

# Death Penalty Support Goes Up for First Time in Decades

Support for the death penalty increased for the first time in more than two decades, according to a Pew Research Center report released on June 11.

When asked, “Do you strongly favor, favor, oppose or strongly oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?” 54 percent of U.S adults responded “strongly favor” or “favor.”

Thirty-nine percent of respondents said they “oppose” or “strongly oppose” capital punishment.

“Two years ago, [49 percent favored the death penalty](#) for people convicted of murder, the lowest level of support for capital punishment in surveys dating back to the early 1970s,” the report said. “While the share of Americans supporting the death penalty has risen since 2016, it remains much lower than in the 1990s or throughout much of the 2000s.”

Men (61 percent) were more likely than women (46 percent) to support capital punishment for a person convicted of murder, and whites (59 percent) were more likely than Hispanics (47 percent) and blacks (36 percent) to do so.

White evangelical Protestants (77 percent) were most likely to respond “strongly favor” or “favor,” followed by white mainline Protestants (61 percent), white Catholics (57 percent), non-white Catholics (53 percent) and the religiously unaffiliated (48 percent).

Political affiliation continued to have a significant impact on responses, with Republicans remaining the most likely to support the death penalty for a convicted murderer (77 percent favor), followed by independents (52 percent) and Democrats (35 percent).

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While all parties saw an increase in support from 2016 to 2018, they also have experienced a decline in support from 1996 to the present, with Republican support dropping 10 points, independents 27 points and Democrats 36 points.

The full report is available [here](#).