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OTTAWA (Reuters) - Even before the Supreme Court begins weighing whether same-sex marriage must be allowed across Canada, advocates on opposite sides of the argument agreed on Tuesday that the judges would most likely say yes.

The country's highest court will begin two days of hearings on Wednesday on the marriage question, which has divided the Canadian Parliament and caused an electoral headache for Liberal Prime Minister Paul Martin.

But both sides thought momentum was in favor of upholding lower court rulings in five provinces and one territory -- representing 82 percent of Canada's population -- that a heterosexual-only definition of marriage was unconstitutional.

"We certainly feel like underdogs in this issue," said Janet Epp-Buckingham of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, which is teaming up with Roman Catholic and Muslim groups before the court to argue against gay marriage. "We are concerned that there may not be balance across the court at this time."

A coalition of groups on the other side noted that the Liberal government was now arguing in favor of gay marriage, a switch from positions as recently as 1-1/2 years ago.

"We are very confident that the Supreme Court will confirm what courts across the country have said many times," said Alex Munter of Canadians for Equal Marriage.