

# Californians and Their Government

## May 2017

### Time Trends – Likely Voters

#### Methodology Note:

Findings for May 2017 are based on a survey of 1,707 California adult residents, with 65 percent interviewed on cell phones (1,107 interviews) and 35 percent interviewed on landline telephones (600 interviews). Live landline and cell phone interviews were conducted in English and Spanish according to the respondents' preferences. Interviews took an average of 18 minutes to complete. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights May 12–22, 2017.

The May 2017 sampling error for the 1,019 likely voters, taking design effects from weighting into consideration, is  $\pm 4.2$  percent. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

If you have any questions or require additional information regarding this survey, please contact [surveys@ppic.org](mailto:surveys@ppic.org)

**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends**

Q2. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of  
 the way that Jerry Brown is handling his job as  
 governor of California?

	approve	disapprove	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	50%	40%	9%	1012
Apr 2017	52%	38%	10%	1026
Mar 2017	61%	32%	7%	1061
Jan 2017	62%	31%	7%	1102
Dec 2016	59%	33%	8%	1112
Oct 2016	56%	32%	12%	1020
Sep 2016	55%	38%	7%	1050
Jul 2016	53%	36%	11%	1048
May 2016	50%	39%	10%	985
Apr 2016	56%	35%	9%	993
Mar 2016	53%	36%	11%	1031
Jan 2016	60%	31%	9%	1036
Dec 2015	54%	35%	11%	1097
Sep 2015	55%	35%	10%	1054
Jul 2015	55%	37%	9%	1054
Jun 2015	54%	36%	10%	1041
Apr 2015	53%	37%	11%	1063
Mar 2015	56%	36%	8%	1056
Jan 2015	58%	33%	9%	1006
Dec 2014	57%	34%	9%	1050
Oct 2014	54%	37%	9%	966
Sep 2014	55%	36%	9%	908
Jul 2014	56%	34%	9%	971
May 2014	54%	35%	11%	1029
Apr 2014	56%	31%	13%	1068
Mar 2014	52%	35%	13%	1080
Jan 2014	60%	32%	8%	1138
Dec 2013	49%	38%	13%	1077
Sep 2013	49%	39%	12%	1092
Jul 2013	54%	31%	15%	1267
May 2013	48%	40%	11%	1117
Apr 2013	49%	41%	10%	1124
Mar 2013	48%	39%	13%	1132
Jan 2013	50%	36%	14%	1110
Dec 2012	49%	40%	11%	1433
Oct 2012	45%	43%	12%	1331
Sep 2012	42%	47%	11%	1322
Aug 2012	46%	42%	11%	1551
May 2012	42%	43%	14%	1248
Apr 2012	47%	40%	12%	1196
Mar 2012	46%	38%	16%	1160
Jan 2012	44%	38%	17%	1297
Dec 2011	46%	36%	17%	1288
Nov 2011	47%	38%	15%	1622
Sep 2011	45%	35%	20%	1350
Jul 2011	48%	35%	17%	1631
Jun 2011	46%	28%	25%	1400
Apr 2011	46%	32%	21%	1640
Mar 2011	41%	25%	34%	1363
Feb 2011	41%	17%	43%	1552
Jan 2011	47%	20%	33%	1380

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends**

Q3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of  
 the way that the California Legislature is  
 handling its job?

	approve	disapprove	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	41%	46%	12%	1012
Apr 2017	44%	45%	11%	1033
Mar 2017	48%	41%	11%	1057
Jan 2017	50%	38%	11%	1101
Dec 2016	45%	44%	11%	1115
Oct 2016	43%	43%	14%	1016
Sep 2016	42%	48%	9%	1050
Jul 2016	42%	48%	10%	1045
May 2016	38%	49%	13%	982
Apr 2016	40%	51%	9%	993
Mar 2016	38%	50%	12%	1029
Jan 2016	41%	48%	11%	1034
Dec 2015	38%	48%	14%	1100
Sep 2015	39%	47%	15%	1056
Jul 2015	32%	54%	13%	1055
Jun 2015	30%	52%	18%	1043
Apr 2015	36%	55%	9%	1061
Mar 2015	39%	50%	11%	1059
Jan 2015	41%	47%	13%	1003
Dec 2014	39%	51%	10%	1046
Oct 2014	37%	51%	13%	969
Sep 2014	32%	54%	14%	901
Jul 2014	31%	56%	13%	972
May 2014	36%	54%	11%	1027
Apr 2014	29%	56%	15%	1074
Mar 2014	32%	57%	12%	1084
Jan 2014	33%	57%	10%	1145
Dec 2013	32%	56%	12%	1077
Sep 2013	32%	57%	10%	1095
Jul 2013	33%	55%	12%	1272
May 2013	29%	59%	12%	1125
Apr 2013	29%	64%	7%	1129
Mar 2013	25%	61%	14%	1130
Jan 2013	31%	55%	14%	1115
Dec 2012	26%	61%	13%	1434
Oct 2012	21%	68%	11%	1329
Sep 2012	22%	68%	10%	1325
Aug 2012	21%	69%	10%	1560
May 2012	17%	71%	11%	1248
Apr 2012	15%	73%	12%	1199
Mar 2012	21%	66%	14%	1162
Jan 2012	17%	71%	12%	1297
Dec 2011	16%	69%	15%	1293
Nov 2011	17%	70%	13%	1634
Sep 2011	17%	71%	12%	1363
Jul 2011	15%	74%	11%	1639
Jun 2011	17%	72%	11%	1404
Apr 2011	14%	74%	12%	1644
Mar 2011	16%	70%	14%	1360
Feb 2011	20%	63%	17%	1558
Jan 2011	18%	68%	14%	1390
Nov 2010	9%	82%	9%	1673

**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends(cont.)**

Q3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of  
 the way that the California Legislature is  
 handling its job?

	approve	disapprove	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
Oct 2010	10%	86%	3%	1238
Sep 2010	11%	85%	4%	1214
Jul 2010	10%	82%	8%	1462
May 2010	11%	80%	8%	1247
Apr 2010	11%	79%	9%	1540
Mar 2010	9%	85%	6%	1235
Jan 2010	12%	80%	7%	1299
Dec 2009	10%	83%	7%	1077
Nov 2009	10%	80%	10%	1630
Sep 2009	16%	76%	8%	1339
Jul 2009	10%	84%	6%	1563
May 2009	12%	80%	8%	1213
Apr 2009	16%	74%	10%	1596
Mar 2009	11%	80%	10%	1136
Feb 2009	14%	75%	10%	1564
Jan 2009	15%	76%	9%	1387
Nov 2008	20%	69%	11%	1633
Oct 2008	22%	70%	8%	1280
Sep 2008	16%	76%	9%	1277
Aug 2008	20%	74%	6%	1183
May 2008	23%	65%	12%	1224
Apr 2008	22%	66%	12%	1517
Mar 2008	25%	64%	11%	1219
Jan 2008	27%	61%	12%	1226
Dec 2007	35%	54%	10%	1146
Oct 2007	32%	54%	14%	1574
Sep 2007	29%	59%	11%	1158
Jun 2007	35%	47%	18%	1106
May 2007	36%	51%	14%	1127
Apr 2007	35%	51%	14%	1510
Mar 2007	39%	47%	14%	1233
Jan 2007	37%	49%	14%	1274
Oct 2006	26%	61%	13%	1188
Sep 2006	32%	55%	13%	1207
Aug 2006	27%	61%	12%	1105
May 2006	23%	61%	15%	1093
Mar 2006	23%	65%	12%	1002
Jan 2006	25%	63%	12%	1256
Jan 2006	23%	60%	17%	1443
Oct 2005	21%	65%	14%	1161
Sep 2005	28%	60%	12%	1111
Aug 2005	23%	64%	13%	1052
May 2005	24%	63%	12%	1237
Jan 2005	33%	57%	11%	1230
Oct 2004	40%	46%	14%	1210
Sep 2004	37%	51%	12%	1191
Aug 2004	37%	52%	11%	1183
Jun 2004	38%	51%	11%	1346
May 2004	35%	52%	13%	1098
Jan 2004	34%	50%	16%	977
Aug 2003	22%	68%	10%	1067
Jun 2003	29%	58%	13%	1032

**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends(cont.)**

Q3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of  
 the way that the California Legislature is  
 handling its job?

	approve	disapprove	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
Feb 2003	29%	55%	16%	1071
Sep 2002	40%	45%	15%	1029
Jan 2002	46%	43%	11%	967
Dec 2001	50%	36%	14%	939
Jan 2001	56%	32%	12%	1085
Sep 2000	56%	34%	11%	1089

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends**

Q4. How would you rate your own personal financial situation? Would you say you are in excellent shape, good shape, only fair shape, or poor shape financially?

	excellent	good	only fair	poor	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	11%	40%	35%	13%	1%	1008
Dec 2013	7%	44%	34%	14%	0%	1071
Dec 2011	8%	32%	39%	20%	0%	1287
Dec 2009	9%	38%	36%	18%	1%	1063

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**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends**

Q5. Does the cost of your housing place a financial strain on you and your family today?

	yes, a lot	yes, a little	no	don't know	yes, don't know how much	Unweighted n
May 2017	20%	16%	62%	1%	2%	1016
Nov 2004	10%	12%	77%	0%	0%	1475

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**PPIC Statewide Survey  
Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
Likely Voters - Time Trends**

Q6. Do you think the state budget situation in California - that is, the balance between government spending and revenues - is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem for the people of California today?

	big problem	somewhat of a problem	not a problem	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	49%	32%	14%	5%	1017
Jan 2017	38%	47%	10%	5%	1105
May 2016	51%	33%	13%	3%	989
Mar 2016	55%	33%	9%	3%	1036
Jan 2016	46%	39%	12%	4%	1041
Dec 2015	50%	35%	10%	6%	1113
Jun 2015	52%	35%	11%	2%	1045
Mar 2015	50%	34%	12%	3%	1063
Jan 2015	56%	35%	7%	2%	1009
Dec 2014	55%	35%	8%	2%	1056
Oct 2014	62%	29%	6%	3%	974
Sep 2014	62%	29%	6%	2%	913
May 2014	58%	34%	5%	2%	1036
Jan 2014	56%	36%	6%	2%	1150
Sep 2013	66%	28%	4%	2%	1101
May 2013	67%	27%	4%	1%	1128
Mar 2013	72%	23%	4%	1%	1137
Jan 2013	71%	23%	4%	1%	1116
Dec 2012	74%	21%	3%	1%	1437
Oct 2012	80%	18%	1%	1%	1336
Sep 2012	83%	15%	1%	1%	1331
May 2012	83%	14%	2%	2%	1256
Apr 2012	80%	16%	2%	1%	1207
Mar 2012	78%	17%	3%	1%	1167
Jan 2012	78%	20%	2%	1%	1305
Dec 2011	83%	14%	2%	2%	1297
Sep 2011	81%	16%	1%	2%	1362
Jun 2011	82%	15%	3%	1%	1409
Mar 2011	83%	14%	2%	1%	1372
Jan 2011	83%	16%	0%	1%	1398
Sep 2010	90%	9%	1%	0%	1219
May 2010	88%	11%	1%	1%	1251
Mar 2010	87%	12%	1%	1%	1237
Jan 2010	83%	15%	0%	1%	1301
Dec 2009	88%	10%	1%	0%	1078
Sep 2009	85%	12%	1%	1%	1342
May 2009	83%	16%	1%	1%	1219
Mar 2009	85%	13%	1%	2%	1138
Jan 2009	82%	16%	1%	1%	1391
Oct 2008	80%	17%	1%	1%	1284
Sep 2008	84%	14%	1%	1%	1283
Aug 2008	84%	14%	1%	1%	1186
May 2008	76%	22%	1%	1%	1229
Mar 2008	79%	18%	2%	2%	1221
Jan 2008	74%	23%	2%	2%	1234
May 2007	46%	46%	5%	3%	1127
Jan 2007	49%	42%	5%	4%	1277
May 2006	64%	30%	2%	3%	1097
Jan 2006	68%	27%	3%	2%	1257

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding



**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends**

Q16. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of  
 the way that Donald Trump is handling his job  
 as president?

	approve	disapprove	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	33%	63%	3%	1013
Mar 2017	35%	62%	3%	1058
Jan 2017	34%	55%	11%	1094

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends**

Q17. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of  
 the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job?

	approve	disapprove	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	19%	76%	5%	1017
Mar 2017	27%	68%	6%	1059
Jan 2017	25%	68%	7%	1098
Oct 2016	17%	77%	6%	1024
Sep 2016	16%	81%	3%	1054
Jul 2016	17%	80%	3%	1051
May 2016	15%	82%	3%	985
Mar 2016	14%	83%	2%	1038
Jan 2016	19%	78%	3%	1040
Dec 2015	14%	81%	5%	1111
Sep 2015	17%	79%	4%	1065
Jul 2015	17%	78%	6%	1057
Jun 2015	20%	74%	6%	1045
Mar 2015	16%	80%	4%	1057
Jan 2015	24%	71%	5%	1008
Oct 2014	16%	79%	5%	970
Sep 2014	16%	80%	5%	907
Jul 2014	15%	83%	2%	976
May 2014	14%	82%	4%	1034
Mar 2014	9%	87%	4%	1091
Jan 2014	15%	82%	3%	1150
Dec 2013	10%	86%	4%	1078
Sep 2013	18%	79%	3%	1086
Jul 2013	18%	77%	4%	1268
May 2013	19%	77%	5%	1124
Mar 2013	16%	81%	3%	1132
Jan 2013	21%	73%	6%	1113
Oct 2012	15%	81%	4%	1332
Sep 2012	17%	78%	5%	1325
Aug 2012	15%	81%	4%	1562
May 2012	16%	78%	5%	1252
Mar 2012	17%	79%	4%	1163
Jan 2012	14%	82%	4%	1300
Dec 2011	9%	88%	3%	1293
Sep 2011	15%	79%	6%	1360
Jul 2011	17%	78%	5%	1638
Mar 2011	22%	69%	9%	1365
Oct 2010	26%	71%	3%	1233
Sep 2010	21%	74%	5%	1214
May 2010	26%	68%	6%	1250
Mar 2010	14%	82%	4%	1231
Jan 2010	29%	65%	6%	1296
Dec 2009	29%	66%	5%	1076
Sep 2009	34%	60%	6%	1338
May 2009	39%	53%	7%	1216
Mar 2009	35%	58%	7%	1134
Jan 2009	30%	64%	6%	1389
Oct 2008	18%	78%	4%	1281
Sep 2008	26%	67%	7%	1280
Aug 2008	22%	72%	6%	1180
Mar 2008	30%	63%	7%	1220
Dec 2007	23%	72%	5%	1147
Sep 2007	28%	66%	6%	1160

**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends(cont.)**

Q17. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of  
 the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job?

	approve	disapprove	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
Jun 2007	30%	62%	9%	1106
Jan 2007	37%	51%	12%	1276
Sep 2006	31%	63%	6%	1207
Mar 2006	31%	62%	7%	1004
Oct 2005	37%	55%	8%	1164

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends**

Q18. Do you think things in the United States  
 are going in the right direction or the wrong  
 direction?

	right direction	wrong direction	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	28%	64%	7%	1010
Jan 2017	37%	57%	6%	1101
Oct 2016	40%	55%	5%	1020
Mar 2016	34%	63%	3%	1034
Sep 2015	35%	61%	4%	1059
Mar 2015	34%	61%	5%	1054
Mar 2014	35%	61%	5%	1084
Dec 2013	32%	63%	4%	1075
Jan 2013	47%	49%	4%	1114
Oct 2012	42%	55%	3%	1332
Sep 2011	24%	72%	4%	1355
Oct 2010	35%	60%	5%	1229
Dec 2009	39%	56%	5%	1078
May 2009	52%	43%	5%	1217
Jan 2009	31%	64%	5%	1386
Aug 2008	22%	73%	5%	1180
Mar 2008	21%	75%	4%	1219
Jun 2007	26%	68%	6%	1107
Jan 2007	33%	63%	4%	1271
Oct 2006	31%	62%	6%	1188
Sep 2005	35%	60%	5%	1117
Jan 2005	43%	52%	4%	1233
Sep 2004	41%	56%	3%	1200
Sep 2003	43%	52%	5%	1146

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends**

Q19. Turning to economic conditions, do you think that during the next 12 months the United States will have good times financially or bad times?

	good times	bad times	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	43%	46%	11%	1014
Jan 2017	54%	38%	8%	1101
Oct 2016	44%	39%	16%	1017
Mar 2016	45%	47%	9%	1032
Sep 2015	43%	50%	7%	1060
Mar 2015	50%	42%	8%	1050
Mar 2014	40%	51%	8%	1084
Dec 2013	38%	55%	7%	1074
Oct 2012	42%	48%	10%	1328
Sep 2011	20%	74%	6%	1357
Sep 2010	30%	63%	7%	1208
Dec 2009	26%	67%	7%	1076
May 2009	25%	70%	5%	1219
Jan 2009	17%	78%	5%	1388
Aug 2008	19%	74%	6%	1182
Mar 2008	13%	82%	4%	1222
Jun 2007	39%	54%	7%	1110
Jan 2007	47%	45%	8%	1274
Oct 2006	49%	42%	9%	1187
Sep 2005	30%	62%	8%	1117
Jan 2005	48%	43%	8%	1231
Sep 2004	47%	41%	12%	1200
Sep 2003	46%	44%	9%	1142

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends**

Q20. As you may know, a health reform bill was signed into law in 2010. Given what you know about the health reform law, do you have a [rotate] [1] [generally favorable] [or] [2] [generally unfavorable] opinion of it?

	generally favorable	generally unfavorable	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	49%	46%	5%	1014
Jan 2017	53%	40%	7%	1098
Dec 2015	49%	46%	5%	1106
Mar 2015	48%	47%	4%	1060
Jan 2015	48%	46%	6%	1006
Dec 2014	45%	47%	8%	1055
Oct 2014	46%	46%	7%	972
Sep 2014	45%	49%	6%	911
May 2014	47%	48%	6%	1033
Mar 2014	44%	50%	7%	1087
Jan 2014	45%	49%	6%	1143
Dec 2013	42%	51%	7%	1076

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends**

Q31. If you had to choose, would you rather have a smaller government providing fewer services, or a bigger government providing more services?

	smaller government, fewer services	bigger government, more services	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	47%	46%	7%	1003
Mar 2016	51%	44%	5%	1028
Feb 2002	55%	40%	6%	947

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends**

Q32. In general, do you think laws covering the sale of guns  
 should be made more strict, less strict, or kept as they are now?

	more strict	less strict	kept as they are now	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	55%	19%	25%	1%	1016
Sep 2015	61%	10%	28%	1%	1065

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding



**PPIC Statewide Survey  
 Californians and Their Government - May 2017  
 Likely Voters - Time Trends**

Q33. In general, do you think the use of  
 marijuana should be legal, or not?

	yes, legal	no, not legal	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	63%	34%	2%	1016
Oct 2016	57%	39%	4%	1023
Sep 2016	61%	37%	2%	1053
May 2016	60%	37%	3%	985
Jun 2015	56%	41%	3%	1041
Mar 2015	55%	43%	3%	1060
Oct 2014	50%	45%	4%	972
Mar 2014	53%	44%	3%	1085
Sep 2013	60%	38%	2%	1098
Mar 2012	49%	47%	4%	1164
Sep 2011	48%	48%	4%	1358
Sep 2010	51%	45%	4%	1215
May 2010	49%	48%	3%	1247

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding