



PPIC



PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

is

Dedicated to informing and improving public policy in California through independent, objective, nonpartisan research on major economic, social, and political issues.

WHO WE ARE

PPIC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank. We are committed to providing essential information and framing policy debates to shape a better future for California.

PPIC is independent, with no government, university, or charitable affiliations.

PPIC is objective. We approach our projects without any specific results in mind. And we publish our results even when they may be unpopular or controversial.

Our research is high quality, relevant, and timely. It is responsive to both immediate and long-term demands of state policymaking. We always disclose our methods, resources, and processes—and we stake our reputation on the credibility of our work.

Our outreach efforts are extensive and well-established. We have created broad networks across our diverse state, connecting with a variety of civic, business, labor, nonprofit, governmental, educational, and research groups.

How do we know our work has an impact? Evaluation is critical—and we make a serious investment in both quantitative and qualitative measures of our work. We rely on a variety of methods—from audience surveys to media tracking, from case studies to focus groups—to help us understand how best to ensure that our work is useful, effective, and influential.

In the past, PPIC's endowment funded many of our research projects and other activities. Today, we increasingly receive generous assistance from many foundations and from private individuals and philanthropies. As we work to improve California's future, we look forward to connecting with individuals and organizations across the state that share our goals and values.

PPIC is based in San Francisco. The PPIC Sacramento Center is located across from the state capitol.

Mark Baldassare is President and CEO of PPIC. Walter B. Hewlett is Chair of the Board of Directors.

OUR HISTORY

PPIC was founded in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. With cofounders Roger W. Heyns and Arjay Miller, Hewlett aspired to help California's leaders better understand policy issues—and make informed decisions—by providing them with objective policy research.

independent

“In this business, good information is the key to making good decisions. PPIC is a valuable source of nonpartisan research on the issues that affect California the most.” SENATOR DIANNE FEINSTEIN

WHAT WE DO

With a general focus on economic, social, and political issues, our research encompasses a wide array of topics, including education, economic development, the environment, and the political process.

Our central audiences are California's elected officials in Sacramento and Washington, D.C.—as well as the many public servants in local governments, on school boards, and in the many other agencies throughout the state. We make our findings widely available to a broad range of organizations, as well as to decisionmakers in the nonprofit and private sectors.

Because PPIC strives to raise public awareness about key state issues, the media and the general public are also important audiences for our work. Our publications range from comprehensive, in-depth reports to one-page fact sheets. All of our materials are available free on our website.

POLICY RESEARCH AREAS

PPIC's research program is as diverse and dynamic as California itself. Focused on the forces shaping California's future, our projects cut across a wide range of policy concerns. Our research staff has expertise in a variety of fields, including economics, demography, political science, sociology, and environmental resources.

Economic Development We examine policies that affect the pros and cons of doing business in California. Our interests include economic trends, housing, the business climate, enterprise zones, and broadband availability.

Education Student achievement, school accountability, and finance policies are central topics. Our work concentrates on K–12 but extends to both pre-K and higher education.

Environment and Resources What are the tradeoffs among various, sometimes conflicting environmental and economic goals? Current projects tackle emissions and air quality, water policy reform, and the relation of land use planning and climate change policies.

Governance We study political participation and civic engagement in our diverse state. Governance reform options—such as open primaries and redistricting—are an important area of study.

Population Immigration is a primary focus, with continuing studies of immigration policy and reform, unauthorized immigrants, and immigrant integration. Another key topic is the state's aging population.

Public Finance We analyze the state's revenue capacity and expenditure needs. Key research initiatives include institutional constraints on budget decisions, the affordability of debt, and alternative mechanisms for financing infrastructure.

Social and Health Policy State and local policies that improve the lives of low-income families are a central concern. Foster care, children's health insurance, and childhood obesity are topics of study.

THE PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY

Inaugurated in 1998, the Statewide Survey has become our signature publication. It is known and trusted for its impartial take on Californians' attitudes and policy preferences. Appearing regularly throughout the year, the survey informs policymakers, encourages discussion, and raises public awareness about a variety of topics—from elections to the state budget to the environment.

nonpartisan

“PPIC [has] a team of top-notch state researchers who have become a valuable resource for political leaders throughout California. And in this era of term limits, that expertise is more valuable than ever.” *CAPITOL WEEKLY, 4/16/09*

PARTICIPATING IN THE POLICY PROCESS

We recognize that decisions made today will affect our quality of life tomorrow. In the fast-paced, present-focused world of political debate, PPIC is setting the standard for future planning efforts.

The policy world has taken notice, and legislative leaders look to PPIC for expert advice. For instance:

- Our work contributed to the bipartisan legislative effort that placed the largest infrastructure bond package in the state's history on the November 2006 ballot—which voters approved.
- More recently, PPIC was called on by the four state legislative leaders to convene a California Economic Recovery Task Force. This distinguished group emphasized the need for investments in education and infrastructure, as well as the importance of using economic stimulus money to help the state achieve long-term goals.
- PPIC has developed a unique school finance model—a tool that allows agencies to understand the potential consequences of various K–12 policy actions. In these fiscally challenging times, this ability is particularly important.
- PPIC's work on the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta has been widely recognized as essential to the discussion of this troubled region—the key to California's water supply system.

PPIC's Sacramento Center has become a key resource in our engagement efforts. The center offers our staff many opportunities to engage with policymakers, from testifying at legislative hearings to providing one-on-one briefings. With a daily presence in the Capitol, PPIC is now cultivating a variety of new opportunities to collaborate with, influence, and advise California's leaders.

We will continue to broaden our efforts by reaching out to diverse organizations and audiences. We wish to engage more Californians in getting ready for our changing future. And we hope to involve and inspire the next generation of policymakers and influential leaders of the state.

ACCOMPLISHING OUR GOALS

Our dedication to excellence—to providing credible, high-quality information to policymakers and others—has established PPIC as an influential resource in California’s public policy debates. But we can’t do it alone. We rely on a broad network of civic, business, labor, nonprofit, governmental, educational, and research groups.

PPIC’s Board of Directors and State-wide Leadership Council are two good examples. These two groups of prominent citizens reflect the state’s demographic, political, racial/ethnic, and regional diversity. They each meet regularly with PPIC’s leaders to air ideas, provide guidance, and create opportunities for PPIC to get involved at the local, regional, and national levels.

Support comes in other forms as well. We receive generous assistance from many foundations, such as the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, the Donald Bren Foundation, the California Endowment, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the William and

Flora Hewlett Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, the National Science Foundation, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and the Riordan Foundation. Private individuals and philanthropies also provide significant contributions.

As PPIC moves forward, we will need to seek even more opportunities for partnership and support. In addition to pursuing grants for specific research projects, we also look to our expanding program of donor circles, which provides unrestricted support for important institutional initiatives. In all of these efforts, we are interested in connecting with individuals and organizations that share our concern—and hope—for the future of the state.

objective

“I trust PPIC’s work and I want to know what they are saying about the important issues facing California today and in the future.”

DARRELL STEINBERG, PRESIDENT PRO TEM, CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE

engaged

“PPIC is a trusted and solid resource at the State Capitol. Its expertise, nonpartisan analysis, and long-term vision make a valuable contribution, given the challenges and pressures of the policymaking process.” GOVERNOR ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

GOING FORWARD

Current events will always grab people's attention and energy. And PPIC will always offer timely, relevant information on issues of the day. At the same time, we want to remind California's leaders and residents that the future is not as far away as it seems.

In the years ahead, California will face many challenges, from a growing population to aging infrastructure. And opportunities will also present themselves as we seek new ways to grow our economy and preserve our environment.

We believe in the power of objective research and nonpartisan advice—and we are committed to providing essential information for the important choices that lie ahead. By informing and improving policy debates, PPIC will continue to work for the good of all Californians.

The Public Policy Institute of California adheres to a set of core values, beliefs, and principles that guide our organization’s choices and staff actions as we meet our mission of informing and improving public policy.

Excellence We produce high-quality research and information for policy-makers. We seek to recruit and retain top talent.

Independence We pride ourselves on rigorous research that is nonpartisan and objective. We report findings and recommendations that are based on unbiased empirical inquiry.

Relevance We provide information that is responsive to both immediate and long-term demands of state policy-making. We engage broadly with civic, business, labor, nonprofit, governmental, educational, and research groups.

Transparency We disclose our methods, resources, and processes and provide free access to our publications to all interested parties.

Community We are committed to a workplace that offers mutual respect, collegiality, collaboration, and inclusiveness; that supports personal, family, and professional development; and that demonstrates leadership in our environmental practices, appreciation for the state’s diverse people and regions, and recognition of the importance of public service.

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