



RECALL ELECTION—ONE YEAR LATER

October 2004

➤ **Most Californians are positive about the state's recall option.**

Seventy-one percent of Californians think it's good that the state constitution provides a means of recalling elected officials such as the governor. Only 24 percent say the recall option is a bad thing. Evidently, the gubernatorial recall election of October 2003 and its aftermath have done nothing to change their minds, because these attitudes toward the recall are virtually the same as they were before that election.

➤ **In fact, the 2003 recall made some Californians feel better about the state's politics.**

Although the recall of Governor Gray Davis made no change in how 41 percent of Californians feel about the state's politics, 33 percent say it made them feel better. A year after the recall election, 23 percent say it made them feel worse about California politics. However, that's a considerable drop from the 40 percent who felt that way immediately before the election took place.

➤ **Moreover, they are now more likely to support a recall.**

A year ago, only 18 percent of the state's residents said the October 2003 recall election would make them more likely to support a recall. Today, 30 percent say they would support another recall. However, 18 percent are less likely to support a recall, and 46 percent say Davis' removal from office has made them no more or less likely to support another recall.

➤ **They are also less likely to think the process needs to change.**

During the campaign leading up to the recall election, about six in 10 Californians felt that the state's recall election process needed to change—and one in three thought *major* changes were needed. Today, Californians are much more likely to say that the system is fine the way it is: Forty-three percent say the process is okay as is, compared to 32 percent in September 2003. Only 28 percent think the recall process needs major changes.

➤ **The recall installed a new popular governor...**

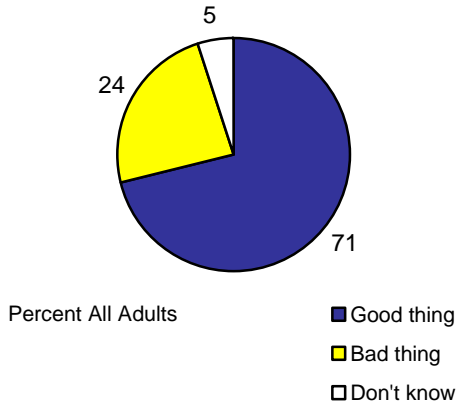
Actor/businessman Arnold Schwarzenegger won the wide-open, 135-candidate race to replace Governor Davis by a wide margin on October 7, 2003. Forty-nine percent of voters picked Schwarzenegger, giving him a comfortable victory over the next two competitors, Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante (31.5%) and State Senator Tom McClintock (13.5%). Since his election, Schwarzenegger has earned consistently high approval ratings. Despite prolonged negotiations over the 2004-2005 California state budget, Schwarzenegger's job approval rating has been 55 percent or higher throughout his first year in office.

➤ **...Who is exceeding the expectations of many Californians.**

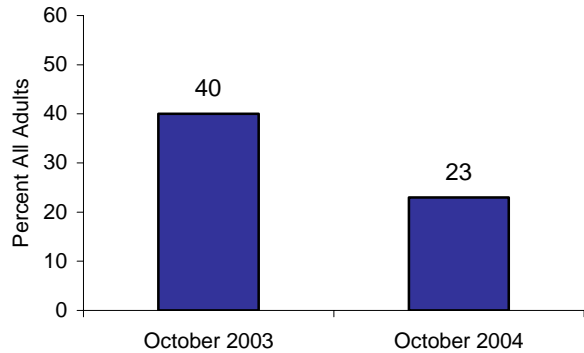
Sixty-one percent of all California adults, and 69 percent of the state's likely voters, approve of the way that Governor Schwarzenegger is handling his new job. Four in 10 Californians, and 46 percent of likely voters, describe Schwarzenegger's first year in office as *better than expected*. Only 17 percent of all adults, and 10 percent of likely voters, describe his first year in office as *worse* than expected.

The Recall Election—One Year Later

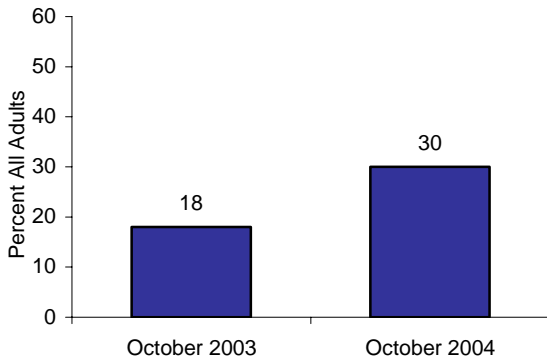
Is it a good thing or a bad thing that the CA constitution provides a way to recall the state's elected officials?



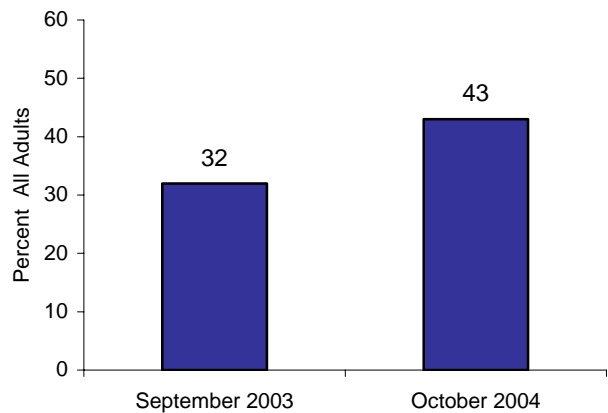
Percent who feel worse about California politics because of the recall election



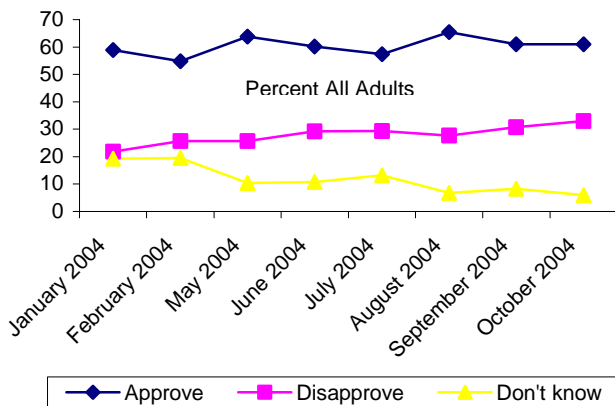
Percent who say the recall election has made them *more likely* to support a future recall



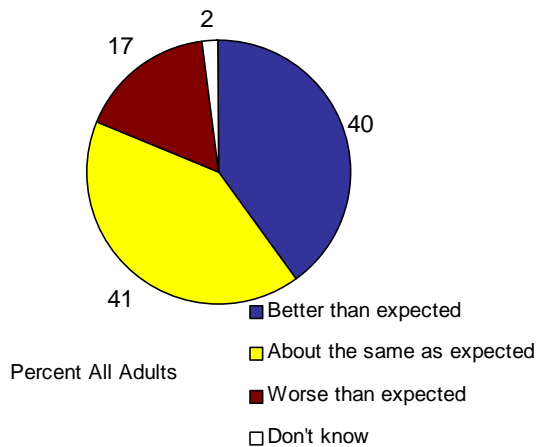
Percent who say recall election process is basically okay the way it is



Governor Schwarzenegger's job approval ratings



Overall, how would you describe Gov. Schwarzenegger's first year in office?



Source: Ten PPIC Statewide Surveys conducted between September 2003 and October 2004, including interviews with more than 21,000 adult Californians (2,001 in September 2003; 2,002 in October 2003; and 2,018 in October 2004).