

■ **NUMBER OF INDEPENDENT AND DEMOCRATIC VOTERS CONTINUES TO RISE.**

At the close of registration for the May 2009 special election, the number of voters registered as independent (“decline to state”) rose to 3.4 million, or 20% of registered voters. With 7.6 million voters, Democrats now make up 45% of the California electorate, while Republicans make up 31% with 5.3 million. Prior to both the 2004 presidential election and November 2005 special election, Democrats comprised 43% of the state’s voters, Republicans 35%, and independents 18%.

■ **PARTY AFFILIATION IS BECOMING STRONGER FOR DEMOCRATS, WEAKER FOR REPUBLICANS.**

Today, 67% of Democratic and 57% of Republican likely voters say they are strongly affiliated with their respective political parties. Since 2004, the percentage of likely voters saying they are strongly affiliated with their party has increased 9 points for Democrats but declined 7 points for Republicans. Major party leanings among independents have changed little since 2004: 42% lean Democratic (41% in 2004), while 28% lean Republican (29% in 2004) and 30% say they don’t feel a close affiliation with either party (30% in 2004).

**ADDITIONAL JUST THE FACTS
ON CALIFORNIA VOTERS**

California’s Likely Voters

Latino Likely Voters
in California

■ **CALIFORNIA’S PARTISANS ARE LOCKED IN AN IDEOLOGICAL DIVIDE, WITH INDEPENDENTS IN THE MIDDLE.**

A majority of Democrats (53%) say they are liberal, and an even higher proportion (65%) say they prefer a government that offers more services with higher taxes. On the other hand, 69% of Republicans identify as conservative, and an overwhelming proportion (74%) prefer lower taxes and fewer services. Most independents fall in the middle: Most say that they are politically moderate (42%), and they are divided on the size of government (47% prefer a government with lower taxes and fewer services, 43% prefer higher taxes and more services). Compared to 2004, Democrats are more strongly in favor of higher taxes with more services (56% in 2004 to 65% today), and independents’ preference for lower taxes and fewer services has weakened (54% in 2004, 47% today).

■ **DEMOCRATS ARE MORE LIKELY THAN REPUBLICANS TO LIVE IN THE LA AND SF BAY AREAS.**

Over half of the state’s Democrats live in Los Angeles County (29%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (27%). The majority of independents also reside in Los Angeles (24%) and the Bay Area (27%). Most Republicans live in Orange/San Diego Counties (22%), the Central Valley (22%), and Los Angeles (20%).

■ **MOST LIKELY VOTERS ARE COLLEGE EDUCATED, BUT PARTY PROFILES VARY WIDELY BY RACE/ETHNICITY.**

A majority of likely voters among independents, Democrats, and Republicans are college graduates. Among Republican likely voters, 82% are white, compared to 67% of independents and 57% of Democrats. Democrats (35%) are more likely than independents (19%) and Republicans (11%) to be comprised of Latino and black voters, and independents have a slightly higher share of Asian voters (9%) than the two major parties (Democrats 6%, Republicans 5%). A majority of Democratic likely voters are women (58%); a majority of Republican and independent likely voters are men (54% and 55%, respectively). Strong majorities in all three groups have household incomes of more than \$40,000 a year, and the percentage with incomes over \$80,000 has grown since 2004.



California Voter and Party Profiles

		Likely Voters	Likely Voter Party Registration			
			Dem	Rep	Ind	Other
All Likely Voters		–	44%	35%	18%	3%
Gender	Men	49	42	54	55	64
	Women	51	58	46	45	36
Age	18 to 34	20	21	15	28	29
	35 to 54	41	39	43	42	45
	55 and older	39	40	42	30	26
Education	No college	16	20	15	13	6
	Some college	30	27	33	30	28
	College graduate	54	53	52	57	66
Household income	Under \$40,000	24	29	19	24	23
	\$40,000 to \$79,999	31	31	30	29	38
	\$80,000 or more	45	40	51	47	39
Race/Ethnicity	White	68	57	82	67	80
	Latino	17	25	9	15	10
	Black	6	10	2	4	4
	Asian	6	6	5	9	5
	Other	3	2	2	5	1
Region	Los Angeles	25	29	20	24	25
	SF Bay Area	23	27	14	27	26
	Central Valley	16	14	22	13	14
	Orange/San Diego	17	13	22	18	18
	Inland Empire	10	8	13	10	6
	Other regions	9	9	9	8	11
Political ideology	Liberal	32	53	8	28	52
	Middle-of-the-road	30	29	23	42	24
	Conservative	38	18	69	30	24
Government preference	Higher taxes, more services	45	65	19	43	61
	Lower taxes, fewer services	47	28	74	47	31
	Don't know	8	7	7	10	8
Strength of affiliation among major party voters	Strong	–	67	57	–	–
	Not very strong	–	30	40	–	–
	Don't know	–	3	3	–	–
Major party leanings among independent voters	Democratic Party	–	–	–	42	–
	Republican Party	–	–	–	28	–
	Neither/don't know	–	–	–	30	–

Note: “Likely voters” are registered voters meeting criteria on interest in politics, attention to issues, voting behavior, and intention to vote.

Sources: Eleven PPIC Statewide Surveys, August 2008–July 2009, including 14,108 likely voters. California Secretary of State, *Report of Registration*, October 2004, October 2005, May 2009.

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