
Preface

California is now in the midst of historic changes that will profoundly affect the future of the state. To improve understanding of these changes and their effect on the political status quo, PPIC will conduct a series of large-scale public opinion surveys during the 1998 election cycle. This report presents the results of the fourth of these statewide surveys. The first three were conducted in April, May, and September, 1998. The purpose of the surveys is to develop an in-depth profile of the social, economic, and political forces at work in California elections and in shaping the state's public policies. The surveys are intended to provide the public and policymakers with relevant—advocacy-free—information on the following:

- Californians' overall impressions and concerns about the economy, population growth, governance, and quality of life and about key issues such as education, welfare, and immigration.
- Differences in social and political attitudes among different demographic, age, and economic groups and across different regions of the state.
- The characteristics of groups that are shaping the state's elections and policy debates.
- The political attitudes underlying "voter distrust" of government and low voter turnout and how both affect the outcomes of elections and the success of ballot initiatives.

Copies of the April, May, or September reports or additional copies of this report may be ordered by calling (800) 232-5343 [mainland U.S.] or (415) 291-4415 [Canada, Hawaii, overseas]. The reports are also posted on the PPIC web site (www.ppic.org).



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**WASHINGTON UPROAR HAVING LITTLE IMPACT
ON VOTER ATTITUDES ABOUT CLINTON, ELECTION, ISSUES
Californians Support Initiative Process, But See Room for Improvement**

SAN FRANCISCO, California, October 12, 1998 — With the general election a mere three weeks away, predictions about the electoral effects of the impeachment crisis are not being borne out by public opinion, according to a survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California. In fact, the latest PPIC Statewide Survey reveals an electorate whose opinions about the President, candidates for statewide office, and substantive policy issues have remained remarkably stable, but also one that feels profoundly disconnected from the current priorities and concerns of politicians, pundits, and the press.

“While political insiders and media authorities have predicted declines in the President’s popularity and in the public’s interest in voting, it hasn’t come to pass at this point,” said survey director Mark Baldassare. “The results of our survey offer an important reality check as we head into to the home stretch of this election cycle. Californians remain upbeat. They want to talk about schools, not scandal. And while the crisis won’t drive voters to the polls, it won’t keep them away either.”

The mood of the state is more positive than it has been all year, with sixty-two percent of Californians believing the state is headed in the right direction. President Clinton’s job approval ratings remain high and steady. Six in 10 Californians say he is doing an excellent or good job, compared with 58% in May and September. When asked if the scandal and investigation would have an impact on their inclination to vote in November, seven in 10 voters said it would not. Only one percent said they would be less inclined to vote, while 29% would be more inclined. Sixty-seven percent also said that the scandal would not make them more likely to support candidates from a particular party.

The Gubernatorial and U.S. Senate races also remain unchanged. Democrat Gray Davis continues to lead Republican Dan Lungren in the race for Governor by an eight-point margin among likely voters (49% to 41%). The September survey showed Davis with a nine-point lead. While Davis maintains a strong advantage in the Bay Area (58% to 33%) and the Los Angeles metro area (53% to 37%), Lungren holds a substantial lead in the Central Valley (57% to 36%). Among Latinos, Davis enjoys a three-to-one edge over Lungren (67% to 22%).

The U.S. Senate contest between Democrat Barbara Boxer and Republican challenger Matt Fong is still too close to call. Among likely voters, Boxer receives 47 percent and Fong 44 percent. Boxer leads Fong in the Los Angeles metro area (52% to 39%), the Bay Area (53% to 41%), and among Latinos (68% to 22%). Fong continues to receive strong support in the Central Valley (56% to 33%).

Disconnect Between People, Politics

As voter attitudes about the upcoming election remain focused and stable despite a constant barrage of public confessions, congressional bickering, and release of graphic testimony, another trend also lingers: Californians feel isolated and disengaged from their government and believe they lack influence over people in elected office.

Fifty-four percent of Californians say that public officials don't care what they think, while 40 percent disagree. Only 15 percent believe that government pays a good deal of attention to what the people think when making decisions. Fifty-four percent say government takes their views into consideration some of the time and 30 percent say it doesn't pay much attention. This attitude extends to the perception of elections as well: While 44 percent say elections make government pay attention to what the people think, 37 percent do not agree.

Perhaps because of this sense of powerlessness, Californians shy away from involvement in politics. Eighty-three percent say they are not involved in any political activities related to parties, candidates, or election campaigns. Only two percent describe themselves as very involved, while 15 percent say they are somewhat involved. While a substantial number of Californians say they are very or somewhat involved in some type of charity or volunteer work, large majorities also say they are not involved in working on neighborhood problems, or local, state, or national issues.

Education Still Prime Concern

Education remains a top issue for Californians. When asked which one issue they would most like to hear candidates for statewide office discuss between now and the election, nearly one in three Californians said schools, trailed by crime (8%), the economy (6%), and taxes (6%). Likely voters continue to say that candidates' stands on the issues are the most important qualification they consider when deciding how to vote for statewide offices.

Proposition 1A, the \$9.2 billion school bond measure placed on the November ballot by the State Legislature, still enjoys strong support. Two-in-three likely voters say they favor the measure, which will finance new construction and repairs to older buildings for the state's K-12 public schools, community colleges, and public universities. Interestingly, Proposition 8, a broad education initiative that establishes permanent class size reductions, among other reforms, does not have majority support among likely voters. Forty-three percent currently support the initiative, while 38 percent are opposed.

Initiative Process Seen as Important but Flawed

Californians appear to have a love-hate relationship with the state's initiative process. While they recognize its policymaking value, they also readily admit to its shortcomings. Seventy-three percent of Californians say initiatives bring up important public policy issues that have not been adequately addressed by the Governor and State Legislature. However, nearly four in five residents also agree that the ballot wording for initiatives is often confusing and that initiatives usually reflect the concerns of organized special interests, not average Californians.

Californians are also strongly in favor of an initiative reform proposal by the California Constitution Revision Commission. Sixty-three percent favor allowing the legislature to hold hearings on a proposed initiative and to adopt technical or clarifying changes before placing the initiative on the ballot. However, residents are leery of another Commission proposal that would permit the legislature to alter measures after they have been approved by the voters. Forty-nine percent oppose allowing the legislature, with gubernatorial approval, to amend initiatives after they have been in effect for six years, while 44 percent support such a reform.

About the Survey

The purpose of the PPIC Statewide Survey is to develop an in-depth profile of the social, economic, and political forces at work in California elections and in shaping the state's public policies. Surveys are intended to provide the public and policymakers with relevant information on the following: Californians' overall impressions of key policy issues and of quality of life, differences in social and political attitudes among demographic groups and across different regions of the state, the characteristics of groups that are shaping the state's elections and policy debates, and the political attitudes underlying "voter distrust" of government and low voter turnout. A total of five surveys will be conducted and released during the 1998 election cycle. The first three surveys were conducted in April, May, and September of this year.

Findings are based on a telephone survey of 2,005 California adult residents interviewed from October 1 to October 6, 1998. Interviews were conducted in English or Spanish. The sampling error for the total sample is +/- 2%. The sampling error for the 1,574 voters is +/- 2.5% and for the 793 likely voters is +/- 3.5%. For additional information on survey methodology, see page 27.

Dr. Mark Baldassare is a senior fellow at PPIC. He is founder and director of the Orange County Annual Survey at UC Irvine. For over two decades, he has conducted surveys for major news organizations, including the Orange County Edition of the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Orange County Register*, KCAL-TV, KRON-TV, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

PPIC is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to independent, nonpartisan research on economic, social, and political issues that affect the lives of Californians. The Institute was established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett.

This report appears in full on PPIC's Web site (www.ppic.org).

California General Election

Governor's Race

With the gubernatorial election only a few weeks away, the outcome is in the hands of a shrinking number of undecided voters. Although Republicans and Democrats are strongly, equally supportive of their party's candidate, neither Gray Davis nor Dan Lungren has captured a majority of California voters. Davis has a slight edge among independent and other party voters, but many of them have not yet made up their minds.

Among those *most likely* to go to the polls in November, Davis has 49 percent and Lungren has 41 percent. One percent supports other candidates and 9 percent are undecided. The undecided ranks have declined by 4 points since the September survey, with support going about equally to Lungren and Davis.

Eight in 10 Democrats support Davis, and eight in 10 Republicans favor Lungren. Davis is leading Lungren by a 25-point margin in the San Francisco Bay area and is ahead by 16 points in the Los Angeles region. Lungren, however, currently leads Davis in the Central Valley by a 21-point margin. Among Latino voters, Davis has better than a three-to-one edge over Lungren. Other voters, who are predominantly white and not Hispanic, are evenly divided between Lungren and Davis.

Women support Davis over Lungren by a sizable margin (51% to 38%), while men are evenly divided between Lungren and Davis (46% each).

"If the election for Governor were being held today, who would you vote for?"

(Likely Voters)	September	October
Gray Davis	47%	49%
Dan Lungren	38	41
Someone else	2	1
Don't know	13	9

(Likely Voters) (October)	Party			Region			Ethnicity	
	Dem	Rep	Other	LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Gray Davis	81%	15%	48%	53%	58%	36%	67%	46%
Dan Lungren	11	77	31	37	33	57	22	45
Someone else	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1
Don't know	7	7	18	9	8	6	10	8

Television Advertising for the Governor's Race

Television commercials by the candidates for Governor are now attracting wide notice across California. Among likely voters, two out of three have seen television ads in the past month. More remember seeing ads for Davis (29%) than for Lungren (19%). One in six give other answers, including having seen equal numbers of ads for both or not being sure. The number who say they have seen television ads for the Governor's race increased by 26 points since the September survey (38% to 64%). Mention of ads has increased more for Davis (18% to 29%) than for Lungren (14% to 19%).

"In the past month, have you seen any television advertisements by the candidates for Governor?"
(If yes, "Whose ads have you seen the most?")

(Likely Voters)	September	October
YES	38%	64%
Gray Davis	18	29
Dan Lungren	14	19
Other answer	6	16
NO	62	36

Debates Between Candidates for Governor

Although there have been three gubernatorial debates, relatively few likely voters say the debates have had a major effect on their choice between the candidates. Among those most likely to vote, 6 percent said that the debates have made a great deal of difference and 20 percent said they have made some difference in deciding who to vote for in the Governor's race. Seven in 10 say the gubernatorial debates have had very little (19%) or no effect (40%), they haven't seen, heard, or read about the debates, or they are uncertain about how the debates have affected their decisions (15%). These results are unchanged from the September survey.

"The Democratic and Republican candidates for Governor are having a series of debates. Some people learn about the debates from news reports as well as seeing or hearing them. So far, have the debates helped you a great deal, somewhat, very little, or not at all in deciding who to vote for in the Governor's race?"

(Likely Voters)	September	October
Great deal	7%	6%
Somewhat	22	20
Very little	19	19
Not at all	37	40
Don't know / Haven't seen, read, heard debates	15	15

U.S. Senate Race

Senator Barbara Boxer and State Treasurer Matt Fong remain in a close race for the U.S. Senate.

Among voters *most likely* to go to the polls in November, Boxer has 47 percent and Fong has 44 percent. One percent supports other candidates and 8 percent are still undecided. Since the September survey, the undecideds declined by 3 points, with support going about equally to Boxer and Fong.

Eight in 10 Democrats support Boxer, and eight in 10 Republicans favor Fong. Independents and other party members support Boxer over Fong (54% to 29%). One in 10 Democrats and independent and other party voters is undecided, and these voting blocks could very well decide the outcome of this close race.

Fong has a 23-point lead over Boxer in the Central Valley (56% to 23%). Boxer has more than a 10-point lead over Fong in the San Francisco Bay area (53% to 41%) and in the Los Angeles metropolitan area (52% to 39%). Latinos support Boxer over Fong by a three-to-one margin, while Fong has a slight edge among all other voters (48% to 43%). Women support Boxer over Fong (50% to 40%), while men favor Fong over Boxer (49% to 42%).

"If the election for the U.S. Senate were being held today, who would you vote for?"

(Likely Voters)	September	October
Barbara Boxer	45%	47%
Matt Fong	43	44
Someone else	1	1
Don't know	11	8

(Likely Voters) (October)	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>			<u>Ethnicity</u>	
	Dem	Rep	Other	LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Barbara Boxer	77%	12%	54%	52%	53%	33%	68%	43%
Matt Fong	12	83	29	39	41	56	22	48
Someone else	1	1	6	1	2	1	0	2
Don't know	10	4	11	8	4	10	10	7

Television Advertising for the U.S. Senate Race

About half the likely voters in California have now seen television commercials for the U.S. Senate candidates. When asked whose ads they have seen the most, 37 percent named Boxer and only 10 percent named Fong. A month ago, only two in 10 likely voters could recall seeing a television ad in the Senate race. Most of the gain has been for Boxer (11% to 37%), while Fong's numbers are virtually unchanged (7% to 10%). However, the overwhelming advantage Boxer has in recall of television ads has apparently not helped her to widen the lead in this close race with Fong. It is also worth noting that the likely voters are much more likely to recall seeing television ads for the Governor's race than for the U.S. Senate race (64% to 53%).

"In the past month, have you seen any television advertisements by the candidates for the U.S. Senate?" (If yes, "Whose ads have you seen the most?")

(Likely Voters)	October
YES	53%
Barbara Boxer	37
Matt Fong	10
Other answer	6
NO	47

Candidate Qualifications

Apparently, the release of the Starr Report and mounds of information on the White House scandal have not influenced voters' perceptions of the candidate qualities that matter most. Six in 10 likely voters continue to name the candidates' stand on issues as the qualification most important to them in voting for a candidate in statewide races. About two in 10 consider character as most important in both the Governor's race and U.S. Senate campaign. Fewer name the candidate's experience in office (13%) or political party (5%). Republicans (33%) and Central Valley voters (34%) are the most likely to name character, but more than half in these groups also say they value a candidate's stand on issues the most. Latinos name experience in office more than other voters (26% to 11%).

"People have different ideas about the qualifications they want when they vote for candidates for statewide office, such as Governor or U.S. Senator. Which of these is most important to you: (a) the candidate's experience, (b) the candidate's character, (c) the candidate's political party, or (d) the candidate's stands on the issues?"

(Likely Voters)	September	October
Experience	14%	13%
Character	18	22
Political party	5	5
Stands on the issues	61	58
Don't know	2	2

Clinton Scandal and Investigation

Two in three voters say that the White House scandal and Congressional investigation have not affected their preferences in the Governor's or the U.S. Senate race. Among all likely voters, slightly more say these events have inclined them to vote for Republican candidates than for Democratic candidates (18% to 14%). Along partisan lines, 36 percent of Republicans say these events have made them more inclined to vote for Republican candidates and 23 percent of Democrats say the events have made them more inclined to vote for Democratic candidates.

Seven in 10 voters say the scandal and investigation will not affect their likelihood of voting in November, while three in 10 say it would make them more inclined to vote. Again, Republicans have been more influenced: 37 percent of Republicans say these events will make them likely to vote, compared to 21 percent of Democrats.

"How do you think that the scandal involving President Clinton, and the ongoing Congressional investigation of his actions, will affect your voting for candidates for statewide office, such as Governor or U.S. Senator? Will these events make you more inclined to vote for Democratic candidates or more inclined to vote for Republican candidates, or won't they affect your decision on which candidates to vote for in November?"

(Likely Voters)	October
More inclined to vote Republican	18%
More inclined to vote Democrat	14
No difference	67
Don't know	1

(Likely Voters) (October)	Party			Region			Ethnicity	
	Dem	Rep	Other	LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
More inclined to vote Rep	3%	36%	13%	15%	16%	25%	10%	20%
More inclined to vote Dem	23	3	14	15	13	13	21	12
No difference	72	59	73	69	69	60	68	67
Don't know	2	2	0	1	2	2	1	1

"Do you think that the scandal involving President Clinton, and the ongoing Congressional investigation of his actions, will make you more inclined to vote, or less inclined to vote, or won't they affect your likelihood to vote in November?"

(Likely Voters)	October
More inclined	29%
Less inclined	1
No difference	69
Don't know	1

Proposition 1A: School Bond Issue

The \$9.2 billion school bond measure for new school construction and building repairs has strong support across parties and regions of the state. Two in three likely voters say they will vote for the bond measure to pay for construction costs in kindergarten through 12th grade public schools, community colleges, and public universities. Only 22 percent say they would vote against it, while 12 percent are undecided.

Three in four Democrats, more than half of Republicans, and more than six in 10 in the three major regions support Proposition 1A. Support is strongest among Latinos, but nearly two in three other voters would also vote yes on the bond measure.

The September survey also asked about support for Proposition 1A, but the wording of the question was different. The October survey question more closely follows the wording that will appear on the November ballot. Despite the difference in wording, the results in the September survey were virtually the same: 70 percent said they would vote for Proposition 1A, whereas 21 percent would vote against it and 9 percent were undecided.

In September, the strong support for Proposition 1A was fueled by the perception that the current level of state funding for public schools is inadequate. Two in three likely voters said that K-12 public education is not getting enough funding from the state. In the current survey, half said that higher education is not getting enough funding, about a quarter said it receives just enough, and fewer than one in 10 said it has more than enough money. The perceptions of funding for higher education appear to be helping rather than hurting the support for Proposition 1A.

"If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 1A?"

(Likely Voters)	October
Yes	66%
No	22
Don't know	12

(Likely Voters) (October)	Party			Region			Ethnicity	
	Dem	Rep	Other	LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Yes	76%	55%	69%	70%	65%	62%	79%	64%
No	13	33	21	22	22	21	17	23
Don't know	11	12	10	8	13	17	4	13

"Do you think that the current level of funding for California's community colleges and public universities is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?"

(Likely Voters)	October
More than enough	9%
Just enough	27
Not enough	51
Don't know	13

Proposition 8: The Public Schools Initiative

Fewer than half of likely voters support Proposition 8. Forty-three percent of likely voters would vote yes on the measure, whereas 38 percent would vote no and 19 percent are undecided. Proposition 8 draws a mixed response across political parties and regions of the state.

Support for this measure is down from the September survey. At that time, 70 percent of likely voters said they would support Proposition 8, when read a description of its proposals, such as providing funds to reduce class sizes, imposing new teacher credential requirements, establishing parent-teacher councils, and creating an office of Chief Inspector of Public Schools. One possible reason for the difference in these results is that (as for Proposition 1A) the question wording in the October survey more closely follows the wording that will appear on the November ballot, specifically describing the fiscal impacts of the measure, which include tens of millions of dollars for school districts.

Proposition 8's efforts to reduce class sizes and improve teacher quality were viewed very positively in the September survey. However, some of the other reforms called for in Proposition 8 are generating little enthusiasm. Only 38 percent said that efforts to increase parental involvement through parent-teacher councils will have a big effect on student learning. Only 12 percent said that creating a state office of Chief Inspector of Public Schools would make a big difference, 27 percent said a moderate difference, and 55 percent said it would make no difference.

" If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 8?"

(Likely Voters)	October
Yes	43%
No	38
Don't know	19

(Likely Voters) (October)	Party			Region			Ethnicity	
	Dem	Rep	Other	LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Yes	43%	42%	44%	45%	42%	39%	47%	42%
No	36	41	38	37	38	38	40	38
Don't know	21	17	18	18	20	23	13	20

"Proposition 8 attempts to increase parents' involvement in their children's schools by establishing parent-teacher councils. Do you think this would make a big difference, a moderate difference, or no difference in helping children learn reading, writing, and arithmetic?"

(Likely Voters)	October
Big difference	38%
Moderate difference	31
No difference	27
Don't know	4

Media Watch

Voters appear to be focusing more on the upcoming California elections. The number who are very closely or fairly closely following the state's election news has jumped 13 points since the September survey (54% to 67%) and is higher than at any time this year. (In the May survey, which was about a month before the June 2nd Primary, 61 percent of likely voters were attending to the news.) Still, one in three, even among likely voters, is not at all closely or not too closely following the election news this year. Moreover, only one in six is very closely following the election news in California.

Republicans are slightly more likely than Democrats or other voters to be tuned in to the election year news. San Francisco Bay area voters are a little less likely than others to be closely following the news. Among those who are likely to vote, there are no differences between Latinos and others.

Thirty-seven percent of likely voters give news organizations either excellent or good marks on reporting about the 1998 California elections. Four in 10 give them a fair rating, whereas about one in six give them poor marks. These ratings of news coverage are about the same as in the May and September surveys. The excellent and good ratings for news organizations have improved by 12 points since the April survey.

"How closely have you been following the news stories about the upcoming 1998 California elections?"

(Likely Voters)	April	May	Sept	Oct
Very closely	9%	13%	9%	15%
Fairly closely	43	48	45	52
Not too closely	39	32	36	26
Not at all closely	9	7	10	7

(Likely Voters) (October)	Party			Region			Ethnicity	
	Dem	Rep	Other	LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Very closely	12%	19%	13%	15%	10%	18%	15%	15%
Fairly closely	53	51	52	54	54	53	50	52
Not too closely	28	24	25	26	27	24	29	26
Not at all closely	7	6	10	5	9	5	6	7

"How would you rate the job that news organizations are doing in reporting about the 1998 California elections?"

(Likely Voters)	April	May	Sept	Oct
Excellent	3%	4%	4%	5%
Good	22	31	31	32
Fair	46	42	43	42
Poor	24	18	17	18
Don't know	5	5	5	3

California Policy Issues

Most Important Issue

When asked what one issue they would most like to hear the candidates for statewide office talk about in the remaining weeks of the campaign, three in 10 named schools. No other topic was mentioned by more than 10 percent of the residents. Crime, jobs and the economy, taxes, the state budget, and poverty were each mentioned by more than two percent.

The issues of abortion, the death penalty, gun control and the three strikes law have been common topics in the television commercials and the debates during this statewide election. However, very few say these are the issues that the candidates should focus on between now and November 3rd. Moreover, very few say they want to hear the candidates for Governor and U.S. Senator talk about the White House scandal or about "character"—their own or their opponents'.

The results are the same when we consider the responses of those who are most likely to vote in November. They are most likely to want the candidates to talk about education, followed by issues such as crime, jobs and the economy, taxes and the state budget. Very few of the likely voters mention topics such as abortion, the three strikes law, the death penalty, the candidate's character, the White House scandal, or the candidate's past record.

"Which one issue would you most like to hear the candidates for statewide office, such as Governor and U.S. Senate, talk about between now and the November 3rd election?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Schools	31%	33%	34%	27%	35%	29%
Crime	8	8	6	10	7	8
Jobs, Economy	6	6	5	6	5	6
Taxes	6	5	5	7	5	6
State Budget	4	3	4	4	1	4
Poverty	3	3	3	3	3	3
Abortion	2	2	3	3	1	3
Immigration	2	2	2	2	3	2
Environment	2	2	2	1	1	2
Health Care	2	1	4	2	2	2
Drugs	2	2	1	1	3	1
Other	12	13	16	12	10	12
Don't know	20	20	15	22	24	22

Mood of the State

The mood of the state today is more positive than it has been all year, despite stock market turbulence, political turmoil in Washington, and economic crises abroad. In the current survey, 62 percent say that things are going in the right direction while 30 percent think that things are going in the wrong direction in California. The positive sentiments today are higher than in the April survey (56%), the May survey (56%), and the September survey (57%).

The mood does vary across the state's major regions. San Francisco Bay area residents are feeling less positive (57%) than those living in the Los Angeles metropolitan area (64%) and the Central Valley (64%). Following a trend apparent in the September survey, Latinos are more likely than other residents to express optimism about the way things are going.

"Do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Right direction	62%	64%	57%	64%	66%	61%
Wrong direction	30	29	36	29	29	30
Don't know	8	7	7	7	5	9

Economic Outlook

Most Californians expect the current good economic times to continue into next year.

Half expect economic conditions to be the same in the next 12 months. Of those who expect change, half think the economy will be even better while half expect it to be worse than it is today. People in the San Francisco Bay area are the most likely to express pessimism about the economy next year. In the September survey, people in the San Francisco Bay area were the most convinced that the Asian financial crisis will have at least some effect on the state's economy. Their concerns about the economy may reflect reports about the effects of the crisis on Bay Area hi-tech firms. Once again, Latinos have a more positive outlook about the state than other residents.

"In the next 12 months, do you expect economic conditions in California to get better, get worse, or stay the same?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Better	25%	29%	20%	24%	36%	22%
Worse	24	22	30	23	18	26
Same	48	46	49	50	45	49
Don't know	3	3	1	3	1	3

California’s Initiative Process

Californians have a love-hate relationship with the citizens' initiative process. While they value it for addressing important public policy issues, they readily admit to its problems and shortcomings.

Seven in 10 *residents* agree that citizens' initiatives bring up important public policy issues that the Governor and State Legislature have not adequately addressed. However, as a signal of their lukewarm endorsement, less than one in four strongly agree with this view, while half agree only somewhat that initiatives tackle important issues. Among *voters*, 75 percent agree that initiatives deal with important public policy issues, with 22 percent saying they strongly agree. There are no differences across parties. This perception is similar across the state's regions.

Eight in 10 residents think that the ballot wording for citizens' initiatives is often too complicated for voters to understand what will happen if an initiative passes. Nearly half strongly agree with this criticism. Among voters, 81 percent think the wording is often too confusing, with 46 percent strongly holding this view. There are no differences between Democrats and Republicans or across major regions of the state. Latinos are less likely than others to see ballot wording as a problem with the citizen's initiative process.

Eight in 10 residents believe that citizens' initiatives usually represent the concerns of organized special interests rather than the concerns of average California residents. One in three strongly hold this negative view, while about half somewhat agree with this perspective. Among voters, 81 percent believe that initiatives more typically reflect special interest groups, with 36 percent strongly agreeing. There are no differences across regions of the state. Once again, Latinos are less likely than others to be highly critical of the initiative process.

"Citizens' initiatives bring up important public policy issues that the Governor and State Legislature have not adequately addressed."

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Strongly agree	22%	23%	23%	21%	20%	23%
Somewhat agree	51	48	48	54	51	51
Somewhat disagree	16	16	17	14	16	16
Strongly disagree	6	8	7	5	9	6
Don't know	5	5	5	6	4	4

"The ballot wording for citizens' initiatives is often too complicated and confusing for voters to understand what happens if the initiative passes."

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Strongly agree	44%	43%	43%	46%	38%	46%
Somewhat agree	35	35	37	33	36	35
Somewhat disagree	11	11	11	12	13	11
Strongly disagree	6	7	6	5	9	5
Don't know	4	4	3	4	4	3

"Citizens' initiatives usually reflect the concerns of organized special interests rather than the concerns of average California residents."

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Strongly agree	34%	34%	35%	30%	29%	36%
Somewhat agree	44	45	42	45	47	43
Somewhat disagree	12	13	12	12	13	12
Strongly disagree	6	6	7	8	8	6
Don't know	4	2	4	5	3	3

Initiative Reform

Californians strongly favor involving the Legislature in drafting citizens' initiatives for the ballot. However, they are divided about allowing the Legislature to change initiatives once they are passed. These reforms were recently recommended by the California Constitution Revision Commission.

By a two-to-one margin, Californians favor allowing the Legislature to hold hearings on an initiative and to adopt changes once the initiative has qualified for the ballot. This proposal would call for having the measure submitted to the voters as revised by the Legislature, if the proponents agree. Most voters (63%), including both Democrats (66%) and Republicans (61%) favor this initiative reform. Six in 10 approve and three in 10 disapprove. There are no differences in support for this initiative reform across regions.

Forty-four percent of Californians would favor allowing the Legislature to amend initiatives after they have been in effect for six years, but 49 percent are opposed. Among voters, a slim majority (51%), including 50 percent of Democrats and 53 percent of Republicans oppose this proposal for Legislative review. There are no differences across regions. Latinos favor this initiative reform by a 10-point margin, while others oppose it by a 10-point margin.

"How do you feel about these proposals for initiative reform?"

"After an initiative has qualified for the ballot, the Legislature would have a short time period to hold hearings on the initiative and to adopt technical or clarifying changes. If the proponents of the initiative agree, the measure would be submitted to the voters as revised by the Legislature.
Do you favor oppose this initiative reform?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Favor	63%	62%	61%	63%	65%	62%
Oppose	29	30	30	28	26	30
Don't know	8	8	9	9	9	8

"Do you favor or oppose allowing the Legislature, with gubernatorial approval, to amend initiatives after they have been in effect for six years?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Favor	44%	44%	39%	47%	52%	42%
Oppose	49	50	54	46	42	52
Don't know	7	6	7	7	6	6

Political Trends

Job Performance

Californians continue to give President Clinton high ratings for his job performance. Those ratings are unchanged since the September survey, despite the release of the Starr report, videotapes of Clinton's grand jury testimony, and debate in Congress over holding impeachment hearings.

Six in 10 say Clinton is doing an excellent or good job as President, while one in five say he is doing a fair job. These ratings are similar to the April, May, and September surveys. One in five rates his job performance as poor.

Clinton's job ratings vary across voter groups. Eighty-one percent of Democrats say he is doing an excellent or good job in office, 13 percent rate him as fair, and only 6 percent say he is doing poorly. Sixty percent of independents and other party voters give him excellent or good marks, 22 percent say fair, and 18 percent rate him as poor. Among Republicans, 27 percent say he is doing an excellent or good job, 25 percent a fair job, and 48 percent think he is doing a poor job in office.

The U.S. Congress has lower job performance ratings than the President. Thirty-nine percent think the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives are doing an excellent or good job, 40 percent rate them as fair, 19 percent as poor, and 2 percent are uncertain. Compared to the May survey, positive ratings of Congress are up by 6 points.

The ratings of Congress also vary by political party. Among Republicans, 44 percent say Congress is doing an excellent or good job, 42 percent fair, 12 percent poor, and 2 percent undecided. Among Democrats, 35 percent rate the Congress as excellent or good, 38 percent as fair, 25 percent as poor, and 2 percent are unsure. For independents and other party voters, 36 percent say they are doing an excellent or good job, 43 percent fair, 20 percent poor, and 1 percent are undecided.

"How do you rate the job performance of ..."

(All Adults)	President Clinton			Congress	
	May	Sept	Oct	May	Oct
Excellent	21%	22%	26%	3%	5%
Good	37	36	34	30	34
Fair	25	21	19	49	40
Poor	16	20	21	15	19
Don't know	1	1	0	3	2

Divided Government

California currently has a divided government, with a Republican governor and a Democratic-controlled Legislature. Some observers say that divided government provides checks and balances, while others argue that it causes political gridlock in Sacramento. California residents are divided about the benefits of having the two parties sharing the responsibilities of running the state government.

Thirty-nine percent say that it is better when the same party is in control of the executive and legislative branches of state government, whereas 36 percent say that it is better when the Governor and the majority in the State Legislature are from different parties. One in four say they are not sure or it depends upon the circumstances. There are no differences across regions. Latinos are more likely than others to favor having one party in control.

Democrats are a little more likely to think that it is better for the same party rather than different parties to hold the Governor's office and the State Legislature (41% to 35%). Republicans are evenly divided (37% to 35%), while independents and other party members favor having different parties rather than the same party in charge of the two branches of government (38% to 32%).

"Do you think it is better for California to have a Governor who comes from the same political party that controls the California Legislature or do you think it is better to have a Governor from one political party and the California Legislature controlled by another?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Better when same party	39%	39%	38%	39%	47%	36%
Better when different party	36	36	36	34	36	36
Don't know, it depends	25	25	26	27	17	28

Term Limits

Californians overwhelmingly support term limits in California. Two in three say term limits are good and only one in six says they are bad for the state. One in five says it makes no difference. Most Republicans (77%), Democrats (63%), and independent voters (62%) believe that term limits are good. Latinos (58%) are less likely than others to say they are good for California. There is a strong endorsement for term limits across all regions of the state.

"The California Legislature has operated under term limits since 1990, meaning that members of the State Senate and State Assembly are limited in the number of terms they can hold their elected office. Do you think that term limits is a good thing or a bad thing for California, or does it make no difference?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Good thing	65%	63%	64%	66%	58%	67%
Bad thing	14	13	18	13	8	16
No difference	19	22	18	19	32	15
Don't know	2	2	0	2	2	2

Trust in Government

Many Californians believe that government is not attentive to their needs and that having elections does not make government officials more responsive to their constituents.

Fewer than one in six thinks that the government pays a great deal of attention to what the people think when it decides what to do. Half say the government pays only some attention, while three in 10 say that it does not pay much attention to the people. Californians are more likely than people in the rest of the country to say that their government does not pay much attention to them when it is deciding what to do. One in three Latinos also hold this dim view of government. Independent voters (34%) are somewhat more likely than Republicans (25%) or Democrats (28%) to feel that government does not pay much attention to their views.

As for how much attention elections make government pay to what people think, fewer than half of Californians say a "good deal" of attention, about one-third say "some," and one in five say "not much." The findings in California are similar to results in the rest of the nation. Latinos are as likely as others to say that having elections causes the government to pay only some or not much attention. Fewer than half of the Democrats (45%) and Republicans (48%), and an even smaller proportion of independents (35%), think that having elections makes the government pay attention to their constituents' wishes.

Many Californians feel powerless when it comes to events occurring within their governments. Most also believe that they lack influence over the people holding public office.

Californians are somewhat less likely than people in the rest of the country to believe that public officials don't care what they think, yet more than half still hold this view. Latinos have the same attitudes as other Californians. More than half of the Democrats (52%), Republicans (53%), and independent voters (55%) believe that public officials don't care much what people like themselves think.

Almost half say that people like themselves don't have any say about what the government does. Latinos hold the same views as other Californians. Nationally, slightly more hold this negative view of government. Democrats (44%), Republicans (47%), and independent voters (43%) are equally likely to believe that they have no say about what the government does.

"Over the years, how much attention do you feel the government pays to what the people think when it decides what to do—a good deal, some, or not much?"

	<u>All Adults</u>		
	U.S.*	California	California Latinos
Good deal	15%	15%	15%
Some	62	54	51
Not much	22	30	33
Don't know	1	1	1

*Source: National Election Studies conducted by the University of Michigan in 1996.

"How much do you feel that having elections makes the government pay attention to what the people think—a good deal, some, or not much?"

	<u>All Adults</u>		
	U.S.*	California	California Latinos
Good deal	42%	44%	42%
Some	42	37	37
Not much	16	19	21

*Source: National Election Studies conducted by the University of Michigan in 1996.

"Public officials don't care much what people like me think. Do you ..."

	<u>All Adults</u>		
	U.S.*	California	California Latinos
Agree	62%	54%	53%
Neither agree nor disagree	14	5	6
Disagree	24	40	40
Don't know	0	1	1

*Source: National Election Studies conducted by the University of Michigan in 1996.

"People like me don't have any say about what the government does. Do you ..."

	<u>All Adults</u>		
	U.S.*	California	California Latinos
Agree	53%	47%	47%
Neither agree nor disagree	9	5	5
Disagree	38	47	47
Don't know	0	1	1

*Source: National Election Studies conducted by the University of Michigan in 1996.

Affirmative Action Programs

Two years ago, voters passed Proposition 209 and eliminated affirmative action programs in state and local government. Today, most Californians want affirmative action programs to end or be phased out. However, they strongly favor minority outreach programs and helping minorities compete for college admissions.

One in four say that affirmative action programs should end now, three in 10 want them phased out, and about four in 10 want affirmative action programs to continue. The preference for ending affirmative action programs now is stronger in California than in the rest of the nation. However, six in 10 Latinos want affirmative action programs to continue. Most Republicans want to end affirmative action now (43%), while fewer independents (23%), and only a small number of Democrats (15%) hold this view.

Support for minority outreach programs is about the same in California and the nation. Six in 10 Californians favor, but one in three opposes, having employers and colleges use outreach programs to hire minority workers and find minority students. Three in four Latinos favor minority outreach for employment and higher education. Democrats (67%) and independents (62%) overwhelmingly support minority outreach programs, while a majority of Republicans (52%) are against them.

Again mirroring national sentiment, two in three California residents support special educational programs in high schools and colleges to help minorities compete for college admissions. One in three opposes such programs. Latinos (82%), Democrats (74%), and independents (65%) overwhelmingly support minority outreach programs for college admissions, while a majority of Republicans oppose them (52%).

"What do you think should happen to affirmative action programs—should they be ended now, should they be phased out over the next few years, or should affirmative action programs be continued for the foreseeable future?"

	<u>All Adults</u>		
	U.S.*	California	California Latinos
Ended now	12%	25%	12%
Phased out	40	31	20
Continued	41	37	61
Don't know	7	7	7

*Source: National survey conducted by CBS/*New York Times* in December, 1997.

"Do you favor or oppose employers and colleges using outreach programs to hire minority workers and find minority students?"

	<u>All Adults</u>		
	U.S.*	California	California Latinos
Favor	60%	59%	75%
Oppose	27	35	20
Don't know	13	6	5

*Source: National survey conducted by CBS/*New York Times* in December, 1997.

"Do you favor or oppose high schools and colleges providing special educational programs to assist minorities in competing for college admissions?"

	<u>All Adults</u>		
	U.S.*	California	California Latinos
Favor	63%	64%	82%
Oppose	28	33	16
Don't know	9	3	2

*Source: National survey conducted by CBS/*New York Times* in December, 1997.

Social and Economic Trends

Consumer Confidence

Even in the midst of stock market declines and fears of a worldwide economic slowdown, California consumer confidence has remained stable over the last month.

In this survey, 34 percent report being better off financially than they were a year ago, 11 percent are worse off, and 54 percent are in about the same situation. The percentage of people who believe they are better off than they were a year ago is about the same as in the September survey and is down three points from the April survey. San Francisco Bay area residents are the most likely to say that they are better off now than last year. Latinos are a little more likely than others to say their finances have improved since last year.

Looking ahead a year, 44 percent think they will be better off, 6 percent worse off, 47 percent think they will be in the same situation, and 3 percent are uncertain. The percentage of Californians who expect to be better off has increased by 4 points since last month and is at the same level as in the April survey. Latinos are much more optimistic than others about their financial prospects for next year.

Democrats (40%) and independent voters (35%) are more likely than Republicans (28%) to say that their finances have improved since last year. Democrats (48%) and independent voters (46%) are more likely than Republicans (34%) to say that their finances will get better in the next year. Republicans are the most likely to report that their finances are unchanged in the past year and will be the same over the next year.

"Would you say that you and your family are financially better off or worse off or just about the same as you were a year ago?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Better off	34%	34%	41%	30%	38%	33%
Worse off	11	13	8	11	11	12
Same	54	53	51	59	51	55
Don't know	1	0	0	0	0	0

"Do you think that a year from now you and your family will be financially better off or worse off or just about the same as now?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Better off	44%	49%	42%	40%	59%	39%
Worse off	6	6	7	8	4	7
Same	47	43	48	50	35	51
Don't know	3	2	3	2	2	3

Racial and Ethnic Change

Two in three California residents see an appreciable amount of change in the racial and ethnic composition of their region in recent years. One in three say that the diversity of their region has changed a lot; three in ten say it has changed somewhat. Residents of the Los Angeles metropolitan region are the most likely to perceive a lot of change. Latinos are less likely than other residents to see a lot or some racial and ethnic change.

Among those who have noticed change, most say that it has made no difference for their region. The rest are about evenly split among those who see change as good (22%) or as bad (20%). In the San Francisco Bay area, good scores somewhat higher than bad (25% to 18%). Latinos overwhelmingly rate the change as good rather than bad (30% to 13%), whereas others remain divided on this issue.

Democrats are more likely to say that racial and ethnic change has been good rather than bad (26% to 17%), independent voters are evenly divided (19% to 19%), and Republicans view racial and ethnic change as more of a bad thing than a good thing for their regions (26% to 14%).

Most say that racial and ethnic groups in their region are getting along "somewhat well." About one in five describe race relations as going very well, while one in five say that race relations are going badly. Those living in the San Francisco Bay area are the most likely to say that racial and ethnic groups are getting along very well. Central Valley residents are the most likely to say that race relations are going badly.

Six in 10 residents think that it is better if racial and ethnic groups change and blend into the larger society. Three in 10 say it is better if different racial and ethnic groups maintain their distinct cultures. Even though Latinos are more likely than others to favor groups maintaining their own cultures, 55 percent favor change. Democrats (32%) and independent voters (33%) are more likely than Republicans (21%) to favor groups maintaining their own cultures. There are no differences by region.

"In the past few years, do you think the racial and ethnic makeup of your region has been changing a lot, somewhat, very little, or not at all?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
A lot	36%	41%	34%	36%	31%	38%
Somewhat	30	29	30	30	29	30
Very little	20	19	23	18	23	19
Not at all	12	10	11	13	16	11
Don't know	2	1	2	3	1	2

Of those who noticed changes: "Would you say that the change in the ethnic and racial makeup is good or bad for your region, or does it make no difference?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Good	22%	23%	25%	20%	30%	20%
Bad	20	22	18	21	13	22
No difference	55	53	55	56	57	55
Don't know	3	2	2	3	0	3

"Overall, how would you say that the racial and ethnic groups in your region are getting along these days—very well, somewhat well, somewhat badly, or very badly?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Very well	21%	19%	28%	20%	18%	23%
Somewhat well	58	59	55	54	62	56
Somewhat badly	15	15	14	18	15	15
Very badly	4	5	3	6	4	4
Don't know	2	2	0	2	1	2

"Which of these views about racial and ethnic groups in your region today is closest to yours? (a) It is better if different racial and ethnic groups change so that they blend into the larger society as in the idea of a melting pot. (b) It is better if different racial and ethnic groups maintain their distinct cultures."

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Better if groups change	61%	62%	60%	58%	55%	61%
Better if groups maintain cultures	29	29	29	30	35	27
Other answer	6	5	6	7	4	6
Don't know	4	4	5	5	6	6

Civic Involvement

Californians are less involved than U.S. residents generally in political activities and more active in volunteer work. Very few residents are highly active in work on local, state, or national issues.

A survey conducted by the University of Virginia for the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) in 1996 found that 28 percent of Americans were involved in political activities. In California, 17 percent have been engaged in political activities, with just 2 percent being very involved with political parties, candidates, or election campaigns. Rates of participation are equally low across regions and ethnic and racial groups.

In the national survey for AARP in 1996, 53 percent reported involvement in volunteer work. In California, 61 percent report working in volunteer activities, with 21 percent saying they are very involved. There are no differences across regions of California. Latinos are less likely than others to be involved in volunteer activities.

As for involvement in local and neighborhood issues, California statistics are very similar to the national trends in the survey for AARP. Four in 10 Californians work on local issues, but only 7 percent say they are very involved in solving neighborhood problems. Two in 10 are working on public issues at the state or national level, although only 3 percent are very involved in such efforts. Central Valley residents are a little more likely to be somewhat engaged in local issues, while San Francisco Bay area residents are a little more involved than others in state and national issues.

Republicans (21%) and Democrats (20%) are more likely than independent voters (13%) to be involved in political work. Republicans (69%) are more likely to volunteer than either Democrats (61%) or independent voters (66%). Level of involvement with local or state and national issues does not differ by political party.

"Are you very involved, somewhat involved, or not involved in ..."

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
<i>Working on local issues and neighborhood problems</i>						
Very involved	7%	6%	8%	6%	6%	7%
Somewhat involved	34	32	33	38	32	34
Not involved	59	62	59	56	62	59
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Working on public issues or problems at the state or national level</i>						
Very involved	3%	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%
Somewhat involved	18	18	23	17	19	18
Not involved	78	78	74	79	77	79
Don't know	1	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Volunteer work and charity for which you are not paid</i>						
Very involved	21%	22%	23%	19%	18%	22%
Somewhat involved	40	40	41	40	35	42
Not involved	39	38	36	41	47	36
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Political activities related to political parties, candidates, or election campaigns</i>						
Very involved	2%	3%	1%	3%	2%	2%
Somewhat involved	15	15	14	17	15	15
Not involved	83	82	85	80	83	83
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0

News Sources

Californians are considerably more likely to get their local news from television than from a newspaper.

Six in 10 say that they watch the local news on television every day. One-third watch television news sometime during the week, while nine percent rarely or never watch a television news program. There are no differences by region. Latinos are slightly less likely to watch local television news on a daily basis.

In contrast, only 45 percent of California residents say they read a local newspaper every day. One in three reads a newspaper sometime during the week, while 25 percent either rarely or never reads a newspaper. Among Latinos, 31 percent read a newspaper every day, compared with half of other residents. There are no differences by region.

Registered voters are also more likely to watch local news on television every day rather than read a newspaper on a daily basis (62% to 50%). Republicans (55%) and Democrats (51%) are more likely than independent voters (38%) to read a newspaper every day. Democrats (65%) and Republicans (62%) are also more likely than independent voters (55%) to watch local news on television on a daily basis.

Comparing the national data collected in the AARP survey with our results, we see that Californians are less likely than the people in the nation as a whole to read a newspaper every day (45% to 51%), while they are only slightly less likely to watch local television news on a daily basis (59% to 62%).

"How often do you ..."

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
<i>Watch local news on television</i>						
Every day	59%	59%	58%	61%	53%	61%
A few times a week	24	25	21	23	32	21
Once a week	8	9	8	6	7	8
Less than once a week	4	4	6	5	5	4
Never	5	3	7	5	2	5
Don't know	0	0	0	0	1	1
<i>Read the local newspaper</i>						
Every day	45%	45%	47%	45%	31%	50%
A few times a week	21	21	21	21	25	20
Once a week	13	13	14	14	17	12
Less than once a week	8	9	7	6	10	7
Never	13	12	10	14	17	11
Don't know	0	0	1	0	0	0

Survey Methodology

The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, senior fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California. The findings of this survey, the fourth in the series, are based on a telephone survey of 2,005 California adult residents interviewed from October 1 to October 6, 1998. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights, using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers, ensuring that both listed and unlisted telephone numbers were called. All telephone exchanges in California were eligible for calling. Telephone numbers in the survey sample were called up to four times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing using the "last birthday method" to avoid biases in age and gender. Each interview took an average of 20 minutes to complete. Interviewing was conducted in English or Spanish, as needed.

We used recent U.S. Census and state figures to compare the demographic characteristics of the survey sample with characteristics of California's adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to U.S. Census and state figures. The survey data in this report were statistically weighted to account for any demographic differences.

The sampling error for the total sample of 2,005 adults is +/- 2 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for subgroups is larger. The sampling error for the 1,574 voters is +/- 2.5% and for the 793 likely voters is +/- 3.5%. Sampling error is just 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.

Throughout the report, we refer to three geographic regions. "LA Metro" includes Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. "SF Bay Area" includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma counties. "Central Valley" includes Butte, Colusa, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba counties. These three regions were chosen for analysis because they account for approximately 85 percent of the state population; moreover, the growth of the Central Valley has given it increasing political significance.

We contrast the results for Latinos with results for "other" ethnic and racial groups. Latinos account for about 24 percent of the state's adult population and constitute one of the fastest growing voter groups. The sample sizes for the African American and Asian subgroups are not large enough for separate statistical analysis. Most of the "other" responses are non-Hispanic whites. We also contrast the opinions of Democrats and Republicans with "other" registered voters. The "other" category includes nonaffiliated voters and members of other political parties.

In some cases we compare the PPIC Statewide Survey responses to responses recorded in national surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center in 1998, by CBS/*New York Times* in 1997, by the University of Michigan (National Election Studies) in 1996, and by the University of Virginia for the American Association of Retired Persons in 1996. In other cases we discuss differences between 1994 and 1998; the earlier data come from surveys of California voters conducted during by Mark Baldassare for KCAL-TV News in Los Angeles and the California Business Roundtable.

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: THE CHANGING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE OF CALIFORNIA
OCTOBER 1-6, 1998
2,005 CALIFORNIA ADULT RESIDENTS; ENGLISH AND SPANISH
MARGIN OF ERROR +/- 2% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE

[Responses recorded for first 15 questions are from likely voters. All other responses are from all adults.]

First, I have a few questions about the November 3rd General Election.

1. If the election for Governor were being held today, who would you vote for? (*rotate names, then ask "or someone else"*)

- 49% Gray Davis, a Democrat
- 41 Dan Lungren, a Republican
- 1 or someone else (specify)
- 9 don't know

2. In the past month, have you seen any television advertisements by the candidates for Governor? (*if yes, whose ads have you seen the most?*)

- 29% yes, Gray Davis
- 19 yes, Dan Lungren
- 16 yes, other answer
- 36 don't know

3. The Democratic and Republican candidates for Governor are having a series of debates. Some people learn about the debates from news reports as well as seeing or hearing them. So far, have the debates helped you a great deal, somewhat, very little, or not at all in deciding who to vote for in the Governor's race?

- 6% great deal
- 20 somewhat
- 19 very little
- 40 not at all
- 15 haven't seen, read, or heard debates
- 0 don't know

4. Next, if the election for the U.S. Senate were being held today, who would you vote for? (*rotate names, then ask "or someone else"*)

- 47% Barbara Boxer, a Democrat
- 44 Matt Fong, a Republican
- 1 or someone else (specify)
- 8 don't know

5. In the past month, have you seen any television advertisements by the candidates for the U.S. Senate? (*if yes, whose ads have you seen the most?*)

- 37% yes, Barbara Boxer
- 10 yes, Matt Fong
- 6 yes, other answer
- 47 no
- 0 don't know

6. On another topic, people have different ideas about the qualifications they want when they vote for candidates for statewide office, such as Governor or U.S. Senator. Which of these is most important to you? Would it be ... (*rotate*)

- 13% the candidate's experience
- 22 the candidate's character
- 5 the candidate's political party
- 58 the candidate's stands on the issues
- 0 other
- 2 don't know, it depends

7. Do you think that the scandal involving President Clinton, and the ongoing congressional investigation of his actions, will make you more inclined to vote or less inclined to vote, or won't they affect your likelihood to vote in November?

- 29% more inclined to vote
- 1 less inclined to vote
- 69 won't affect voting
- 1 don't know, it depends

8. How do you think that the scandal involving President Clinton, and the ongoing congressional investigation of his actions, will affect your voting for candidates for statewide office, such as Governor or U.S. Senator? Will these events make you more inclined to vote for Democratic candidates or more inclined to vote for Republican candidates, or won't they affect your decision on which candidates to vote for in November?

- 18% more inclined to vote Republican
- 14 more inclined to vote Democrat
- 67 no difference
- 1 don't know, it depends

9. On another topic, Proposition 1A on the November ballot is a 9.2 billion dollar bond issue that will provide funding for necessary education facilities for at least four years for class size reduction, to relieve overcrowding and accommodate student enrollment growth, to repair older schools, and for wiring and cabling for education technology. Funds will also be used to upgrade and build new classrooms in community colleges and public universities. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on proposition 1A?

66% yes
22 no
12 don't know

10. Do you think that the current level of funding for California's community colleges and public universities is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?

9% more than enough
27 just enough
51 not enough
13 don't know

11. On another topic, Proposition 8, the Public Schools Initiative on the November ballot, establishes permanent class-size-reduction funding for school districts that establish parent-teacher councils, requires testing for teacher credentialing, and pupil suspension for drug possession. This will cost up to 60 million dollars in new state programs, offset in part by existing funds. Annual costs to school districts are potentially in the high tens of millions of dollars. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 8?

43% yes
38 no
19 don't know

12. Proposition 8 would create a state office of Chief Inspector of Public Schools, which would report each year on the quality of public K-12 schools. Do you think this would make a big difference, a moderate difference, or no difference in helping children learn reading, writing, and arithmetic?

12% big difference
27 moderate difference
55 no difference
6 don't know

13. Proposition 8 attempts to increase parents' involvement in their children's schools by establishing parent-teacher councils. Do you think this would make a big difference, a moderate difference, or no difference in helping children learn reading, writing, and arithmetic?

38% big difference
31 moderate difference
27 no difference
4 don't know

14. On another topic: so far, how closely have you been following the news stories about the upcoming 1998 California elections?

15% very closely
52 fairly closely
26 not too closely
7 not at all closely

15. And how would you rate the job that news organizations are doing in reporting about the 1998 California elections?

5% excellent
32 good
42 fair
18 poor
3 don't know

16. Next, some questions about the state. Which one issue would you most like to hear the candidates for statewide office, such as Governor and U.S. Senator, talk about between now and the November 3rd election? (*code don't read*)

31 schools, education
8 crime, gangs
6 jobs, the economy
6 taxes
4 state budget, finance
3 poverty, the poor, homeless, welfare
2 immigration, illegal immigration
2 drugs
2 environment, pollution
2 abortion
2 health care, HMOs
12 other (specify)
20 don't know

17. And do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

62% right direction
30 wrong direction
8 don't know

18. What about the next 12 months? Do you expect economic conditions in California to get better, get worse, or stay the same?

25% better
24 worse
48 same
3 don't know

Next, we are interested in your opinions about the citizens' initiatives that appear on the state ballot as propositions. Do you agree or disagree with these statements? (*rotate questions 19-21*)

19. Citizens' initiatives bring up important public policy issues that the Governor and State Legislature have not adequately addressed. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree?

22% strongly agree
51 somewhat agree
16 somewhat disagree
6 strongly disagree
5 don't know

20. The ballot wording for citizens' initiatives is often too complicated and confusing for voters to understand what happens if the initiative passes. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree?

44% strongly agree
35 somewhat agree
11 somewhat disagree
6 strongly disagree
4 don't know

21. Citizens' initiatives usually reflect the concerns of organized special interests rather than the concerns of average California residents. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree?

34% strongly agree
44 somewhat agree
12 somewhat disagree
6 strongly disagree
4 don't know

22. How do you feel about these proposals for initiative reform: After an initiative has qualified for the ballot, the Legislature would have a short time period to hold hearings on the initiative and to adopt technical or clarifying changes. If the proponents of the initiative agree, the measure would be submitted to the voters as revised by the Legislature. Do you favor or oppose this initiative reform?

63% favor
29 oppose
8 don't know

23. And do you favor or oppose allowing the Legislature, with the Governor's approval, to amend initiatives after they have been in effect for six years?

44% favor
49 oppose
7 don't know

24. On another topic, how do you rate the job performance of President Bill Clinton at this time?

26% excellent
34 good
19 fair
21 poor
0 don't know

25. How do you rate the job performance of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives at this time?

5% excellent
34 good
40 fair
19 poor
2 don't know

26. On another topic, do you think it is better for California to have a Governor who comes from the same political party that controls the California Legislature or do you think it is better to have a Governor from one political party and the California Legislature controlled by another?

39% better when same party
36 better when different party
25 don't know, it depends

27. The California Legislature has operated under term limits since 1990, meaning that members of the State Senate and State Assembly are limited in the number of terms they can hold their elected office. Do you think that term limits is a good thing or a bad thing for California, or does it make no difference?

65% good thing
14 bad thing
19 no difference
2 don't know

Now, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with these statements.

28. People like me don't have any say about what the government does. Do you ...

47% agree
6 neither agree nor disagree
47 disagree
0 don't know

29. Public officials don't care much what people like me think. Do you ...

54% agree
5 neither agree nor disagree
40 disagree
1 don't know

30. How much do you feel that having elections makes the government pay attention to what the people think—a good deal, some, or not much?

44% good deal
37 some
19 not much
0 don't know

31. And over the years, how much attention do you feel the government pays to what the people think when it decides what to do—a good deal, some, or not much?

15% good deal
54 some
30 not much
1 don't know

32. Now, a few questions about affirmative action programs in hiring, promoting, and college admissions. First, what do you think should happen to affirmative action programs—should they be ended now, should they be phased out over the next few years, or should affirmative action programs be continued for the foreseeable future?

25% ended now
31 phased out
37 continued for future
7 don't know

33. Do you favor or oppose employers and colleges using outreach programs to hire minority workers and find minority students?

59% favor
35 oppose
6 don't know

34. Do you favor or oppose high schools and colleges providing special educational programs to assist minorities in competing for college admissions?

64% favor
33 oppose
3 don't know

35. On another topic, some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain you are registered to vote in the precinct or election district where you now live or haven't you been able to register to vote yet? (*If yes, are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party or independent?*)

37% yes, Democrat
30 yes, Republican
14 yes, independent or other party
19 no, not registered (*skip q. 36*)

36. Some people who plan to vote can't always get around to it on election day. With your own personal daily schedule in mind, are you absolutely certain to vote, will you probably vote, are the chances about 50-50, less than 50-50, or don't you think you will vote in the California election on November 3rd?

78% certain to vote
11 probably vote
8 50-50 chance
1 less than 50-50 chance
1 don't think will vote
1 don't know

37. Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in politics?

- 21% a great deal
- 49 fair amount
- 24 only a little
- 5 none
- 1 don't know

38. How often do you watch local news on television?

- 59% every day
- 24 a few times a week
- 8 once a week
- 4 less than once a week
- 5 never
- 0 don't know

39. How often do you read the local newspaper?

- 45% every day
- 21 a few times a week
- 13 once a week
- 8 less than once a week
- 13 never
- 0 don't know

40. How often would you say you vote—always, nearly always, part of the time, seldom, or never?

- 50% always
- 25 nearly always
- 10 part of the time
- 5 seldom
- 9 never
- 1 other
- 0 don't know

41. On another topic: as far as your own situation, would you say you and your family are financially better off or worse off or just about the same as you were a year ago?

- 34% better off
- 11 worse off
- 54 same
- 1 don't know

42. Now, looking ahead, do you think that a year from now you and your family will be financially better off or worse off or just about the same as now?

- 44% better off
- 6 worse off
- 47 same
- 3 don't know

Now, some questions about the region of the state you live in.

43. In the past few years, do you think the racial and ethnic makeup of your region has been changing a lot, somewhat, very little, or not at all?

- 36% a lot
- 30 somewhat
- 20 very little
- 12 not at all (*skip q. 44*)
- 2 don't know (*skip q. 44*)

44. Overall, would you say that the change in the ethnic and racial makeup is good or bad for your region or does it make no difference?

- 22% good
- 20 bad
- 55 no difference
- 3 don't know

45. Overall, how would you say that the racial and ethnic groups in your region are getting along these days—very well, somewhat well, somewhat badly, or very badly?

- 21% very well
- 58 somewhat well
- 15 somewhat badly
- 4 very badly
- 2 don't know

46. Which of these views about racial and ethnic groups in your region today is closest to yours? (*rotate*) (a) It is better if different racial and ethnic groups change so that they blend into the larger society as in the idea of a melting pot. (b) It is better if different racial and ethnic groups maintain their distinct cultures.

- 61% better if groups change
- 29 better if groups maintain cultures
- 6 other answer
- 4 don't know

Next, we are interested in how people are spending their time these days. I am going to read a list of types of activities that people get involved in, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you feel very involved, somewhat involved, or not really involved in that activity these days. (*If asked:* by involvement, we mean how much time you spend on something compared to other people.)

47. First, how about working on local issues and neighborhood problems? Are you ...

7% very involved
34 somewhat involved
59 not involved
0 don't know

48. How about working on public issues or problems at the state or national level? Are you ...

3% very involved
18 somewhat involved
78 not involved
1 don't know

49. How about volunteer work and charity work for which you are not paid? Are you ...

21% very involved
40 somewhat involved
39 not involved
0 don't know

50. How about political activities related to political parties, candidates, or election campaigns? Are you ...

2% very involved
15 somewhat involved
83 not involved
0 don't know

[51-61. Demographic Questions]

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