



Californians & Their Government

Mark Baldassare Dean Bonner David Kordus Lunna Lopes

CONTENTS

Press Release	3
State Issues	6
Federal Issues	14
Regional Map	24
Methodology	25
Questionnaire and Results	27

Supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation and the PPIC Donor Circle.



PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

The PPIC Statewide Survey provides a voice for the public and likely voters—informing policymakers, encouraging discussion, and raising awareness on critical issues of the day.

© 2016 Public Policy Institute of California

The Public Policy Institute of California is dedicated to informing and improving public policy in California through independent, objective, nonpartisan research.

PPIC is a public charity. It does not take or support positions on any ballot measures or on any local, state, or federal legislation, nor does it endorse, support, or oppose any political parties or candidates for public office.

Short sections of text, not to exceed three paragraphs, may be quoted without written permission provided that full attribution is given to the source.

Research publications reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff, officers, or board of directors of the Public Policy Institute of California.

CONTACT

Linda Streaan 415-291-4412
Serina Correa 415-291-4417

News Release

EMBARGOED: Do not publish or broadcast until 9:00 p.m. PST on Wednesday, January 27, 2016.

Para ver este comunicado de prensa en español, por favor visite nuestra página de internet:
www.ppic.org/main/pressreleaseindex.asp

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY:

Californians Split on Budget Plan—Few Favor Raising Fees or Taxes to Fund Transportation

IN PRESIDENTIAL RACE, CLINTON RANKS HIGHEST IN FAVORABILITY, TRUMP IN UNFAVORABILITY

SAN FRANCISCO, January 27, 2016—Californians are divided over Governor Brown's 2016–17 budget plan, with support much lower than in recent years when his proposals included no new taxes. This is among the key findings of a statewide survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), with support from The James Irvine Foundation.

When read a brief description of the governor's proposal, 48 percent of adults and 46 percent of likely voters favor it (46% adults, 50% likely voters oppose). While a solid majority of Democrats (64%) are in favor, majorities of Republicans (68%) and independents (54%) are opposed.

Brown is calling for increased spending on K–12 and higher education, health and human services, and prisons and courts. As he has in recent years, he proposes paying down debt and building up the rainy day fund. In contrast to his recent budget proposals, his plan this year includes tax and fee increases. He calls for increased spending on transportation infrastructure funded in part by a new fee on vehicles and an increase in the gasoline tax. To fund Med-Cal, he proposes a tax on health care insurers.

Support for the governor's plan was much higher in the past few years (69% adults, 66% likely voters in January 2013; 77% adults, 75% likely voters in January 2014; 75% adults, 79% likely voters in January 2015). But his January 2012 budget proposal—which included tax proposals—had similar levels of support (50% adults, 48% likely voters).

While the governor proposes to increase spending on transportation infrastructure by raising fees and gas taxes, most Californians prefer other methods. When asked how they would most like to pay for increased spending on roads and infrastructure, a plurality of adults (31%) prefer to use only surplus budget funds. Fewer (24%) prefer issuing state bonds. Just 17 percent prefer increased vehicle registration fees and 13 percent favor an increased state gas tax. The preferences of likely voters are nearly identical.

Today, a record-low 42 percent of Californians say the state budget situation is a big problem. The survey asks whether residents would prefer using a projected budget surplus of several billion dollars to pay down state debt and build up the reserve or restore some of the funding that was cut from social service programs in recent years. Adults are evenly divided (48% for each), while likely voters prefer paying down debt (54%) to restoring social service funding (42%).

"The governor's budget proposal is receiving mixed reviews from the California public," said Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO. "Californians are divided on whether to use surplus revenues to restore funding for social programs or build up the reserve, and most residents would rather fund road improvements through surplus funds and state bonds than vehicle fees and gasoline taxes."

State voters may be asked to decide several issues this fall. The survey asks about the importance of four that may appear on the ballot. Most adults say the issue of stricter gun laws (57%) and increasing the state tax on cigarettes to fund health care (53%) are very important to them. Fewer (33%) say that requiring voter approval for revenue bonds is very important. A fourth issue—changing the public employee pension system—is very important to 42 percent of residents. However, near the end of the survey fielding period, advocates of an effort to change the pension system withdrew their measure.

Most Republicans Have Favorable Views of Cruz, Rubio, Trump

With the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primary approaching, Californians are divided when asked if they are satisfied with their choice of candidates (48% satisfied, 47% not satisfied). A slight majority of likely voters (52%) say they are satisfied. The survey asks whether Californians have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the presidential candidates who are polling at higher than 10 percent for their party's nomination in recent national media surveys. Overall, only Hillary Clinton receives a favorable rating from a majority of Californians (55% favorable, 41% unfavorable). Bernie Sanders is viewed favorably by 46 percent of Californians (40% unfavorable). Among likely voters, 47 percent have a favorable view of Clinton and 53 percent view Sanders favorably. Solid majorities of Democrats have a favorable opinion of Clinton (72%) and Sanders (62%). About half of independents have favorable views of both candidates (Clinton 51%, Sanders 49%). Younger Californians are as likely to have a favorable view of Clinton (52%) as Sanders (54%), while older residents are more likely to favor Clinton. Across racial/ethnic groups, whites are more likely to have a favorable opinion of Sanders (49%) than Clinton (38%), while Asians, blacks, and Latinos are more likely to view Clinton favorably.

Fewer than a third of Californians have a favorable opinion of any of the four Republican candidates the survey asks about:

- **Ben Carson:** 29 percent favorable, 56 percent unfavorable
- **Ted Cruz:** 32 percent favorable, 53 percent unfavorable
- **Marco Rubio:** 32 percent favorable, 52 percent unfavorable
- **Donald Trump:** 22 percent favorable, 74 percent unfavorable

Majorities of Republicans have favorable opinions of Trump (55%), Cruz (54%), and Rubio (54%). Among independents, about a third have a favorable impression of each of the Republican candidates the survey asks about.

“California likely voters are closely watching the presidential election, and a slim majority express satisfaction with the choices of candidates,” Baldassare said. “Hillary Clinton generates the highest favorability rating, while Donald Trump is receiving the highest unfavorability rating.”

Most See Immigrants as Benefit

The survey asks about a series of issues being debated in the presidential campaign. On immigration, 82 percent of Californians and 78 percent of likely voters say undocumented immigrants should be able to stay in the US legally if certain requirements are met. Far fewer (17% adults, 21% likely voters) say they should not be allowed to stay. Overwhelming majorities of Democrats (90%) and independents (83%) say undocumented immigrants should be able to stay, as do a solid majority of Republicans (60%). A record-high 68 percent of Californians say immigrants are a benefit to the state because of their hard work and job skills, while 27 percent say they are a burden because they use public services.

Terrorism Concerns Rise Sharply

A month after the terrorist attacks in San Bernardino, a record-high 43 percent of Californians say terrorism and security are a big problem in the state today. In December 2001—shortly after the

September 11 attacks—31 percent expressed this view, and just 24 percent did so when the survey last asked the question in September 2009. Today, half of Inland Empire residents (52%) say terrorism and security are a big problem in the state; fewer hold this view in other regions (45% Orange/San Diego Counties, 45% Central Valley, 43% Los Angeles, and 32% San Francisco Bay Area).

How well do Californians think the US government is doing in reducing the threat of terrorism? A solid majority (61%) say the government is doing either very or fairly well (22% not too well, 16% not at all well).

Majorities Want More Gun Regulation

In the aftermath of the San Bernardino attacks and with the possibility of new gun regulations on the November ballot, 62 percent of Californians say the government does not do enough to regulate access to guns, while 35 percent say the government goes too far in restricting the right of citizens to own guns. Findings among likely voters are similar (59% not enough, 38% too far). Asked their views of President Obama's actions on gun control, 39 percent say he has not gone far enough, 34 percent say he has taken the right amount of action, and 25 percent say he has gone too far. Asians (56%), blacks (52%), and Latinos (47%) are much more likely than whites (27%) to say the president has not gone far enough. A majority of Californians (57%) say they are very concerned (28%) or somewhat concerned (29%) about the threat of a mass shooting in the area where they live.

"In the wake of the San Bernardino attack, record numbers of Californians say that terrorism and security are a big problem, and many are concerned about the threat of mass shootings where they live," Baldassare said. "Majorities of Californians place importance on stricter gun laws and want the government to do more to regulate guns."

Crime Concerns Dip—Most See Justice System as Biased

Half of California adults say violence and street crime in their communities is either a big problem (20%) or somewhat of one (31%). This is down 7 points from last January (24% big problem, 34% somewhat of a problem). Latinos (60%) and blacks (52%) are more likely than whites (44%) to say crime is a problem in their communities. Two-thirds of Californians say their local police are doing an excellent job (29%) or a good job (36%) in controlling crime in their communities. Whites (74%) are the most likely to rate local police as excellent or good, followed by Asians (65%), Latinos (57%), and blacks (44%). After a year in which protests have drawn attention to police treatment of minorities, a solid majority of Californians (61%) say blacks and other minorities do not receive treatment equal to whites in the criminal justice system, up slightly from January 2015 (55%). Most whites (55%) Asians (60%), and Latinos (64%) express this view, and it is most commonly expressed among black Californians (92%).

More Key Findings

- Brown's job approval hovers near record high—[pages 7, 15](#)

The governor's approval rating is 58 percent among adults, while President Obama's is 62 percent. Californians give the state legislature a higher rating (46%) than they give to Congress (32%).

- Water, economy seen as most important issues—[page 8](#)

Californians name water and the drought (17%) and the economy (16%) as the most important issues for the governor and legislature to work on in 2016.

- Californians' knowledge of budget is low—[page 10](#)

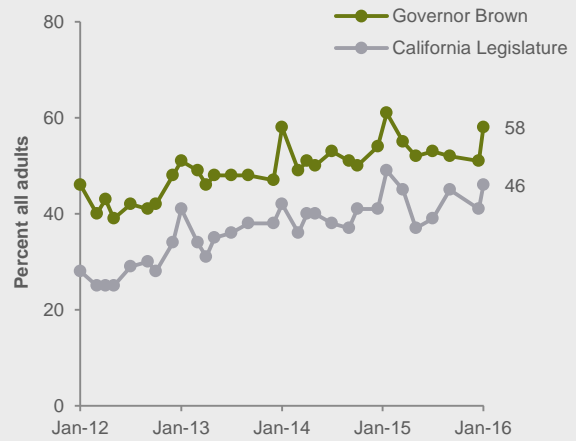
Asked to choose the largest area of state spending, Californians are most likely to select—incorrectly—prisons and corrections (42%). Only 15 percent correctly choose K–12 education. What should be the highest spending priority? Californians are most likely to name K–12 education.

State Issues

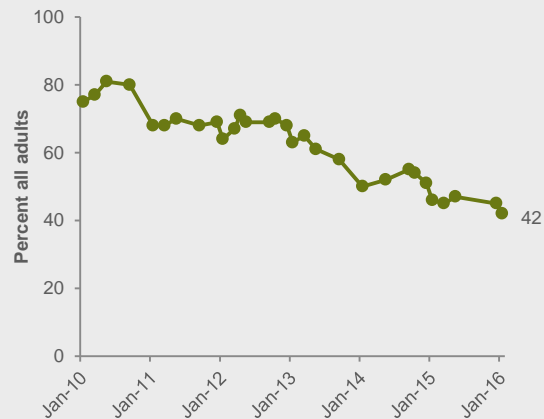
Key Findings

- Approval of Governor Brown (58%) and the state legislature (46%) are near the record highs reached last January. Fifty-seven percent of Californians think that the governor and the legislature will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in 2016. *(pages 7, 8)*
- About half of Californians think the state is heading in the right direction (54%) and are expecting good economic times in the next 12 months (49%). *(page 9)*
- Knowledge of the state budget remains low. Just 15 percent know that K–12 education is the top area of state spending. Half of Californians (49%) say K–12 education should have the highest priority when it comes to state spending. *(page 10)*
- A record-low share of Californians (42%) think the state budget situation is a big problem. Californians are divided along party lines when asked if the budget surplus should be used to build up the reserves or restore some funding for social service programs. *(pages 10, 12)*
- Half of Californians favor the governor’s proposed 2016–17 budget. Pluralities of adults and likely voters (31% each) would prefer to use only surplus budget funds to increase current infrastructure funding. *(pages 11, 12)*
- Majorities of Californians say the issues of stricter gun laws (57%) and increasing the state tax on cigarettes to fund health care (53%) are very important. One in three say requiring statewide voter approval for revenue bonds is very important. *(page 13)*

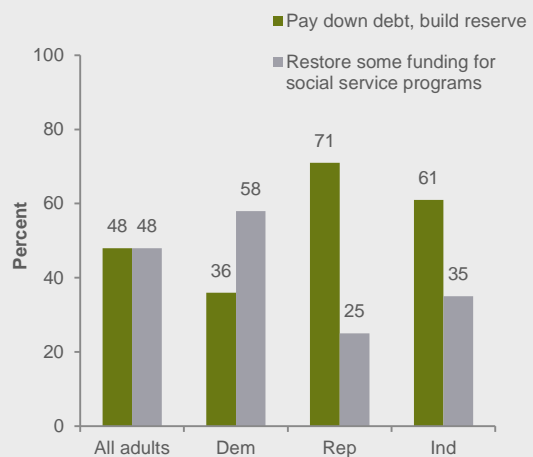
Approval ratings of state elected officials



Perception that the state budget situation is a big problem



Preferences for the use of surplus budget funds



Approval Ratings of State Elected Officials

At the start of Jerry Brown’s second year of his fourth term in office, 58 percent of adults and 60 percent of likely voters approve of the way that he is handling his job as California governor. The governor’s approval rating among all adults has increased since December (51%), and is similar to January 2015 (61%) and January 2014 (58%). It was slightly higher in January 2013 (51%); it was also higher in January 2012 (46%) and in January 2011 (41%), when he entered office. Today, the governor’s approval rating is 78 percent among Democrats, 50 percent among independents, and 36 percent among Republicans. Majorities across age, education, and income groups approve of Governor Brown. Approval is higher in the San Francisco Bay Area (65%) and Los Angeles (64%) than in other regions (52% Orange/San Diego, 51% Central Valley, 50% Inland Empire). Majorities of blacks (67%), Asians (65%), Latinos (62%), and whites (54%) approve of Brown.

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	58%	78%	36%	50%	60%
Disapprove	26	11	55	29	31
Don't know	16	10	9	21	9

Forty-six percent of adults and 41 percent of likely voters approve of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job. Approval among adults was similar in December (41%) and in each January survey since 2013 (49% 2015, 42% 2014, 41% 2013). It was much lower in January 2012 (28%) and January 2011 (26%). Today, 59 percent of Democrats, 41 percent of independents, and 23 percent of Republicans say that they approve of the legislature. Approval of the legislature is higher in the Inland Empire (51%), Los Angeles (50%), and the San Francisco Bay Area (48%) than in the Central Valley (40%) and Orange/San Diego (38%). Latinos (56%), Asians (53%), and blacks (50%) are more likely than whites (39%) to approve.

Forty-nine percent of adults and 45 percent of likely voters approve of the way that their own state legislators are representing their assembly and senate districts. Approval of their state legislators among adults was similar in January 2015 (53%), January 2014 (48%), and January 2013 (45%), but much lower in January 2012 (36%) and March 2011 (36%). Sixty percent of Democrats, 45 percent of independents, and 30 percent of Republicans approve of their legislators. A majority of residents in Los Angeles (54%) approve, while fewer than half in other regions do so (49% San Francisco Bay Area, 47% Inland Empire, 45% Central Valley, 42% Orange/San Diego). Asians (58%), blacks (54%), and Latinos (54%) are more likely than whites (43%) to approve of their state legislators.

“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the ...?”

		All adults	Party			Likely voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
way that the California Legislature is handling its job	Approve	46%	59%	23%	41%	41%
	Disapprove	39	28	67	47	48
	Don't know	15	13	10	12	11
job that the state legislators representing your assembly and senate districts are doing at this time	Approve	49	60	30	45	45
	Disapprove	35	28	58	41	44
	Don't know	16	12	12	14	11

Top Issues, Prospects of State Leaders Working Together in 2016

Californians name water and the drought (17%) and jobs and the economy (16%) as the most important issues for the governor and legislature to work on in 2016. Likely voters also name jobs and the economy (19%) and water and the drought (18%) as the most important issues in 2016. Other issues with more than 5 percent mentions are education and schools (9% adults, 9% likely voters) and immigration (9% adults, 7% likely voters). The state budget is mentioned by just 4 percent of all adults and 5 percent of likely voters.

The four most important issues are the same today as they were in January 2015: jobs and the economy (19% adults, 21% likely voters) and education and schools (15% adults, 18% likely voters) were mentioned most often while fewer named immigration (11% adults, 10% likely voters) and water and the drought (9% adults, 12% likely voters).

Today, water is mentioned more often in the Central Valley (27%) than in other regions, while the economy is named as the most important issue at similar levels across regions. There are no large partisan differences in naming water and the drought (20% Democrats, 18% Republicans, 16% independents) or jobs and the economy (17% Democrats, 19% Republicans, 16% independents) as the most important issues for the governor and legislature. However, there are differences across racial/ethnic groups, with blacks (24%) most likely to mention jobs and the economy, whites most likely to mention water (20%), and Latinos most likely to mention immigration (13%).

“Which one issue facing California today do you think is the most important for the governor and state legislature to work on in 2016?”

Top 4 issues	All adults	Region					Likely voters
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
Water, drought	17%	27%	13%	12%	16%	19%	18%
Jobs, economy	16	15	17	17	16	14	19
Education, schools, teachers	9	6	12	11	6	12	9
Immigration, illegal immigration	9	8	6	11	11	9	7

Fifty-seven percent of adults and 53 percent of likely voters say that Governor Brown and the state legislature will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year. Similar percentages of all adults held this view in January 2015 (59%), January 2014 (57%), and January 2013 (57%), while only 44 percent did so in January 2012. When Governor Brown entered office in January 2011, 58 percent of residents believed he would be able to work with the legislature. Today, Democrats (66%) and independents (55%) are much more likely than Republicans (33%) to hold this view. Half or more across regions and age, education, and income groups say that Governor Brown and the legislature will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year.

“Do you think that Governor Brown and the state legislature will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year, or not?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Yes, will be able to	57%	66%	33%	55%	53%
No, will not be able to	32	24	57	37	38
Don't know	11	11	10	9	9

Overall Mood

Fifty-four percent of adults say that things in California are generally going in the right direction, while 41 percent say they are going in the wrong direction. Likely voters are more divided, with 49 percent saying that things are going in the right direction and 47 percent saying they are going in the wrong direction. The perception among all adults that things are going in the right direction was similar in December (51%), and was in a range similar to today’s findings in January 2015 (57%), January 2014 (53%), and January 2013 (51%). It was much lower in January 2012 (37%) and January 2011 (38%). Today, Democrats (67%) are much more likely than independents (49%) and Republicans (24%) to say that things are going in the right direction. Across the state’s regions, residents in Los Angeles (62%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (59%) are more likely than others (50% Orange/San Diego, 48% Inland Empire, 45% Central Valley) to say that things are generally going in the right direction. Across racial/ethnic groups, Asians (72%) and Latinos (60%) are more likely than blacks (51%) and whites (47%) to hold this view. Positive perceptions about the direction of the state are higher among those younger than 35 (63%) than among older Californians (54% age 35 to 54, 46% age 55 and older).

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Right direction	54%	67%	24%	49%	49%
Wrong direction	41	28	72	47	47
Don't know	5	5	3	4	4

Forty-nine percent of adults say the state will have good times financially in the next 12 months, while 43 percent say it will have bad times. Among likely voters, 44 percent expect good times financially, while 46 percent anticipate bad times. A similar 48 percent of Californians expected good economic times in December, compared to 58 percent last January. Expectations of good economic times were similar in January 2014 and January 2013 (49% in both). Only 35 percent held positive economic expectations in January 2012 and 36 percent had positive expectations when Governor Brown entered office in January 2011. Today, Democrats (59%) are much more likely than independents (38%) and Republicans (33%) to expect good times financially during the next year. A slim majority of Los Angeles residents (53%) think that good economic times are ahead (50% Orange/San Diego, 48% San Francisco Bay Area, 46% Central Valley, 43% the Inland Empire). Latinos (56%) are more likely than whites (47%), Asians (46%), and blacks (45%) to expect good economic times in the next year. Men (54%) are more optimistic than women (45%), but there are no notable differences across education or income groups. The prediction of good economic times is also higher among those younger than 35 (55%) than among older Californians (48% age 35 to 54, 44% age 55 and older).

“Turning to economic conditions in California, do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?”

	All adults	Region					Likely voters
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
Good times	49%	46%	48%	53%	50%	43%	44%
Bad times	43	47	44	41	42	51	46
Don't know	8	7	8	6	8	7	11

State Budget

In early January, Governor Brown proposed a 2016–17 state budget that includes approximately \$122.6 billion in General Fund expenditures. Ninety percent of General Fund spending in the proposed budget is allocated for K–12 education (41.8%, \$51.2 billion), health and human services (27.5%, \$33.7 billion), higher education (11.9%, \$14.6 billion), and corrections and rehabilitation (8.7%, \$10.6 billion). When asked to identify the largest area of state spending, only 15 percent of adults and 17 percent of likely voters know that K–12 education is the largest. This level of awareness has been similar in other January surveys in this decade (16% 2010, 2011, 2012; 17% 2014, 15% 2015, 15% today) and has not risen above 30 percent since we began asking this question in May 2005. Today, awareness that K–12 education is the largest spending area is slightly higher among Republicans (19%) and independents (17%) than Democrats (11%). As in recent years, a plurality of adults (42%) and likely voters (41%) today incorrectly name prisons and corrections as the largest area of state spending.

“I’m going to name some of the largest areas for state spending. Please tell me the one that represents the most spending in the state budget.”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Prisons and corrections	42%	47%	27%	42%	41%
Health and human services	28	27	39	27	29
K–12 public education	15	11	19	17	17
Higher education	10	11	9	8	8
Don’t know	5	3	6	5	5

About half of Californians (49%) say that K–12 education should have the highest priority when it comes to state government spending; fewer choose health and human services (26%), higher education (20%), or prisons and corrections (3%). Spending priorities are similar among likely voters. About half of Democrats (54%), Republicans (48%), and independents (54%) say that K–12 education should have the highest priority. The priorities for all adults today are similar to those last January (53% K–12 education, 20% higher education, 18% health and human services, 6% prisons and corrections).

“Thinking about these four areas of state spending, I’d like you to name the one you think should have the highest priority when it comes to state government spending.”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
K–12 public education	49%	54%	48%	54%	54%
Health and human services	26	26	25	20	23
Higher education	20	17	17	22	18
Prisons and corrections	3	3	8	2	3
Don’t know	2	1	3	3	2

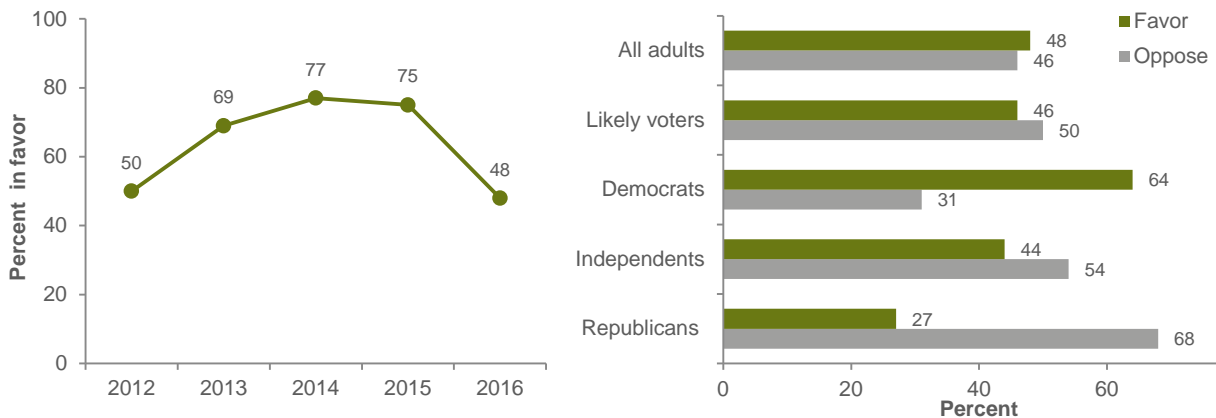
In the wake of an improving economy and rising revenues, 42 percent of Californians and 46 percent of likely voters say the state budget situation is a big problem. Republicans (63%) and independents (55%) are much more likely than Democrats (33%) to say this. San Francisco Bay Area residents (33%) are less likely than those living in other regions to hold this view. The perception that the state budget situation is a big problem is down sharply since 2010.

Governor’s Budget Proposal

Governor Brown’s 2016–17 budget proposal calls for increased spending on K–12 and higher education, health and human services, and prisons and courts. Consistent with recent years, the governor has proposed paying down debt and putting money in the rainy day fund. Contrary to recent budget proposals, this plan also includes tax and fee increases. In an effort to fund infrastructure projects, Governor Brown proposes a new fee on all vehicles and an increase in the gasoline tax. To fund Medi-Cal, he proposes a tax on health care insurers. Californians are divided on the governor’s proposal: after being read a short description, just under half of adults (48%) are in favor. Support for the budget plan today is much lower than for recent proposed budgets that did not include new taxes, but similar to support in 2012 (50%), when tax proposals were included.

A solid majority of Democrats (64%) are in favor, while majorities of Republicans (68%) and independents (54%) are opposed. About half of Californians across regions are in favor—except among Central Valley residents where a majority are opposed (56%). Californians age 18 to 34 (59%) are much more likely than Californians age 35 and older (43%) to support the budget proposal. Blacks (58%) are the most likely racial/ethnic group to be in favor, followed by Latinos (50%), whites (50%), and Asians (45%).

“In general, do you favor or oppose the governor’s budget plan?”



The governor’s budget proposal calls for increased spending on transportation infrastructure projects, to be funded by a new fee on vehicles and an increase in the state gasoline tax, among other things. However, when asked how they would prefer state government to increase the current level of funding for roads and infrastructure projects, a plurality of adults would prefer to use only surplus budget funds (31%); fewer would prefer to issue state bonds (24%), increase vehicle registration fees (17%), or increase the state gasoline tax (13%). Preferences of likely voters are nearly identical. Partisans have differing views on this issue, with Democrats divided between using surplus funds and issuing state bonds (26% each); Republicans (39% to 21%) and independents (40% to 20%) favor using surplus funds rather than issuing bonds, by about a two-to-one margin.

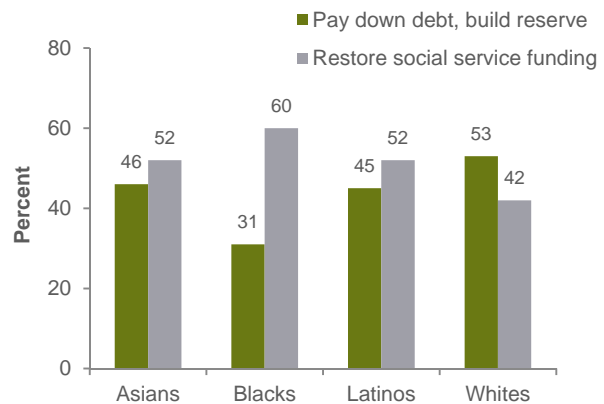
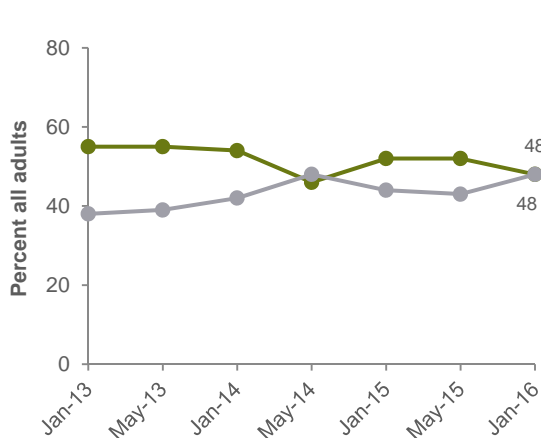
This preference for surplus funds over state bonds is prevalent among residents of the Central Valley (39% to 19%) and the Inland Empire (37% to 17%); residents elsewhere in the state are more divided. Pluralities of Californians across age, education, and racial/ethnic groups prefer using surplus budget funds.

“How would you most prefer that the state government increase the level of current funding for roads and other infrastructure projects?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Use only surplus budget funds	31%	26%	39%	40%	31%
Issue state bonds	24	26	21	20	23
Increase vehicle registration fees	17	18	12	14	15
Increase the state gasoline tax	13	16	10	15	15
Other (volunteered)	5	4	10	7	7
Should not increase current level of funding (volunteered)	3	3	2	2	3
Don't know	7	6	6	3	6

With a projected budget surplus, would Californians prefer to pay down state debt and build up the reserve or restore some funding for social service programs that were cut in recent years? Adults are evenly divided (48% pay debt and build reserve; 48% restore funding), while likely voters prefer paying down debt and building up the reserve (54%) to restoring social service funding (42%). Since we began asking this question in January 2013, majorities of adults have almost always preferred paying down debt. There is a partisan divide on this issue: Republicans (71%) and independents (61%) prefer paying debt and building the reserve, while Democrats (58%) prefer restoring social service funding. Central Valley (48% pay debt, build reserve; 47% restore funding), Los Angeles (48% to 49%), and Orange/San Diego (49% to 45%) residents are divided on what to do with surplus funds. Residents in the San Francisco Bay Area prefer to restore social service funding (54%), while residents in the Inland Empire prefer paying debt and building the reserve (56%). Majorities of Asians (52%), Latinos (52%), and blacks (60%) prefer restoring social service funding, while majorities of whites (53%) prefer paying down debt and building up the reserve. Preference for paying down debt rises as income levels increase.

“The state is projected to have a budget surplus of several billion dollars. Would you prefer to pay down state debt and build up the reserve or would you prefer to use some of this money to restore some funding for social service programs that were cut in recent years?”



Ballot Issues

As we enter 2016 it is becoming clear that some high-profile propositions will likely occupy prominent space on the November ballot. When asked about the importance of four potential ballot measures in December, majorities of Californians considered issuing state bonds for K–12 schools and community college facilities (63%) and increasing the minimum wage (57%) to be very important, while fewer viewed extending Proposition 30 taxes (36%) and legalizing marijuana (28%) as very important. Today, majorities consider enacting stricter gun laws (57%) and increasing the state tax on cigarettes to fund health care (53%) to be very important, while one in three consider requiring voter approval for revenue bonds (33%) to be very important. Four in 10 Californians consider changing the public employee pension system to be very important—near the end of our fielding period, proponents of one such proposal withdrew their ballot measure from the initiative process for 2016.

“Next, several issues may be decided by California voters on the November 2016 ballot. Please tell me if each of the following issues is very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important to you. How about ...”

All adults	Stricter gun laws	Increasing state tax on cigarettes to fund health care	Changing the public employee pension system	Requiring statewide voter approval for revenue bonds
Very important	57%	53%	42%	33%
Somewhat important	15	22	32	37
Not too important	8	10	12	13
Not at all important	18	14	8	9
Don't know	1	1	5	8

The share of Californians who view stricter gun laws as very important is much higher among Democrats (73%) than among Republicans (36%) and independents (43%). At least half across regions and demographic groups—except whites (46%) and those with only some college education (49%)—view stricter gun laws as very important. Californians without a gun in their home are much more likely than gun owners to consider this issue to be very important (63% to 41%). When it comes to increasing the cigarette tax, Democrats (59%) are more likely than Republicans (43%) or independents (39%) to consider this issue to be very important. Whites (44%) are the least likely racial/ethnic group and the Central Valley (44%) is the least likely region to consider increasing the cigarette tax to be very important. Fewer than half across parties, regions, and demographic groups consider requiring statewide voter approval for revenue bonds to be very important.

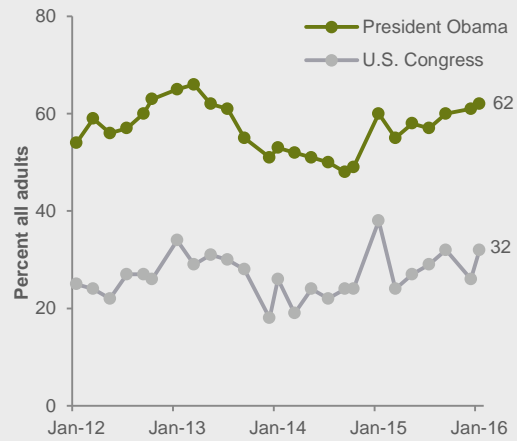
% very important	Stricter gun laws	Increasing state tax on cigarettes to fund health care	Changing the public employee pension system	Requiring statewide voter approval for revenue bonds
All adults	57%	53%	42%	33%
Likely voters	54	47	39	37
Party	Democrats	73	59	33
	Republicans	36	43	42
	Independents	43	39	43
Race/Ethnicity	Asians	65	55	44
	Blacks	71	55	46
	Latinos	68	65	51
	Whites	46	44	35

Federal Issues

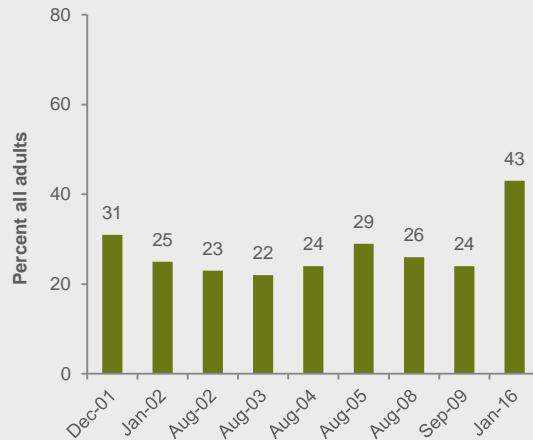
Key Findings

- Six in 10 Californians (62%) approve of President Obama; one in three (32%) approve of Congress. Majorities approve of their representative to the U.S. House (54%), Senator Barbara Boxer (53%), and Senator Dianne Feinstein (56%). *(pages 15, 16)*
- Three in 10 Californians (29%) and 45 percent of likely voters are very closely following news about candidates for the 2016 presidential election. Californians are divided on satisfaction with their choice of presidential candidates. *(page 17)*
- Californians have more favorable opinions of Democratic candidates Hillary Clinton (55%) and Bernie Sanders (46%) than of Republican candidates Ted Cruz (32%), Marco Rubio (32%), Ben Carson (29%), and Donald Trump (22%). *(page 18)*
- A record-high 43 percent view terrorism and security in California as a big problem. Six in 10 think the U.S. government is doing very (24%) or fairly well (37%) in reducing the threat of terrorism. *(page 19)*
- Six in 10 Californians say government does not do enough to regulate access to guns; 57 percent are concerned about the threat of a mass shooting in their area. *(page 20)*
- Solid majorities of Californians continue to view immigrants as a benefit rather than a burden. Eight in 10 think undocumented immigrants should be allowed to stay legally if certain requirements are met. *(page 22)*
- Most Californians rate their local police as excellent or good, but a solid majority say that blacks and other minorities do not receive equal treatment in the criminal justice system. *(page 22)*

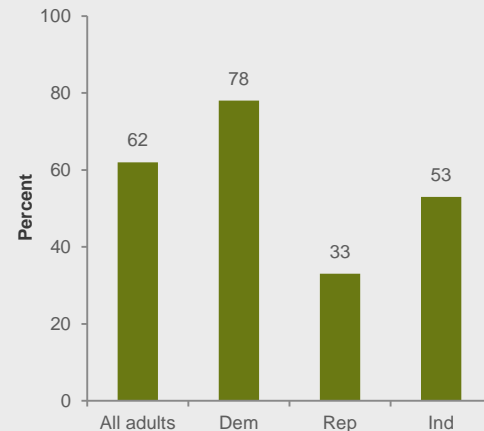
Approval ratings of federal elected officials



Perception that terrorism/security is a big problem in California



Perception that the government does not do enough to regulate access to guns



Approval Ratings of Federal Elected Officials

As President Obama enters his last year in office, six in 10 adults (62%) and likely voters (60%) approve of the way he is handling his job. Approval among Californians was similar in December (61%) and is at its highest point since May 2013 (62%). Californians in our survey are more likely to approve of President Obama than are adults nationwide (46%), according to a recent CBS/New York Times Poll. There continue to be sharp partisan differences: nearly nine in 10 Democrats (88%) approve of the president, while nearly eight in 10 Republicans (79%) disapprove. Independents are more likely to approve (58%) than to disapprove (42%). Majorities across age, education, income, and racial/ethnic groups, approve of the way President Obama is handling his job. (Our third day of interviewing took place on the night of the State of the Union address; findings were similar before and after.)

“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barack Obama is handling his job as president of the United States?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	62%	88%	19%	58%	60%
Disapprove	37	12	79	42	39
Don't know	1	1	2	1	1

The U.S. Congress receives far lower approval ratings than the president, with only one in three adults (32%) and one in five likely voters (19%) saying they approve of the way it is handling its job. Approval of the U.S. Congress is slightly lower than in January 2015 (38%), yet remains slightly higher than in January 2014 (26%). While approval of Congress remains low, Californians (32%) are twice as likely as adults nationwide to approve of the U.S. Congress (15%, CBS/New York Times Poll). Across parties, fewer than one in three Californians approve of the way Congress is handling its job. Latinos (45%) and Asians (45%) are more likely than blacks (33%) and whites (19%) to express approval. Approval of Congress is higher among younger, less educated, and less affluent Californians.

While only a third of California adults approve of the U.S. Congress as a whole, a majority (54%) say they approve of their own representative to the U.S. House. Approval ratings were similar last January (56%) and in January 2014 (51%). Today, Democrats (64%) are more likely than independents (49%) and Republicans (41%) to approve of their own representative. With the exception of the Central Valley (47%), majorities across regions approve of their own representative, as do majorities of Californians across education, income, and racial/ethnic groups.

“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that...?”

		All adults	Party			Likely voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
the U.S. Congress is handling its job	Approve	32%	28%	17%	23%	19%
	Disapprove	63	68	80	75	78
	Don't know	5	5	3	2	3
your own representative to the U.S. House of Representatives is handling his or her job	Approve	54	64	41	49	51
	Disapprove	33	26	50	41	40
	Don't know	13	9	9	10	8

Approval Ratings of California’s U.S. Senators

A majority of Californians (56%) approve of the way Senator Dianne Feinstein is handling her job, while three in 10 disapprove. Senator Feinstein’s approval rating was similar last January (54%). Among likely voters, 56 percent approve of her job performance while 39 percent disapprove.

There are stark partisan differences with three in four Democrats (74%) approving of the senator, while nearly seven in 10 Republicans (68%) disapprove. A majority of independents (54%) approve of the way Senator Feinstein is handling her job while a third disapprove (34%). Senator Feinstein’s approval is higher in Los Angeles (60%), the San Francisco Bay Area (58%), and Orange/San Diego (58%), than in the Central Valley (51%) and the Inland Empire (47%). Across racial/ethnic groups, blacks (76%) and Asians (68%) are more likely to approve of Senator Feinstein than Latinos (55%) and whites (52%).

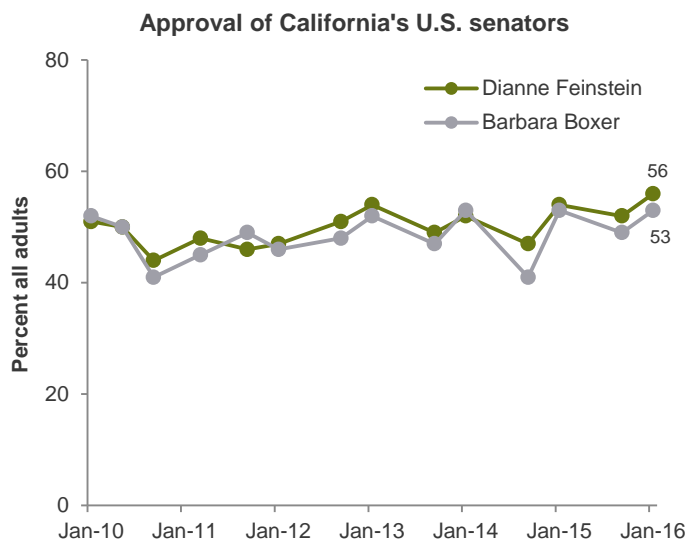
“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that ...?”

		All adults	Party			Likely voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
Dianne Feinstein is handling her job as U.S. Senator	Approve	56%	74%	29%	54%	56%
	Disapprove	31	18	68	34	39
	Don't know	13	8	3	12	5
Barbara Boxer is handling her job as U.S. Senator	Approve	53	76	21	51	52
	Disapprove	33	17	75	38	42
	Don't know	14	7	4	11	6

As Senator Barbara Boxer enters her last year in the Senate, 53 percent of Californians approve of the way she is handling her job while 33 percent disapprove. Senator Boxer’s current approval rating was similar last January (53%) and in January 2010 (52%), when she began her current term in the U.S. Senate. Today, 52 percent of likely voters approve of the senator’s job performance while 42 percent disapprove.

Similar to the partisan difference in Senator Feinstein’s approval rating, three in four Democrats (76%) approve of Senator Boxer while three in four Republicans (75%) disapprove. Among independents, half (51%) approve of her job performance, while four in 10 (38%) disapprove.

Across regions, Senator Boxer’s approval rating is highest in the San Francisco Bay Area (59%) and Los Angeles (57%), followed by Orange/San Diego (53%) and the Central Valley and Inland Empire (45% each). Approval of the way Senator Boxer is handling her job is highest among blacks (77%), followed by Asians (66%), Latinos (58%), and whites (45%).



Presidential Election

With the Iowa caucus and the New Hampshire primary approaching, how closely are Californians following news about the candidates in the 2016 presidential election? Sixty-five percent of adults say they are following the election either very closely (29%) or fairly closely (36%). Eighty-two percent of likely voters are following news about the 2016 presidential election, with 45 percent following news very closely. Attention to candidate news was similar in 2012 (85%) and in 2008 (88%).

Across parties, Republicans (47%) are more likely than Democrats (37%) and independents (30%) to say they are following news about the candidates very closely. There are stark differences across age groups—nearly half of Californians age 55 or older (47%) report following news about the candidates very closely, compared to a quarter of those age 35 to 54 (24%) and fewer than one in five adults age 18 to 34 (17%). Across racial/ethnic groups, whites (39%) are the most likely to say they are very closely following news about the candidates, followed by blacks (33%), Asians (21%), and Latinos (19%).

“How closely are you following news about candidates for the 2016 presidential election—very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Very closely	29%	37%	47%	30%	45%
Fairly closely	36	36	35	38	37
Not too closely	24	23	15	20	14
Not at all closely	11	4	3	11	3

When asked if they are satisfied with their choice of candidates, Californians are divided: 48 percent say they are satisfied, while 47 percent are not satisfied. Among likely voters, 52 percent say they are satisfied with their choices, while 42 percent say they are not satisfied. Californians were also divided in December (46% satisfied, 46% not satisfied). While slight majorities of Democrats (53%) and Republicans (53%) say they are satisfied with their choices, a slight majority of independents (53%) say they are not satisfied. A majority of Californians who identify as liberal say they are satisfied (58%), while a majority of those who identify as moderate are not satisfied (55%). Those who identify as conservative are divided (47% satisfied, 47% not satisfied). Across racial/ethnic groups, Asians (57%) are the most likely to say they are satisfied, followed by whites (50%), Latinos (42%), and blacks (40%). Likely voters were about as satisfied with their choice of presidential candidates in January 2012 (53% satisfied). However, satisfaction with the choice of candidates in the presidential primary was higher in January 2008 (64%).

“In general, would you say you are satisfied or not satisfied with your choices of candidates in the election for U.S. president in 2016?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Satisfied	48%	53%	53%	43%	52%
Not satisfied	47	42	41	53	42
Both (<i>volunteered</i>)	2	2	1	1	3
Don't know	4	3	4	3	3

Candidate Favorability

With the presidential primary campaigns gearing up, we asked Californians whether they had a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the major presidential candidates (those polling 10% or higher for their party’s nomination in recent national media surveys). Overall, only Hillary Clinton receives a favorable rating from a majority of Californians (55%). Forty-six percent of Californians say they have a favorable view of Bernie Sanders, while 40 percent view him unfavorably. Fewer than a third of Californians have a favorable opinion of any of the four Republican candidates we asked about. While majorities have an unfavorable opinion of Ben Carson, Ted Cruz, and Marco Rubio, nearly three in four have an unfavorable opinion of Donald Trump. Compared to other candidates, few Californians do not have an opinion of Clinton or Trump. Compared to findings from a recent Washington Post/ABC News Poll, Californians are less likely than adults nationwide to have a favorable impression of each of the Republican candidates in this survey.

“Please say if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the following presidential candidates. How about...”

All adults	Hillary Clinton	Bernie Sanders	Ben Carson	Ted Cruz	Marco Rubio	Donald Trump
Favorable	55%	46%	29%	32%	32%	22%
Unfavorable	41	40	56	53	52	74
Don't know/never heard of him/her	4	14	15	16	16	3

Among likely voters, 47 percent have a favorable impression of Clinton and 53 percent have a favorable impression of Sanders. Solid majorities of Democrats say they have a favorable opinion of Clinton (72%) and Sanders (62%). About half of independents have a favorable opinion of Clinton (51%) and Sanders (49%). Few Republicans have a favorable view of either Democratic candidate (17% Clinton, 21% Sanders). Younger Californians are as likely to have a favorable opinion of Clinton (52%) as of Sanders (54%), while older Californians age 35 to 54 (61% Clinton, 44% Sanders) and 55 and older (51% Clinton, 40% Sanders) are more likely to favor Clinton. Across racial/ethnic groups, whites are more likely to have a favorable opinion of Sanders (49%) than of Clinton (38%), while other racial/ethnic groups are more likely to hold a favorable opinion of Clinton.

% favorable		Hillary Clinton	Bernie Sanders	Ben Carson	Ted Cruz	Marco Rubio	Donald Trump
All adults		55%	46%	29%	32%	32%	22%
Likely voters		47	53	29	35	36	27
Party	Democrats	72	62	15	18	21	8
	Republicans	17	21	47	54	54	55
	Independents	51	49	32	33	30	30
Age	18 to 34	52	54	28	28	28	16
	35 to 54	61	44	28	30	30	23
	55 and older	51	40	31	39	38	28
Race/Ethnicity	Asians	64	53	23	19	22	23
	Blacks	76	47	27	17	12	6
	Latinos	70	41	31	39	36	13
	Whites	38	49	29	32	35	32

Majorities of Republicans have a favorable opinion of Trump (55%), Cruz (54%), and Rubio (54%). Among independents, three in 10 have a favorable impression of each of the Republican candidates we asked about. Of the four Republican candidates we asked about, Democrats are most likely to have a favorable opinion of Rubio (21%) and least likely to have a favorable impression of Trump (8%). More than a third of Latinos have a favorable opinion of Cruz (39%) and Rubio (36%), while just 13 percent have a favorable opinion of Trump.

Terrorism

Following the December terrorist attack in San Bernardino, a record-high share of Californians in our survey say that terrorism and security are a big problem in California. Forty-three percent of adults say they are a big problem, eclipsing the share who said the same in December 2001 (31%), shortly after the September 11 attacks. Californians are much more likely to call terrorism and security a big problem today than they were when we last asked this question in September 2009 (24%).

Today, half of Inland Empire residents (52%) say that terrorism and security are a big problem in California, compared with one in three San Francisco Bay Area residents (32%). Republicans (55%) are much more likely than independents (41%) and far more likely than Democrats (34%) to say terrorism and security are a big problem in California. Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (53%) are more likely than blacks (43%), whites (37%), or Asians (35%) to hold this view. Noncitizens (53%) and naturalized citizens (47%) are more likely to say they are big problems than are native-born citizens (38%). Younger Californians (35%) are less likely than those who are 35 or older (46%) to see terrorism and security as a big problem, and this view is more prevalent among those with lower levels of education and income.

“How much of a problem is terrorism and security in California today? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?”

	All adults	Region					Likely voters
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
Big problem	43%	45%	32%	43%	45%	52%	40%
Somewhat of a problem	36	37	37	35	40	38	38
Not much of a problem	21	18	30	20	13	10	21
Don't know	1	–	1	1	1	–	1

Regarding the effectiveness of U.S. government actions to reduce the threat of terrorism, a solid majority of Californians (61%) say the government is doing either very well or fairly well. Compared to adults nationwide in a December Pew Research Center poll, Californians are more likely to say the U.S. government is doing very well (24% Californians, 9% adults nationwide) and less likely to say it is doing not at all well (16% Californians, 25% adults nationwide).

Among Californians, there is a sharp partisan divide on this question, with a strong majority of Democrats (74%) saying the government is doing well and a majority of Republicans (58%) saying the government is not doing well (among independents: 52% well, 47% not well). Across regions, residents of Los Angeles (68%) are most likely to say the government is doing well, followed by residents of the Inland Empire (61%), the San Francisco Bay Area (61%), Orange/San Diego (57%), and the Central Valley (51%). Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (32%) are most likely to say the government is doing very well, followed by Asians (24%), whites (18%), and blacks (14%). Among those who approve of President Obama’s job performance, 76 percent say the government is doing well in reducing the threat of terrorism, while 63 percent of those who disapprove of the president say the government is not

doing well. Notably, a majority (54%) of those who say terrorism is a big problem in California also say the government is not doing well in reducing the threat (29% not too well, 25% not at all well).

“In general, how well do you think the U.S. government is doing in reducing the threat of terrorism—very well, fairly well, not too well, or not at all well?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Very well	24%	26%	9%	14%	16%
Fairly well	37	48	32	38	43
Not too well	22	18	21	26	20
Not at all well	16	7	37	21	20
Don't know	1	2	1	1	1

Gun Laws

With the recent terrorist attack in San Bernardino and the possibility of new gun regulations appearing on the November ballot, how do Californians feel about gun laws today? Sixty-two percent of Californians say the government does not do enough to regulate access to guns, while 35 percent say the government goes too far in restricting the rights of citizens to own guns. Findings among likely voters are similar (59% not enough, 38% too far). Today, adults and likely voters are slightly more likely to say the government does not do enough than they were when we last asked this question in March 2014 (adults 56%, likely voters 52%). As we have found in the past, partisans are sharply divided on this question, with an overwhelming majority of Democrats (78%) saying the government does not do enough and a solid majority of Republicans (64%) saying the government goes too far. A slim majority of those who say they have a gun in their home say the government goes too far (53%), while a solid majority of those without guns (69%) say the government should do more.

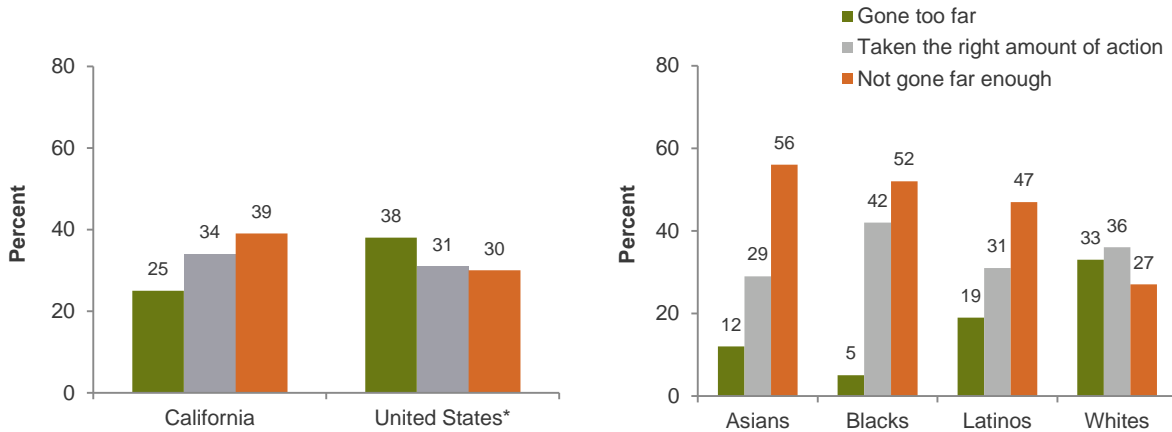
“Please indicate which statement comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right. The government goes too far in restricting the rights of citizens to own guns; or the government does not do enough to regulate access to guns.”

	All adults	Party			Have gun, rifle, or pistol in home	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Government goes too far	35%	18%	64%	42%	53%	28%
Government does not do enough	62	78	33	53	43	69
Don't know	3	4	3	4	4	3

Earlier this month, President Obama announced new executive actions to tighten the regulation of gun sales. A plurality of Californians (39%) say that President Obama has not gone far enough to change the nation’s gun laws. About one in three Californians (34%) say he has taken the right amount of action on guns, and fewer (25%) say he has gone too far. Compared to adults nationwide in a January CNN/ORC poll, Californians are more likely to say the president has not done enough and less likely to say he has gone too far (adults nationwide: 30% not enough, 38% gone too far). Forty-five percent of Democrats in California say the president has not gone far enough, a majority of Republicans (58%) say he has gone too far, and independents are split between saying he has gone too far (31%), taken the right

amount of action (32%), and not gone far enough (36%). Asians (56%), blacks (52%), and Latinos (47%) are far more likely than whites (27%) to say the president has not gone far enough, and just 5 percent of blacks say he has gone too far.

“When it comes to gun control laws, do you think Barack Obama has gone too far, has taken about the right amount of action, or has not gone far enough to change the nation's gun laws?”



* CNN/Opinion Research Center, January 2016

A majority of Californians (57%) say they are very (28%) or somewhat (29%) concerned about the threat of a mass shooting in the area where they live. These responses are similar to those of adults nationwide in a December CBS/New York Times poll (23% very concerned, 30% somewhat concerned). In California, Democrats and Republicans have similar responses. Residents of Los Angeles (37%) and the Inland Empire (36%) are more likely than residents of other regions to say they are very concerned about a mass shooting. Across racial/ethnic groups, blacks (40%), Asians (40%), and Latinos (39%) are far more likely than whites (16%) to say they are very concerned. The likelihood of being very concerned is much greater among those with no college education (41%) than among those with more education (20%), and it increases as income decreases. Gun owners (16%) are much less likely than non-gun owners (32%), and men (22%) are much less likely than women (35%), to be very concerned.

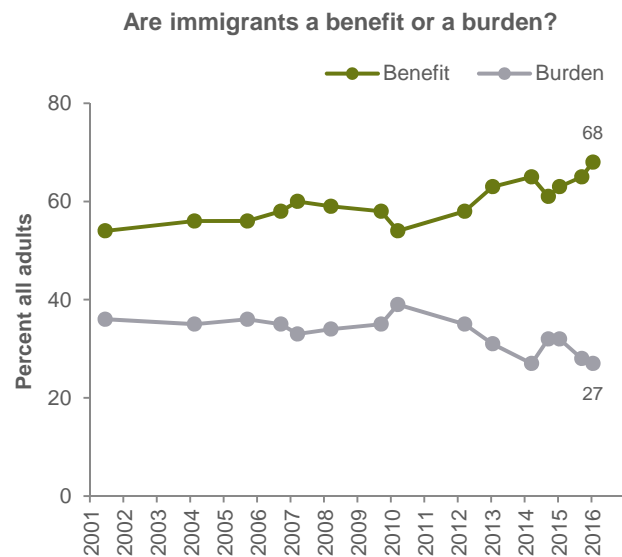
“How concerned are you about the threat of a mass shooting in the area where you live?”

	All adults	Region					Have gun, rifle, or pistol in home	
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	Yes	No
Very concerned	28%	22%	23%	37%	26%	36%	16%	32%
Somewhat concerned	29	25	30	29	36	27	23	29
Not very concerned	22	26	26	21	24	15	33	20
Not concerned at all	20	26	21	13	12	22	28	18
Don't know	1	–	–	–	2	–	–	1

Immigration

With the presidential candidates debating restrictions on immigration and policy options for the country’s undocumented immigrant population, how do Californians feel about immigration? About two in three (68%)—a record high—say that immigrants are a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills, while 27 percent consider them a burden because they use public services. Since 2000, at least half of Californians have called immigrants a benefit, and at least six in ten Californians have held this view since January 2013. Today, an overwhelming majority of Democrats (78%) call immigrants a benefit; they are much more likely than independents (63%) and far more likely than Republicans (33%) to hold this view. Across regions, residents of the San Francisco Bay Area (75%) are most likely to say immigrants are a benefit, followed by those in Los Angeles (68%), Orange/San Diego (66%), the Central Valley (64%), and the Inland Empire (63%). Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (83%) are the most likely to say immigrants are benefit to the state, followed by Asians (70%), blacks (67%), and whites (57%). Californians with incomes below \$40,000 (75%) are more likely to call immigrants a benefit than are those with higher incomes (64%).

Eight in 10 Californians (82%) say there should be a way for undocumented immigrants to stay in the U.S. legally, if certain requirements are met. Just 17 percent say they should not be allowed to stay. Overwhelming majorities of Democrats (90%) and independents (83%) say undocumented immigrants should be allowed to stay, as do a solid majority of Republicans (60%). Across regions, at least seven in 10 adults say undocumented immigrants should be allowed to stay legally, and at least three quarters of adults across age, education, income, and racial/ethnic groups groups say the same. Californians are slightly more likely to say undocumented immigrants should be able to stay legally than were adults nationwide in a September 2015 Pew Research Center poll (74%).



“Which comes closer to your view about how to handle undocumented immigrants who are living in the U.S.? There should be a way for them to stay in the country legally, if certain requirements are met, or they should not be allowed to stay in this country legally.”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Allowed to stay legally	82%	90%	60%	83%	78%
Not allowed to stay legally	17	9	39	16	21
Don't know	1	1	1	1	1

Crime, Police, and Race Relations

Half of California adults say violence and street crime are either a big problem (20%) or somewhat of a problem (31%) in their local communities, while 49 percent say they are not a problem. Last January, 58 percent said they were a big (24%) or somewhat of a problem (34%), while 42 percent said they were not a problem. Republicans (46%) are slightly less likely than independents (51%) or Democrats (53%)

to say crime is a problem. Across regions, fewer than half of residents in Orange/San Diego (44%), the Inland Empire (45%), and the San Francisco Bay Area (49%) say crime is a problem, while majorities in the Central Valley (61%) and Los Angeles (56%) hold this view. Latinos (60%) and blacks (52%) are more likely than whites (44%) to say crime is a problem in their local community. Those with annual incomes of \$80,000 or more (40%) are much less likely than less affluent Californians (57% under \$40,000, 53% \$40,000 to under \$80,000) to say crime is a problem.

Two in three Californians (65%) say their local police are doing either an excellent (29%) or a good (36%) job of controlling crime in their community. Findings were similar last January (24% excellent, 39% good). Across parties, Republicans (35%) are most likely to say police are doing an excellent job, followed by independents (27%) and Democrats (26%). Across regions, residents of Orange/San Diego (36%) and the Inland Empire (35%) are most likely to say local police are doing an excellent job, while fewer hold this view in the San Francisco Bay Area (28%), Los Angeles (24%), or the Central Valley (21%). Across racial/ethnic groups, whites (74%) are the most likely to rate local police as excellent or good, followed by Asians (65%), Latinos (57%), and blacks (44%). Among those who say crime is a big problem in their community, a majority say the police are doing a fair (33%) or a poor (22%) job.

“How would you rate the job your local police are doing in controlling crime in your community: excellent, good, fair, or poor?”

	All adults	Age			Race/Ethnicity			
		18 to 34	35 to 54	55 and older	Asians	Blacks	Latinos	Whites
Excellent	29%	25%	29%	30%	30%	18%	22%	35%
Good	36	28	37	43	35	26	35	39
Fair	25	32	25	20	31	33	30	19
Poor	9	12	8	6	3	23	12	5
Don't know	1	2	–	1	–	–	1	2

During the past year, protests in cities across the country have drawn attention to police treatment of minorities. Today, a solid majority (61%) of Californians say blacks and other minorities do not receive treatment equal to whites in the criminal justice system—slightly higher than in January 2015 (55%). Democrats (78% today, 74% in 2015) and independents (63% today, 56% in 2015) are far more likely to express this view than are Republicans (39%, up from 28% in 2015). With the exception of the Central Valley (50%), majorities across regions and demographic groups say blacks and other minorities do not receive equal treatment in the criminal justice system. While majorities of whites (55%), Asians (60%), and Latinos (64%) express this view, it is most commonly expressed among black Californians: 92 percent say blacks and other minorities are not treated equally.

“Do you think blacks and other minorities receive equal treatment as whites in the criminal justice system or not?”

	All adults	Party			Race/Ethnicity			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Asians	Blacks	Latinos	Whites
Receive equal treatment	33%	19%	56%	30%	34%	6%	32%	40%
Do not receive equal treatment	61	78	39	63	60	92	64	55
Don't know	5	3	5	7	6	2	5	5

Regional Map



Methodology

The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, president and CEO and survey director at the Public Policy Institute of California, with assistance from associate survey director Dean Bonner, project manager for this survey, and survey research associates David Kordus and Lunna Lopes. The Californians and Their Government series is supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation and the PPIC Donor Circle. The PPIC Statewide Survey invites input, comments, and suggestions from policy and public opinion experts and from its own advisory committee, but survey methods, questions, and content are determined solely by PPIC's survey team.

Findings in this report are based on a survey of 1,704 California adult residents, with 50 percent interviewed on landline telephones (852 interviews) and 50 percent interviewed on cell phones (852 interviews). Interviews took an average of 20 minutes to complete. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights January 10–19, 2016.

Landline interviews were conducted using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers that ensured that both listed and unlisted numbers were called. All landline telephone exchanges in California were eligible for selection, and the sample telephone numbers were called as many as six times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (age 18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing using the “last birthday method” to avoid biases in age and gender.

Cell phone interviews were conducted using a computer-generated random sample of cell phone numbers. All cell phone numbers with California area codes were eligible for selection, and the sample telephone numbers were called as many as eight times to increase the likelihood of reaching an eligible respondent. Once a cell phone user was reached, it was verified that this person was age 18 or older, a resident of California, and in a safe place to continue the survey (e.g., not driving).

Cell phone respondents were offered a small reimbursement to help defray the cost of the call. Cell phone interviews were conducted with adults who have cell phone service only and with those who have both cell phone and landline service in the household.

Live landline and cell phone interviews were conducted by Abt SRBI, Inc., in English and Spanish, according to respondents' preferences. Accent on Languages, Inc., translated new survey questions into Spanish, with assistance from Renatta DeFever.

Abt SRBI uses the U.S. Census Bureau's 2011–2013 American Community Survey's (ACS) Public Use Microdata Series for California (with regional coding information from the University of Minnesota's Integrated Public Use Microdata Series for California) to compare certain demographic characteristics of the survey sample—region, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and education—with the characteristics of California's adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to the ACS figures. To estimate landline and cell phone service in California, Abt SRBI used 2013 state-level estimates released by the National Center for Health Statistics—which used data from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) and the ACS—and 2014 estimates for the West Census Region in the latest NHIS report. The estimates for California were then compared against landline and cell phone service reported in this survey. We also used voter registration data from the California Secretary of State to compare the party registration of registered voters in our sample to party registration statewide. The landline and cell phone samples were then integrated using a frame integration weight, while sample balancing adjusted for differences across regional, age, gender, racial/ethnic, education, telephone service, and party registration groups.

The sampling error, taking design effects from weighting into consideration, is ± 3.5 percent at the 95 percent confidence level for the total unweighted sample of 1,704 adults. This means that 95 times out

of 100, the results will be within 3.5 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for unweighted subgroups is larger: for the 1,394 registered voters, the sampling error is ± 3.8 percent; for the 1,043 likely voters, it is ± 4.4 percent. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

We present results for five geographic regions, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population. "Central Valley" includes Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. "San Francisco Bay Area" includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. "Los Angeles" refers to Los Angeles County, "Inland Empire" refers to Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, and "Orange/San Diego" refers to Orange and San Diego Counties. Residents of other geographic areas are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, and likely voters, but sample sizes for these less populous areas are not large enough to report separately.

We present specific results for non-Hispanic whites, who account for 43 percent of the state's adult population, and also for Latinos, who account for about a third of the state's adult population and constitute one of the fastest-growing voter groups. We also present results for non-Hispanic Asians, who make up about 15 percent of the state's adult population, and non-Hispanic blacks, who comprise about 6 percent. Results for other racial/ethnic groups—such as Native Americans—are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, and likely voters, but sample sizes are not large enough for separate analysis. We compare the opinions of those who report they are registered Democrats, registered Republicans, and decline-to-state or independent voters; the results for those who say they are registered to vote in other parties are not large enough for separate analysis. We also analyze the responses of likely voters—so designated per their responses to voter registration survey questions, previous election participation, and current interest in politics.

The percentages presented in the report tables and in the questionnaire may not add to 100 due to rounding.

We compare current PPIC Statewide Survey results to those in our earlier surveys and to those in national surveys by Washington Post/ABC News, Pew Research Center, CNN/ORC, and CBS/New York Times. Additional details about our methodology can be found at www.ppic.org/content/other/SurveyMethodology.pdf and are available upon request through surveys@ppic.org.

Questionnaire and Results

CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

January 10–19, 2016

1,704 California Adult Residents:
English, Spanish

MARGIN OF ERROR ±3.5% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE
PERCENTAGES MAY NOT ADD TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING

1. First, which one issue facing California today do you think is the most important for the governor and the state legislature to work on in 2016?

[code, don't read]

- 17% water, drought
- 16 jobs, economy
- 9 education, schools, teachers
- 9 immigration, illegal immigration
- 4 environment, pollution, global warming
- 4 infrastructure
- 4 state budget, deficit, taxes
- 3 crime, gangs, drugs
- 3 guns, gun control
- 3 health care, health insurance
- 3 homelessness
- 17 other (specify)
- 8 don't know

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

- 58% approve
- 26 disapprove
- 16 don't know

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

- 46% approve
- 39 disapprove
- 15 don't know

4. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the job that the state legislators representing your assembly and senate districts are doing at this time?

- 49% approve
- 35 disapprove
- 16 don't know

5. Do you think that Governor Brown and the state legislature will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year, or not?

- 57% will be able to work together
- 32 no, will not be able to work together
- 11 don't know

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

- 54% right direction
- 41 wrong direction
- 5 don't know

7. Turning to economic conditions in California, do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?

- 49% good times
- 43 bad times
- 8 don't know

8. I'm going to name some of the largest areas for state spending. Please tell me the one that represents the most spending in the state budget. *[rotate]* (1) K–12 public education, (2) higher education, (3) health and human services, *[or]* (4) prisons and corrections.

- 15% K–12 public education
- 10 higher education
- 28 health and human services
- 42 prisons and corrections
- 5 don't know

9. Thinking about these four areas of state spending, I'd like you to name the one you think should have the highest priority when it comes to state government spending, *[rotate in same order as Q8]* (1) K–12 public education, (2) higher education, (3) health and human services, *[or]* (4) prisons and corrections.

- 49% K-12 public education
- 20 higher education
- 26 health and human services
- 3 prisons and corrections
- 2 don't know

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

- 42% big problem
- 40 somewhat of a problem
- 14 not a problem
- 5 don't know

10a. The state is projected to have a budget surplus of several billion dollars. In general, how would you prefer to use this extra money? *[rotate]* (1) Would you prefer to pay down state debt and build up the reserve *[or]* (2) would you prefer to use some of this money to restore some funding for social service programs that were cut in recent years?

- 48% pay down debt and build up reserve
- 48 restore funding for social services
- 4 don't know

11. On another topic, Governor Brown recently proposed a budget plan for the next fiscal year that will increase spending on K–12 and higher education, health and human services, prisons, and courts. The plan includes a new fee on all vehicles and an increase in the state gasoline tax to fund transportation infrastructure projects, and a tax on health care insurers to fund Medi-Cal. The plan includes funds to pay down the state's debt and puts \$2 billion into the state's rainy day fund. In general, do you favor or oppose the governor's budget plan?

- 48% favor
- 46 oppose
- 2 haven't heard anything about the budget *(volunteered)*
- 4 don't know

12. How would you most prefer that the state government increase the level of current funding for roads and other infrastructure projects *[rotate]* (1) increase the state gasoline tax; (2) increase vehicle registration fees; (3) issue state bonds paid for through the state's general fund *[or]* (4) use only surplus budget funds?

- 13% increase the state gasoline tax
- 17 increase vehicle registration fees
- 24 issue state bonds
- 31 use only surplus budget funds
- 3 should not increase current level of funding *(volunteered)*
- 1 all of the above *(volunteered)*
- 4 other *(specify)*
- 7 don't know

Next, several issues may be decided by California voters on the November 2016 ballot. Please tell me if each of the following issues is very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important to you.

[rotate questions 13 to 16]

13. How about stricter gun laws?

- 57% very important
- 15 somewhat important
- 8 not too important
- 18 not at all important
- 1 don't know

14. How about increasing the state tax on cigarettes to fund healthcare?

- 53% very important
- 22 somewhat important
- 10 not too important
- 14 not at all important
- 1 don't know

15. How about changing the public employee pension system?

- 42% very important
- 32 somewhat important
- 12 not too important
- 8 not at all important
- 5 don't know

16. How about requiring statewide voter approval for revenue bonds?

- 33% very important
- 37 somewhat important
- 13 not too important
- 9 not at all important
- 8 don't know

On another topic,

17. How closely are you following news about candidates for the 2016 presidential election—very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?

- 29% very closely
- 36 fairly closely
- 24 not too closely
- 11 not at all closely
- don't know

18. In general, would you say you are satisfied or not satisfied with your choices of candidates in the election for U.S. president in 2016?

- 48% satisfied
- 47 not satisfied
- 2 both (*volunteered*)
- 4 don't know

Please say if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the following presidential candidates.

[rotate questions 19 to 24]

19. How about Ben Carson?

- 29% favorable
- 56 unfavorable
- 15 don't know/ never heard of him

20. How about Hillary Clinton?

- 55% favorable
- 41 unfavorable
- 4 don't know/ never heard of her

21. How about Ted Cruz?

- 32% favorable
- 53 unfavorable
- 16 don't know/ never heard of him

22. How about Marco Rubio?

- 32% favorable
- 52 unfavorable
- 16 don't know/ never heard of him

23. How about Bernie Sanders?

- 46% favorable
- 40 unfavorable
- 14 don't know/ never heard of him

24. How about Donald Trump?

- 22% favorable
- 74 unfavorable
- 3 don't know/ never heard of him

Changing topics,

25. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barack Obama is handling his job as president of the United States?

- 62% approve
- 37 disapprove
- 1 don't know

[rotate questions 26 and 27]

26. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Dianne Feinstein is handling her job as U.S. senator?

- 56% approve
- 31 disapprove
- 13 don't know

27. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barbara Boxer is handling her job as U.S. senator?

- 53% approve
- 33 disapprove
- 14 don't know

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

- 32% approve
- 63 disapprove
- 5 don't know

29. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way your own representative to the U.S. House of Representatives in Congress is handling his or her job?

- 54% approve
- 33 disapprove
- 13 don't know

30. On another topic, how much of a problem is terrorism and security in California today? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?

- 43% big problem
- 36 somewhat of a problem
- 21 not much of a problem
- 1 don't know

31. In general, how well do you think the U.S. government is doing in reducing the threat of terrorism—very well, fairly well, not too well, or not at all well?

- 24% very well
- 37 fairly well
- 22 not too well
- 16 not at all well
- 1 don't know

Changing topics,

32. Please indicate which statement comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right. [rotate] (1) The government goes too far in restricting the rights of citizens to own guns; [or] (2) the government does not do enough to regulate access to guns.

- 35% government goes too far
- 62 government does not do enough
- 3 don't know

32a. When it comes to gun control laws, do you think Barack Obama has gone too far, has taken about the right amount of action, or has not gone far enough to change the nation's gun laws?

- 25% gone too far
- 34 taken about the right amount of action
- 39 not gone far enough
- 3 don't know

33. How concerned are you about the threat of a mass shooting in the area where you live? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not concerned at all?

- 28% very concerned
- 29 somewhat concerned
- 22 not very concerned
- 20 not concerned at all
- 1 don't know

34. On another topic, please indicate which statement comes closest to your own view—even if neither is exactly right. [rotate] (1) Immigrants today are a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills [or] (2) Immigrants today are a burden to California because they use public services.

- 68% immigrants are a benefit to California
- 27 immigrants are a burden to California
- 5 don't know

35. Which comes closer to your view about how to handle undocumented immigrants who are living in the U.S.? [rotate] there should be a way for them to stay in the country legally, if certain requirements are met [or] they should not be allowed to stay in this country legally.

- 82% allowed to stay legally
- 17 not allowed to stay legally
- 1 don't know

36. On another topic, how much of a problem are violence and street crime in your local community today—a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?

- 20% big problem
- 31 somewhat of a problem
- 49 not much of a problem
- don't know

36a. How would you rate the job your local police are doing in controlling crime in your community: excellent, good, fair, or poor?

- 29% excellent
- 36 good
- 25 fair
- 9 poor
- 1 don't know

37. Do you think blacks and other minorities receive equal treatment as whites in the criminal justice system or not?

- 33% receive equal treatment
- 61 do not receive equal treatment
- 5 don't know

38. Next, some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain that you are registered to vote in California?

- 66% yes [ask q38a]
- 34 no [skip to q39b]

38a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or are you registered as a decline-to-state or independent voter?

- 43% Democrat [ask q39]
- 27 Republican [ask q39a]
- 5 another party (specify) [skip to q40]
- 24 independent [skip to q39b]

39. Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or not a very strong Democrat?

- 58% strong
- 40 not very strong
- 2 don't know

[skip to q40]

39a. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

- 51% strong
- 47 not very strong
- 2 don't know

[skip to q40]

39b. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?

- 27% Republican Party
- 50 Democratic Party
- 15 neither
- 8 don't know

40. Next, would you consider yourself to be politically: [read list, rotate order top to bottom]

- 13% very liberal
- 21 somewhat liberal
- 31 middle-of-the-road
- 20 somewhat conservative
- 13 very conservative
- 3 don't know

41. Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in politics—a great deal, a fair amount, only a little, or none?

- 23% great deal
- 39 fair amount
- 32 only a little
- 6 none
- don't know

[d1 to d15: demographic questions]

PPIC STATEWIDE
SURVEY ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

Ruben Barrales
President and CEO
GROW Elect

Angela Glover Blackwell
President and CEO
PolicyLink

Mollyann Brodie
Senior Vice President
Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation

Bruce E. Cain
Director
Bill Lane Center for the American West
Stanford University

Jon Cohen
Vice President of Survey Research
SurveyMonkey

Joshua J. Dyck
Co-Director
Center for Public Opinion
University of Massachusetts, Lowell

Russell Hancock
President and CEO
Joint Venture Silicon Valley

Sherry Bebitch Jeffe
Professor
Sol Price School of Public Policy
University of Southern California

Robert Lapsley
President
California Business Roundtable

Carol S. Larson
President and CEO
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

Donna Lucas
Chief Executive Officer
Lucas Public Affairs

Lisa Pitney
Vice President of Government Relations
The Walt Disney Company

Robert K. Ross, MD
President and CEO
The California Endowment

Most Reverend Jaime Soto
Bishop of Sacramento
Roman Catholic Diocese of Sacramento

Carol Whiteside
Principal
California Strategies

PPIC BOARD OF
DIRECTORS

Donna Lucas, Chair
Chief Executive Officer
Lucas Public Affairs

Mark Baldassare
President and CEO
Public Policy Institute of California

Ruben Barrales
President and CEO
GROW Elect

María Blanco
Executive Director
Undocumented Student Legal
Services Center
University of California Office
of the President

Louise Henry Bryson
Chair Emerita, Board of Trustees
J. Paul Getty Trust

A. Marisa Chun
Partner
McDermott Will & Emery LLP

Phil Isenberg
Vice Chair
Delta Stewardship Council

Mas Masumoto
Author and Farmer

Steven A. Merksamer
Senior Partner
Nielsen, Merksamer, Parrinello,
Gross & Leoni, LLP

Gerald L. Parsky
Chairman
Aurora Capital Group

Kim Polese
Chairman
ClearStreet, Inc.

Gaddi H. Vasquez
Senior Vice President, Government Affairs
Edison International
Southern California Edison



Public Policy Institute of California
500 Washington Street, Suite 600
San Francisco, CA 94111
T: 415.291.4400
F: 415.291.4401
PPIC.ORG

PPIC Sacramento Center
Senator Office Building
1121 L Street, Suite 801
Sacramento, CA 95814
T: 916.440.1120
F: 916.440.1121



PPIC

**PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA**