

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY

MAY 2015

Californians & their government



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ABOUT THE SURVEY

The PPIC Statewide Survey provides policymakers, the media, and the public with objective, advocacy-free information on the perceptions, opinions, and public policy preferences of California residents. This is the 150th PPIC Statewide Survey in a series that was inaugurated in April 1998 and has generated a database of responses from more than 314,000 Californians.

This is the 67th in the *Californians and Their Government* series. The survey is conducted periodically to examine the social, economic, and political trends that influence public policy preferences and ballot choices. Supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation, the series seeks to inform decisionmakers, raise public awareness, and stimulate policy discussion and debate about important state and national issues.

The survey began just days after Governor Brown released a revised state budget proposal for 2015–16. With increased revenues, the governor proposed a budget that increases funding for K–12 schools and higher education, and creates the state’s first Earned Income Tax Credit to help about 2 million lower-income Californians. In the midst of the current drought, the governor proposed \$2.2 billion for emergency drought response. In response to Governor Brown’s executive order on April 1, the State Water Resources Control Board adopted statewide mandatory water reductions on May 5. State lawmakers are considering legislation that would require children to be vaccinated before entering kindergarten, with no exemptions for personal or religious reasons. Policymakers are discussing ways to increase civic engagement in the wake of historic low voter turnout in 2014, and advocates of marijuana legalization have submitted several initiatives for the 2016 ballot.

The survey presents the responses of 1,706 adult residents throughout California, interviewed in English or Spanish by landline or cell phone. It includes findings on the following topics:

- State fiscal and policy issues, including overall mood; perceptions of the state budget situation; perceived need for changes to the state and local tax system; views on extending Proposition 30 taxes; attitudes toward raising state revenues, opinions of the governor’s revised budget proposal, including support for increased funding for the UC system and the creation of a state Earned Income Tax Credit; perceptions of the current water supply, opinions about whether people are doing enough in response to the drought and support for the governor’s mandatory water reductions; views on vaccines and public health; and support for marijuana legalization.
- State and federal government, including approval ratings of state and federal elected officials; trust in state and federal government; views of low voter turnout and support for voter engagement reforms; and reasons for not registering to vote or not voting in all elections.
- Time trends, national comparisons, and the extent to which Californians may differ in their perceptions, attitudes, and preferences regarding state and federal government based on political party affiliation, likelihood of voting, region of residence, race/ethnicity, and other demographics.

This report may be downloaded free of charge from our website (www.ppic.org). If you have questions about the survey, please contact survey@ppic.org. Try our PPIC Statewide Survey interactive tools online at www.ppic.org/main/survAdvancedSearch.asp.

NEWS RELEASE

EMBARGOED: Do not publish or broadcast until 9:00 p.m. PDT on Wednesday, June 3, 2015.

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

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

For First Time, Water and Drought Seen as Biggest California Issue

MOST SUPPORT BROWN'S REVISED BUDGET, BACK PLAN FOR UC AND NEW TAX CREDIT

SAN FRANCISCO, June 3, 2015—Californians see water and drought as the most important issue facing the state, and most residents say people in their region are not doing enough to respond. These are among the key findings of a statewide survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), with funding from The James Irvine Foundation.

For the first time in a PPIC survey, Californians are most likely to name water and drought (39%) as the most important state issue, followed by jobs and the economy (20%). Water and drought is the most frequently named issue in all regions, but Central Valley residents are the most likely to mention it (53%) (42% San Francisco Bay Area, 37% Orange/San Diego, 36% Inland Empire, 31% Los Angeles). In addition, 69 percent of Californians say the supply of water in their part of the state is a big problem—a record high since the survey began asking this question in 2009.

Just 28 percent of Californians say that people in their part of the state are doing the right amount to respond to the drought, while 60 percent say that their neighbors are not doing enough (7% too much).

The survey also asked about the governor's order to implement water restrictions in cities and towns to reduce water usage statewide by 25 percent. Nearly half of residents (46%) say the restrictions do the right amount to respond to the drought. About a third (36%) say the restrictions do not do enough, and 12 percent say they do too much.

"Public concern about the drought is at a record-high level today," said Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO. "Most Californians are satisfied with the governor's actions, but a sizable number say the mandatory water reductions have not gone far enough."

When asked about Governor Brown's handling of the drought, 47 percent of Californians approve, 38 percent disapprove, and 15 percent don't know (likely voters: 44% approve, 47% disapprove, 10% don't know). Brown's overall job approval rating is slightly higher: 52 percent approve, 27 percent disapprove, 21 percent don't know (likely voters: 54% approve, 36% disapprove, 10% don't know). The legislature's job approval rating is 37 percent among adults and 30 percent among likely voters. Asked to rate national leaders, 58 percent of California adults and 49 percent of likely voters approve of the job President Obama is doing, while 27 percent of adults and 20 percent of likely voters approve of the U.S. Congress.

SUPPORT FOR STATE EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT, UC PLAN

The survey began just after the governor released his revised budget. After hearing a brief summary of the plan, 73 percent of adults and 70 percent of likely voters say they favor it, while about a quarter (23%

adults, 25% likely voters) are opposed. Majorities across parties favor the proposal, but support is much higher among Democrats (80%) and independents (73%) than among Republicans (55%).

Most Californians (60%) also favor the governor's proposed state Earned Income Tax Credit, a refundable credit for wages earned that would benefit 2 million of the lowest-income Californians and cost \$380 million in its first year. About half of likely voters (53%) are in favor. Brown also proposes increasing state funding for the University of California system by 4 percent for each of the next four years in return for a two-year tuition freeze by UC. Most residents (63%) and likely voters (61%) support this plan.

In addition to increased spending on K–12 and higher education, the governor proposes modest spending increases for health and human services, prisons, and courts. The budget includes funds to pay down the state's debt and puts \$1.9 billion into the state's rainy day fund. How do Californians want a projected budget surplus used? Slim majorities (52% adults, 53% likely voters) would prefer that the state pay down debt and build up a reserve. Fewer (43% adults, 42% likely voters) would prefer that some of this money be used to restore some funding to social service programs that were cut in recent years.

The survey shows that the public's concerns about the state budget situation have steadily eased over time. Today, 47 percent of adults say the budget situation is a big problem—close to the record low on this question reached in May 2007 (44%). Californians' opinions about the direction of the state and their own economic futures are about the same as in May 2014. Today, 45 percent of adults and 40 percent of likely voters say things are generally going in the right direction. About half (48%) of adults and 44 percent of likely voters expect good times financially in the next year. Residents in the San Francisco Bay Area are more upbeat than those in other regions about the direction of things in California (53% right direction), and more likely to expect good economic times (57%).

HALF FAVOR EXTENDING PROPOSITION 30 AND CHANGING TO SPLIT ROLL

With a number of tax proposals under discussion in Sacramento, how do Californians feel about the tax system? Half of adults (49%) and 54 percent of likely voters say major changes are needed to the state and local tax system. About a third (32% adults, 31% likely voters) say minor changes are needed. Across income groups, those in the middle—with household incomes from \$40,000 to less than \$80,000—are most likely to say that major changes are needed. The survey also asked about specific tax changes being discussed:

- **Extending Proposition 30.** About half of adults (49%) and 46 percent of likely voters favor extending the temporary tax increases on sales and the incomes of high earners to fund schools and guarantee public safety realignment funding. When those who favor extending Proposition 30 are asked if they favor making the increases permanent, support declines significantly (33% adults, 30% likely voters).
- **Changing Proposition 13.** The survey asked about a “split roll” tax on property—taxing commercial properties according to their market value while leaving limits on residential property taxes intact. Half of adults and likely voters (50% for each) favor this idea.
- **Increasing cigarette taxes.** Most (70% adults, 67% likely voters) support raising state taxes on cigarettes. Strong majorities across political parties, age groups, and income groups are in favor.
- **Taxing the extraction of oil and natural gas.** Californians are divided (44% favor, 50% oppose) over whether to institute this tax, as are likely voters (47% favor, 48% oppose).
- **Extending the sales tax to services.** Californians are also split (42% favor, 46% oppose) over extending the state sales tax to services not currently taxed while lowering the overall tax rate. Among likely voters, 41 percent favor this idea, while 49 percent are opposed.

Baldassare noted: “Most efforts to make changes to our state's tax system face difficult hurdles even in the favorable climate of an improving economy.”

STRONG MAJORITIES SUPPORT REQUIRING VACCINATIONS FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

The legislature is debating a bill that would eliminate personal-belief and religious exemptions to the requirement that parents vaccinate their children before enrolling them in kindergarten. Asked how they feel about requiring children to be vaccinated to attend public schools, two-thirds of Californians (67%) and public school parents (65%) say children should not be allowed to attend unless they are vaccinated. Majorities of adults across all regions and demographic groups say children should be required to be vaccinated. Overwhelming majorities also say that, in general, vaccines given to children are very safe (57% adults, 54% public school parents) or somewhat safe (30% adults, 34% public school parents). This view holds across racial/ethnic groups, though Latinos (49%) are much less likely than whites (65%) to view vaccines as very safe.

SLIM MAJORITY FAVOR LEGALIZING MARIJUANA

A record-high 54 percent of residents favor legalizing marijuana, while 44 percent are opposed. Californians hold similar views to adults nationwide, according to a recent CBS News Poll (53% favor, 43% oppose). Among California likely voters, 56 percent favor legalization and 41 percent are opposed. A majority of whites (60%) favor legalization, while a similar proportion of Latinos (60%) oppose it. Across age groups, Californians age 18 to 34 (62%) are more likely to favor legalization than are older residents (51% age 35 to 54, 49% age 55 and older). Just under half of Californians (46%) say that if marijuana were legal, they would be very concerned that more underage people would be led to try it (18% somewhat concerned). Latinos (63%) are far more likely than whites (37%) to say they are very concerned.

HIGH LEVELS OF DISTRUST IN GOVERNMENT

Distrust in the state and federal governments is high, with the federal government faring worse. Strong majorities of adults (65%) and likely voters (69%) say they can trust the federal government to do what is right only some of the time. And 72 percent of Californians say the federal government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves. Just 23 percent say it is run for the benefit of all the people. Likely voters hold similar views (76% big interests, 19% benefit of all). A solid majority of adults (61%) say the federal government wastes a lot of the money they pay in taxes (likely voters 66%).

Asked the same series of questions about state government, 61 percent of adults and 62 percent of likely voters say they can trust the government in Sacramento to do what is right only some of the time. Solid majorities (62% adults, 65% likely voters) say state government is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves. A slim majority of adults (52%) and 57 percent of likely voters say people in state government waste a lot of tax money.

PROPOSALS TO BOOST VOTER TURNOUT, REGISTRATION FAVORED

In the wake of record-low voter turnout in both the 2014 primary and general elections, most Californians (59% adults, 66% likely voters) say it is a big problem that many people who are eligible to vote don't always do so. When adults not registered to vote are asked why they haven't done so, one of the most frequently cited reasons—apart from citizenship status (32%)—is that they are too busy or don't have enough time (10%). Lack of time is also the top reason registered adults give for not voting (30%).

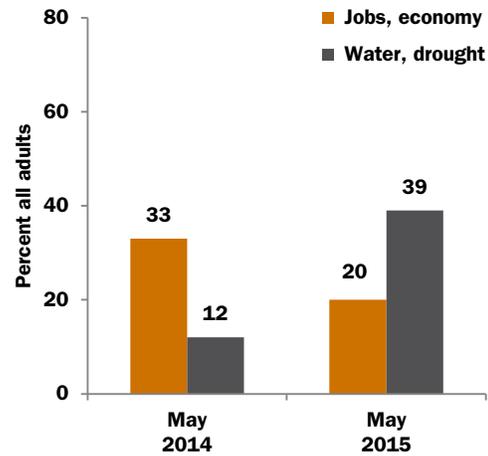
The survey asked about two proposals—one that would make it easier to register and one that would make it easier to vote. Support for each is high. When asked about automatically registering people to vote when they visit the Department of Motor Vehicles, 69 percent of adults are in favor. When asked whether each registered voter should automatically be sent a vote-by-mail ballot, 70 percent of adults are in favor. Support for both ideas is higher among Democrats than among independents or Republicans.

STATE FISCAL AND POLICY ISSUES

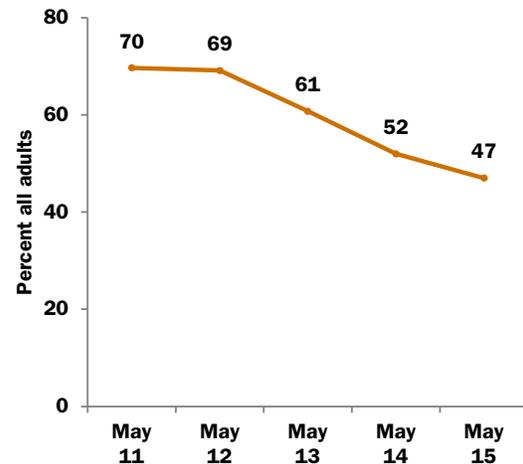
KEY FINDINGS

- Californians are increasingly concerned about the ongoing drought. Today, a plurality of adults (39%) say the drought is the top issue facing the state. *(page 7)*
- As the state’s economy continues to recover, fewer than half of Californians now say the budget situation is a big problem (47%). *(page 8)*
- Californians are divided over whether to extend the Proposition 30 tax increases, with 49 percent favoring an extension and 44 percent opposed. *(page 9)*
- Seven in 10 Californians favor increasing taxes on cigarettes. Far fewer are in favor of other proposals for generating state revenues. *(page 10)*
- Seven in 10 Californians favor Governor Brown’s budget proposal. Majorities also support Brown’s proposed state Earned Income Tax Credit (60%) and his proposed increase in state funding for the University of California system in return for a two-year tuition freeze (63%). *(page 11)*
- The proportion of Californians who say that the supply of water in their part of California is a big problem has reached an all-time high—nearly seven in 10 adults. *(page 12)*
- More than eight in 10 Californians say that vaccines are very or somewhat safe. A solid majority of public school parents (65%) say that unvaccinated children should not be allowed to attend public schools. *(page 13)*
- A majority of Californians (54%) say marijuana should be legal, but 46 percent are very concerned that making marijuana legal may lead to more underage people using it. *(page 14)*

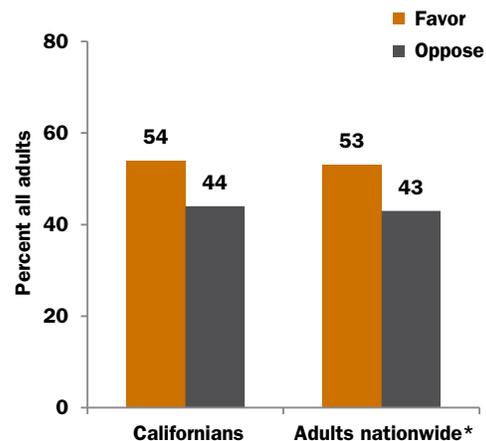
Most Important Issue Facing California



View Budget Situation as a Big Problem



Support for Legalizing Marijuana



*CBS News Poll, April 2015

OVERALL MOOD

A plurality of Californians are now naming water and the drought (39%) as the most important issue facing people in California today, followed by jobs and the economy (20%). In May 2014, Californians were most likely to mention jobs and the economy (33%), followed by water and the drought (12%). Today, water and the drought are mentioned as the top issue more often in the Central Valley (53%) than in other regions. These findings do not vary much across income groups. Likely voters have views similar to those of all adults on the most important issues facing Californians.

“Thinking about the state as a whole, what do you think is the most important issue facing people in California today?”

Top five issues mentioned	All adults	Region					Likely voters
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
Water, drought	39%	53%	42%	31%	37%	36%	38%
Jobs, economy	20	11	19	22	27	17	21
Crime, gangs, drugs	5	5	4	5	3	5	3
Environment, pollution, global warming	5	4	6	7	3	5	5
Immigration, illegal immigration	4	4	4	3	4	9	6

Forty-five percent of all adults and 40 percent of likely voters say that things in California are generally going in the right direction. The share holding this view was higher in March (50% adults, 49% likely voters) and similar in May 2014 (45% adults, 44% likely voters). Today, Democrats (57%) are much more likely than other registered voters to say that things are going in the right direction. San Francisco Bay Area residents (53%) are more likely than those in other regions to hold this view. The perception that things are generally going in the right direction declines as age increases (54% under age 35, 43% age 35 to 54, 40% 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	45%	57%	21%	38%	40%
Wrong direction	46	33	74	55	52
Don't know	8	10	5	7	8

Forty-eight percent of adults and 44 percent of likely voters think that the state will have good economic times in the next 12 months. Responses were similar in March (52% adults, 49% likely voters) and in May 2014 (44% adults, 44% likely voters). Today, San Francisco Bay Area residents (57%) are more likely to expect good times than those in other regions. Democrats (58%) are more likely than other registered voters to expect good times. Higher-income residents are more likely to expect good times (59% \$80,000 or more).

“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	48%	43%	57%	47%	47%	35%	44%
Bad times	42	47	34	42	45	47	44
Don't know	10	10	9	11	8	18	11

STATE BUDGET SITUATION

The public's perceptions of the budget situation in California have been steadily improving over time. Today, 47 percent of all adults and 52 percent of likely voters say the state budget is a big problem. In May 2014, majorities of adults (52%) and likely voters (58%) held this view. Today, Republicans (67%) are much more likely than other registered voters to say that the budget is a big problem. Across regions, the perception that the state budget is a big problem is highest in Orange/San Diego (55%).

As the California economy and budget situation improve, what do Californians want to do with surplus funds? Fifty-two percent of adults and 53 percent of likely voters say they prefer to pay down debt and build up the reserve, while 43 percent of adults and 42 percent of likely voters say they would prefer to use some of this money to restore some funding for social service programs that were cut in recent years. Since we began asking this question in January 2013, majorities have almost always preferred paying down debt (55% January 2013, 55% May 2013, 54% January 2014, 52% January 2015), with the exception of May 2014 (46%). Republicans (74%) are more likely than other registered voters to prefer paying down debt. Those with incomes under \$40,000 are less likely to prefer paying down debt (45%) compared to those with higher incomes (57% \$40,000 to \$80,000, 58% \$80,000 or more).

“The state is projected to have a budget surplus of several billion dollars over the next several years. In general, how would you prefer to use this extra money? 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?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Pay debt, build reserve	52%	35%	74%	55%	53%
Restore some funding for social service programs	43	60	20	44	42
Don't know	5	6	6	1	5

Some are proposing to reform the state and local tax system. About half of adults (49%) and likely voters (54%) say that major changes are needed. This proportion is similar to March 2015 (47% adults, 53% likely voters) and March 2014 (51% adults, 56% likely voters)—but it is much lower than in September 2011 (62% adults, 68% likely voters). Today, Republicans (65%) are more likely than other registered voters to say that major changes are needed. Across income groups, the perception that major changes are needed is highest in the middle-income group (55% \$40,000 to \$80,000). It does not vary much between homeowners (51%) and renters (47%).

“Overall, do you think the state and local tax system is in need of major changes, minor changes, or do you think it is fine the way it is?”

		Major changes	Minor changes	Fine the way it is	Don't know
All adults		49%	32%	15%	4%
Likely voters		54	31	11	4
Party	Democrats	41	39	16	4
	Republicans	65	24	8	3
	Independents	51	34	13	2
Household income	Under \$40,000	45	33	18	4
	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	55	31	12	2
	\$80,000 or more	48	34	13	5

STATE REVENUES

Since California voters passed Proposition 30 in November 2012, there have been ongoing discussions about extending these temporary tax increases, which are set to fully expire in 2018. Some are proposing a ballot measure in November 2016. About half of California adults (49%) are in favor and 44 percent are opposed to extending the Proposition 30 tax increases. Findings among adults were similar this March (51% favor, 40% oppose), this January (50% favor, 42% oppose), and in December 2014 (53% favor, 40% oppose). Today, likely voters are also divided on a Proposition 30 tax extension (46% favor, 47% opposed). Democrats (64%) are more likely than other registered voters to favor this tax extension. San Francisco Bay Area residents (56%) are more likely than those living elsewhere to be in favor of it. Support for the Proposition 30 tax extension is similar across income groups. Support declines by a significant margin when those who are in favor are asked if they support making the Proposition 30 tax increase permanent (33% adults, 30% likely voters).

**“As you may know, voters passed Proposition 30 in November 2012. It increased taxes on earnings over \$250,000 for seven years and sales taxes by one quarter cent for four years, to fund schools and guarantee public safety realignment funding. Do you favor or oppose extending the Proposition 30 tax increases which are set to fully expire in 2018?
(If favor: And would you favor or oppose making the Proposition 30 tax increases permanent?)”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor (total)	49%	64%	30%	51%	46%
<i>Favor, even if it is permanent</i>	33	48	15	26	30
<i>Favor, but oppose if it is permanent</i>	16	16	15	25	16
Oppose	44	29	62	44	47
Don't know	7	8	8	5	7

Some are proposing to make changes to Proposition 13's property tax limits through a citizens' initiative on the November 2016 ballot. When asked about a proposal to have commercial properties taxed according to their current market value, Californians are divided, with 50 percent of adults and 50 percent of likely voters in favor. Support for this proposal today is slightly lower than in January (54% adults, 54% likely voters) and at its lowest point among adults since we began asking this question in January 2012 (60%). Democrats (59%) are more likely than other registered voters to favor this proposal. Support for changing Proposition 13's commercial property tax limits does not vary much between homeowners (49%) and renters (51%), and is similar across age, education, and income groups.

“Under Proposition 13, residential and commercial property taxes are both strictly limited. What do you think about having commercial properties taxed according to their current market value? Do you favor or oppose this proposal?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	50%	59%	36%	47%	50%
Oppose	43	34	56	48	44
Don't know	7	6	7	6	6

STATE REVENUES (CONTINUED)

We asked about three other proposed changes to state revenues that have surfaced in discussions about legislative measures this year and in reports about citizens' initiatives for the November 2016 ballot. Strong majorities (70%) favor increasing state taxes on the purchase of cigarettes. Support for this tax increase was at 74 percent in December 2014, its highest point since PPIC began asking this question in January 2006. Californians are divided on whether to tax the extraction of oil and natural gas in California (44% favor, 50% oppose). Support for this tax increase was similar the other three times that we asked this question (45% December 2014, 43% May 2014, 42% March 2013). Californians are also divided over extending the state sales tax to services that are not currently taxed while lowering the overall sales tax rate (42% favor, 46% oppose, 11% don't know). Support for this state sales tax proposal was at a similar 42 percent when we asked about it in December 2014.

“For each of the following, please say if you favor or oppose the proposal. How about ...?”

	Increasing taxes on cigarettes	Taxing the extraction of oil and natural gas	Extending the state sales tax to services that are not currently taxed while lowering the overall sales tax rate
Favor	70%	44%	42%
Oppose	27	50	46
Don't know	3	6	11

Likely voters have preferences similar to those of all adults on all three of these state revenue proposals. Strong majorities across political, age, and income groups favor increasing taxes on cigarettes. Republicans (32%) are less likely than other registered voters to favor taxing the extraction of oil and natural gas, while support for this tax proposal falls below 50 percent in all age groups and varies strongly by income (35% under \$40,000, 50% \$40,000 to \$80,000, 62% \$80,000 or more). Democrats (46%) are more likely than other registered voters to support extending the sales tax to services not covered while lowering the overall sales tax rate. Support for this sales tax proposal is higher among those younger than age 35 (50%) than among older adults; it falls below a majority in all income groups.

“For each of the following, please say if you favor or oppose the proposal. How about ...?”

<i>Percent saying favor</i>	Increasing taxes on cigarettes	Taxing the extraction of oil and natural gas	Extending the state sales tax to services that are not currently taxed while lowering the overall sales tax rate	
All adults	70%	44%	42%	
Likely voters	67	47	41	
Party	Dem	78	52	46
	Rep	59	32	31
	Ind	65	47	35
Age	18 to 34	79	46	50
	35 to 54	68	46	41
	55 and above	65	41	37
Household income	Under \$40,000	69	35	44
	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	72	50	47
	\$80,000 or more	74	62	37

GOVERNOR BROWN’S BUDGET PROPOSAL

On May 14, Governor Brown released his revised state budget proposal for the next fiscal year. After hearing a brief summary of the revised budget plan, seven in 10 Californians (73%) are in favor and nearly one in four are opposed (23%). Democrats (80%) are more likely than independents (73%) and far more likely than Republicans (55%) to favor the governor’s budget plan.

“Governor Brown recently released a revised budget plan for the next fiscal year that will increase spending on K–12 and higher education, and modestly increase spending on health and human services, prisons, and courts. The plan includes funds to pay down the state’s debt including repayment of previously deferred payments to K–12 schools and paying off economic recovery bonds that were passed in 2004 to balance the budget. The plan puts \$1.9 billion into the state’s rainy day fund, allocates \$2.2 billion for emergency drought response, and includes no new taxes. In general, do you favor or oppose the governor’s budget plan?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	73%	80%	55%	73%	70%
Oppose	23	17	38	24	25
Don’t know	4	3	7	3	5

In his May budget revision, Governor Brown proposed establishing the state’s first Earned Income Tax Credit. Six in 10 Californians (60%) and half of likely voters (53%) favor this proposal. There are stark partisan differences, with 67 percent of Democrats favoring the tax credit and 53 percent of Republicans opposing it. Across racial/ethnic groups, whites (52%) are less likely to favor this proposal than blacks (75%), Asians (71%), and Latinos (64%). The likelihood of favoring the proposed tax credit falls as age and income rise.

“As part of his revised budget plan, Governor Brown has proposed establishing the state’s first Earned Income Tax Credit. This refundable tax credit for wages earned would benefit two million of the lowest-income Californians and cost about \$380 million in its first year. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	60%	67%	36%	55%	53%
Oppose	31	24	53	36	38
Don’t know	9	9	11	9	9

In his revised budget plan, Governor Brown also proposed increasing state funding for the University of California system by 4 percent in each of the next four years in return for a two-year tuition freeze. Six in 10 Californians (63%) and likely voters (61%) favor this proposal. Democrats (74%) are much more likely than independents (58%) and far more likely than Republicans (49%) to be in favor.

“In his revised budget plan Governor Brown proposes increasing state funding for the University of California system by 4 percent in each of the next four years in return for a two-year tuition freeze. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	63%	74%	49%	58%	61%
Oppose	32	24	45	37	35
Don’t know	5	3	7	5	4

STATE WATER SUPPLY

With mandatory water use reductions being implemented, Californians seem to be increasingly concerned about the ongoing drought. Today, nearly seven in 10 adults (69%) say the supply of water is a big problem—a record high since we began asking this question in 2009. More than six in 10 Californians across all regions and demographic groups say the supply of water is a big problem.

With concern about the water supply increasing, how do Californians think people in their part of the state are responding to the drought? Today, 28 percent of adults say people in their part of the state are doing the right amount to respond to the drought and 7 percent say people are doing too much—but a majority (60%) say people are not doing enough. The proportion of Californians who say that people are not doing enough has declined slightly since March (66% not enough), before the water use restrictions were announced. Across regions, residents in Orange/San Diego (65%) are the most likely to say that people are not doing enough, while those in the Central Valley (49%) are the least likely to say this. Younger Californians, age 18 to 34 (70%), are more likely than those age 55 and older (54%) to say that people are not doing enough. Across parties, Democrats (65%) and independents (64%) are more likely than Republicans (50%) to say people are not doing enough to respond to the drought.

“Overall, do you think that the people in your part of California are doing too much, the right amount, or not enough to respond to the current drought in California?”

	All adults	Region					Inland/Coastal	
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	Inland	Coastal
Too much	7%	14%	3%	5%	6%	8%	11%	5%
Right amount	28	33	31	24	23	31	33	26
Not enough	60	49	62	64	65	56	52	64
Don't know	5	5	5	6	6	5	5	5

Governor Brown has directed the State Water Resources Control Board to implement water restrictions in cities and towns across the state to reduce statewide usage by 25 percent. A plurality of Californians (46%) say this action does the right amount to respond to the current drought. More than a third of adults (36%) say the restrictions are not enough while 12 percent say they do too much. Californians age 18 to 34 (42%) are more likely than those age 55 and older (32%) to say that the mandatory water reductions are not enough. Across parties, Democrats (35%) and independents (38%) are somewhat more likely than Republicans (29%) to say that the water reductions do not do enough. Coastal residents are more likely than inland residents to say that the water reductions do not do enough to respond to the drought.

“Governor Brown recently directed the State Water Resources Control Board to implement mandatory water reductions in cities and towns across California to reduce statewide water usage by 25 percent. Do you think this action does too much, the right amount, or not enough to respond to the current drought in California?”

	All adults	Region					Inland/Coastal	
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	Inland	Coastal
Too much	12%	16%	13%	10%	11%	15%	15%	11%
Right amount	46	46	42	46	45	44	48	45
Not enough	36	33	39	37	40	31	31	39
Don't know	6	4	6	7	3	9	6	5

VACCINES AND PUBLIC HEALTH

A legislative proposal to ban personal belief exemptions for vaccinations for children entering kindergarten continues to be debated in Sacramento. How do Californians feel about requiring children to be vaccinated in order to attend public schools? Today, two in three Californians (67%) and public school parents (65%) say that children who have not been vaccinated should not be allowed to attend public schools. Californians' views are similar to those of adults nationwide (64% should not be allowed, 32% should be allowed), according to a February CBS News Poll.

Majorities of Californians across all regions, political, and demographic groups say that children who have not been vaccinated should not be allowed to attend public schools. The likelihood of holding this view increases as education and income rise.

“Should children who have not been vaccinated from diseases like measles, mumps, and rubella be allowed to attend public schools, or not?”

	All adults	Region					Public school parents
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
Should be allowed	29%	30%	23%	32%	31%	23%	32%
Should not be allowed	67	67	72	63	66	72	65
Don't know	4	3	5	4	3	5	3

Most Californians say that in general, vaccines given to children are very safe (57%) or somewhat safe (30%). Californians hold views similar to those of adults nationwide (61% very safe, 28% somewhat safe), according to a February CBS News Poll. Among public school parents, a majority (54%) say vaccines are very safe and 34 percent say they are somewhat safe. Across all regions, majorities of Californians say vaccines are very safe. College graduates (68%) are more likely than those with some college (56%) or those with a high school degree or less (51%) to say that vaccines given to children are very safe.

Across income groups, Californians with a household income of \$80,000 or more (74%) are much more likely than those with lower household incomes (56% \$40,000 to \$80,000, 51% under \$40,000) to say that vaccines are very safe. While overwhelming majorities across racial/ethnic groups say that vaccines are very or somewhat safe, Latinos (49%) are much less likely than whites (65%) to say that vaccines are very safe. Among those who say that unvaccinated children should be allowed to attend public school, 37 percent say that vaccines are very safe and 41 percent say they are somewhat safe.

“In general, how safe are vaccines given to children for diseases like measles, mumps, and rubella—very safe, somewhat safe, not very safe, or not safe at all?”

	All adults	Region					Public school parents
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
Very safe	57%	54%	59%	54%	62%	57%	54%
Somewhat safe	30	31	27	33	27	30	34
Not very safe	7	11	5	7	6	6	7
Not safe at all	3	3	4	3	4	4	3
Don't know	3	1	5	3	2	2	2

MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION

A record-high 54 percent of Californians favor legalizing marijuana while 44 percent oppose it. Californians hold views similar to those of adults nationwide (53% legal, 43% not legal), according to a recent CBS News Poll. Today, as ballot measures in support of legalization are considered, 56 percent of likely voters support legalization while 41 percent oppose it. Among all adults, support for legalization was at 53 percent in March 2015 and 51 percent in October 2014. Today, majorities of Democrats (65%) and independents (61%) support marijuana legalization while 56 percent of Republicans oppose it. While a majority of whites (60%) favor legalization, a similar proportion of Latinos (60%) oppose it. Across age groups, Californians age 18 to 34 (62%) are more likely to favor legalization than older residents (51% age 35 to 54, 49% age 55 and older). Men (57%) are more likely than women (51%) to support marijuana legalization. Regionally, support for legalizing marijuana is highest in the San Francisco Bay Area (62%) and lowest in the Inland Empire (43%). More than three in four Californians (78%) who have tried marijuana say that it should be legal, compared to only a third (34%) of those who have never tried it.

“Next, in general, do you think the use of marijuana should be legal, or not?”

		Yes, legal	No, not legal	Don't know
All adults		54%	44%	2%
All likely voters		56	41	3
Party	Democrats	65	32	3
	Republicans	43	56	1
	Independents	61	34	5
Age	18 to 34	62	37	1
	35 to 54	51	47	2
	55 and above	49	47	4
Ever tried marijuana?	Yes	78	21	1
	No	34	63	4

Forty-six percent of Californians say they are very concerned that if marijuana were legal, more underage people would try it. More than half of public school parents (56%) say they are very concerned about this issue. Republicans (53%) are far more likely than independents (38%) and Democrats (36%) to say they are very concerned. Latinos (63%) are far more likely than whites (37%) to say they are very concerned. Among those who have never tried marijuana, six in 10 say they are very concerned. Among those who are opposed to marijuana legalization, 81 percent say they are very concerned. Younger Californians are less likely than Californians age 35 and older to say they are concerned about an increase in underage people trying marijuana if it were made legal.

“If marijuana were legal, how concerned are you that it would lead to more underage people trying it?”

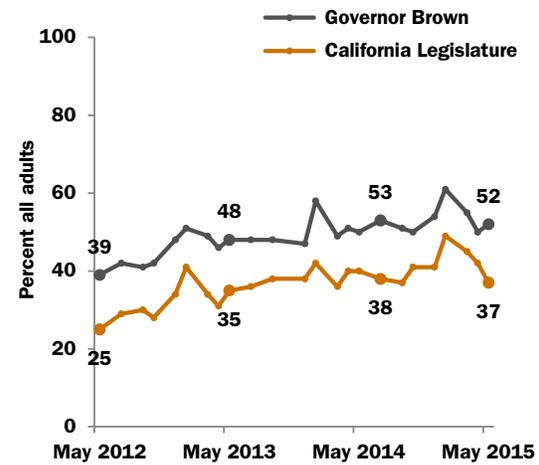
	All adults	Age			Ever tried marijuana?	
		18 to 34	35 to 54	55 and above	Yes	No
Very concerned	46%	38%	50%	48%	26%	63%
Somewhat concerned	18	15	17	22	18	17
Not too concerned	20	24	20	15	30	11
Not at all concerned	16	22	13	14	26	8
Don't know	1	1	–	1	–	1

STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

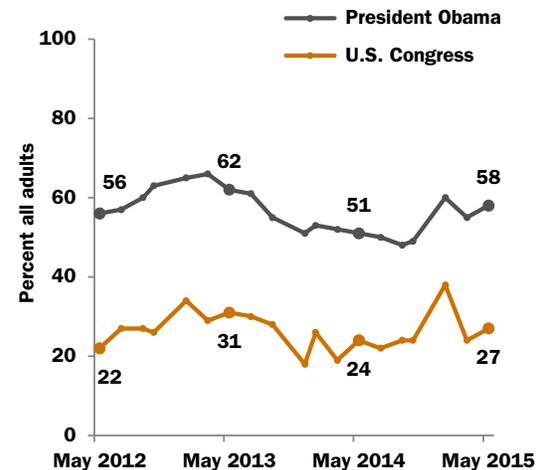
KEY FINDINGS

- Fifty-two percent of Californians approve of Governor Brown's job performance, and 47 percent approve of his handling of the current drought. Approval of the state legislature is at 37 percent. *(page 16)*
- Solid majorities of Californians think that the state government is run by a few big interests. A majority say the state government wastes a lot of money, while 61 percent say they think you can trust the state government to do what is right only some of the time. *(page 17)*
- Fifty-eight percent of Californians approve of President Obama's job performance. The U.S. Congress gets approval from 27 percent of Californians. *(page 18)*
- Seventy-two percent of Californians think the federal government is run by a few big interests. A solid majority say that the federal government wastes a lot of money, while 65 percent say they think you can trust the federal government to do what is right only some of the time. *(page 19)*
- Low voter turnout in California elections is viewed as a big problem by 59 percent of adults—including 66 percent of likely voters and half of unregistered adults. *(page 20)*
- Strong majorities of Californians favor proposals to automatically register voters at the DMV and to send each registered voter a vote-by-mail ballot. *(page 20)*

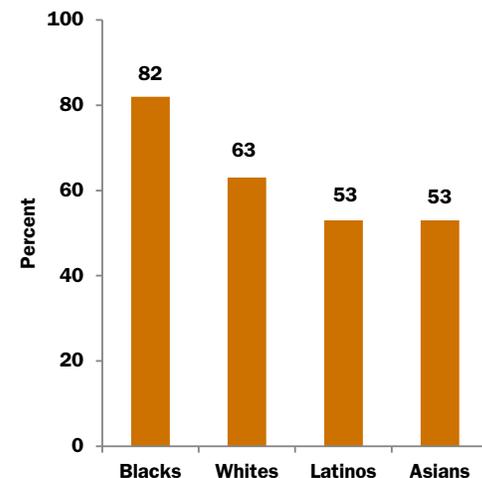
Approval Ratings of State Elected Officials



Approval Ratings of Federal Elected Officials



Low Voter Turnout as a Big Problem



APPROVAL RATINGS OF STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS

Fifty-two percent of all adults and 54 percent of likely voters approve of the way Jerry Brown is handling his job as governor. This is similar to the governor’s approval ratings in April (50% adults, 53% likely voters) and his approval last May (50% adults, 54% likely voters). Brown continues to receive high levels of approval among Democrats and liberals (73% and 61%), whereas Republicans and conservatives (30% and 41%) are less likely to approve. Among independents, 50 percent currently approve of the governor’s job performance, which is similar to their level of approval in April (53%) and a year ago (46%).

When asked about Jerry Brown’s response to the current drought, 47 percent of all adults and 44 percent of likely voters expressed approval. Approval of Brown’s drought response varies along party lines (57% Democrats, 30% Republicans, 43% independents). Approval of the governor’s handling of the drought is lowest in the Inland Empire (37%) and Orange/San Diego (43%) and is somewhat higher in Los Angeles (47%), the Central Valley (50%), and the San Francisco Bay Area (50%).

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters	
		Dem	Rep	Ind		
Jerry Brown is handling his job as governor of California	Approve	52%	73%	30%	50%	54%
	Disapprove	27	13	56	35	36
	Don’t know	21	14	14	14	10
Jerry Brown is handling the current drought	Approve	47	57	30	43	44
	Disapprove	38	32	56	46	47
	Don’t know	15	11	13	12	10

While approval levels for the governor have held steady, approval of the California Legislature has declined slightly. Thirty-seven percent of all adults and 30 percent of likely voters currently approve of the legislature’s job performance, a slight decline from April (42% adults, 36% likely voters). Last May, approval was at 40 percent among all adults and 36 percent among likely voters. Today, approval varies along party lines (47% Democrats, 15% Republicans, 28% independents). Approval of the legislature is highest in the San Francisco Bay Area (40%) followed by those in Los Angeles (38%), Central Valley (36%), Orange/San Diego (36%), and the Inland Empire (26%).

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

	Approve	Disapprove	Don’t know	
All adults	37%	43%	20%	
Likely voters	30	52	18	
Party	Democrats	47	34	19
	Republicans	15	69	17
	Independents	28	53	19
Region	Central Valley	36	52	12
	San Francisco Bay Area	40	40	20
	Los Angeles	38	41	21
	Orange/San Diego	36	44	20
	Inland Empire	26	41	34

TRUST IN STATE GOVERNMENT

Six in 10 Californians (61%) and likely voters (62%) think that they can trust the state government to do what is right only some of the time; an additional 6 percent of Californians and 9 percent of likely voters volunteer that they can never trust the state government to do what is right. In periodic surveys since August 2002, more than 60 percent of all adults have expressed distrust in state government. Majorities of Democrats, Republicans, and independents trust the state government only some of the time, and Republicans (14%) are most likely to volunteer that they can never trust the government to do what is right (3% Democrats, 7% independents). Among racial/ethnic groups, Asians (40%) are most likely to trust the state government most of the time or just about always, followed by Latinos (33%), blacks (27%), and whites (26%).

“How much of the time do you think you can trust the state government in Sacramento to do what is right?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Just about always	6%	4%	2%	3%	2%
Most of the time	25	33	14	21	25
Only some of the time	61	58	67	68	62
None of the time (volunteered)	6	3	14	7	9
Don't know	2	2	2	1	2

Solid majorities of adults overall and likely voters say that the state government is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves (62% adults, 65% likely voters). At least six in 10 Californians have held this view in periodic surveys since January 2004. Majorities of Democrats (56%), independents (68%), and Republicans (77%) currently think the state government is run by a few big interests. Across parties, Democrats are most likely to hold the opposite belief that the state government is run for the benefit of all the people (37% Democrats, 24% independents, 13% Republicans).

Majorities of all adults (52%) and likely voters (57%) think that the state government wastes a lot of the money Californians pay in taxes, while 36 percent of adults and 35 percent of likely voters think the government wastes some taxpayer money. These responses are similar to last May, when 89 percent of Californians said the state government wastes a lot (48%) or some (41%) of the money paid in taxes. Today, Republicans (73%) are much more likely than independents (52%) or Democrats (42%) to think the government wastes a lot.

“Do you think the people in state government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
A lot	52%	42%	73%	52%	57%
Some	36	47	21	38	35
Don't waste very much	9	9	3	7	6
Don't know	3	2	3	4	2

APPROVAL RATINGS OF FEDERAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

Fifty-eight percent of all Californians approve of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president of the United States. Californians (58%) are more likely than adults nationwide to approve of the president (46% approve, 48% disapprove) according to a recent Pew Research Center Poll. Among California likely voters, the president's job approval rating stands at 49 percent. His overall approval rating has changed little since March (55% adults, 49% likely voters). One year ago, the president's approval rating was lower among all adults (51% May 2014) but similar among likely voters (50% May 2014). Today, President Obama's job approval in California is highest among residents of the San Francisco Bay Area (65%) and Los Angeles (63%), followed by Orange/San Diego (54%), the Inland Empire (50%), and the Central Valley (47%). Obama's job approval among Latinos has increased since last May: 67 percent of Latinos approve of the way the president is handling his job, up from 52 percent a year ago.

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

		Approve	Disapprove	Don't know
All adults		58%	38%	4%
All likely voters		49	46	5
Party	Democrats	79	17	4
	Republicans	16	81	3
	Independents	44	49	7
Region	Central Valley	47	46	7
	San Francisco Bay Area	65	32	3
	Los Angeles	63	32	5
	Orange/San Diego	54	42	4
	Inland Empire	50	47	2

Job approval for the U.S. Congress is at 27 percent among all adults and 20 percent among likely voters. Overall approval levels for Congress were similar in March of this year (24% adults, 16% likely voters) and in May 2014 (24% adults, 14% likely voters). Latinos (40%) are more likely than Asians (27%) to approve of Congress and much more likely than whites (19%) or blacks (18%) to approve. Approval levels decline as age and level of education increase.

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

		Approve	Disapprove	Don't know
All adults		27%	68%	5%
All likely voters		20	74	6
Party	Democrats	26	68	6
	Republicans	16	74	10
	Independents	21	76	3
Region	Central Valley	33	64	4
	San Francisco Bay Area	20	77	3
	Los Angeles	27	68	5
	Orange/San Diego	31	64	4
	Inland Empire	25	69	6

TRUST IN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Levels of distrust in the federal government continue to be high. Sixty-five percent of Californians say they think the federal government can be trusted to do what is right only some of the time, while 7 percent volunteer that it can never be trusted; 27 percent of Californians say it can be trusted just about always (8%) or most of the time (19%). Distrust among likely voters is slightly higher (69% only some of the time, 9% none of the time). Californians held similar views last May (64% only some of the time, 8% none of the time). At least six in 10 Californians have expressed distrust since August 2002. While distrust is high across parties, Republicans (87%) and independents (77%) are more likely than Democrats (66%) to express distrust.

“How much of the time do you think you can trust the federal government in Washington to do what is right?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Just about always	8%	6%	–%	7%	3%
Most of the time	19	26	11	16	18
Only some of the time	65	61	76	68	69
None of the time (volunteered)	7	5	11	9	9
Don't know	1	1	1	–	1

Seven in 10 Californians (72%) say the federal government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves; just one in four (23%) think that it is run for the benefit of all the people. Likely voters hold similar views (76% a few big interests, 19% benefit of all). Views among all adults today are similar to those in May 2014 (70% a few big interests) and have been similar each of the six times we have asked this question since October 2010. Strong majorities across parties (83% Republicans, 77% independents, 70% Democrats) say the federal government is run by a few big interests, as do strong majorities across regions. Whites (78%) and blacks (79%) are more likely than Asians (60%) and Latinos (69%) to say the federal government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves.

A solid majority of Californians (61%) think that the federal government wastes a lot of the money paid in taxes, and 30 percent say it wastes at least some tax money. Likely voter opinions are similar (66% a lot, 28% some). Views among all adults were similar last May (58% a lot, 33% some), and in surveys dating back to 1998, majorities have said a lot of taxpayer money is wasted. Today, Republicans (77%) are more likely than independents (65%) and Democrats (55%) to hold this view. Blacks (73%) and whites (68%) are more likely than Latinos (53%) and Asians (51%) to say a lot of taxpayer money is wasted.

“Do you think the people in the federal government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
A lot	61%	55%	77%	65%	66%
Some	30	34	21	33	28
Don't waste very much	7	9	1	2	4
Don't know	2	2	1	1	1

VOTER TURNOUT AND ELECTION REFORMS

With historically low turnout in both the primary and the general elections in 2014, do Californians view voter turnout as a problem? When asked how problematic it is that many Californians who are eligible to vote don't always do so, more than eight in 10 say this is either a big problem (59%) or somewhat of a problem (25%); just 13 percent say it is not much of a problem. Majorities across parties call it a big problem, with 66 percent of both Democrats and Republicans holding this view, followed by 59 percent of independents. Half of those who are not registered to vote (49%) say that low turnout is a big problem. Residents in the San Francisco Bay Area (63%) are the most likely—and those in the Inland Empire (55%) the least likely—to hold this view. Blacks (82%) are by far the most likely racial/ethnic group to see low turnout as a big problem, followed by whites (63%), Latinos (53%), and Asians (53%).

“Many people who are eligible to vote in elections don't always do so. Do you think this is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem in California today?”

		Big problem	Somewhat of a problem	Not much of a problem	Don't know
All adults		59%	25%	13%	2%
All likely voters		66	21	11	2
Party	Democrats	66	24	9	1
	Republicans	66	19	11	4
	Independents	59	22	16	3
Region	Central Valley	58	23	18	1
	San Francisco Bay Area	63	23	13	1
	Los Angeles	60	24	14	2
	Orange/San Diego	60	27	9	4
	Inland Empire	55	29	14	2

Among nonregistered adults, one of the top reasons given for not registering to vote—apart from citizenship status (32%)—is being too busy or not having enough time (10%). Lack of time (30%) is the top reason for not voting given by registered adults who don't always vote. When asked about a policy (enacted in Oregon and under consideration in California) to automatically register eligible citizens to vote when they visit the DMV, two in three adults (69%) and likely voters (67%) express support. Support is similar for another idea aimed at making it easier to vote: automatically sending each registered voter a vote by mail ballot. Two in three adults (70%) and likely voters (66%) favor this idea. Support for both reforms is higher among Democrats than independents or Republicans. More than six in 10 adult residents across regions and demographic groups are in favor of both electoral reforms.

“Electoral reforms have been proposed to address registration and voter turnout issues. For each of the following, please say if you favor or oppose the proposal. How about automatically...?”

		All adults	Party			Likely voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
Registering eligible citizens to vote when they go to the DMV	Favor	69%	79%	49%	66%	67%
	Oppose	29	19	48	34	31
	Don't know	2	2	3	–	2
Sending each registered voter a vote-by-mail ballot	Favor	70	76	58	67	66
	Oppose	28	23	40	31	32
	Don't know	2	2	2	2	2

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 and survey research associate Lunna Lopes, co-project managers for this survey, and survey research associate David Kordus. The *Californians and their Government* series is supported with funding from the James Irvine Foundation. 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 1,706 California adult residents, including 1,021 interviewed on landline telephones and 685 interviewed on cell phones. Interviews took an average of 20 minutes to complete. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights from May 17–27, 2015.

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, race/ethnicity, education, telephone service, and party registration groups.

The sampling error, taking design effects from weighting into consideration, is ± 3.6 percent at the 95 percent confidence level for the total unweighted sample of 1,706 adults. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 3.6 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for unweighted subgroups is larger: for the 1,374 registered voters, the sampling error is ± 4.0 percent; for the 1,048 likely voters, it is ± 4.6 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. In several places, we refer to coastal and inland counties. The coastal region refers to the counties along the California coast from Del Norte County to San Diego County and includes all of the San Francisco Bay Area counties. All other counties are included in the inland region.

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 CBS News and Pew Research Center. 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

May 17–27, 2015

1,706 California Adult Residents:
English, Spanish

MARGIN OF ERROR $\pm 3.6\%$ AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE
PERCENTAGES MAY NOT ADD TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING

1. First, thinking about the state as a whole, what do you think is the most important issue facing people in California today?

[code, don't read]
39% water, drought
20 jobs, economy
5 crime, gangs, drugs
5 environment, pollution, global warming
4 immigration, illegal immigration
3 education, schools, teachers
3 housing costs, availability
3 state budget, deficit, taxes
2 government in general
2 health care, health reform, Obamacare
11 other
3 don't know
2. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Jerry Brown is handling his job as governor of California?

52% approve
27 disapprove
21 don't know
- 2a. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Jerry Brown is handling the current drought?

47% approve
38 disapprove
15 don't know
3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job?

37% approve
43 disapprove
20 don't know
4. Do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

45% right direction
46 wrong direction
8 don't know
5. Turning to economic conditions in California, do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?

48% good times
42 bad times
10 don't know
6. Next, 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?

47% big problem
36 somewhat of a problem
12 not a problem
5 don't know

7. As you may know, voters passed Proposition 30 in November 2012. It increased taxes on earnings over \$250,000 for seven years and sales taxes by one quarter cent for four years, to fund schools and guarantee public safety realignment funding. Do you favor or oppose extending the Proposition 30 tax increases which are set to fully expire in 2018 (**if favor:** “And would you favor or oppose making the Proposition 30 tax increases permanent?”)

- 33% favor, even if it is permanent
- 16 favor, but oppose if it is permanent
- 44 oppose
- 7 don't know

For each of the following, please say if you favor or oppose the proposal.

[rotate questions 8 to 10]

8. How about taxing the extraction of oil and natural gas in California?

- 44% favor
- 50 oppose
- 6 don't know

9. How about increasing state taxes on the purchase of cigarettes?

- 70% favor
- 27 oppose
- 3 don't know

10. How about extending the state sales tax to services that are not currently taxed while lowering the overall sales tax rate?

- 42% favor
- 46 oppose
- 11 don't know

11. Under Proposition 13, residential and commercial property taxes are both strictly limited. What do you think about having commercial properties taxed according to their current market value? Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

- 50% favor
- 43 oppose
- 7 don't know

12. Overall, do you think the state and local tax system is in need of major changes, minor changes, or do you think it is fine the way it is?

- 49% major changes
- 32 minor changes
- 15 fine the way it is
- 4 don't know

13. Governor Brown recently released a revised budget plan for the next fiscal year that will increase spending on K–12 and higher education, and modestly increase spending on health and human services, prisons, and courts. The plan includes funds to pay down the state’s debt including repayment of previously deferred payments to K–12 schools and paying off economic recovery bonds that were passed in 2004 to balance the budget. The plan puts \$1.9 billion into the state’s rainy day fund, allocates \$2.2 billion for emergency drought response, and includes no new taxes. In general, do you favor or oppose the governor’s budget plan?

- 73% favor
- 23 oppose
- 4 don't know

13a. As part of his revised budget plan, Governor Brown has proposed establishing the state's first Earned Income Tax Credit. This refundable tax credit for wages earned would benefit two million of the lowest-income Californians and cost about \$380 million in its first year. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

- 60% favor
- 31 oppose
- 9 don't know

14. In his revised budget plan Governor Brown proposes increasing state funding for the University of California system by 4 percent in each of the next four years in return for a two-year tuition freeze. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

- 63% favor
- 32 oppose
- 5 don't know

14a. The state is projected to have a budget surplus of several billion dollars over the next several years. 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?

- 52% pay down debt and build up reserve
- 43 restore funding for social services
- 5 don't know

15. On another topic, would you say that the supply of water is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem in your part of California?

- 69% big problem
- 20 somewhat of a problem
- 10 not much of a problem
- 1 don't know

15a. Overall, do you think that the people in your part of California are doing too much, the right amount, or not enough to respond to the current drought in California?

- 7% too much
- 28 the right amount
- 60 not enough
- 5 don't know

16. Governor Brown recently directed the State Water Resources Control Board to implement mandatory water reductions in cities and towns across California to reduce statewide water usage by 25 percent. Do you think this action does too much, the right amount, or not enough to respond to the current drought in California?

- 12% too much
- 46 the right amount
- 36 not enough
- 6 don't know

Changing topics,

17. How much of the time do you think you can trust the state government in Sacramento to do what is right—just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

- 6% just about always
- 25 most of the time
- 61 only some of the time
- 6 none of the time (*volunteered*)
- 2 don't know

18. Would you say the state government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of all of the people?

- 62% a few big interests
- 30 benefit of all of the people
- 8 don't know

19. Do you think the people in state government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?

- 52% a lot
- 36 some
- 9 don't waste very much
- 3 don't know

20. On another topic, overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barack Obama is handling his job as president of the United States?

- 58% approve
- 38 disapprove
- 4 don't know

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

- 27% approve
- 68 disapprove
- 5 don't know

22. Next, how much of the time do you think you can trust the federal government in Washington today to do what is right—just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

- 8% just about always
- 19 most of the time
- 65 only some of the time
- 7 none of the time (*volunteered*)
- 1 don't know

23. Would you say the federal government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of all of the people?

- 72% a few big interests
- 23 benefit of all of the people
- 5 don't know

24. Do you think the people in the federal government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?

- 61% a lot
- 30 some
- 7 don't waste very much
- 2 don't know

On another topic,

25. Many people who are eligible to vote in elections don't always do so. Do you think this is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem in California today?

- 59% big problem
- 25 somewhat of a problem
- 13 not much of a problem
- 2 don't know

[rotate questions 26 and 27]

Electoral reforms have been proposed to address registration and voter turnout issues. For each of the following, please say if you favor or oppose the proposal.

26. How about automatically registering eligible citizens to vote when they go to the DMV?

- 69% favor
- 29 oppose
- 2 don't know

27. How about automatically sending each registered voter a vote-by-mail ballot?

- 70% favor
- 28 oppose
- 2 don't know

28. Changing topics, should children who have not been vaccinated from diseases like measles, mumps, and rubella be allowed to attend public schools, or not?

- 29% should be allowed
- 67 should not be allowed
- 4 don't know

29. In general, how safe are vaccines given to children for diseases like measles, mumps, and rubella—very safe, somewhat safe, not very safe, or not safe at all?

- 57% very safe
- 30 somewhat safe
- 7 not very safe
- 3 not safe at all
- 3 don't know

30. Next, in general, do you think the use of marijuana should be legal, or not?

- 54% yes, legal
- 44 no, not legal
- 2 don't know

31. If marijuana were legal, how concerned are you that it would lead to more underage people trying it—very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 46% very concerned
- 18 somewhat concerned
- 20 not too concerned
- 16 not at all concerned
- 1 don't know

32. Keeping in mind that all of your answers in the survey are confidential, have you ever tried marijuana? (**if yes:** Have you used marijuana in the last 12 months?)

- 15% yes have tried marijuana, used in the past year
- 29 yes, have tried marijuana, not in the past year
- 55 no, have not tried marijuana
- don't know

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

- 69% yes **[ask q33a]**
- 30 no **[skip to q34b]**
- 1 don't know **[skip to q34b]**

33a. 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 q34]**
- 28 Republican **[ask q34a]**
- 5 another party (specify) **[skip to q35]**
- 24 independent **[ask q34b]**

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

- 56% strong
- 42 not very strong
- 1 don't know

[skip to q35]

34a. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

- 46% strong
- 50 not very strong
- 4 don't know

[skip to q35]

34b. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?

- 23% Republican Party
- 47 Democratic Party
- 21 neither (volunteered)
- 9 don't know

34c. **[unregistered adults only]** There are many reasons why people don't register to vote. Could you please tell me the main reason why you're not registered to vote?

[code, don't read]

- 32% not a U.S. citizen
- 10 too busy to register/no time
- 7 don't know enough about the choices or issues
- 6 no confidence in government, politics, or politicians
- 6 voting doesn't change things/my vote doesn't matter
- 4 avoid jury duty
- 4 felony, parole
- 4 in transition, just turned 18
- 4 not interested in politics
- 4 recently moved/relocated
- 3 just don't want to
- 13 something else (*specify*)
- 3 don't know

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

- 11% very liberal
- 20 somewhat liberal
- 31 middle-of-the-road
- 22 somewhat conservative
- 14 very conservative
- 2 don't know

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

- 21% great deal
- 39 fair amount
- 32 only a little
- 8 none
- 1 don't know

37a. **[among those who say they do not always vote]**

There are many reasons people aren't able to vote. Could you please tell me the main reason why you don't always vote?

[code, don't read]

- 30% too busy to vote/no time
- 9 lack of interest in the issues/particular election
- 8 don't know enough about the choices or issues
- 6 didn't like the candidates
- 6 forgot to vote
- 4 illness
- 4 no way to get to polls
- 4 traveling
- 4 voting does not change things/my vote doesn't matter
- 3 in transition, just moved, just old enough, just registered
- 3 not interested in politics
- 2 no confidence in government, politics, or politicians
- 2 unfamiliar with the process, particular election, undecided
- 12 something else (*specify*)
- 3 don't know

[d1 to d17: demographic questions]

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