

# **PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and Their Government**

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**Public  
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California**

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## Preface

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California is in the midst of historic changes that will profoundly affect its future. To understand these changes and how they influence voters' choices at the ballot box, PPIC is conducting a series of comprehensive statewide surveys on the theme of "Californians and Their Government." This report presents the results of the ninth of these statewide surveys, which will continue up to the November 2000 election. The first eight surveys in this series were conducted in September, November, and December of 1999 and in January, February, June, July, and August of 2000. Several of these surveys were special editions, focusing on particular regions and themes (November 1999 on the Central Valley, June 2000 on the environment, and July 2000 on San Diego County).

The purpose of the PPIC Statewide Survey is to develop an in-depth profile of the social, economic, and political forces affecting California elections and public policy preferences. The surveys are intended to provide the public, the media, and policymakers with relevant, non-partisan, advocacy-free information on the following:

- What Californians know about government at all levels, how they rate elected officials and public services, and what government actions they prefer.
- The public's interest in civic affairs and politics, their current and preferred information sources, their attention to state political news, and their ratings of the media.
- How growing regions and groups—such as the Central Valley, suburban regions, Latinos, and independent voters—affect the state's elections and policy debates.
- The political attitudes and perceptions that are tied to "voter distrust" of government, and the social, economic, and political factors that explain low voter turnout in state elections.
- The role of political, social, and economic attitudes in public support for citizens' initiatives and government reform proposals.

Copies of earlier survey reports or additional copies of this report may be ordered by e-mail ([order@ppic.org](mailto:order@ppic.org)) or phone (415-291-4400). The reports are also posted on the publications page of the PPIC web site ([www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org)).

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## Press Release

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### ISSUES KEY TO GORE'S STRONG SHOWING IN CALIFORNIA

#### Substantial Gender Gap in All Major Races; Majority Now Opposes Voucher Initiative

SAN FRANCISCO, California, September 19, 2000 — What a difference a month makes. Growing support for Al Gore among key voter blocs — women, Latinos, and independents — has propelled the Vice President out of a virtual tie and into the lead in the vote-rich Golden State, according to a new survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC). Much of this support appears to stem from voter confidence in Gore's ability to handle the issues they care about — education, health care, and Social Security and Medicare.

In the first independent survey since the Labor Day campaign kickoff, Vice President Gore leads Texas Governor George W. Bush by a 9-point margin in California (48% to 39%). The biggest changes since last month's survey? An 8-point increase for Gore accompanied by a sizeable decline in support for Green Party candidate Ralph Nader (from 8% to 4%) and a 7-point drop in undecideds. In August, voters outside the two major parties favored Bush over Gore; now, they favor Gore over Bush by a wide margin (42% to 28%). Gore is ahead by a 20-point margin among women (54% to 34%) and has narrowed Bush's earlier lead among men to just 2 percent (42% to 44%). In addition, Gore now leads Bush by a wider margin among Latinos (61% to 28%) and has cut Bush's lead among non-Hispanic whites to a single point (43% to 44%).

"In California's new political landscape, once-marginal voter groups such as Latinos and independents now hold the key to success at the polls," said PPIC Statewide Survey Director Mark Baldassare. "Since the Democratic convention in August, Al Gore seems to have found a way to connect with these key voters. As a result, they are now swinging his way — and toward Democrats in general."

Indeed, Gore's progress in California may also hinder Republican efforts to hold on to Congress. There are early signs of a "coattail effect": 86 percent of Gore's voters — including many independents — favor the Democrat in their local Congressional race. And when voters are asked who they support in Congressional elections, Democrats now hold the same 9-point edge over Republicans that they do in the Gore-Bush match-up (48% to 39%). Interestingly, state voters (57%) are more likely than the nation as a whole (46%) to say that the issue of which party controls Congress will be a factor in their vote. Those who say party control is a factor favor Democrats over Republicans (51% to 40%) in their House races.

#### Issues Matter

Much of Gore's current success in California appears driven by his connection with voters on a few major issues. When asked what one issue they would most like to hear the candidates talk about during next month's debates, voters say schools and education (19%), health care and HMO reform (15%), Social Security and Medicare (14%), and taxes and tax cuts (11%). On all but one of these topics, voters say they believe that Gore would do a better job of handling the issue. In fact, Gore holds double-digit leads over Bush on the top three issues for state voters: education (55% to 36%), health care (58% to 32%), and Social Security (54% to 36%). On the issue of tax cuts, Bush leads Gore by a wide margin (53% to 35%), although Latinos prefer Gore over Bush on this issue (52% to 36%).

Voters also express more confidence in how Bush would handle issues concerning the military (55% to 32%). But despite Republican efforts to create a campaign issue over military preparedness, a majority of Californians (54%)

believe the military is currently as strong as it needs to be, mirroring the results of national surveys. Like the nation as a whole, Californians also favor a prescription drug benefit through Medicare (74%) — even if it means increasing premiums and program costs — and prefer using the budget surplus to cut taxes (40%) rather than to reduce the debt (33%) or improve funding for government programs (22%). However, on the subject of controlling gun violence, Californians stand apart from the rest of the nation: They are more likely to say that better enforcement of existing gun laws, rather than the adoption of new laws and regulations, is the way to decrease gun violence (56% to 41%).

### **Public Conflicted About Education Initiatives**

Although education is a priority for state voters, a majority (53%) are now opposed to Proposition 38, the school vouchers initiative. Prop. 38 faces an uphill battle in large part because it is not viewed as a solution to improving schools or student performance: Voters believe that passage of the voucher initiative will not help the public school system (56%) or the students with the lowest test scores (53%).

A near majority of voters (49%) say they will vote yes on Proposition 39, which would make it possible to approve local school bonds with a 55 percent majority rather than a two-thirds vote. Opposition to Prop. 39 increases from 37 percent to 48 percent when voters learn that the initiative could result in property tax increases. However, support for the initiative grows from 49 percent to 57 percent when voters are told of the measure's school accountability requirements. "The outcome of the measure hinges on the ability of supporters and opponents to focus voters on the details," said Baldassare.

### **Year of the Woman: The Sequel?**

A sizeable gender gap is evident in each of the statewide political contests included in the PPIC Statewide Survey and, interestingly, women appear to be on the majority side in each of these races. As he moved into the lead in California, Al Gore saw his margin of support among women expand rapidly (from 13% in August to 20% in September). U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein — who remains far ahead of Rep. Tom Campbell in the race for U.S. Senate (48% to 31%) — has a two-to-one lead over her Republican challenger among women (51% to 26%). Women also support the Democrat over the Republican candidate in Congressional races by a 20-point margin (55% to 35%), oppose Proposition 38 by 21 points (55% to 34%), and favor Proposition 39 by 19 points (51% to 32%). "Women voters appear to be picking the political winners in California this election cycle," said Baldassare.

On the issues, women are more interested than men in hearing the candidates' views on education (21% to 16%), health care (18% to 12%), and Social Security and Medicare (16% to 11%), while men express greater interest in tax cuts (14% to 9%) and foreign policy (7% to 3%).

### **State Scorecard**

Governor Gray Davis continues to enjoy high job approval ratings. Two in three Californians say they approve of the way he is handling his job and only one in four disapproves. However, more Californians disapprove of Davis' handling of the recent utility deregulation crisis in San Diego than approve of how he has handled the issue (36% to 28%). Among Californians closely watching this news story, 34 percent approve and 45 percent disapprove of the Governor's performance on deregulation.

Although few Californians closely followed news stories about bills passed by the State Senate and Assembly before their recent session ended, the California Legislature also receives the approval of a majority of residents (56%). Residents also voice support for the way the Legislature has handled the investigation of the scandal-plagued State Insurance Commissioner, with 56 percent approving of the Legislature's performance and 24 percent disapproving. Among Californians who closely followed this news story, 69 percent approve of the Legislature's handling of the investigation.

## Other Key Findings

- **Consumer Confidence** (page 29)

Consumer confidence is still climbing in the state: 42% of residents say they are better off today than they were a year ago, and 48% say they expect to be even better off a year from now.

- **Owning a Home** (page 30)

8 in 10 homeowners say they have seen the value of their home increase in the past few years, with 66% of San Francisco Bay Area homeowners saying their property value has increased a lot. 69% of renters — and 77% of Latino renters — say they expect to own a home in the state someday.

- **Open Border with Mexico** (page 26)

Most Californians (65%) and a majority of Latinos (51%) say an open border between the United States and Mexico — as suggested by Mexican President-elect Vicente Fox — is a bad idea.

- **Poll Watching** (page 20)

By a two-to-one margin, Californians believe members of Congress should read polls to learn the public's views on the issues (66% to 30%).

- **Tobacco Settlement Windfall** (page 13)

Strong majorities believe the state (73%) and counties (71%) should be required to spend all money they receive from the national tobacco lawsuit settlement on health-related programs.

- **Internet Use** (page 31)

68 percent of Californians say they often or sometimes use the Internet, compared to 60 percent one year ago.

- **E-mail Monitoring** (page 33)

A majority of Californians (54%) believe that employers should be allowed to monitor the e-mail messages of their employees at work.

## About the Survey

The purpose of the PPIC Statewide Survey is to develop an in-depth profile of the social, economic, and political forces affecting California elections and public policy preferences. PPIC will conduct large-scale public opinion surveys on a regular basis leading up to the November 2000 election. Findings of the current survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,014 California adult residents interviewed from September 5 to September 11, 2000. Interviews were conducted in English or Spanish. The sampling error for the total sample is +/- 2%. The sampling error for the 1,651 registered voters is +/- 2.5% and for the 1,099 likely voters is +/- 3.5%. For additional information on survey methodology, see page 35.

Dr. Mark Baldassare is a senior fellow and program director at PPIC. He is founder and director of the PPIC Statewide Survey, which he has conducted since 1998. For over two decades, he has directed surveys for the University of California, Irvine and major state news organizations. Dr. Baldassare is the author of numerous books, including *California in the New Millennium: The Changing Social and Political Landscape* (University of California Press, 2000).

PPIC is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to objective, nonpartisan research on economic, social, and political issues that affect the lives of Californians. The Institute was established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. This report will appear on PPIC's Web site ([www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org)) on September 19, 2000.

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## California 2000 Election

### Presidential Election

Coming into the homestretch of the presidential campaign, Vice President Al Gore leads Texas Governor George W. Bush by nine points (48% to 39%) in California. Ralph Nader and other minor-party candidates have only small followings, while 7 percent of likely voters are yet undecided. Since PPIC's survey last month, Gore has gained eight points (40% to 48%), compared to Bush's two-point gain (37% to 39%), Nader's four-point decline (8% to 4%), and a seven-point drop in the undecided vote (14% to 7%).

In presidential preferences, as in other issues addressed by the survey, a gender gap emerges: Women support Gore over Bush by a big margin (54% to 34%), while men favor Bush over Gore, although by a very narrow margin (44% to 42%).

Both candidates have a lock on their own parties at this point, with 85 percent of Democrats supporting Gore and 81 percent of Republicans ready to vote for Bush. However, voters outside of the major parties give Gore a big edge over Bush (42% to 28%). Gore has larger leads over Bush in the Democratic strongholds of Los Angeles County and the San Francisco Bay area than Bush has over Gore in the more Republican-leaning other regions of Southern California and in the Central Valley. Latinos favor Gore over Bush (61% to 28%), while non-Hispanic whites are split in their support for Bush (44%) and Gore (43%).

**"If the election for president were held today, who would you vote for?"**

	<u>Likely Voters</u>	
	Aug 00	Sept 00
<b>Democratic ticket of Al Gore and Joseph Lieberman</b>	40%	<b>48%</b>
<b>Republican ticket of George W. Bush and Richard Cheney</b>	37	<b>39</b>
<b>Green Party ticket of Ralph Nader and Winona La Duke</b>	8	<b>4</b>
<b>Others*</b>	1	<b>2</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	14	<b>7</b>

\* includes listed candidates Harry Browne (1%) and Patrick Buchanan (1%), and volunteered responses.

	<u>Likely Voters (September 2000)</u>							
	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>				<u>Latino</u>
	Dem	Rep	Other Voters	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b>Al Gore</b>	85%	10%	42%	41%	57%	53%	41%	61%
<b>George W. Bush</b>	6	81	28	47	28	31	49	28
<b>Ralph Nader</b>	3	1	12	4	7	5	1	3
<b>Others</b>	0	1	6	1	1	3	2	2
<b>Don't know</b>	6	7	12	7	7	8	7	5

## Issues for the Presidential Debates

When the candidates face off in debates, most likely voters in California (59%) want to hear them talk about schools, health care, Social Security and Medicare, and taxes and tax cuts. Few voters are interested in the candidates' positions on subjects such as foreign policy, the economy, the environment, gun control, abortion, and immigration.

In another instance of gender differences, women are more interested than men in the candidates' views on schools (21% to 16%), health care (18% to 12%), and Social Security and Medicare (16% to 11%). Men are more interested than women in tax cuts (14% to 9%) and foreign policy (7% to 3%).

Democrats have more interest than Republicans in hearing about health care (21% to 9%), schools (21% to 17%), and Social Security and Medicare (16% to 11%). Republicans have more interest than Democrats in tax cuts (18% to 6%) and foreign policy (8% to 4%). Latinos are much more likely than non-Hispanic whites to want the candidates to talk about schools (26% to 16%) during the presidential debates.

**"Which one issue would you most like to hear the candidates talk about during the debates?"**

	<u>Likely Voters (September 2000)</u>				
	<u>All Likely Voters</u>	<u>Party</u>			<u>Latino</u>
		<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Other</u>	
<b>Schools, education</b>	19%	21%	17%	18%	26%
<b>Health care, HMO reform</b>	15	21	9	13	15
<b>Social Security, Medicare</b>	14	16	11	13	15
<b>Taxes, cutting taxes</b>	11	6	18	9	8
<b>Foreign policy, national security, defense</b>	5	4	8	3	3
<b>Jobs, the economy, unemployment</b>	5	5	4	5	5
<b>Environment, pollution</b>	3	2	2	6	1
<b>Federal budget, spending surplus</b>	4	3	3	9	2
<b>Abortion</b>	3	2	4	1	2
<b>Morals, family values</b>	2	1	2	3	1
<b>Campaign finance reform</b>	2	2	1	4	3
<b>Guns, gun control</b>	2	1	3	3	1
<b>Crime, gangs</b>	1	1	2	0	1
<b>Immigration, illegal immigration</b>	1	1	1	1	8
<b>Other*</b>	3	4	3	4	1
<b>Don't know</b>	10	9	12	8	8

\*Includes responses of less than 1% for issues such as poverty, welfare, homelessness, and race relations.

## Ranking of Candidates on Issues

We asked Californians whether they think Gore or Bush would do a better job in handling five dominant issues in the presidential campaign so far. Gore leads Bush by large margins on three issues that currently also rank high on the list of voters' concerns: education (55% to 36%), health care (58% to 32%), and Social Security and Medicare (54% to 36%). In contrast, Bush has large margins over Gore on cutting taxes (53% to 35%) and the military (55% to 32%), two issues that Bush's campaign has focused on in recent weeks.

When it comes to education, health care and Social Security and Medicare, eight in 10 Democrats have more confidence in Gore than Bush, while six in 10 think Gore would do the better job when it comes to the military and cutting taxes. Eight in 10 Republicans favor Bush over Gore on handling the military and cutting taxes,, while two in three favor Bush when it comes to education, Social Security and Medicare, and health care. Voters outside of the major parties favor Gore over Bush by two-to-one margins for handling education, health care, and Social Security, and Bush over Gore, but by narrower margins, when it comes to the military and tax cuts.

Currently, Latinos believe Gore would do a better job than Bush in handling four issues (education, health care, cutting taxes, and Social Security and Medicare), while giving Bush the nod over Gore on the military. In contrast, non-Hispanic whites favor Bush over Gore for cutting taxes (58% to 31%).

**"Regardless of your choice for president, do you think Bush or Gore  
would do a better job handling each of these issues?"**

	<u>Likely Voters (September 2000)</u>				
	<u>All Likely Voters</u>	<u>Party</u>			<u>Latino</u>
		Democrat	Republican	Other	
<b><i>Education</i></b>					
Bush	36%	9%	69%	26%	28%
Gore	55	84	22	59	66
Neither, both	2	2	2	6	2
Don't know	7	5	7	9	4
<b><i>Social Security</i></b>					
Bush	36%	8%	70%	28%	30%
Gore	54	84	18	59	58
Neither, both	3	3	3	5	3
Don't know	7	5	9	8	9
<b><i>Cutting taxes</i></b>					
Bush	53%	30%	80%	47%	36%
Gore	35	59	12	31	52
Neither, both	4	3	2	8	3
Don't know	8	8	6	14	9
<b><i>Health care</i></b>					
Bush	32%	7%	63%	27%	26%
Gore	58	86	25	61	64
Neither, both	3	2	2	6	4
Don't know	7	5	10	6	6
<b><i>The military</i></b>					
Bush	55%	30%	85%	52%	52%
Gore	32	55	8	31	37
Neither, both	3	2	1	6	2
Don't know	10	13	6	11	9

## U.S. Senate Election

Senator Dianne Feinstein maintains a substantial lead over Republican challenger Congressman Tom Campbell in the race for the U.S. Senate seat. Just under half of likely voters support Feinstein, 31 percent would vote for Campbell, 6 percent for third-party candidates, and 15 percent are undecided. These results are very similar to the 19-point edge Feinstein had in our August survey.

Once again, there is a gender gap. Both women and men favor Feinstein over Campbell, but the margin is much larger among women (51% to 26%) than among men (44% to 37%).

Both candidates have strong support in their own parties: 78 percent of Democrats would vote for Feinstein and 64 percent of Republicans for Campbell. Voters outside of the major parties favor Feinstein over Campbell by a 20-point margin (40% to 20%), though one in four is still undecided. Feinstein has a two-to-one lead over Campbell in the urban coastal regions of Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area and an 11-point lead in the Central Valley. However, the candidates are close in the Southern California region outside of Los Angeles. Latinos strongly back Feinstein over Campbell (61% to 16%), while non-Hispanic whites give Feinstein a narrower edge (43% to 36%).

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

<u>Likely Voters</u>		
	<b>Aug 00</b>	<b>Sept 00</b>
<b>Dianne Feinstein, Democrat</b>	52%	<b>48%</b>
<b>Tom Campbell, Republican</b>	33	<b>31</b>
<b>Medea Susan Benjamin, Green Party*</b>	–	<b>3</b>
<b>Gail Katherine Lightfoot, Libertarian Party*</b>	–	<b>2</b>
<b>Joe Camahort, Reform Party*</b>	–	<b>1</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	15	<b>15</b>

\* Was not given as an option in August 2000 survey.

	<u>Likely Voters (September 2000)</u>							
	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>				<u>Latino</u>
	<b>Dem</b>	<b>Rep</b>	<b>Other Voters</b>	<b>Central Valley</b>	<b>SF Bay Area</b>	<b>Los Angeles</b>	<b>Other Southern California</b>	
<b>Dianne Feinstein</b>	78%	18%	40%	45%	54%	53%	43%	61%
<b>Tom Campbell</b>	6	64	20	34	27	25	37	16
<b>Medea Susan Benjamin</b>	3	0	8	2	4	4	1	3
<b>Gail Katherine Lightfoot</b>	1	1	8	1	4	1	2	2
<b>Joe Camahort</b>	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	2
<b>Don't know</b>	11	16	23	17	9	17	16	16

## Congressional Elections

When we asked voters if they would support the Democrat or Republican candidate for the House in their district, Democrats gained the same nine-point edge over Republicans that we found in the Bush-Gore match up (48% to 39%). Republicans and Democrats would vote largely along party lines, but voters outside of the major parties favor the Democrats by 16 points (44% to 28%). There are early signs of a "coattail effect" in the Congressional races in California: 86% of those who would vote for Gore would also vote for the Democratic congressional candidate in their district.

The gender gap here is almost identical to the one for President: Women support the Democrat in the Congressional races by a 20-point margin (55% to 35%), while men narrowly support the Republican (44% to 42%).

Democratic candidates are favored over Republican candidates in Los Angeles (54% to 36%) and in the San Francisco Bay area (53% to 26%); Republicans are favored in the Southern California counties outside of Los Angeles (49% to 40%); and Democrats (47%) and Republicans (45%) have equal support in the Central Valley. Latinos strongly back Democrats over Republicans (64% to 26%), while non-Hispanic whites are divided between Republicans (44%) and Democrats (43%) running for Congress.

Which party controls Congress is an issue for 57 percent of California voters in thinking about how they will vote. Six in 10 Democrats and Republicans, and half of the voters outside of the major parties, claim that party control is an issue. As a point of comparison, in the national Pew Center Survey in July 2000, 46 percent of Americans said that party control was a factor in their vote for Congress. Those who say party control is a factor favor the Democrat over the Republican (51% to 40%) in their local House race.

**"If the election for the U.S. House of Representatives were being held today, would you vote for the Republican Party's candidate or the Democratic Party's candidate for the House in your district?"**

	<u>Likely Voters (September 2000)</u>				
	<u>All Likely Voters</u>	<u>Party</u>			<u>Latino</u>
		Democrat	Republican	Other	
<b>Republican</b>	39%	5%	82%	28%	26%
<b>Democrat</b>	48	87	8	44	64
<b>Other</b>	3	2	1	8	2
<b>Don't Know</b>	10	6	9	20	8

**"Thinking about your vote for Congress this fall, will the issue of which party controls Congress – the Republicans or the Democrats – be a factor in your vote, or not?"**

	<u>Likely Voters (September 2000)</u>				
	<u>All Likely Voters</u>	<u>Party</u>			<u>Latino</u>
		Democrat	Republican	Other	
<b>Yes, will be a factor</b>	57%	59%	58%	49%	55%
<b>No, will not be a factor</b>	41	39	40	50	41
<b>Don't Know</b>	2	2	2	1	4

**Proposition 38: School Vouchers**

A majority of voters now oppose Proposition 38, the school vouchers initiative, under which the state would provide payments for students to attend private and religious schools. Fifty-three percent would vote no, 37 percent would vote yes, and 10 percent are undecided.

Support for Proposition 38 varies across party lines: 67 percent of Democrats oppose it and 49 percent of Republicans favor it. Among voters outside of the major parties, 52 percent are against it.

Opposition to Proposition 38 is greater than support among both women and men. However, the margin is larger for women (55% to 34%) than for men (51% to 40%).

In all regions, opposition is greater than support, but it is strongest in the San Francisco Bay area. Latinos narrowly oppose the school vouchers initiative by a five-point margin (49% to 44%), while non-Hispanic whites reject Proposition 38 by a 17-point margin (53% to 36%).

Proposition 38 is not viewed as part of the solution to improving public schools and student performance. Most think that passage of the voucher initiative will not help the public school system (56%) nor the students with the lowest test scores (53%) in California. Overwhelmingly, voters holding these two negative perceptions would also vote no on Proposition 38.

**"On another topic, Proposition 38 – the school vouchers initiative on the November ballot – authorizes annual state payments of at least \$4,000 per pupil for private and religious schools. It permits replacement of the current constitutional public school spending formula. The fiscal impacts include near-term state costs from zero to \$1.1 billion annually. The long-term state impact is from \$2 billion in annual costs to \$3 billion in annual savings, depending on how many public school students shift to private schools. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on proposition 38?"**

<u>Likely Voters</u>		
	Aug 00*	Sept 00
Yes	45%	37%
No	44	53
Don't know	11	10

\*Question wording for August 2000 is from official title and summary. Wording for September 2000 is from ballot label.

	<u>Likely Voters (September 2000)</u>							
	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>				<u>Latino</u>
	Dem	Rep	Other Voters	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	Latino
Yes	24%	49%	41%	39%	31%	40%	40%	44%
No	67	38	52	47	62	50	51	49
Don't know	9	13	7	14	7	10	9	7

**"If the voucher initiative passes, overall, do you think that it will or will not help the public school system in California?"**

Likely Voters	
<b>Will</b>	34%
<b>Will not</b>	56
<b>Don't know</b>	10

**"If the voucher initiative passes, overall, do you think that it will or will not help the students with the lowest test scores in California?"**

Likely Voters	
<b>Will</b>	36%
<b>Will not</b>	53
<b>Don't know</b>	11

### **Proposition 39: 55 Percent Majority**

When they are read the official ballot label that was recently released by the California Secretary of State, a near-majority of voters (49%) now say they will vote yes on Proposition 39, thus making it possible to approve local school bonds with a 55 percent majority vote. In PPIC's August survey, when read a description of the initiative from the official title and summary of Proposition 39 provided at the time by the Secretary of State, a majority of voters said they would vote no.

Given the wording of the ballot label (read to respondents in this current survey), Democrats strongly favor Proposition 39, most Republicans oppose it, and a small majority of voters outside of the major parties would vote yes. Voters in the San Francisco Bay area most strongly support Proposition 38, while the initiative leads by narrower margins in the other three regions. Latinos are more strongly in favor (59% to 30%) than non-Hispanic whites (46% to 40%). Women favor Proposition 39 by a 19-point margin (51% to 32%), while men support it by a narrower five-point margin (47% to 42%).

To gauge the effect of statements in the official title and summary that are not in the ballot label, we asked two follow-up questions. The results suggest that the fate of Proposition 39 may well hinge on how well supporters and opponents can focus public attention on the details: Opposition increases when voters are read the statement about the consequences for property taxes. However, support increases to over a majority when voters are read the statement about the accountability measures included in the initiative.

**"Proposition 39 – the 'school facilities, 55 percent local vote, bonds, taxes, accountability requirements' initiative on the November ballot – authorizes bonds for repair, construction, or replacement of school facilities and classrooms, if approved by 55 percent local vote. The fiscal impacts include increased bond debt for many school districts. Long-term costs statewide could total in the hundreds of millions annually, with potential longer-term state savings to the extent school districts assume greater responsibility for funding school facilities. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on proposition 39?"**

<b>Likely Voters</b>		
	<b>Aug 00*</b>	<b>Sept 00</b>
<b>Yes</b>	35%	<b>49%</b>
<b>No</b>	55	<b>37</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	10	<b>14</b>

\*Question wording for August 2000 is from official title and summary.  
Wording for September 2000 is from ballot label.

	<b>Likely Voters (September 2000)</b>							
	<b>Party</b>			<b>Region</b>				<b>Latino</b>
	<b>Dem</b>	<b>Rep</b>	<b>Other Voters</b>	<b>Central Valley</b>	<b>SF Bay Area</b>	<b>Los Angeles</b>	<b>Other Southern California</b>	
<b>Yes</b>	60%	37%	50%	46%	56%	50%	48%	59%
<b>No</b>	26	49	37	41	31	36	39	30
<b>Don't know</b>	14	14	13	13	13	14	13	11

**"Proposition 39 authorizes property taxes in excess of the 1 percent limit by a 55 percent vote, rather than the current two-thirds, as necessary to pay school bonds. Knowing this, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 39?"**

<b>Likely Voters</b>	
<b>Yes</b>	41%
<b>No</b>	48
<b>Don't know</b>	11

**"Proposition 39 authorizes accountability requirements, including annual performance and financial audits on the use of school bond proceeds. Knowing this, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 39?"**

<b>Likely Voters</b>	
<b>Yes</b>	57%
<b>No</b>	32
<b>Don't know</b>	11

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## California Policy Issues

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### Governor's Report Card

Governor Gray Davis is enjoying very high overall approval ratings from Californians: Two in three say they approve of the way he is handling his job. Only one in four disapproves.

Democrats (76%) are more likely than Republicans (54%) and voters outside of the major parties (65%) to approve of the Governor's performance. Latinos (75%) give more positive ratings than non-Hispanic whites (63%). The Governor's approval ratings are fairly consistent across regions: 69 percent in the San Francisco Bay area, 65 percent in the Central Valley, 64 percent in Los Angeles, and 65 percent in the Southern California counties outside of Los Angeles.

In recent weeks, the Governor has had to respond to the controversy surrounding sharply rising electricity prices in San Diego, which most experts agree has occurred because of the state's deregulation of utilities. At this point, 28 percent of Californians approve of the way the Governor has handled this issue, 36 percent disapprove, and 36 percent are not sure.

Democrats (32%) and independent voters (30%) are more likely than Republicans (21%) to approve of the way that Governor Davis is handling the issue. Latinos (34%) give the Governor higher approval ratings on this issue than non-Hispanic whites (24%).

Among those who closely followed this news story, 34 percent approve and 45 percent disapprove of the Governor's performance in this matter. As for those living in the Southern California area outside of Los Angeles, 34 percent approve and 40 percent disapprove of the way the Governor is handling the problem.

#### "Do you approve or disapprove of ..."

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<b><i>The way that Gray Davis is handling his job as Governor of California?</i></b>						
Approve	66%	76%	54%	65%	69%	75%
Disapprove	24	15	37	23	18	18
Don't know	10	9	9	12	13	7
<b><i>The way that Governor Davis is handling the issue of utility deregulation and higher electricity bills in San Diego?</i></b>						
Approve	28%	32%	21%	30%	28%	34%
Disapprove	36	32	40	35	39	38
Don't know	36	36	39	35	33	28

## California Legislature's Report Card

The California Legislature is also viewed in a positive light by most state residents today, though its ratings are not as glowing as the Governor's. Half of Californians approve of the job the Legislature is doing at this time, while three in 10 disapprove, and 13 percent are unsure.

Democrats (63%) are more likely than Republicans (49%) and voters outside of the major parties (54%) to approve of the Legislature's performance. Latinos (66%) give more positive ratings than non-Hispanic whites (53%). The approval ratings do not vary much across regions: 58 percent in the San Francisco Bay area, 52 percent in the Central Valley, 56 percent in Los Angeles, and 58 percent in the Southern California counties outside of Los Angeles.

For several months, the Legislature has been involved in an investigation of alleged wrongdoing in the State Insurance Commissioner's office. This has led to the resignation of the elected State Insurance Commissioner, the appointment of a new Insurance Commissioner, and a study involving legislative recommendations for reforms of the Insurance Commissioner's office. The majority of Californians (56%) approve of the way the Legislature has handled this issue, while only one in four disapprove, and one in five is unsure.

Democrats (62%), independent voters (54%), and Republicans (56%) all approve of the way that the Legislature has handled the insurance investigation. Latinos (54%) and non-Hispanic whites (57%) offer similar approval ratings on this issue. A majority in every region approves of the Legislature's performance in handling the probe: 61 percent in the San Francisco Bay area, 57 percent in the Central Valley, 55 percent in Los Angeles, and 54 percent in the Southern California counties outside of Los Angeles. Among those who closely followed this news story, 69 percent approve of the Legislature's handling of the issue.

### "Do you approve or disapprove of ..."

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<b><i>The job the California Legislature is doing at this time?</i></b>						
Approve	56%	63%	49%	54%	60%	66%
Disapprove	31	25	38	37	27	25
Don't know	13	12	13	9	13	9
<b><i>The way the California Legislature has handled the investigation of the State Insurance Commissioner's Office?</i></b>						
Approve	56%	62%	56%	54%	49%	54%
Disapprove	24	20	25	30	24	30
Don't know	20	18	19	16	27	16

## Tobacco Settlement and Health Care Spending

The State of California will be receiving about \$1 billion a year for 25 years as a result of the tobacco lawsuit settlement. The state government will receive about half of the money, which will go into its general fund, and then distribute the other half to county governments, using a population-based formula. What should the state and county governments do with this windfall?

Three in four Californians believe that the state government should be required to spend all of its share of the settlement money on health care programs. There are no differences in opinion across parties, regions, or demographic groups with regard to how this additional state money should be spent.

A similar number of Californians believe that county governments should also be required to spend all of their share of the tobacco settlement money on health care programs. Once again, this policy preference is overwhelming across all political groups, regions, and demographic categories. In several counties, there are ongoing controversies about how these discretionary funds should be spent. For example, Orange County voters have placed an initiative on the ballot this fall that would require their county government to spend most of the tobacco lawsuit funds on health care.

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<i>Do you think the state government should or should not be required to spend all of its share of the tobacco settlement money on health care programs?</i>						
Should	73%	75%	68%	71%	82%	78%
Should not	24	22	29	27	17	20
Don't know	3	3	3	2	1	2
<i>Do you think that county governments should or should not be required to spend all of their share of the tobacco settlement money on health care programs?</i>						
Should	71%	72%	68%	71%	76%	77%
Should not	26	24	29	26	21	21
Don't know	3	4	3	3	2	2

## Initiatives: Usefulness of Information Sources

Most Californians (84%) rank the Voter Information Guide mailed to voters by the Secretary of State as a useful information source in deciding how to vote on state initiatives, followed by news stories about initiatives (70%), independent and government-operated websites about the initiatives (66%), and, finally, paid political commercials (43%). More than half say the Voter Information Guide is “very useful.” By contrast, one in four rank news stories and websites as very useful, and only 11 percent say that paid political commercials are very useful as information sources on initiatives.

There is little variation across political groups in evaluations of the Voter Information Guide and the other sources of information. Republicans are less likely than others to see news stories as useful in deciding how to vote on initiatives.

Among likely voters, almost all (90%) find the Voter Information Guide useful, and 58 percent rate it as very useful. By contrast, two in three find initiative news stories and initiative websites useful, while only one in four find these sources very useful. Thirty-nine percent of likely voters rank paid political commercials as useful, with 8 percent describing them as very useful. Fifty-nine percent of likely voters say that paid commercials are “not too useful.”

Among the likely voters who use the internet frequently, almost three in four (72%) say that initiative websites are useful, while 28% think they are very useful

"In deciding how to vote on citizens' initiatives that appear on the state ballot as propositions, how useful are each of these information sources to you – very useful, somewhat useful, or not too useful?"

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	
<b><i>The voter information guide mailed to voters by the Secretary of State</i></b>					
Very useful	52%	56%	54%	50%	58%
Somewhat useful	32	30	34	35	32
Not too useful	12	11	10	13	8
Don't know	4	3	2	2	2
<b><i>News stories about the initiatives that appear in the media</i></b>					
Very useful	25%	26%	18%	25%	22%
Somewhat useful	45	47	44	48	46
Not too useful	26	23	35	26	30
Don't know	4	4	3	1	2
<b><i>Websites about the initiatives set up by government and independent sources</i></b>					
Very useful	27%	25%	23%	29%	25%
Somewhat useful	39	41	42	38	40
Not too useful	24	23	26	26	25
Don't know	10	11	9	7	10
<b><i>Political commercials paid for by the initiative campaigns</i></b>					
Very useful	11%	12%	8%	8%	8%
Somewhat useful	32	31	34	31	31
Not too useful	53	53	55	60	59
Don't know	4	4	3	1	2

## Initiatives: Effects of Information Sources on Voting

Two in three Californians believe that the media – that is, both news stories (38%) and paid political commercials (26%) – is the most influential source of information when it comes to voters' decisions on whether to vote yes or no on initiatives. Despite the fact that residents describe the Voter Information Guide as the most useful tool for sorting out initiatives, fewer than one in four rank it as the most influential source of information. Fewer than one in 10 rank government and independent websites as the information source that has the biggest effect on how people vote. Across political groups, California voters believe that news stories in the media have the greatest effect. Independent voters are the least likely to say that the Voter Information Guide is the most influential source of information. Among likely voters, 35 percent rank news stories first, followed by paid commercials (28%) and the Voter's Information Guide (27%) as the most influential sources of information. Even among the likely voters who are frequent Internet users, only 4 percent rank websites as most influential.

The majority of California voters (53%) believe that voters are not receiving enough information to decide how to vote on initiatives, while 15 percent say there is “more than enough” information and 30 percent say there is “just enough information.” While all political groups rank the amount of information as inadequate, independent voters are the most likely to say there is not enough information. Among likely voters, 53 percent say there is not enough information on initiatives.

**"Which of these information sources do you think has the biggest effect on voters' decisions to vote yes or no on citizens' initiatives?"**

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	
<b>Voter information guide</b>	23%	24%	27%	18%	27%
<b>News stories in the media</b>	38	35	36	43	35
<b>Government and independent websites</b>	7	6	6	7	5
<b>Paid political commercials</b>	26	29	25	27	28
<b>Other</b>	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Don't know</b>	4	4	4	3	3

**"Do you think voters are receiving more than enough, just enough, or not enough information to decide how to vote on citizens' initiatives?"**

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	
<b>More than enough</b>	15%	14%	19%	14%	17%
<b>Just enough</b>	30	30	31	27	29
<b>Not enough</b>	53	54	48	57	53
<b>Don't know</b>	2	2	2	2	1

## News Attentiveness

How closely have Californians been following the major news stories of the past few weeks? A solid majority have been very or fairly closely following news about the presidential election (77%). About half have been attentive to the investigation of Insurance Commissioner Chuck Quackenbush and the appointment of a new commissioner (50%) and to utility deregulation and higher electricity bills in San Diego (46%). Fewer have closely followed news stories about the CAL-FED water program (33%) and the bills passed by the State Legislature before the end of its most recent session (32%).

There is no variation across regions in attentiveness to the news stories about the 2000 presidential election. However, the news about the State Insurance Commissioner's office was followed more closely in the San Francisco Bay area (57%), while news about higher electricity bills was followed most closely in the Southern California area outside of Los Angeles (59%). Central Valley residents were more attentive than other state residents to news about the CAL-FED water program (41%) and news about bills passed by the State Legislature (38%).

Among likely voters in California elections, many very or fairly closely followed news about the presidential election (87%), the investigation of the State Insurance Commissioner's office (62%), the rising price of electricity in San Diego (56%), recent measures passed by the Legislature (40%), and the CAL-FED water program (38%).

News attentiveness was similar for Latinos and non-Hispanic whites for the presidential election (75% to 77%), the bills passed by the Legislature (34% to 32%), and the CAL-FED program (34% to 33%). Non-Hispanic whites were more likely than Latinos to closely follow the news stories about the State Insurance Commissioner (55% to 35%) and the San Diego electric rates (50% to 38%).

"Tell me if you followed this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely ..."

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b><i>Candidates for the 2000 presidential election</i></b>						
Very closely	38%	39%	37%	41%	36%	40%
Fairly closely	39	38	40	36	39	35
Not too closely	16	16	18	17	16	19
Not at all closely	7	7	5	6	9	6
<b><i>Utility deregulation and higher electricity bills in San Diego</i></b>						
Very closely	22%	16%	19%	18%	35%	21%
Fairly closely	24	23	28	21	24	17
Not too closely	23	25	23	29	18	31
Not at all closely	31	36	30	32	23	31
<b><i>The Legislature's investigation of Chuck Quackenbush and the appointment of a new state insurance commissioner</i></b>						
Very closely	21%	17%	26%	22%	17%	18%
Fairly closely	29	30	31	29	27	17
Not too closely	26	27	21	26	27	35
Not at all closely	24	26	22	23	29	30
<b><i>The CAL-FED program for increasing water storage and restoring the environment of the Sacramento Delta</i></b>						
Very closely	13%	15%	14%	12%	13%	17%
Fairly closely	20	26	21	19	15	17
Not too closely	29	30	32	28	29	32
Not at all closely	38	29	33	41	43	34
<b><i>Bills passed by the State Legislature before its session ended</i></b>						
Very closely	10%	12%	10%	9%	8%	16%
Fairly closely	22	26	20	21	23	18
Not too closely	31	29	33	32	30	32
Not at all closely	37	33	37	38	39	34

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## Political Trends

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### Political Alienation

Californians are fairly cynical about government, but no more so than the nation as a whole. Fifty percent of Californians believe the federal government pays at least some attention to what the people think when it decides what to do, while the other half say their government does not pay much attention. In a recent national survey, 54 percent of Americans said the federal government does not pay much attention to what the people think when it decides what to do.

Democrats (54%) have a little more faith than Republicans (49%) and independent voters (46%) that the federal government is listening at least some of the time. Latinos (53%) and non-Hispanic whites (50%) have about the same belief that the government pays at least some attention.

Central Valley residents (53%) are more likely than those living in Southern California outside of Los Angeles (49%) and in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles (46% each) to believe that the national government pays “not much” attention to people when deciding what to do.

**"How much attention do you feel the federal government pays to what the people think when it decides what to do – a good deal, some, or not much?"**

	<u>All Adults</u>	
	U.S.*	California
<b>A good deal</b>	7%	11%
<b>Some</b>	36	39
<b>Not much</b>	54	49
<b>Don't know</b>	3	1

\*Vox Populi survey, January 1999

	<b>All Adults</b>	<u>Party Registration</u>				<b>Latino</b>
		<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Republicans</b>	<b>Other Voters</b>	<b>Not Registered to Vote</b>	
<b>A good deal</b>	11%	12%	9%	13%	12%	14%
<b>Some</b>	39	42	40	33	38	39
<b>Not much</b>	49	45	51	53	49	46
<b>Don't know</b>	1	1	0	1	1	1

## Should Elected Officials Watch Polls?

One way that members of government can at least find out what people think is through polls. When politicians stress their independence from polls, they are not necessarily striking a popular chord with many voters. By a two-to-one margin, both Americans and Californians believe members of Congress should pay attention to surveys to “get a sense of the public’s views” on an issue. Only three in 10 think that reading up on polls will distract their elected officials from thinking about what is right.

There are some partisan differences: Republicans (54%) are less likely than Democrats (73%) and independent voters (69%) to think that members of Congress should study polls. Latinos (74%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (63%), and women (71%) are more likely than men (61%), to want their representatives to look at the polls.

There are modest regional differences: 70 percent of Los Angeles residents support the idea of their representatives using polls, compared to 66 percent of those living elsewhere in Southern California, 65 percent in the San Francisco Bay area, and 62 percent in the Central Valley.

A solid majority across all age, income, and education categories want members of Congress to study the polls before voting on an issue.

**"Please tell me which statement you agree with most: (A) When members of Congress are thinking about how to vote on an issue, they should read up on polls on the issue, because this can help them get a sense of the public’s views on the issue. (B) When members of Congress are thinking about how to vote on an issue, they should not read up on polls, because this will distract them from thinking about what they think is right."**

	<u>All Adults</u>	
	U.S.*	California
<b>Should</b>	67%	66%
<b>Should not</b>	26	30
<b>Neither (volunteered)</b>	3	2
<b>Don't Know</b>	4	2

\*Vox Populi survey, January 1999

	<b>All Adults</b>	<u>Party Registration</u>				<b>Latino</b>
		<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Republicans</b>	<b>Other Voters</b>	<b>Not Registered to Vote</b>	
<b>Should</b>	66%	73%	54%	69%	71%	74%
<b>Should not</b>	30	23	42	26	23	23
<b>Neither (volunteered)</b>	2	2	3	3	2	2
<b>Don't know</b>	2	2	1	2	4	1

## Divided Federal Government

Although 57 percent of Californians say that party control of Congress will be a factor in how they vote, 41 percent believe it doesn't matter if the same party controls Congress and the presidency or if government is divided. Slightly more (29%) say that it is better when one party controls the White House and the other controls Congress than say it is better when the President's party controls Congress as well (24%). Californians' feelings about divided government parallel results of national surveys.

Republicans (33%) are more likely than other voters to think that a divided government is best. Independent voters (49%) are the most likely to think divided government does not matter. Democrats (28%) express the greatest preference for the same party controlling the White House and Congress. But "doesn't matter" is the most likely answer across all voters.

Latinos (24%) are less likely than non-Hispanic whites (31%) to believe a divided government is the best situation. Younger, less educated, and lower income residents are more likely than others to say it doesn't matter if the same party controls Congress and the White House. There are no differences in attitudes toward divided government between men and women or across regions.

Attitudes toward one-party control of the federal government are related to voting preferences for Congress among likely voters (voting preference table appears on page 6). Those who favor united government are more likely to support the Democrat over the Republican in their own district (57% to 35%) than those who say party control does not matter (49% to 36%), while those who like divided government have a preference for the Republican over the Democrat (46% to 41%).

**"Generally, what's the better situation – that a president's political party also has a controlling majority in Congress, or that one party controls the White House while the other party controls the Congress, or don't you think it matters too much one way or the other?"**

	<u>All Adults</u>	
	U.S.*	California
<b>President's party controls congress</b>	25%	24%
<b>One party controls each</b>	27	29
<b>Doesn't matter</b>	41	41
<b>Don't know</b>	7	6

\*Pew Center for the People and the Press survey, July 2000

	All Adults	<u>Party Registration</u>				Latino
		Democrats	Republicans	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<b>President's party controls Congress</b>	24%	28%	24%	19%	20%	24%
<b>One party controls each</b>	29	28	33	27	26	24
<b>Doesn't matter</b>	41	39	36	49	46	46
<b>Don't know</b>	6	5	7	6	8	6

## U.S. Military Strength

A majority of Californians (54%) believe the U.S. military is strong enough as it is, while 43 percent think it is not. These results closely mirror those seen in national surveys.

U.S. military preparedness is an issue that has been raised by the Republicans in this presidential election and responses to it are highly partisan. Thus far, 66 percent of Democrats and 61 percent of independent voters believe the military is strong enough, while 71 percent of Republicans think it is not strong enough to ensure our national defense and protect our interests.

Latinos (69%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (48%) to say the military is strong enough. There are also differences by age: Six in 10 residents under 55 think the military is strong enough, while six in 10 who are 55 and older think it is not strong enough. Furthermore, six in 10 living in Los Angeles county and in the San Francisco Bay Area think the military is strong enough, compared to half of those living in the Central Valley and in the Southern California region outside of Los Angeles. Interestingly enough, there are no differences by gender: 54 percent of both women and men feel the military is strong enough.

**"Do you think that the United States military is or is not as strong as it needs to be to ensure our national defense and protect our national interests around the world?"**

	<u>All Adults</u>	
	U.S.*	California
<b>Strong enough</b>	52%	54%
<b>Not strong enough</b>	45	43
<b>Don't know</b>	3	3

\*NBC / Wall Street Journal survey, April 1999

	<b>All Adults</b>	<u>Party Registration</u>				<b>Latino</b>
		<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Republicans</b>	<b>Other Voters</b>	<b>Not Registered to Vote</b>	
<b>Strong enough</b>	54%	66%	27%	61%	71%	69%
<b>Not strong enough</b>	43	30	71	35	26	28
<b>Don't know</b>	3	4	2	4	3	3

## Controlling Gun Violence

When asked what is more likely to decrease gun violence, most Californians choose better enforcement of existing gun laws (56%) rather than new laws (34%). In fact, Californians are more likely than the nation as a whole to choose better enforcement over more laws. In this respect, Californians tend to be closer to the message of the Bush campaign and the position of Governor Davis.

Survey results indicate how partisan this issue tends to be: 71 percent of Republicans believe that better enforcement is the answer to reducing gun violence, compared to just 47 percent of Democrats and 55 percent of independent voters. There are also gender differences, with men (60%) more likely than women (53%) to favor better enforcement over new laws. Latinos (50%) are less supportive than non-Hispanic whites (60%) of a policy emphasizing better enforcement rather than new gun control laws.

Six in ten residents of the Central Valley and areas of Southern California outside of Los Angeles favor better enforcement over new gun control laws, compared to roughly half of the residents in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area. There are no significant variations across age, income, or educational groups.

**"Which do you think is more likely to decrease gun violence: (a) better enforcement of existing gun laws, or (b) more laws and restrictions on obtaining guns?"**

	<u>All Adults</u>	
	U.S.*	California
<b>Better enforcement</b>	41%	56%
<b>More laws</b>	37	34
<b>Both (volunteered)</b>	14	5
<b>Don't know</b>	8	5

\*Fox News / Opinion Dynamics survey, March 2000

	<b>All Adults</b>	<u>Party Registration</u>				<b>Latino</b>
		<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Republicans</b>	<b>Other Voters</b>	<b>Not Registered to Vote</b>	
<b>Better enforcement</b>	56%	47%	71%	55%	51%	50%
<b>More laws</b>	34	41	21	35	39	43
<b>Both (volunteered)</b>	5	7	4	5	6	3
<b>Don't know</b>	5	5	4	5	4	4

## Medicare Payment for Prescription Drugs

The vast majority of Californians (74%) favor Medicare coverage for prescription drugs, even if it means increased premiums for Medicare patients and increased costs to the Medicare program. The PPIC Statewide Survey results are very similar to those of a recent national survey in which 70 percent favored having Medicare pay for prescription drugs.

At least three in four Democrats and three in four independent voters support expanding Medicare to cover prescription drugs. Though Republicans are less supportive, two in three favor this proposal. Most Latinos (81%) and non-Hispanic whites (73%) support the expansion of Medicare coverage. Prescription drug coverage is highly popular across regions and across age, education, gender, and income groups.

**"As you may know, Medicare – government health insurance for people age 65 and over – does not currently cover the cost of prescription drugs. Would you favor or oppose the Medicare system paying for the cost of prescription drugs for all beneficiaries, even if this meant an increase in premiums for Medicare patients and increased costs to the Medicaid program?"**

<u>All Adults</u>		
	U.S.*	California
<b>Favor</b>	70%	74%
<b>Oppose</b>	20	20
<b>Don't know</b>	10	6

\*CBS News survey, July 2000

	All Adults	<u>Party Registration</u>				Latino
		Democrats	Republicans	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<b>Favor</b>	74%	80%	67%	74%	78%	81%
<b>Oppose</b>	20	16	26	22	18	17
<b>Don't know</b>	6	4	7	4	4	2

## Budget Surplus

When asked how they would like to see the federal budget surplus spent, 40 percent of Californians chose a tax cut, 33 percent favored reducing the national debt, and 22 percent preferred improving funding for needed government programs. The results of a recent national survey were similar.

One in three Republicans, Democrats, and independent voters favors having the surplus used to reduce the debt. Republicans (50%) are most in favor of tax cuts, followed by independent voters (39%) and Democrats (29%). In contrast, Democrats (29%) express the most support for improving funding for needed government programs, followed by independent voters (23%) and Republicans (10%).

A preference for using the surplus to help pay off the federal debt increases with age, income, and education. There are gender differences, as well: While women (39%) and men (42%) both want a tax cut, men are more likely than women to support debt reduction (37% to 30%), while women are more likely than men to want more funding for needed programs (26% to 18%).

Latinos are more in favor than non-Hispanic whites of a tax cut (47% to 39%) and improved funding for needed programs (27% to 18%), but they are less likely to favor reducing the debt (21% to 39%). San Francisco Bay area residents (36%) are less supportive of tax cuts than are residents elsewhere. In other regions of the state, tax cuts are favored over reducing the debt and improving funding for programs.

**"The federal government will have a surplus of funds in the next few years. For which of the following would you like to see the surplus funds used: reducing the national debt, improving funding for needed government programs, or providing an across-the-board tax cut?"**

	<u>All Adults</u>	
	U.S.*	California
Tax cut	38%	40%
Reducing debt	32	33
Improving funding	22	22
All (volunteered)	3	1
None (volunteered)	4	1
Don't know	1	3

\*NBC / Wall Street Journal survey, June 2000

	All Adults	<u>Party Registration</u>				Latino
		Democrats	Republicans	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
Tax cut	40%	29%	50%	39%	49%	47%
Reducing debt	33	36	36	34	21	21
Improving funding	22	29	10	23	26	27
All (volunteered)	1	1	2	0	1	0
None (volunteered)	1	2	1	2	0	1
Don't know	3	3	1	2	3	4

## Open Borders

Although Californians are more positive about immigration today than they were in the early 1990s, most do not welcome the idea of an open border, which has been suggested by President-elect Vicente Fox of Mexico. Sixty-five percent say an open border between the United States and Mexico would be a bad thing for California; only 28 percent think it would be a good thing.

Perceptions of an open border are more evenly split among Latinos, with 45 percent saying it would be a good thing and 51 percent describing it as bad. In contrast, 69 percent of non-Hispanic whites view it as bad for the state.

The majority of residents in all four major regions of the state have a negative view of open borders, but San Francisco Bay area residents (33%) are the most likely to see this policy option as having a beneficial effect. Republicans (76%) are more likely than independent voters (66%) and Democrats (58%) to see open borders as a negative development for the state. There are no major differences in views about open borders across age, income, gender, or education groups.

**"President-elect Vicente Fox of Mexico has recently proposed an open border between the U.S. and Mexico within 10 years. Do you think an open border would be a good thing or a bad thing for California?"**

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Good thing	28%	24%	33%	27%	26%	45%
Bad thing	65	65	59	65	69	51
Don't know	7	11	8	8	5	4

## North American Free Trade Agreement

While Californians are highly negative toward an open border with Mexico, they are more positive about NAFTA, an agreement that liberalized trade with Mexico. Fifty-one percent say they like the effects of NAFTA on the state, although 31 percent think it has had bad effects.

About half of the residents in every region of the state think that NAFTA has been good for California. Sixty-six percent of Latinos describe NAFTA as a good thing, 23 percent say it has been bad, and 11 percent are uncertain. In comparison, 46 percent of non-Hispanic whites say it has been good, 33 percent say it has been bad, and 21 percent are uncertain of NAFTA's effect on California.

Democrats (53%) think most highly of the treaty, followed by independent voters (50%) and Republicans (43%). Age is an important factor in support for NAFTA: 61 percent of 18 to 34 year-olds think its results have been mostly positive, compared to 46 percent of 35 to 54 year-olds and 43 percent of those 55 and older. There are no significant differences by income, gender, or education.

**"Do you think that the North American Free Trade Agreement – NAFTA – has been a good thing or a bad thing for California?"**

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b>Good thing</b>	51%	49%	51%	49%	53%	66%
<b>Bad thing</b>	31	30	28	34	30	23
<b>Don't know</b>	18	21	21	17	17	11

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## Social and Economic Trends

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### Personal Finance

Consumer confidence is still climbing in California. Today, 42 percent of Californians describe themselves as financially better off than they were a year ago. This is a 6-point increase from a year ago (i.e., 36% in September 1999) and a 9-point increase from two years ago (i.e., 33% in September 1998). Remarkably, at least four in 10 residents in every region report that their finances have improved. The San Francisco Bay area leads all other regions in consumer optimism. Latinos (51%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (38%) to say they are financially better off today.

Turning to a year from now, nearly half of Californians (48%) think they will be better off financially than they are today. This is a 4-point increase from a year ago (i.e., 44% in September 1999) and an 8-point increase from two years ago (i.e., 40% in September 1998). Southern California residents have the most optimism about their future finances, although at least four in 10 adults in every region think that even better financial times lie ahead. Latinos (63%) are overwhelmingly optimistic about their future finances, while most non-Hispanic whites expect their financial situation to remain about the same next year (49%) rather than improve (42%).

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

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b>Better off</b>	42%	40%	47%	41%	43%	51%
<b>Worse off</b>	10	12	7	12	10	9
<b>Same</b>	48	48	46	47	47	40
<b>Don't know</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0

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

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b>Better off</b>	48%	45%	42%	52%	52%	63%
<b>Worse off</b>	4	4	5	3	5	4
<b>Same</b>	43	44	49	40	40	30
<b>Don't know</b>	5	7	4	5	3	3

## Owning a Home

About six in 10 Californians (59%) report owning their own home, while almost four in 10 do not. The significant numbers of renters in the state demonstrates that there are many Californians who have not benefited from rising home values. Fifty-seven percent of Latinos are renters, while 67 percent of non-Hispanic whites are homeowners. Most Californians with annual household incomes under \$40,000 (61%) and under 35 years old (68%) are renters. Homeownership is somewhat higher outside of the urban coastal areas of Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area.

Four in 10 Californians who own homes believe that the value of their homes has increased a lot. However, there are regional differences: Two in three residents in the San Francisco Bay area, compared to one in three in Southern California and one in four in the Central Valley, say that their home values have increased a lot. Non-Hispanic whites (43%) are much more likely than Latinos (27%) to say their homes have increased a lot in value.

Most renters (69%) – including young adults and lower-income residents – expect to own a home in California. Latinos (77%) are more optimistic than non-Hispanic whites (64%) about owning a home. Renters in the San Francisco Bay area are the most pessimistic about this possibility.

**"Do you own or rent your current residence?"**

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b>Own</b>	59%	64%	58%	54%	63%	43%
<b>Rent</b>	41	36	42	46	37	57

**"In the past few years, do you think the value of the home you now live in has increased a lot, increased some, stayed about the same, or declined?" (homeowners only)**

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b>Increased a lot</b>	40%	25%	66%	31%	36%	27%
<b>Increased some</b>	40	38	25	49	44	45
<b>Stayed about the same</b>	14	29	5	16	14	23
<b>Decreased</b>	4	7	2	3	4	3
<b>Don't know</b>	2	1	2	1	2	2

**"Do you ever expect to own a home in California?" (renters only)**

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b>Yes</b>	69%	71%	58%	70%	76%	77%
<b>No</b>	27	26	38	24	22	20
<b>Don't know</b>	4	3	4	6	2	3

## Computers and the Internet

Over time, more Californians are using computers to access the Internet. Today, 78 percent say they have used a computer, while 68 percent say they have at some time accessed the Internet. There has been an 8-point increase in use of the Internet since this question was first asked in a PPIC survey one year ago.

Nonetheless, access to the Internet remains uneven, creating “digital divides” across many demographic groups. While half of California adults often use the Internet, frequent use varies by educational level: 26 percent for those who have never entered college, 52 percent for those with some college education, and 70 percent for those who have graduated from college. Similarly, frequent Internet use is strongly related to annual household income: 33 percent for those with incomes under \$40,000, 61 percent for those with incomes of \$40,000 to \$79,999, and 75 percent for those with incomes of \$80,000 or more. There is also a 25-point gap between the proportion of Latinos and non-Hispanic whites (32% to 57%) who frequently use the Internet. In addition (in part due to age differences), those who are employed (57%) are much more likely than those who are not employed (35%) to use the Internet on a frequent basis.

<u>All Adults</u>						
	Sept 99	Dec 99	Jan 00	Feb 00	Aug 00	Sept 00
"Do you ever use a computer at home, at work, or at school?"	74%	76%	78%	72%	76%	<b>78%</b>
"Do you ever go online to access the Internet or World Wide Web, or to send or receive e-mail?"	60	61	64	60	66	<b>68</b>

"Do you ever go on line to access the Internet or World-Wide Web, or to send or receive e-mail?"

	All Adults	<u>Education</u>			Latino
		High School or Less	Some College	College Grad	
<b>Yes, often</b>	51%	26%	52%	70%	32%
<b>Yes, sometimes</b>	17	18	21	14	19
<b>No</b>	10	14	9	6	17
<b>Don't use computers</b>	22	42	18	10	32

## Use of E-mail

The Internet has become a major social connector for Californians. Six in 10 adults exchange e-mail messages with friends and relatives, while nearly half do so on a frequent basis. Four in 10 residents receive e-mail messages from groups and organizations related to their personal interests, with two in 10 saying they often receive this kind of targeted e-mail.

However, not all Californians are equally likely to stay in touch with others through e-mail messages. Employed residents are more likely than those who are not employed to receive e-mail from friends and relatives, as well as from groups and organizations. Latinos are much less likely than non-Hispanic whites to frequently exchange e-mail with friends and relatives (26% to 51%) and to receive e-mail from groups and organizations (17% to 24%). Reflecting their limited access to the Internet, few Californians who are 55 and older who lack a college education and who have household incomes of less than \$40,000 are connecting with others through e-mail messages.

San Francisco Bay area residents are more likely than those living in other regions of the state to frequently exchange e-mail with friends and relatives (53%) and to at least sometimes receive e-mail messages from groups or organizations reflecting their personal interests (49%).

	All Adults	Employment Status			Latino
		Work for Someone Else	Self-Employed	Not Employed	
<b><i>"Do you ever exchange e-mail messages with friends or relatives?"</i></b>					
Yes, often	45%	51%	48%	34%	26%
Yes, sometimes	17	19	20	10	15
No	6	7	6	5	10
Don't use Internet	32	23	26	51	49
<b><i>"Do you ever receive e-mail messages from groups and organizations related to your personal interests?"</i></b>					
Yes, often	22%	25%	26%	15%	17%
Yes, sometimes	20	22	24	13	14
No	26	30	24	21	20
Don't use Internet	32	23	26	51	49

## Monitoring Employees' E-mail

A majority of Californians believe that employers should be allowed to monitor the e-mail messages of their employees at work. Fifty-four percent are in favor and 41 percent are opposed to this practice in the workplace. This is true even among employees, who support the monitoring of e-mail by a 9-point margin (53% to 44%).

Most of the Californians who frequently go online (55%) think that employers should be allowed to monitor e-mail messages. Similarly, most of those who often exchange e-mail messages with friends and relatives (55%) believe employers have the right to monitor e-mail.

Residents under 35 are the most likely to think that employers should *not* be allowed to monitor e-mail (50%), while the majority of older adults think they should be allowed to do so. Non-Hispanic whites (58%) are more likely than Latinos (48%) to favor employer monitoring. Residents of the San Francisco Bay area (51%) and Los Angeles area (51%) are less likely than those living in other regions to support the idea of an employer monitoring the e-mail messages of employees.

**"Do you think that employers should or should not be allowed to monitor the e-mail messages that their employees are sending and receiving at work?"**

	All Adults	Employment Status			Latino
		Work for Someone Else	Self-Employed	Not Employed	
Should	54%	53%	55%	55%	48%
Should not	41	44	39	38	48
Don't know	5	4	7	7	5

	All Adults	People Who Exchange E-Mails			Don't Use Internet
		Often	Sometimes	Never	
Should	54%	55%	57%	55%	51%
Should not	41	42	40	42	41
Don't know	5	3	3	3	8

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## Survey Methodology

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The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, a senior fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California, with research assistance from Eric McGhee and Mina Yaroslavsky. The findings of this survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,014 California adult residents interviewed from September 5 to September 11, 2000. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights, using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers, ensuring that both listed and unlisted telephone numbers were called. All telephone exchanges in California were eligible for calling. Telephone numbers in the survey sample were called up to five times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing by using the “last birthday method” to avoid biases in age and gender. Each interview took an average of 20 minutes to complete. Interviewing was conducted in English or Spanish. Maria Tello translated the survey into Spanish.

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

The sampling error for the total sample of 2,014 adults is +/- 2 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for subgroups is larger. The sampling error for the 1,651 registered voters is +/- 2.5% and for the 1,099 likely voters is +/- 3.5%. Sampling error is just one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

Throughout the report, we refer to four geographic regions. “Central Valley” includes Butte, Colusa, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. “SF 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, and “Other Southern California” includes the mostly suburban regions of Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties. These four regions were chosen for analysis because they are the major population centers of the state, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population; moreover, the growth of the Central Valley and “Other Southern California” regions have given them increasing political significance.

We present specific results for Latinos because they account for about 24 percent of the state's adult population and constitute one of the fastest growing voter groups. For likely voters, the sample sizes for the African American and Asian subgroups are not large enough for separate statistical analysis. We contrast the opinions of Democrats and Republicans with “other” or “independent” registered voters. This third category includes those who are registered to vote as “decline to state” as well as a fewer number who say they are members of other political parties.

In some cases, we compare PPIC Statewide Survey responses to responses recorded in national surveys conducted in 1999 and 2000 by Vox Populi, the Pew Center for People and the Press, NBC / *Wall Street Journal*, Fox News / Opinion Dynamics, and CBS News. We used 1998, 1999, and 2000 PPIC Statewide Surveys to analyze trends over time in California.

**PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT**  
**SEPTEMBER 5 – SEPTEMBER 11, 2000**  
**2,014 CALIFORNIA ADULT RESIDENTS; ENGLISH AND SPANISH**  
**MARGIN OF ERROR +/- 2% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE**

[Responses recorded for first 16 questions are from likely voters. All other responses are from all adults.]

1. First, I have a few questions about the November 7<sup>th</sup> general election. If the election for president were held today, who would you vote for? (*rotate names, then ask "or someone else"*)
- |     |  |  |
|-----|--|--|
| 48% |  | the Democratic ticket of Al Gore and Joseph Lieberman        |
| 39  |  | the Republican ticket of George W. Bush and Richard Cheney   |
| 4   |  | the Green Party ticket of Ralph Nader and Winona La Duke     |
| 1   |  | the Reform Party ticket of Patrick Buchanan and Ezola Foster |
| 1   |  | the Libertarian Party ticket of Harry Browne and Art Olivier |
| 7   |  | don't know   |
2. There will be a series of presidential debates in October. Which one issue would you most like to hear the candidates talk about during the debates? (*code don't read*)
- |     |  |  |
|-----|--|--|
| 19% |  | schools, education                         |
| 15  |  | health care, HMO reform                    |
| 14  |  | Social Security, Medicare                  |
| 11  |  | taxes, cutting taxes                       |
| 5   |  | foreign policy, national security, defense |
| 5   |  | jobs, the economy, unemployment            |
| 4   |  | federal budget, spending surplus           |
| 3   |  | abortion                                   |
| 3   |  | environment, pollution                     |
| 2   |  | campaign finance reform                    |
| 2   |  | morals, family values                      |
| 2   |  | guns, gun control                          |
| 1   |  | crime, gangs                               |
| 1   |  | immigration, illegal immigration           |
| 3   |  | other ( <i>specify</i> )                   |
| 10  |  | don't know                                 |

Regardless of your choice for president, which of these candidates would do the better job on each of these issues – George W. Bush or Al Gore? First . . . (*rotate q. 3-7*)

3. How about education?

- |     |  |              |
|-----|--|--------------|
| 36% |  | Bush         |
| 55  |  | Gore         |
| 2   |  | other answer |
| 7   |  | don't know   |

4. How about Social Security?

- |     |  |              |
|-----|--|--------------|
| 36% |  | Bush         |
| 54  |  | Gore         |
| 3   |  | other answer |
| 7   |  | don't know   |

5. How about cutting taxes?

- |     |  |              |
|-----|--|--------------|
| 53% |  | Bush         |
| 35  |  | Gore         |
| 4   |  | other answer |
| 8   |  | don't know   |

6. How about health care?

- |     |  |              |
|-----|--|--------------|
| 32% |  | Bush         |
| 58  |  | Gore         |
| 3   |  | other answer |
| 7   |  | don't know   |

7. How about the military?

- |     |  |              |
|-----|--|--------------|
| 55% |  | Bush         |
| 32  |  | Gore         |
| 3   |  | other answer |
| 10  |  | don't know   |

8. If the November election for the U.S. Senate were held today, who would you vote for? (*rotate names, then ask "or someone else?"*)

- |     |  |                                       |
|-----|--|---------------------------------------|
| 48% |  | Dianne Feinstein, Democrat            |
| 31  |  | Tom Campbell, Republican              |
| 3   |  | Medea Susan Benjamin, Green Party     |
| 2   |  | Gail Katherine Lightfoot, Libertarian |
| 1   |  | Joe Camahort, Reform Party            |
| 15  |  | don't know                            |

9. If the election for the U.S. House of Representatives were being held today, would you vote for the Republican Party's candidate or the Democratic Party's candidate for the House in your district?

- |     |  |            |
|-----|--|------------|
| 39% |  | Republican |
| 48  |  | Democrat   |
| 3   |  | other      |
| 10  |  | don't know |

10. Thinking about your vote for Congress this fall, will the issue of which party controls Congress – the Republicans or Democrats – be a factor in your vote, or not?

- |     |  |                          |
|-----|--|--------------------------|
| 57% |  | yes, will be a factor    |
| 41  |  | no, will not be a factor |
| 2   |  | don't know               |

11. Proposition 38 – the school vouchers initiative on the November ballot – authorizes annual state payments of at least \$4,000 per pupil for private and religious schools. It permits replacement of the current constitutional public school spending formula. The fiscal impacts include near-term state costs from zero to \$1.1 billion annually. The long-term state impact is from \$2 billion in annual costs to \$3 billion in annual savings, depending on how many public school students shift to private schools. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 38?

37% yes  
53 no  
10 don't know

12. If the voucher initiative passes, overall, do you think that it will or will not help the public school system in California?

34% will help  
56 will not help  
10 don't know

13. If the voucher initiative passes, do you think that it will or will not help the students with the lowest test scores in California?

36% will help  
53 will not help  
11 don't know

14. Proposition 39 – the “school facilities, 55 percent local vote, bonds, taxes, accountability requirements” initiative on the November ballot – authorizes bonds for repair, construction, or replacement of school facilities and classrooms, if approved by 55 percent local vote. The fiscal impacts include increased bond debt for many school districts. Long-term costs statewide could total in the hundreds of millions annually, with potential longer-term state savings to the extent school districts assume greater responsibility for funding school facilities. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 39?

49% yes  
37 no  
14 don't know

15. Proposition 39 authorizes property taxes in excess of the 1 percent limit by a 55 percent vote, rather than the current two-thirds, as necessary to pay school bonds. Knowing this, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 39?

41% yes  
48 no  
11 don't know

16. Proposition 39 authorizes accountability requirements, including annual performance and

financial audits on the use of school bond proceeds. Knowing this, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 39?

57% yes  
32 no  
11 don't know

On a related topic, in deciding how to vote on citizens’ initiatives that appear on the state ballot as propositions, how useful to you are each of these information sources – very useful, somewhat useful, or not too useful? (*rotate q. 17-20*)

17. The voter information guide mailed to voters by the Secretary of State.

52% very useful  
32 somewhat useful  
12 not too useful  
4 don't know

18. News stories about the initiatives that appear in the media.

25% very useful  
45 somewhat useful  
26 not too useful  
4 don't know

19. Websites about the initiatives set up by government and independent sources.

27% very useful  
39 somewhat useful  
24 not too useful  
10 don't know

20. Political commercials paid for by the initiative campaigns.

11% very useful  
32 somewhat useful  
53 not too useful  
4 don't know

21. Right now, which of these information sources do you think has the biggest effect on voters’ decisions to vote yes or no on citizens’ initiatives? (*rotate*)

23% voter information guide  
38 news stories in the media  
7 government and independent websites  
26 paid political commercials  
2 other answers  
4 don't know

22. Overall, do you think voters are receiving more than enough, just enough, or not enough information to decide how to vote on citizens’ initiatives.

15% more than enough  
30 just enough  
53 not enough  
2 don't know

I will read a list of some recent news stories covered by news organizations. As I read each one, tell me if you followed this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. (*rotate q. 23-27*)

23. News about candidates for the 2000 presidential election.

38% very closely  
39 fairly closely  
16 not too closely  
7 not at all closely

24. News about utility deregulation and higher electricity bills in San Diego.

22% very closely  
24 fairly closely  
23 not too closely  
31 not at all closely

25. News about the legislature's investigation of Chuck Quackenbush and the appointment of a new state insurance commissioner.

21% very closely  
29 fairly closely  
26 not too closely  
24 not at all closely

26. News about the Cal-Fed program for increasing water storage and restoring the ecology of the Sacramento Delta.

13% very closely  
20 fairly closely  
29 not too closely  
38 not at all closely

27. News about the bills passed by the state legislature before its session ended.

10% very closely  
22 fairly closely  
31 not too closely  
37 not at all closely

28. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Gray Davis is handling his job as governor of California?

66% approve  
24 disapprove  
10 don't know

29. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Davis is handling the issue of utility deregulation and higher electricity bills in San Diego?

28% approve  
36 disapprove  
36 don't know

30. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the job the California legislature is doing at this time?

56% approve  
31 disapprove  
13 don't know

31. Do you approve or disapprove of the way the California Legislature has handled the investigation of the state insurance commissioner's office?

56% approve  
24 disapprove  
20 don't know

32. California will receive about 1 billion dollars a year for 25 years as a result of a tobacco law suit settlement. The state government will receive half of the money and distribute the other half to county governments. Do you think the state government should or should not be required to spend all of its share of the tobacco settlement money on health care programs?

73% should  
24 should not  
3 don't know

33. The state government will use a population-based formula to determine how much of the tobacco settlement money each county will receive annually. Do you think that county governments should or should not be required to spend all of their share of the tobacco settlement money on health care programs?

71% should  
26 should not  
3 don't know

34. In general, how much attention do you feel the federal government pays to what the people think when it decides what to do – a good deal, some, or not much?

11% good deal  
39 some  
49 not much  
1 don't know

35. I'm going to read two statements. Please tell me which statement you agree with most: (*rotate*)  
(a) When members of Congress are thinking about how to vote on an issue, they should read up on polls on the issue, because this can help them get a sense of the public's views on the issue; (b) when members of Congress are thinking about how to vote on an issue, they should not read up on polls, because this will distract them from thinking about what they think is right.

66% should read polls  
30 should not read polls  
2 doesn't matter  
2 don't know

36. Generally, what's the better situation: that a President's political party also has a controlling majority in Congress, or that one party controls the White House while the other party controls the Congress, or don't you think it matters too much one way or the other?
- 24% President's party controls Congress
  - 29 one party controls each
  - 41 doesn't matter
  - 6 don't know
37. Generally speaking, do you think that the United States military is or is not as strong as it needs to be to ensure our national defense and protect our national interests around the world?
- 54% strong enough
  - 43 not strong enough
  - 3 don't know
38. Which do you think is more likely to decrease gun violence, (a) better enforcement of existing gun laws, or (b) more laws and restrictions on obtaining guns? (rotate a and b)
- 56% better enforcement
  - 34 more laws
  - 5 both (volunteered)
  - 5 don't know
39. As you may know, Medicare – government health insurance for people age 65 and older – does not currently cover the cost of prescription drugs. Would you favor or oppose the Medicare system paying for the cost of prescription drugs for all beneficiaries, even if this meant an increase in premiums for Medicare patients and increased costs to the Medicaid program?
- 74% favor
  - 20 oppose
  - 6 don't know
40. The federal government will have a surplus of funds in the next few years. for which of the following would you like to see the surplus funds used: reducing the national debt, improving funding for needed government programs, or providing an across-the-board tax cut?
- 33% reducing debt
  - 22 improving funding for programs
  - 40 tax cut
  - 1 all (volunteered)
  - 1 none, other (volunteered)
  - 3 don't know
41. President-elect Vicente Fox of Mexico has recently proposed an open border between the U.S. and Mexico within 10 years. Do you think an open border would be a good thing or a bad thing for California?
- 28% good thing
  - 65 bad thing
  - 7 don't know
42. Overall, do you think that the North American Free Trade Agreement – NAFTA – has been a good thing or a bad thing for California?
- 51% good thing
  - 31 bad thing
  - 18 don't know
43. Some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain you are registered to vote? (if yes: Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or as an independent?)
- 37% yes, Democrat (skip to q. 45)
  - 31 yes, Republican (skip to q. 45)
  - 3 yes, other party (skip to q. 45)
  - 12 yes, independent (ask q. 44)
  - 17 no, not registered (skip to q. 45)
44. (Independents only) Do you think of yourself as closer to the Democratic Party or the Republican Party?
- 45% Democratic
  - 33 Republican
  - 21 neither
  - 1 don't know
45. Would you consider yourself to be politically very liberal, somewhat liberal, middle-of-the-road, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?
- 9% very liberal
  - 20 somewhat liberal
  - 32 middle-of-the-road
  - 27 somewhat conservative
  - 10 very conservative
  - 2 don't know
46. 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
  - 50 fair amount
  - 24 only a little
  - 5 none
  - 0 don't know
47. How often would you say you vote – always, nearly always, part of the time, seldom, or never?
- 52% always
  - 21 nearly always
  - 10 part of the time
  - 6 seldom
  - 10 never
  - 1 other
  - 0 don't know
48. As far as your own situation, would you say you and your family are financially better off or worse off or just about the same as you were a year ago?
- 42% better off
  - 10 worse off
  - 48 same
  - 0 don't know

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

48% better off  
4 worse off  
43 same  
5 don't know

50. Do you ever use a computer at home, at work, or at school? (if yes: Do you do this often or only sometimes?)

61% yes, often (ask q. 51)  
17 yes, sometimes (ask q. 51)  
22 no (skip to q. 54)

51. Do you ever go on line to access the Internet or World Wide Web, or to send or receive e-mail? (if yes: Do you do this often or only sometimes?)

51% yes, often (ask q. 52)  
17 yes, sometimes (ask q. 52)  
10 no (skip to q. 54)  
22 not applicable / don't use computers (skip to q. 54)

52. Do you ever exchange e-mail messages with friends and relatives? (if yes: Do you do this often or only sometimes?)

45% yes, often  
17 yes, sometimes  
6 no  
32 not applicable / don't use Internet (skip to q. 54)

53. Do you ever receive e-mail messages from groups and organizations related to your personal interests? (if yes: Does this happen often or only sometimes?)

22% yes, often  
20 yes, sometimes  
26 no  
32 not applicable / don't use Internet

54. Do you think that employers should or should not be allowed to monitor the e-mail messages that their employees are sending and receiving at work?

54% should  
41 should not  
5 don't know

55. Finally, we have a few demographic questions. What is your age?

13% 18 to 24  
21 25 to 34  
23 35 to 44  
17 45 to 54  
11 55 to 64  
15 65 or older

56. Do you own or rent your current residence?

59% own (ask q. 57)  
41 rent (skip to q. 58)

57. In the past few years, do you think the value of the home you live in has increased a lot, increased some, stayed about the same, or declined?

40% increased a lot (skip to q. 59)  
40 increased some (skip to q. 59)  
14 stayed about the same (skip to q. 59)  
4 decreased (skip to q. 59)  
2 don't know (skip to q. 59)

58. Do you ever expect to own a home in California?

69% yes  
27 no  
4 don't know

[Questions 59–65: additional demographic questions]

## PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY

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