PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and Their Government

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September 2012
Outline

- PPIC Statewide Surveys
- November 2012 Election
- State and National Issues
- Conclusions
PPIC Statewide Survey Mission

- Provide timely, relevant, nonpartisan data on political, social, and economic opinions
- Inform and improve state policymaking, raise awareness, encourage discussion
- Provide a voice for all Californians in important state policy debates
  - 270,000+ Californians since 1998
  - 128 general, issue, and regional surveys
Californians and Their Government

- General series funded by The Irvine Foundation
- 2012 November election
  - Presidential election; vote on tax measures to fund education and governance reforms
- State and national issues
  - Approval ratings, tax preferences, state budget, death penalty, three strikes
- Telephone interviews, September 9–16
  - 2,003 adults / 995 likely voters
    - ± 3.5 % margin of error for adults
    - ± 4.4 % for likely voters
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If the November 6th presidential election were being held today, would you vote for the Democratic ticket of Barack Obama and Joe Biden or the Republican ticket of Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan?

- Obama and Biden: 53
- Romney and Ryan: 39
- Someone else (vol): 2
- Don't know: 6

Likely voters
Satisfaction with Presidential Candidate Choices

In general, would you say you are satisfied or not satisfied with your choices of candidates in the election for U.S. President in 2012?

Democrats
Republicans
Independents
Likely voters

Dec 11 | Jan 12 | Mar 12 | May 12 | Sept 12
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
47 | 67 | 65 | 75 | 65
57 | 44 | 45 | 48 | 49
33 | 39 | 43 | 46 | 49

PPIC
Most Important Issue Candidates Should Discuss

Which one issue would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about between now and the November 6th election?

**Economy, jobs**
49%

**Healthcare, health costs, Medicare**
8%

**Federal budget, deficit, taxes**
7%

**Education, schools, teachers**
6%

**Foreign policy, defense spending, military**
6%
Satisfaction with Attention to Issues of Importance

Would you say you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the amount of attention that the candidates for president are spending on the issues most important to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All likely voters</th>
<th>Dem</th>
<th>Rep</th>
<th>Ind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is your preference for the outcome of this year’s congressional elections: a Congress controlled by Republicans or a Congress controlled by Democrats?

![Graph showing preferences for congressional control]

- Democratic control:
  - Mar 12: 50%
  - May 12: 47%
  - Sept 12: 52%

- Republican control:
  - Mar 12: 35%
  - May 12: 40%
  - Sept 12: 38%
Vote on Tax Measures to Fund Education

Proposition 30: Temporary Taxes to Fund Education, Public Safety
- Yes: 52
- No: 40
- Don't know: 8

Proposition 38: Tax for Education and Early Childhood Programs
- Yes: 45
- No: 45
- Don’t know: 11

Likely voters
Vote on Prop. 30: Temporary Taxes for Education, Public Safety

Proposition 30 is called the “Temporary Taxes to Fund Education. Guaranteed Local Public Safety Funding. Initiative Constitutional Amendment”...If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 30?
Vote on Prop. 38: Tax for Education and Early Childhood Programs

Proposition 38 is called the “Tax for Education and Early Childhood Programs. Initiative Statute.”...If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 38?

[Bar chart showing vote percentages by party affiliation:]
- All likely voters: 45% Yes, 45% No, 11% Don't know
- Democrats: 61% Yes, 26% No, 13% Don't know
- Republicans: 68% Yes, 21% No, 10% Don't know
- Independents: 53% Yes, 37% No, 10% Don't know
Vote on Proposition 31: State Budget, State and Local Government

Proposition 31 is called the “State Budget, State and Local Government, Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute.”...If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 31?
Vote on Proposition 32: Political Contributions by Payroll Deduction

Proposition 32 is called the “Political Contributions by Payroll Deduction. Contributions to Candidates. Initiative Statute.”...If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 32?
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Approval Ratings of State Elected Officials

Governor Brown
Legislature
Approval Ratings of Residents’ Own State Legislators

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

- **All adults:** 36% Approve, 42% Disapprove
- **Dem:** 40% Approve, 40% Disapprove
- **Rep:** 28% Approve, 56% Disapprove
- **Ind:** 33% Approve, 51% Disapprove
- **Likely voters:** 35% Approve, 50% Disapprove
Approval Ratings of Federal Elected Officials

President Obama
Congress

Mar 09 Sep 09 Mar 10 Sep 10 Mar 11 Sep 11 Mar 12 Sep 12

71 63 58 52 56 51 59 60
43 39 24 26 30 27 24 27
Approval Ratings of Senator Dianne Feinstein

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Approve</th>
<th>Disapprove</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Economic Conditions

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

Would you say that California is in an economic recession, or not? (if yes: Do you think it is in a serious, moderate, or a mild recession?)

- **Good times**: 57
- **Bad times**: 33
- **Don't know**: 10

- **Serious recession**: 3
- **Moderate recession**: 18
- **Mild recession**: 10
- **Not in a recession**: 27
- **Don't know**: 42
Closing Potential Budget Deficit

How would you prefer to deal with the state’s potential budget gap?

- Mix of cuts and taxes
- Mostly spending cuts
- Mostly tax increases
- OK to borrow, run deficit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>All adults</th>
<th>Dem</th>
<th>Rep</th>
<th>Ind</th>
<th>Likely voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mix of cuts and taxes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly spending cuts</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly tax increases</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK to borrow, run deficit</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
Raising Taxes

For each of the following, please say if you favor or oppose the proposal. Do you favor or oppose raising _________?

- Personal income tax
  - Favor: 24%
  - Oppose: 70%

- Income tax on wealthy
  - Favor: 67%
  - Oppose: 30%

- Sales tax
  - Favor: 60%
  - Oppose: 66%

- Corporate tax
  - Favor: 60%
  - Oppose: 35%
Preference for Making Budget Decisions

When it comes to the tough choices involved in the state budget this year, would you prefer that the governor and legislature make all of the decisions about spending and taxes; or that California voters make some of the decisions about spending and taxes at the ballot box?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Governor and legislature</th>
<th>California voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Which of the following statements do you agree with more?
The penalty for first-degree murder should be the death penalty; or
the penalty for first degree murder should be life imprisonment
with absolutely no possibility of parole.
Do you favor or oppose revising the three strikes law in California to impose life sentences on repeat offenders only if the third felony conviction is serious or violent?

- All adults: Favor 72%, Oppose 23%
- Dem: Favor 74%, Oppose 22%
- Rep: Favor 72%, Oppose 23%
- Ind: Favor 76%, Oppose 19%
- Likely voters: Favor 73%, Oppose 23%
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Conclusions

- Obama-Biden lead Romney-Ryan by 14 points
- Jobs, economy is the issue Californians want presidential candidates to talk about
- Half of likely voters favor Prop. 30 and support is slightly lower for Prop. 38
- Many unsure about their vote on Prop. 31 (state budget); split on Prop. 32 (political contributions)
- Strong majorities support changing three strikes law
- Californians prefer life imprisonment over death as the penalty for first-degree murder
Notes on the use of these slides

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

surveys@ppic.org

Thank you for your interest in this work.

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