PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and Their Government

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October 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
  - 272,000+ Californians since 1998
  - 129 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 on governance measures
- State and national issues
  - Approval ratings, state budget, tax preferences, political trust, initiative process
- Telephone interviews, October 14–21
  - 2,006 adults / 993 likely voters
    - ± 3.2 % margin of error for adults
    - ± 4.0 % 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-Biden:
  - July: 51%
  - Sept: 53%
  - Oct: 53%

- Romney-Ryan:
  - July: 40%
  - Sept: 39%
  - Oct: 41%

- Don't know/someone else:
  - July: 9%
  - Sept: 8%
  - Oct: 6%
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

%
Enthusiasm about Voting

Thinking about the presidential election that will be held this November, are you more enthusiastic about voting than usual, or less enthusiastic?

- All likely voters: 61% more enthusiastic, 27% less enthusiastic, 11% same.
- Democrats: 61% more enthusiastic, 26% less enthusiastic, 11% same.
- Republicans: 70% more enthusiastic, 21% less enthusiastic, 9% same.
- Independents: 47% more enthusiastic, 41% less enthusiastic, 12% same.

More enthusiastic
Less enthusiastic
Same (vol)

PPIC
What is your preference for the outcome of this year’s congressional elections: a Congress controlled by Republicans or a Congress controlled by Democrats?

Congressional Elections

Controlled by Democrats
Controlled by Republicans

Likely voters

52 52
47 38
40 39
50 35

Mar 12 May 12 Sept 12 Oct 12
Support on Tax Measures to Fund Education

Prop 30: Temporary Taxes for Education, Public Safety
- September: 52%
- October: 48%

Prop 38: Tax for Education, Early Childhood Programs
- September: 45%
- October: 39%
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?

![Bar chart showing voter opinions on Proposition 30 by party affiliation.]

All likely voters: 48% Yes, 44% No, 8% Don't know
Democrats: 22% Yes, 8% No, 11% Don't know
Republicans: 70% Yes, 20% No, 11% Don't know
Independents: 43% Yes, 50% No, 7% Don't know
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?
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

Jan 11  May 11  Sep 11  Jan 12  May 12  Oct 12

% 0  20  40  60  80

41  42  41  46  39  42

26  23  26  28  25  28

41  42
Approval Ratings of Federal Elected Officials

- President Obama
- Congress

Oct 08: President Obama 23, Congress 39
Mar 09: President Obama 71, Congress 43
Sep 09: President Obama 63, Congress 39
Mar 10: President Obama 58, Congress 31
Oct 10: President Obama 55, Congress 30
Mar 11: President Obama 56, Congress 27
Sep 11: President Obama 51, Congress 24
Mar 12: President Obama 59, Congress 24
Oct 12: President Obama 63, Congress 26
Overall Mood of State

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

- Right direction: 39
- Wrong direction: 53
- Don't know: 8

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

- Good times: 53
- Bad times: 37
- Don't know: 11

All adults
Overall Mood of Nation

- **Country heading in wrong direction**
  - August 2008: 74%
  - October 2012: 49%

- **U.S. will have bad times financially**
  - August 2008: 70%
  - October 2012: 46%
Would you say that your local government services—such as those provided by city and county governments and public schools—have or have not been affected by recent state budget cuts? (If they have: “Have they been affected a lot or somewhat?”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Affected a lot</th>
<th>Affected somewhat</th>
<th>Not affected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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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>Group</th>
<th>Mix of cuts and taxes</th>
<th>Mostly spending cuts</th>
<th>Mostly tax increases</th>
<th>OK to borrow, run deficit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td></td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3%</td>
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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 72%
- **Income tax on wealthy**: Favor 66%, Oppose 29%
- **Sales tax**: Favor 28%, Oppose 69%
- **Corporate tax**: Favor 59%, Oppose 35%
Do you think the people in ... government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don’t waste very much of it?

Percent saying a lot

- **All adults**: 60% State, 57% Federal
- **Dem**: 53% State, 49% Federal
- **Rep**: 74% State, 74% Federal
- **Ind**: 51% State, 54% Federal
- **Likely voters**: 60% State, 60% Federal
Role of Big Interests

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

Percent saying run by a few big interests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Federal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
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Changes to Initiative Process

Do you think the citizens’ initiative process in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or that it is basically fine the way it is?

![Bar chart showing the percentage of responses for different groups.](chart.png)

- **All adults**: 46% minor changes, 50% major changes
- **Dem**: 26% minor changes, 50% major changes
- **Rep**: 29% minor changes, 35% major changes
- **Ind**: 38% minor changes, 38% major changes
- **Likely voters**: 30% minor changes, 40% major changes
How about having a period of time in which the initiative sponsor and the legislature could meet to see if there is a compromise solution before initiatives go to the ballot?

How about increasing public disclosure of funding sources for signature gathering and initiative campaigns?

All adults

- Favor: 81
- Oppose: 16
- Don't know: 7

- Favor: 77
- Oppose: 14
- Don't know: 5
Party Perceptions

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of the...

% saying favorable

- Democratic Party
- Republican Party
- Tea Party movement

% saying favorable:

- All adults: 58%
- Dem: 27%
- Rep: 72%
- Ind: 46%
- Likely voters: 53%

Party Perceptions
Need for a Third Party

In your view, do the Republican and Democratic parties do an adequate job representing the American people, or do they do such a poor job that a third major party is needed?
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Conclusions

- Obama-Biden lead Romney-Ryan by 12 points
- Just under half would vote yes on Proposition 30, support lower for Proposition 38
- Nearly half would vote no on Prop. 31 and many still undecided; just over half oppose Prop. 32
- Most Californians express distrust of both state and federal government
- Most say changes are needed to the initiative process and support reform
- A majority have a favorable impression of the Democratic Party; more negative views of the Republican Party or the Tea Party
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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