PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and Their Government

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September 2011
Outline

- PPIC Statewide Surveys
- State Issues
- 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
  - 254,000+ Californians since 1998
  - 100+ general, issue, and regional surveys
Californians and Their Government

- General series funded by The Irvine Foundation
- State issues
  - Overall mood; economy; approval ratings
  - State and local relationship; initiative process
- National Issues
  - Overall mood; approval ratings
  - U.S. economic policy; federal budget deficit
- Telephone interviews, September 6–13
  - 2,002 adults / 958 likely voters
    - ± 3.6% margin of error for adults
    - ± 4.2% for likely voters
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Thinking about the state as a whole, what do you think is the most important issue facing people in California today?

- Jobs, economy: 67%
- Education, schools: 6%
- State budget, deficit, taxes: 6%
- Immigration, illegal immigration: 4%
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: 67%
- Bad times: 25%
- Don't know: 8%

Serious recession: 10%
Moderate recession: 7%
Mild recession: 2%
Not in a recession: 32%
Don't know: 50%
Concern About Job Loss

Are you concerned that you or someone in your family will lose their job in the next year, or not? (if yes: Are you very concerned or somewhat concerned?)

- All adults: 19% somewhat concerned, 30% very concerned
- Under $40,000: 18% somewhat concerned, 38% very concerned
- $40,000 to $80,000: 20% somewhat concerned, 29% very concerned
- $80,000 or more: 19% somewhat concerned, 19% very concerned
- Likely voters: 16% somewhat concerned, 26% very concerned
Approval Ratings of State Elected Officials

Governor Brown
Legislature

Jan 26 24 24 21 23 23 26
Feb 34 34 40 42 42 42 41
Mar 41
Apr
May
Jun
Jul 26
Aug
Sep
Local Government Services

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, ask: “Have they been affected a lot or somewhat?”)*

![Bar chart showing the percentage of responses for different regions and voter types regarding the impact of state budget cuts on local government services.](chart.png)
State and Local Realignment

Would you favor or oppose a shift of some tax dollars and fees from the state government to local governments, in order for local governments to take on the responsibility of running certain programs currently run by the state?

% who favor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>January</th>
<th>September</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Realignment and Confidence in Local Government

% very or somewhat confident

- Overall:
  - All adults: 59%
  - Central Valley: 56%
  - SF Bay Area: 65%
  - Los Angeles: 56%
  - Other Southern California: 58%
  - Likely voters: 59%

- About prisoner shift:
  - All adults: 48%
  - Central Valley: 44%
  - SF Bay Area: 47%
  - Los Angeles: 48%
  - Other Southern California: 50%
  - Likely voters: 46%
Budget Reform

Do you think it is a good idea or bad idea to lower the vote requirement to pass a state budget and state taxes from a two-thirds vote to a simple majority or 50 percent plus one vote?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Good idea</th>
<th>Bad idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Term Limits Reform

Some people have proposed reducing the total amount of time a person may serve in the state legislature from 14 years to 12 years and allowing a person to serve a total of 12 years either in the assembly, the senate, or a combination of both. Do you think this is a good idea or a bad idea?

- All adults: 62% Good idea, 26% Bad idea
- Dem: 60% Good idea, 32% Bad idea
- Rep: 71% Good idea, 21% Bad idea
- Ind: 65% Good idea, 26% Bad idea
- Likely voters: 65% Good idea, 27% Bad idea
Legislative Reforms

Do you think that having a part-time legislature is a good idea or a bad idea?

- Good idea: 31
- Bad idea: 58
- Don't know: 11

Do you think that having a single body of 120-members in the legislature is a good idea or a bad idea?

- Good idea: 43
- Bad idea: 38
- Don't know: 19

All adults
Overall, how much would you say that the initiative process in California today is controlled by special interests—a lot, some, or not at all?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>% saying a lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asians</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinos</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Initiative Reform Proposals

How about requiring initiatives which create new programs or reduce taxes to identify a specific funding source?

How about a system of review and revision of proposed initiatives to try to avoid legal issues and drafting errors?

- **Favor**: 73%
- **Oppose**: 10%
- **Don't know**: 17%

- **Favor**: 68%
- **Oppose**: 14%
- **Don't know**: 19%
Abortion

Which of the following statements comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right?

Government should not interfere with a woman's access
Government should pass more restrictive laws

Jan 00: 71%
Jan 02: 69%
Jan 04: 69%
Aug 08: 65%
Feb 09: 61%
Mar 10: 65%
Sep 11: 69%
Do you favor or oppose allowing gay and lesbian couples to be legally married?
Marijuana Legalization

In general, do you think the use of marijuana should be made legal, or not?

- **All adults:** 46% Yes, 51% No
- **Dem:** 53% Yes, 44% No
- **Rep:** 36% Yes, 59% No
- **Ind:** 56% Yes, 40% No
- **Likely voters:** 48% Yes, 48% No
Death Penalty

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.
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Approval Ratings of Federal Elected Officials

- President Obama:
  - Mar 09: 71%
  - Sep 09: 63%
  - Mar 10: 58%
  - Sep 10: 52%
  - Mar 11: 56%
  - Sep 11: 51%

- Congress:
  - Mar 09: 43%
  - Sep 09: 39%
  - Mar 10: 24%
  - Sep 10: 26%
  - Mar 11: 30%
  - Sep 11: 27%
Approval Ratings of U.S. Senators

Barbara Boxer
Dianne Feinstein

Oct 04
Oct 05
Sep 06
Sep 07
Sep 08
Sep 09
Sep 10
Sep 11

%
Obama’s Economic Policies

Since taking office, have Barack Obama’s economic policies made economic conditions better, worse, or not had an effect so far?

- **Better**
- **Worse**
- **No effect so far**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Better</th>
<th>Worse</th>
<th>No effect so far</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats (Dem)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans (Rep)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents (Ind)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who do you trust more to make the right decisions about the nation’s economy?

- **Barack Obama**
  - All adults: 50%
  - Dem: 77%
  - Rep: 69%
  - Ind: 45%
  - Likely voters: 48%

- **Republicans in Congress**
  - All adults: 31%
  - Dem: 10%
  - Rep: 10%
  - Ind: 31%
  - Likely voters: 33%
Job Creation

Overall, do you think that Congress and the Obama administration are doing more than enough, just enough, or not enough to help create jobs?

% saying not enough

- All adults: 67%
- Dem: 64%
- Rep: 83%
- Ind: 71%
- Likely voters: 74%
American Jobs Act

In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the president’s plan?

- **All adults**: 53% satisfied, 37% dissatisfied
- **Dem**: 80% satisfied, 15% dissatisfied
- **Rep**: 72% satisfied, 17% dissatisfied
- **Ind**: 56% satisfied, 35% dissatisfied
- **Likely voters**: 52% satisfied, 39% dissatisfied
Federal Budget Deficit

If you were setting priorities for the federal government these days, would you place a higher priority on spending to help the economy recover or a higher priority on reducing the budget deficit?

- **Democrats**
  - Spending to help economy recover: 31
  - Reducing the budget deficit: 64

- **Republicans**
  - Spending to help economy recover: 70
  - Reducing the budget deficit: 25
  - Don't know: 5

Options:  
- Spending to help economy recover  
- Reducing the budget deficit  
- Don't know

[Diagram showing survey results]
 Debt Ceiling Agreement

Based on what you have read or heard, do you approve or disapprove of that bill?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Approve</th>
<th>Disapprove</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Deficit Reduction Proposal

Please tell me whether you think each of the following should or should not be included in that deficit reduction proposal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% saying should be included</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tax increases on businesses and higher-income Americans</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major changes to Social Security and Medicare systems</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **All adults**: 67% for tax increases, 46% for major changes
- **Dem**: 82% for tax increases, 36% for major changes
- **Rep**: 38% for tax increases, 54% for major changes
- **Ind**: 69% for tax increases, 55% for major changes
- **Likely voters**: 62% for tax increases, 46% for major changes
Party Perceptions

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

% saying favorable

Democratic Party
Republican Party
Tea Party movement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
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<th>Dem</th>
<th>Rep</th>
<th>Ind</th>
<th>Likely voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Party</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea Party movement</td>
<td></td>
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PPIC
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- Record high mention of jobs and the economy as California’s most important issue
- Majorities say local services affected by state budget cuts
- Overall confidence in realignment higher than confidence in handling prisoner shift
- Californians trust Obama over congressional Republicans on economy
- Majorities say not enough being done to create jobs
- Californians support spending to help economy recover over deficit reduction
Upcoming PPIC Statewide Surveys

- November
  - *Californians and Higher Education*

- December
  - *Californians and Their Government*

- January
  - *Californians and Their Government*
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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:

Mark Baldassare or Dean Bonner: surveys@ppic.org

Thank you for your interest in this work.

September 2011