

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY

OCTOBER 2010

Californians & their government



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in collaboration with
The James Irvine Foundation



PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The PPIC Statewide Survey series provides policymakers, the media, and the public with objective, advocacy-free information on the perceptions, opinions, and public policy preferences of California residents. Inaugurated in April 1998, this is the 110th PPIC Statewide Survey in a series that has generated a database of responses from more than 234,000 Californians.

This survey is the 43rd in the *Californians and Their Government* series, which is conducted periodically to examine the social, economic, and political trends that influence public policy preferences and ballot choices. The series is supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation. This survey seeks to raise public awareness, inform decisionmakers, and stimulate public discussion and debate about important state and national issues and the November general election.

This survey took place as the competitive governor's and senate races entered their final stages: with the final gubernatorial debate taking place during the week respondents were interviewed, just after passage of the state budget, and as economic news remains grim. Several citizens' initiatives on the ballot are linked by their proponents to economic and fiscal recovery, including legalizing marijuana, suspending climate change legislation, repealing recently enacted legislation reducing business tax liability, and lowering the legislative vote threshold for passing the state budget. At the national level, Democrats and Republicans are locked in battle for control of Congress, with voter satisfaction low for both parties, and with the outlook for the country's unemployment and housing situation continuing to be poor.

This survey presents the responses of 2,002 adult residents throughout the state, interviewed in English or Spanish and reached by landline or cell phone. It includes findings on these topics:

- The 2010 general election, including preferences for candidates in both the governor's and U.S. Senate races, satisfaction with choices of candidates in each race, and rankings of candidates on key issues; support for and perceived importance of four initiatives: Proposition 19 (legalizes marijuana under California law), Proposition 23 (suspends AB 32 implementation), Proposition 24 (repeals legislation allowing businesses to lower tax liability), and Proposition 25 (changes budget approval requirement from two-thirds to a simple majority).
- State and national issues, including the direction of the state and nation, perceptions of the California economy, and concerns about job loss and housing affordability; approval ratings of Governor Schwarzenegger, the California Legislature, President Obama, and Congress; preference for party control of the next Congress; perceptions of the political parties and the Tea Party movement; trust in state and federal government; and attitudes toward the citizens' initiative process.
- Time trends, national comparisons, and the extent to which Californians—based on their political party affiliation, region of residence, race/ethnicity, and other demographics—may differ in their perceptions, attitudes, and preferences regarding the 2010 general election and state and national issues.

This report may be downloaded free of charge from our website (www.ppic.org). For questions about the survey, please contact survey@ppic.org. View our searchable PPIC Statewide Survey database online at <http://www.ppic.org/main/survAdvancedSearch.asp>.

NEWS RELEASE

EMBARGOED: Do not publish or broadcast until 9:00 p.m. PDT on Wednesday, October 20, 2010.

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

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

Brown Leads Whitman—Boxer in Close Race With Fiorina

NEARLY HALF FAVOR PROPOSITION 25, FEWER SUPPORT PROPOSITIONS 19, 23, 24

SAN FRANCISCO, October 20, 2010—Democrat Jerry Brown leads Republican Meg Whitman in the governor's race, and Democratic incumbent Barbara Boxer is locked in a close contest with Republican challenger Carly Fiorina in the U.S. Senate campaign. These are the results of a survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) with funding from The James Irvine Foundation.

Likely voters favor Brown over Whitman by 8 points (44% Brown, 36% Whitman, 16% undecided). The two candidates were in a virtual tie in September (38% Whitman, 37% Brown, 18% undecided). The Senate race is tight (43% Boxer, 38% Fiorina, 13% undecided) among likely voters. Boxer held a 7-point lead in September (42% Boxer, 35% Fiorina, 17% undecided).

In the final weeks of the campaign season, California's likely voters express discontent in a number of ways: approval ratings of elected officials that are at or near record lows, a belief that the state and nation are headed in the wrong direction, and pessimism about the economy. While most (62%) are satisfied with their choice for U.S. Senate, more than half (55%) are dissatisfied with their choice for governor. Farther down the statewide ballot, none of the four state ballot initiatives included in the PPIC survey has the majority support today that is necessary for passage on November 2.

Looking to Washington, California likely voters are split over whether they would prefer a Congress controlled by Democrats or one controlled by Republicans (45% prefer control by Democrats, 43% control by Republicans). Should control of Congress switch to Republicans, 40 percent of likely voters say it would be a good thing, 33 percent say it would be bad, and 25 percent say it would make no difference.

"As they view their ballot options on Election Day, voters are united in their unhappiness with elected officials and the direction of government—but divided about the leadership they want to help meet the challenges in their lives," said Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO.

Californians approach the election with a dismal view of the economy. Nearly all adults (87%) continue to say that the state is in a recession, and 54 percent call it a serious recession. A majority of Californians (62%) are concerned (39% very concerned, 23% somewhat concerned) about having enough money to pay their rent or mortgage. With unemployment in double digits, 45 percent are very concerned (28%) or somewhat concerned (17%) that they or someone in their family will lose a job in the next year.

INDEPENDENTS SPLIT IN RACES FOR GOVERNOR, SENATE

Among likely voters, independents were more likely to support Whitman in September (38% Whitman, 30% Brown, 19% undecided) but are divided today (37% Whitman, 36% Brown, 19% undecided). Support for Brown has increased among Democrats (76% today, 63% September), liberals (82% today,

68% September), moderates (51% today, 39% September), women (47% today, 35% September), and Latinos (51% today, 32% September). Support for Whitman has held steady among Republicans (73% today, 71% September) and conservatives (63% today, 67% September). Men and whites remain divided.

Asked which candidate for governor would do a better job handling specific issues, likely voters prefer Brown over Whitman on education (47% to 37%), the environment (57% to 25%), and immigration (43% to 37%). They prefer Whitman over Brown on jobs and the economy (47% to 39%) and on the state budget and taxes (48% to 40%).

In the Senate race, independents are split (37% Fiorina, 36% Boxer, 18% undecided), as they were in September (34% Fiorina, 32% Boxer, 20% undecided). Support is up slightly for Boxer among Democrats (76% today, 72% September) and for Fiorina among Republicans (77% today, 72% September).

SUPPORT TO LEGALIZE MARIJUANA DROPS BELOW MAJORITY

Today, 44 percent of likely voters plan to vote for Proposition 19—the measure that would legalize marijuana—while 49 percent plan to vote against it, with 7 percent undecided. This is an 8-point drop in support since September (52% yes, 41% no, 7% undecided). Support has declined among Democrats (56% today, 63% September), dropped sharply among independents (40% today, 65% September), and remains low among Republicans (30% today, 32% September). Support has declined across nearly all demographic groups, most strikingly among Latinos (42% today, 63% September). Most likely voters say the outcome of the vote on Proposition 19 is important (52% very important, 28% somewhat important). Those planning to vote no are more likely to consider the outcome very important (67%) than those planning to vote yes (40%).

MORE OPPOSE THAN SUPPORT PROPOSITIONS 23, 24

Support has also declined for Proposition 23, the measure to suspend the state's air pollution law until unemployment falls to at least 5.5 percent for one year. Likely voters are now much more likely to say they will vote no (48%) on the proposition than yes (37%), while in September they were closely divided (43% yes, 42% no). Across parties, opposition has increased slightly among Democrats (53% today, 48% September) and independents (54% today, 43% September), while support has held steady among Republicans (46% today, 45% September). Latinos, who favored Proposition 23 in September (54% yes, 36% no) are now divided (44% yes, 42% no). About half of likely voters (49%) say the outcome of the vote on Proposition 23 is very important and 33 percent say it is somewhat important.

Proposition 24 still has neither majority support nor opposition across parties, regions, and demographic groups. A plurality plans to vote no on the measure, which would repeal a law that grants businesses lower tax liability (38% no, 31% yes, 31% undecided). Asked about the importance of the vote on Proposition 24, 31 percent say it is very important and 37 percent say somewhat important.

Just under half of likely voters (49%) plan to vote for Proposition 25, 34 percent plan to vote no, and 17 percent are undecided about the measure, which would reduce the legislative threshold for budget passage from two-thirds to a simple majority. The results were nearly identical in September (48% yes, 35% no, 17% undecided). Support has increased among Democrats (58% today, 52% September), and a plurality of Republicans remain opposed (45% today, 43% September). Half of likely voters (50%) say the outcome of the vote on Proposition 25 is very important, and 32 percent say it is somewhat important. Majorities of those who support (56%) and those opposed (54%) consider the outcome very important.

DECISION BY INITIATIVE: VOTERS LIKE IT, BUT MORE OF THEM WANT CHANGES

As they consider nine initiatives on the ballot, most likely voters (55%) say that decisions made by voters through the initiative process are probably better than those made by the governor and legislature and 30 percent say voters' decisions are probably worse. This finding has stayed remarkably consistent: since

PPIC first asked this question in October 2000, majorities have said decisions made by voters are probably better. Despite confidence in their own decisions, voters' dissatisfaction with the initiative process has grown. Between 2000 and 2008, less than a third of likely voters said they were dissatisfied with the way the initiative process is working. Today, 43 percent say so. About half (49%) say the initiative process needs major changes. Another 30 percent say minor changes are needed, and just 15 percent say the process is fine as it is. Even among those who say voters' decisions are better than those of elected officials, a plurality (40%) say the process needs major changes.

LIKELY VOTERS GIVE LEGISLATURE 10 PERCENT APPROVAL RATING

In Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's last months in office, his approval rating among likely voters is 29 percent, up slightly from his record-low 24 percent in May. The legislature gets more negative reviews: after passing the budget 100 days late, lawmakers get an approval rating of 10 percent from likely voters, a virtual tie with the record low of 9 percent in March.

Federal elected officials fare better than state leaders. Just under half of likely voters (49%) approve of President Barack Obama's job performance and 47 percent disapprove. Among all California adults, a majority (55%) approve and 40 percent disapprove of the job Obama is doing. Californians are more approving of the president than adults nationwide (45% approve, 52% disapprove in a recent CNN/Opinion Research Corporation poll). Obama's approval rating has fallen 17 points among likely voters from a high of 66 percent in May 2009. Congress gets considerably lower marks: just 26 percent of likely voters approve of federal legislators' job performance.

MAJOR PARTIES VIEWED UNFAVORABLY—TEA PARTY RATING DOWN, TOO

Likely voters' discontent with their elected officials is echoed in their discontent over the direction of the state and nation. Solid majorities say California (77%) and the United States (60%) are headed in the wrong direction. The Democratic and Republican parties don't fare well with likely voters either: A majority (56%) say the parties are doing such a poor job that a third major party is needed. How is the Tea Party movement viewed in California? Likely voters' negative impressions have increased in the last year, with 35 percent viewing it favorably and 47 percent viewing it unfavorably today. The unfavorable rating has increased 10 points since March. However, the Republican Party has a higher unfavorable rating (62%) than either the Tea Party (47%) or Democratic Party (51%).

MORE KEY FINDINGS

- **Distrust in government runs high**—pages 20, 21

Three-quarters (73%) of likely voters say the federal government is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves rather than being run for the benefit of all. Seventy-nine percent hold this view about state government.

- **TV tops other media as source of political information**—pages 32, 33

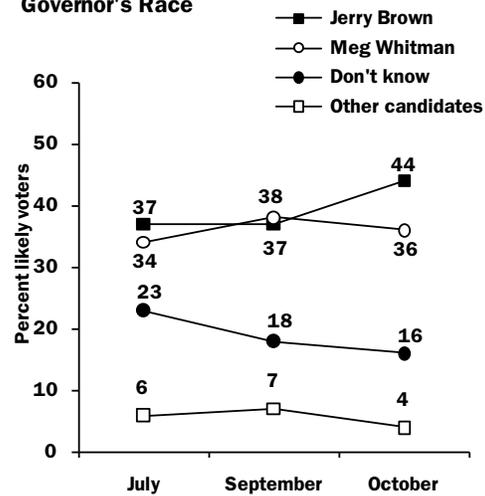
A plurality of residents (37%) get most of their information about politics from television, a 10-point drop since 2007. Nearly a quarter (24%) get most of their information from the Internet, 15 percent from newspapers, and 10 percent from radio. Those who mainly get information online are divided among those who read newspaper websites (47%) and those who go to other types of websites (50%). The percentage of adults who go online sometimes or often to get California news has increased 16 points since 2007, from 43 percent to 59 percent.

NOVEMBER 2010 ELECTION

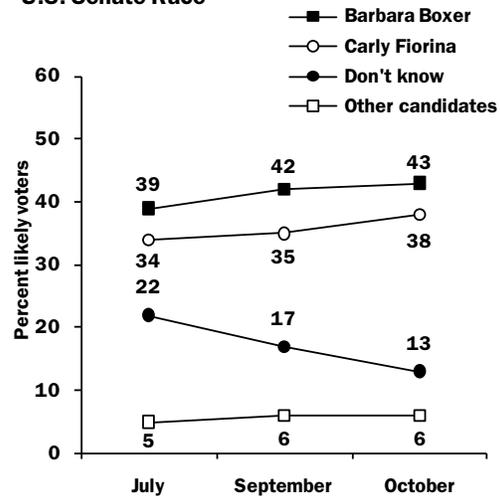
KEY FINDINGS

- Jerry Brown now has an 8-point lead in the race for governor against Meg Whitman (44% to 36%). Over half of likely voters are not satisfied with their choice of candidates for governor. (page 7)
- Likely voters say Jerry Brown would do a better job than Meg Whitman on education (47% to 37%), the environment (57% to 25%), and immigration (43% to 37%), but Whitman would better handle jobs and the economy (47% to 39%) and the state budget and taxes (48% to 40%). (page 8)
- Senator Barbara Boxer is in a close race with Carly Fiorina for the U.S. Senate (43% to 38%). Six in 10 likely voters continue to say they are satisfied with their choice of candidates in this race. (page 9)
- Support for Proposition 19, which would legalize marijuana in the state, has declined by 8 points, falling below 50 percent. Half view the outcome of this proposition as very important. (page 10)
- Support for Proposition 23, which would suspend California's air pollution control law (AB 32), has declined by 6 points and falls well below the majority needed to pass. Half view the outcome of this proposition as very important. (page 11)
- Support for Proposition 24, which would repeal a law that grants businesses a lower tax liability, has declined by 4 points and is well below a majority. But three in 10 are undecided. (page 12)
- Likely voters are more likely to support than oppose Proposition 25, which would change the legislative vote requirement to pass a budget from two-thirds to a simple majority, but support is still just below 50 percent. (page 13)

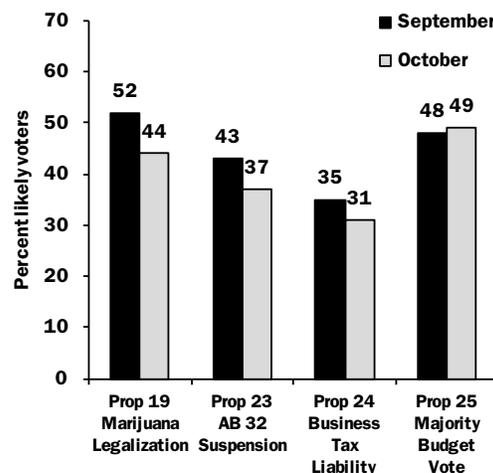
Governor's Race



U.S. Senate Race



Percent Supporting State Ballot Initiatives



GOVERNOR'S RACE

With two weeks before the November election, Jerry Brown now has an 8-point lead over Meg Whitman (44% to 36%). In September, likely voters were divided (37% Brown, 38% Whitman), as they were in July (37% Brown, 34% Whitman). Support for Brown has increased among Democrats (63% September, 76% today), liberals (68% September, 82% today), moderates (39% September, 51% today), women (35% September, 47% today), and Latinos (32% September, 51% today). Support for Whitman has held steady among Republicans (71% September, 73% today) and conservatives (67% September, 63% today). Independents were more likely to support Whitman in September (38% Whitman, 30% Brown), while they are more closely divided today (37% Whitman, 36% Brown).

Brown is favored in the San Francisco Bay Area (55%, up 5 points since September) and Los Angeles (54%, up 19 points), while Whitman is favored in the Other Southern California region (45%, unchanged). Likely voters in the Central Valley are divided (42% Brown, 41% Whitman), a change from September when they favored Whitman over Brown (32% Brown, 47% Whitman). Men and whites remain divided.

"If the November 2nd election for governor were being held today, would you vote for...?"

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Jerry Brown	Meg Whitman	Other candidates*	Don't know
All Likely Voters		44%	36%	4%	16%
Party	Democrats	76	7	2	15
	Republicans	11	73	4	12
	Independents	36	37	8	19
Region	Central Valley	42	41	5	12
	San Francisco Bay Area	55	29	1	15
	Los Angeles	54	28	3	15
	Other Southern California	28	45	8	19
Gender	Men	41	40	5	14
	Women	47	32	4	17
Race/ethnicity	Latinos	51	22	6	21
	Whites	41	42	4	13

* For full list of candidates, see question 7 on page 28

Four in 10 likely voters are following news about the governor's election very closely (39%, up 9 points from September); 50 percent are following the news fairly closely. Republicans (42%) are the most likely to be following the news very closely, followed by Democrats (36%) and independents (33%). In October 2006, before the last governor's race, far fewer followed news about the election very closely (19%).

Over half of likely voters report that they are not satisfied with their choice of candidates for governor (55%, up 6 points since September). Half of Democrats remain satisfied, while satisfaction has dropped 10 points among Republicans and 9 points among independents since last month.

"In general, would you say you are satisfied or not satisfied with your choices of candidates in the election for governor on November 2nd?"

<i>Likely voters only</i>	All Likely Voters	Party			Latinos
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Satisfied	42%	50%	38%	30%	43%
Not satisfied	55	46	58	68	54
Don't know	3	4	4	2	3

ISSUE AND CANDIDATE RANKINGS

When asked which gubernatorial candidate would do a better job of handling a number of important issues, likely voters choose Jerry Brown over Meg Whitman on education (47% to 37%), the environment (57% to 25%), and immigration (43% to 37%). They say Meg Whitman would better handle jobs and the economy (39% Brown, 47% Whitman) and the state budget and taxes (40% Brown, 48% Whitman).

When it comes to education, three in four Democrats (73%) think Brown would do a better job than Whitman, seven in 10 Republicans (69%) prefer Whitman, and independents pick Brown (48% to 34%). Voters in Los Angeles (57% to 30%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (55% to 30%) say Brown, a plurality in the Other Southern California region say Whitman (44% to 36%), and Central Valley voters are divided.

On the environment, Democrats (75%) and independents (64%) think Brown would do a better job, while half of Republicans (50%) say Whitman would. Across regions and demographic groups, likely voters think Brown would do a better job than Whitman on this issue.

On immigration, Democrats choose Brown (71%), Republicans pick Whitman (68%), and independents are divided (37% Brown, 41% Whitman). Over half of voters in the San Francisco Bay Area (56%) and Los Angeles (52%) prefer Brown, while pluralities of voters in the Other Southern California region and the Central Valley (46% each) favor Whitman. Over half of Latinos (56%) say Brown would do a better job; whites are divided (38% Brown, 42% Whitman).

On jobs and the economy, Republicans (78%) and independents (52%) pick Whitman, while Democrats (66%) support Brown. Half in Los Angeles (49%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (48%) say Brown; majorities in the Central Valley (57%) and the Other Southern California region (56%) say Whitman.

On the state budget and taxes, Republicans (79%) choose Whitman, as do half of independents (51%), while Democrats (68%) pick Brown. About half of likely voters in Los Angeles (53%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (50%) say Brown, while majorities in the Other Southern California region (59%) and the Central Valley (55%) say Whitman.

“Regardless of your choice for governor, which of these candidates would do the better job on...?”

<i>Likely voters only</i>		All Likely Voters	Party			Latinos
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
...education	Jerry Brown	47%	73%	14%	48%	59%
	Meg Whitman	37	14	69	34	28
	Neither/don't know	16	13	17	18	13
...environment	Jerry Brown	57	75	31	64	60
	Meg Whitman	25	8	50	20	14
	Neither/don't know	18	17	19	16	26
...immigration	Jerry Brown	43	71	13	37	56
	Meg Whitman	37	12	68	41	25
	Neither/don't know	20	17	19	22	19
...jobs and the economy	Jerry Brown	39	66	10	34	44
	Meg Whitman	47	21	78	52	37
	Neither/don't know	14	13	12	14	19
...state budget and taxes	Jerry Brown	40	68	10	34	46
	Meg Whitman	48	21	79	51	37
	Neither/don't know	12	11	11	15	17

2010 SENATE ELECTION

Democratic incumbent Barbara Boxer remains in a close race with Carly Fiorina for the U.S. Senate (43% to 38%). In September, Boxer was slightly ahead (42% to 35%); and in July, the race was also close (39% Boxer to 34% Fiorina). Today, support among partisans is up slightly from September with strong majorities of Democrats (76% Boxer, 72% in September) and Republicans (77% Fiorina, 72% in September) supporting their party's candidate. Independents are divided (37% Fiorina, 36% Boxer), as they were in September (34% Fiorina, 32% Boxer).

Majorities in the San Francisco Bay Area (59%) and Los Angeles (52%) support Boxer, while pluralities of likely voters in the Central Valley (48%) and the Other Southern California region (49%) support Fiorina. Latinos (52% Boxer, 17% Fiorina) and women (48% Boxer, 32% Fiorina) prefer Boxer, while whites (46% Fiorina, 38% Boxer) and men (44% Fiorina, 38% Boxer) favor Fiorina. Voters age 18 to 34 prefer Boxer, while older voters are divided. Among those who approve of President Obama and Congress, strong majorities support Boxer. Fiorina leads among those who disapprove of Congress (48% to 34%), and among those who disapprove of President Obama (71% to 10%).

"If the November 2nd election for U.S. Senate were being held today, would you vote for...?"

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Barbara Boxer	Carly Fiorina	Other candidates*	Don't know
All Likely Voters		43%	38%	6%	13%
Party	Democrats	76	7	3	14
	Republicans	8	77	3	12
	Independents	36	37	9	18
Region	Central Valley	35	48	3	14
	San Francisco Bay Area	59	26	8	7
	Los Angeles	52	26	6	16
	Other Southern California	29	49	5	17
Gender	Men	38	44	7	11
	Women	48	32	4	16
Race/ethnicity	Latinos	52	17	6	25
	Whites	38	46	6	10

* For full list of candidates, see question 14 on page 29.

Sixty-two percent of likely voters are satisfied with their choice of candidates in the election for U.S. Senate. Majorities across parties are satisfied, but Democrats (67%) are more satisfied than Republicans (61%) or independents (57%). Findings were similar in September. Majorities across regions and demographic groups are satisfied. Among those who are satisfied, Boxer leads Fiorina (50% to 41%); among those who are not satisfied, nearly one in four are undecided and the rest are divided (33% Boxer, 34% Fiorina).

"In general, would you say you are satisfied or not satisfied with your choices of candidates in the election for U.S. senator on November 2nd?"

<i>Likely voters only</i>	All Likely Voters	Party			Latinos
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Satisfied	62%	67%	61%	57%	68%
Not satisfied	32	27	34	41	29
Don't know	6	6	5	2	3

PROPOSITION 19—MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION

Support for Proposition 19, which would legalize marijuana in California, has declined since September. When read the official ballot title and label, 44 percent of likely voters say they would vote yes (down 8 points since September), 49 percent would vote no (up 8 points), and 7 percent remain undecided. Currently, a majority of Democrats (56%) would vote yes, while a strong majority of Republicans (66%) and half of independents (49%) would vote no. Support among independents has declined sharply since September (65% to 40% today). Support for Proposition 19 has declined across nearly all demographic groups. Support among Latinos has also dropped sharply since last month (63% to 42% today). Whites are now more likely to vote no than yes, a reversal since September. Men are divided and women are opposed. Younger voters still support Proposition 19, while half of voters over 34 oppose it. Half of voters in the San Francisco Bay Area support it, while voters elsewhere are opposed.

“Proposition 19 is called the ‘Legalizes Marijuana Under California but Not Federal Law. Permits Local Governments to Regulate and Tax Commercial Production, Distribution, and Sale of Marijuana. Initiative Statute.’ If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 19?”*

Likely voters only		Yes	No	Don't know
All Likely Voters		44%	49%	7%
Party	Democrats	56	37	7
	Republicans	30	66	4
	Independents	40	49	11
Gender	Men	47	48	5
	Women	41	50	9
Race/ethnicity	Latinos	42	51	7
	Whites	44	50	6
Age	18–34	59	37	4
	35–54	41	50	9
	55 and older	40	53	7

* For complete text of proposition question, see page 29.

As in September, eight in 10 likely voters consider the outcome of Proposition 19 to be very (52%) or somewhat (28%) important. Republicans are still more likely than Democrats and independents to say the outcome is very important, and no-voters continue to place higher importance on the outcome than yes-voters. Across regions, voters in San Francisco Bay Area are the least likely—and those in the Other Southern California region the most likely—to consider the outcome of Proposition 19 very important. Latino voters are far more likely than whites to say the outcome is very important (67% to 48%).

“How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 19?”

	All Likely Voters	Party			Vote on Proposition 19	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very important	52%	50%	57%	48%	40%	67%
Somewhat important	28	31	24	28	36	21
Not too important	12	11	11	17	16	9
Not at all important	5	6	5	4	7	3
Don't know	3	2	3	3	1	–

PROPOSITION 23—AB 32 SUSPENSION

When read the ballot title and label on Proposition 23, which would suspend California’s air pollution control law (AB 32) until unemployment drops to 5.5 percent or less for a full year, likely voters are much more likely to oppose (48%) than to support this measure (37%), with 15 percent undecided. In September, likely voters were divided (43% yes, 42% no). Across parties today, opposition has grown among Democrats and independents, while Republicans are as likely to favor this measure (46% yes, 38% no) as they were in September (45% yes, 35% no). Latino voters are now divided (44% yes, 42% no); in September, a majority said they would vote yes. Currently, pluralities of women and voters across age and income groups would vote no. Men are divided (44% yes, 48% no). A strong majority of likely voters in the San Francisco Bay Area and half in Los Angeles would vote no, while those in the Other Southern California region and Central Valley are divided.

“Proposition 23 is called the ‘Suspends Implementation of Air Pollution Control Law (AB 32) Requiring Major Sources of Emissions to Report and Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions That Cause Global Warming, Until Unemployment Drops to 5.5 Percent or Less for Full Year. Initiative Statute.’ If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 23?”*

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Yes	No	Don't know
All Likely Voters		37%	48%	15%
Party	Democrats	31	53	16
	Republicans	46	38	16
	Independents	35	54	11
Gender	Men	44	48	8
	Women	31	48	21
Race/Ethnicity	Latinos	44	42	14
	Whites	34	51	15

* For complete text of proposition question, see page 30.

How important is the outcome of Proposition 23? Among likely voters, 49 percent now consider it very important (45% September). Among Democrats and Republicans, the percentage calling this measure very important is similar to September; among independents, it has grown (41% September, 49% today). No-voters (52%) are now as likely as yes-voters (56%) to say the outcome is very important, marking an increase among no-voters.

About half of likely voters in the San Francisco Bay Area (54%), Los Angeles (51%), and the Other Southern California region (51%) say the outcome of Proposition 23 is very important; 41 percent in the Central Valley hold this view. Latinos (63%) are far more likely than whites (46%) to say the outcome is very important. This attitude increases with age and declines as income rises.

“How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 23?”

	All Likely Voters	Party			Vote on Proposition 23	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very important	49%	54%	43%	49%	56%	52%
Somewhat important	33	33	33	35	36	35
Not too important	7	4	10	8	7	8
Not at all important	3	2	4	3	1	4
Don't know	8	7	10	5	–	1

PROPOSITION 24—BUSINESS TAX LIABILITY

When read the ballot title and label, a plurality of likely voters (38%) say they would vote no on Proposition 24, which would repeal recent legislation allowing some businesses to lower their tax liability. Three in 10 likely voters remain undecided on this measure. Across parties, regions, and demographic groups, Proposition 24 still has neither majority support nor opposition. A plurality of Republicans and independents would vote no, while Democrats are divided. Men are somewhat more likely than women to say they would vote no. Latinos are divided, with about one in four undecided. Whites are more likely to support than oppose this measure, but one in three are undecided. Conservative and moderate voters are more likely to oppose than favor Proposition 24, while liberals are more likely to favor than oppose it. Support among younger voters has declined since September, and they are now divided.

**“Proposition 24 is called the ‘Repeals Recent Legislation That Would Allow Businesses to Lower Their Tax Liability. Initiative Statute.’
If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 24?”***

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Yes	No	Don't know
All Likely Voters		31%	38%	31%
Party	Democrats	34	33	33
	Republicans	27	44	29
	Independents	32	39	29
Gender	Men	33	42	25
	Women	29	34	37
Race/Ethnicity	Latinos	38	36	26
	Whites	28	38	34
Household income	Under \$40,000	36	42	22
	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	32	36	32
	\$80,000 or more	27	39	34

* For complete text of proposition question, see page 30.

Seven in 10 likely voters consider the outcome of Proposition 24 to be very (31%) or somewhat (37%) important. The percentage unsure about its importance (16%) is the highest among the four propositions included in this survey. In September the percentage saying the outcome was similar. Currently, Republicans are the most likely across parties to say the outcome is very important. Among no-voters, the percentage calling the outcome very important has risen since September. Today, the perception that Proposition 24 is very important increases with age and decreases as education levels rise.

“How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 24?”

	All Likely Voters	Party			Vote on Proposition 24	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very important	31%	28%	37%	25%	34%	42%
Somewhat important	37	40	37	37	48	42
Not too important	13	14	9	17	13	12
Not at all important	3	3	3	5	2	3
Don't know	16	15	14	16	3	1

PROPOSITION 25—MAJORITY BUDGET VOTE

Proposition 25 would lower the legislative vote requirement to pass a state budget from two-thirds to a simple majority, while retaining the two-thirds vote requirement for taxes. Of the four propositions included in this survey, only Proposition 25 receives more support than opposition. When read the ballot title and label, 49 percent of likely voters say they would vote yes, 34 percent would vote no, and 17 percent are undecided. Findings were nearly identical in September (48% yes, 35% no, 17% undecided). Support among Democrats has increased (today: 58% yes, 24% no; September: 52% yes, 27% no). A plurality of Republicans now oppose this measure (39% yes, 45% no); last month, they were divided (42% yes, 43% no). A plurality of independents support Proposition 25 (48% yes, 34% no), but by a narrower margin than they did in September (53% yes, 34% no). A plurality of men, women, Latinos, and whites say they would vote yes on Proposition 25. Support is highest in the San Francisco Bay Area (63%); half of voters in the Central Valley (52%) and a plurality in Los Angeles (45%) favor this measure and voters in the Other Southern California region are divided (40% to 38%).

“Proposition 25 is called the ‘Changes Legislative Vote Requirement to Pass Budget and Budget-related Legislation from Two-Thirds to a Simple Majority. Retains Two-Thirds Vote Requirement for Taxes. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.’ If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 25?”*

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Yes	No	Don't know
All Likely Voters		49%	34%	17%
Party	Democrats	58	24	18
	Republicans	39	45	16
	Independents	48	34	18
Gender	Men	50	40	10
	Women	47	28	25
Race/Ethnicity	Latinos	46	28	26
	Whites	50	34	16

* For complete text of proposition question, see page 30.

Eight in 10 likely voters say the outcome of the vote on Proposition 25 is very (50%) or somewhat (32%) important, nearly identical to findings from last month. Republicans are more likely than independents and Democrats to say the outcome is very important; this is unchanged from September. Majorities of both yes-voters (56%) and no-voters (54%) consider the outcome very important. A majority of likely voters in the San Francisco Bay Area (56%) and just under half in other regions consider the outcome of Proposition 25 very important. The percentage holding this view increases sharply with age.

“How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 25?”

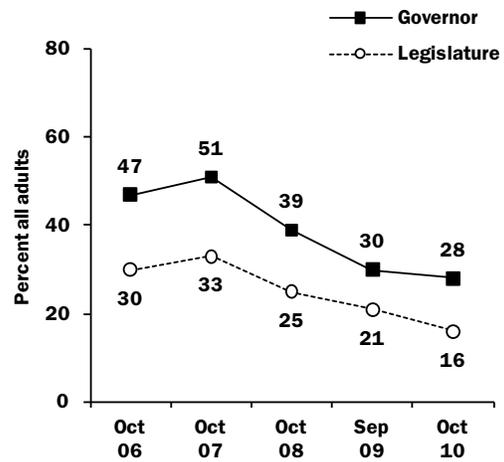
	All Likely Voters	Party			Vote on Proposition 25	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very important	50%	46%	55%	48%	56%	54%
Somewhat important	32	35	30	31	36	31
Not too important	7	6	5	7	6	9
Not at all important	3	5	1	3	2	5
Don't know	8	8	9	11	–	1

STATE AND NATIONAL ISSUES

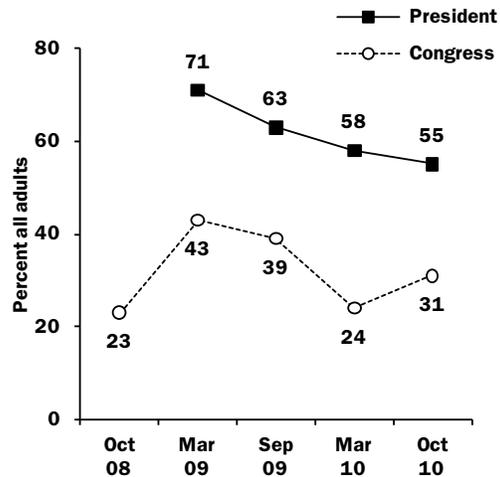
KEY FINDINGS

- Californians continue to cite jobs and the economy (59%) as the state's most important issue. Seventy-three percent say the state is headed in the wrong direction; 58 percent say the nation is. *(page 15)*
- Six in 10 Californians expect bad times in the next year and 54 percent say the state is in a serious recession. Nearly three in 10 are very concerned about job loss and four in 10 are very concerned about paying for housing. *(page 16)*
- Approval ratings of the governor (28%) and legislature (16%) remain low. More Californians approve of President Obama (55%) than of Congress (31%). More would prefer a Congress controlled by Democrats (48%) than Republicans (35%), but they are divided on whether a shift in control to Republicans would be a good thing (32%) or a bad thing (30%). *(pages 17, 18)*
- Californians are divided on their impression of the Democratic Party (47% favorable, 43% unfavorable), while 60 percent have an unfavorable impression of the Republican Party. Unfavorable impressions of the political movement known as the Tea Party have increased this year (34% March, 44% today). Just over half of Californians say that the major parties do such a poor job that a third party is needed. *(page 19)*
- Strong majorities of Californians distrust the state and federal governments, with negativity higher toward the state. Strong majorities also say state and federal governments are run by big interests. *(pages 20, 21)*
- A record percentage say the state initiative process needs major changes, but most still say voters' decisions are better than those of elected officials. *(pages 22, 23)*

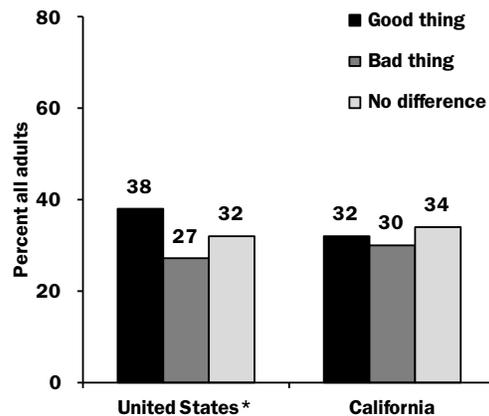
Approval Ratings of State Elected Officials



Approval Ratings of Federal Elected Officials



If Control of Congress Switched to Republicans



*Washington Post/ABC News poll, October 2010

OVERALL MOOD

Californians continue to name jobs and the economy (59%) as the most important issue facing the state today. Far fewer name the state budget and taxes. Mention of the jobs and the economy is similar to September (62%) and has topped the list of concerns since January 2008; it has not dropped below 50 percent since January 2009. Today, partisans are similar in their mention of jobs and the economy and the state budget and taxes. Democrats (2%) are less likely than Republicans (8%) and independents (8%) to mention immigration or illegal immigration.

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

Top four issues mentioned	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Jobs, economy	59%	59%	59%	56%	59%
State budget, deficit, taxes	10	10	12	14	11
Education, schools	8	10	5	7	6
Immigration, illegal immigration	5	2	8	8	5

Solid majorities are pessimistic about the direction of the state and nation, but they are much more likely to say the state (73%) than the nation (58%) is going in the wrong direction. Pessimism was similar in September and at least two in three since June 2008 have said the state is headed in the wrong direction. Today, strong majorities of partisans say wrong direction, but Republicans (88%) are the most likely to hold this view, followed by independents (71%) and Democrats (65%). At least 65 percent across demographic groups say wrong direction, but whites (77%) are somewhat more pessimistic than Latinos (69%); pessimism increases with income. Among likely voters, Whitman supporters are far more likely than Brown supporters (92% to 66%) to say the state is going in the wrong direction.

Californians also have a negative outlook at the national level, but are more than twice as likely to be positive about the direction of the nation (36%) than the state (16%). Adults nationwide held similar views about the country (31% right direction, 63% wrong track) in a recent Ipsos/Reuters poll. Californians were far less optimistic about the nation’s direction prior to the last general election (21% August 2008). Half of Democrats (51%) say right direction, while a strong majority of Republicans (82%) say wrong direction. A majority of independents (57%) also say wrong direction. Central Valley (62%) and Other Southern California (63%) residents are more pessimistic about the country’s direction than San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles residents (52% each). Whites (64%) are much more likely than Latinos (51%) to hold this view. Pessimism increases with age. Among likely voters, 86 percent of Fiorina supporters say the nation is going in the wrong direction, while 58 percent of Boxer supporters say right direction.

“Do you think things in _____ are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters	
		Dem	Rep	Ind		
California	Right direction	16%	20%	6%	17%	12%
	Wrong direction	73	65	88	71	77
	Don't know	11	15	6	12	11
United States	Right direction	36	51	15	35	35
	Wrong direction	58	45	82	57	60
	Don't know	6	4	3	8	5

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Californians' negative outlook about the direction of the state is echoed in their pessimistic economic views. Six in 10 say that during the next 12 months we will have bad times financially. At least 59 percent have held this view since September 2007. Today the expectation of bad times is held more widely among Republicans (74%) and independents (67%) than among Democrats (57%). Majorities across regions and demographic groups think that the state can expect bad times in the next 12 months.

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

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Good times	25%	30%	15%	19%	20%
Bad times	62	57	74	67	65
Don't know	13	13	11	14	15

Nearly all Californians continue to say that the state is in a recession, with 54 percent calling it a serious recession. Only 10 percent say the state is not in a recession. Perceptions are similar to September's and at least half of Californians have said the state is in a serious recession since January 2009. Today, Republicans (67%) are much more likely than independents (54%) and Democrats (52%) to call the recession serious, as are whites (58%) more likely than Latinos (48%) to say so.

In September, for the first time in the United States, more than 100,000 homes were foreclosed on in a single month. In California, over six in 10 residents are very (39%) or somewhat (23%) concerned about affording their rent or mortgage. Thirty-seven percent are not too (15%) or not at all (22%) concerned. The percentage that is very concerned is similar to March (41%) and identical to March 2009 (39%), the first time this question was asked. Perceptions differ greatly by income, with lower-income residents (57%) far more likely to be very concerned than middle-income (33%) or upper-income (22%) residents. In California, affording rent appears to be a much greater concern than affording a mortgage: half of renters (52%) are very concerned about affording housing costs compared to 30 percent of homeowners. Latinos are far more likely than whites to be very concerned about affording housing costs (54% to 30%).

“How concerned are you, if at all, about not having enough money to pay your rent or mortgage?”

	All Adults	Household Income			Homeownership	
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	Owners	Renters
Very concerned	39%	57%	33%	22%	30%	52%
Somewhat concerned	23	20	30	22	22	24
Not too concerned	15	10	15	20	17	13
Not at all concerned	22	10	21	35	29	10
Already behind (vol)/ Don't know	1	3	1	1	2	1

With double-digit unemployment in California, 45 percent of residents are very (28%) or somewhat (17%) concerned that they or someone in their family will lose a job in the next year, while 44 percent are not concerned, and 9 percent volunteer that their family has already experienced job loss. Concern was the same in September. Lower-income residents (35%) are much more likely to be very concerned about job loss than upper-income residents (21%), 58 percent of whom are not concerned. Latinos (36%) are much more likely than whites (24%) to be very concerned.

APPROVAL RATINGS OF STATE AND FEDERAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

With Governor Schwarzenegger in his last months in office, what do Californians think about his job performance? Sixty-five percent disapprove, matching May's record disapproval, while nearly three in 10 adults and likely voters approve. Approval has ranged from a high of 65 percent in August 2004 to a low of 23 percent in May of this year; since March 2008, fewer than half have approved. About three in 10 across parties approve; approval does not exceed 33 percent in any demographic group today.

The California Legislature passed a record-late budget for fiscal year 2010-2011, days before respondents were interviewed. What do Californians think about the legislature's job performance? Adults (16%) and likely voters (10%) express near record-low approval, and record-high disapproval (77% adults, 86% likely voters). Before the last two general elections, approval was higher (25% October 2008, 30% October 2006). Today, over six in 10 across regions, parties, and demographic groups disapprove.

"Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that..."

		All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
<i>...Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling his job as governor of California?</i>	Approve	28%	27%	30%	31%	29%
	Disapprove	65	67	66	67	65
	Don't know	7	6	4	2	6
<i>...the California Legislature is handling its job?</i>	Approve	16	19	9	12	10
	Disapprove	77	77	88	85	86
	Don't know	7	4	3	3	4

A majority of Californians (55%) approve, and 40 percent disapprove of President Obama's job performance; approval of the president has declined 17 points since its record high of 72 percent in May 2009. Today, Californians are more approving than adults nationwide (45% approve, 52% disapprove), according to a recent CNN/Opinion Research Corporation poll. Most Democrats (78%) approve, while most Republicans (77%) disapprove; independents are more likely to approve (52%) than not (41%).

Congress receives much lower marks than the president: 31 percent of adults and 26 percent of likely voters approve. Californians are more likely to approve of Congress than are adults nationwide, according to a recent CBS News poll (18% approve, 71% disapprove). Approval was lower in October 2008 (23% adults, 18% likely voters), before the last general election, and was higher in September 2006 (37% adults, 31% likely voters). Republicans and independents are much less likely than Democrats to approve. Latinos are far more likely than whites to approve. Approval falls as age rises.

"Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that..."

		All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
<i>... Barack Obama is handling his job as president of the United States?</i>	Approve	55%	78%	19%	52%	49%
	Disapprove	40	18	77	41	47
	Don't know	5	4	4	7	4
<i>... the U.S. Congress is handling its job?</i>	Approve	31	41	13	29	26
	Disapprove	64	53	85	67	71
	Don't know	5	6	2	4	3

CONTROL OF CONGRESS

As the midterm election cycle winds down, uncertainty remains about which party will control Congress next year. A plurality of adults (48%) in California prefer that Congress remain under Democratic control; fewer (35%) want Republican control, and 8 percent volunteer that they prefer neither. Likely voters are divided in their preferences (45% Democratic control, 43% Republican control). Support for Democratic control was 9 points higher in October 2006, a month before Democrats regained control of Congress; preference for Republican control was similar (32%). In a recent NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* poll, adults nationwide had split preferences over party control of Congress (44% Democrats, 44% Republicans, 12% unsure).

Eight in 10 Democrats and Republicans each prefer that their own party control Congress. Independents are more divided (42% Republican control, 37% Democratic control). Majorities in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles prefer Democrats while Central Valley and Other Southern California residents are divided. Latinos much prefer Democratic control, while whites are divided. At least half of women, adults 18–34, college graduates, and adults in lower-income households prefer Democrats; in no regional or demographic group does a majority prefer Republican control.

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

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Controlled by Republicans	35%	9%	79%	42%	43%
Controlled by Democrats	48	81	9	37	45
Neither (volunteered)	8	5	7	12	7
Don't know	9	5	5	9	5

Should control of Congress switch from Democrats to Republicans, Californians are just as likely to say the change would be a good thing (32%) as to say it would be a bad thing (30%) or that it wouldn't make a difference (34%). Likely voters are more likely to say the change would be a good thing (40%, 33% bad thing, 25% no difference). In a recent *Washington Post*/ABC News poll, 38 percent of adults nationwide said the switch would be good, 27 percent bad, and 32 percent said there would be no difference.

While 71 percent of Republicans view a switch to Republican control as a good thing, fewer Democrats (53%) think their party losing control would be a bad thing. A plurality of independents (36%) think a change to Republicans wouldn't make a difference, while the rest are divided about its being good (32%) or bad (28%). Among those who prefer a Congress controlled by Democrats, 56 percent think Republican control would be a bad thing; among those who prefer a Congress controlled by Republicans, 70 percent say the switch would be a good thing.

“If control of the Congress switched from the Democrats to the Republicans after November's election, do you think that would be a good thing, a bad thing, or wouldn't it make any difference?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Good thing	32%	12%	71%	32%	40%
Bad thing	30	53	6	28	33
Would not make a difference	34	31	22	36	25
Don't know	4	4	1	4	2

PARTY PERCEPTIONS

In the heat of competitive midterm elections—with discontent with elected leaders and over the direction of the state and nation—how are the Democratic and Republican parties perceived? And with several Tea Party-backed candidates appearing on ballots elsewhere, how is this political movement viewed? Californians hold the most favorable impression of the Democratic Party (47%), followed by the Republican Party (28%) and Tea Party movement (27%). The Republican Party (60%) has a much higher unfavorable rating than the Tea Party movement (44%) or the Democratic Party (43%). In March, impressions of the Democratic and Republican Parties were similar. Favorability of the Tea Party is similar to what it was in March, but the percentage unsure is down 9 points and unfavorable ratings are up 10 points.

Although a partisan divide about this issue is clear, Democrats (75%) are far more likely than Republicans (55%) to hold a favorable view of their own party. Independents are somewhat more likely to have a favorable impression of the Democratic Party (37%) and the Tea Party (31%) than of the Republican Party (24%), but at least half express unfavorable views of each party. About six in 10 Republicans hold a favorable view of the Tea Party, while about two in three Democrats hold an unfavorable view.

“Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of the...”

		All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
<i>...Democratic Party?</i>	Favorable	47%	75%	13%	37%	44%
	Unfavorable	43	20	82	52	51
	Don't know	10	5	5	11	5
<i>...Republican Party?</i>	Favorable	28	14	55	24	31
	Unfavorable	60	79	39	65	62
	Don't know	12	7	6	11	7
<i>...the political movement known as the Tea Party?</i>	Favorable	27	10	59	31	35
	Unfavorable	44	65	21	50	47
	Don't know	29	25	20	19	18

Asked whether the two major parties do an adequate job representing the American people, 35 percent of adults and 34 percent of likely voters say they do an adequate job. Majorities think a third major party is needed. Findings were the same in March. Independents (69%) are the most likely to say a third party is needed; a majority of Republicans (54%) and plurality of Democrats (48%) agree. Majorities across ideological groups say a third party is needed. Nearly half of those who have favorable impressions of either major party think a third party is needed; 60 percent who view the Tea Party favorably agree.

“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?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Adequate job	35%	41%	35%	22%	34%
Third party is needed	53	48	54	69	56
Don't know	12	11	11	9	10

POLITICAL TRUST AT FEDERAL LEVEL

Two in three 10 Californians (68%) and three-fourths of likely voters (73%) think the federal government is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves rather than being run for the benefit of all. The share saying so has risen 9 points since the question was last asked in May 2009, a few months into President Obama’s term. In October 2008, prior to the last general election, a record high 74 percent said a few big interests. Today, Republicans (81%) are the most likely hold this view, followed by independents (73%) and Democrats (62%). At least six in 10 across political, regional, and most demographic groups say the government is run by a few big interests; Latinos (57%) are the least likely demographic group to say this and whites (76%) the most likely.

The view that the federal government is run by a few big interests rather than for the benefit of the people is reflected in the question of trust in the federal government. Seven in 10 adults think they can trust the government to do what is right only some or none of the time, 7 points higher than in May 2009, but 8 points lower than in October 2008, before the last general election. Trust varies across parties: 85 percent of Republicans and 75 percent of independents say they can trust the government only some or none of the time; 59 percent of Democrats concur. Majorities across political, regional, and demographic groups say they can trust the federal government only some or none of the time. Whites are far more likely than Latinos to express distrust in the federal government (77% to 55%).

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

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Just about always	5%	5%	1%	3%	3%
Most of the time	25	34	14	21	23
Only some of the time	60	56	70	65	63
None of the time (volunteered)	9	3	15	10	10
Don't know	1	2	–	1	1

At the same time, 63 percent of Californians think the people in federal government waste a lot of taxpayer money, 29 percent say some is wasted, and just 5 percent think the federal government doesn't waste very much. Likely voters hold similar views. Considering trends before the last two general elections, the perception that a lot is wasted has declined 11 points since October 2008, but is similar to October 2006 (65%). Today, eight in 10 Republicans and seven in 10 independents think a lot of taxpayer money is wasted, compared to half of Democrats. In October 2008, far more Democrats (73%) said a lot is wasted, but among Republicans, the perception (80%) was the same. Nearly all Californians across political, regional, and demographic groups think at least some taxpayer money is wasted.

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

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
A lot	63%	51%	79%	72%	67%
Some	29	38	17	22	27
Don't waste very much	5	8	2	4	5
Don't know	3	3	2	2	1

POLITICAL TRUST AT STATE LEVEL

The view that government is run by a few big interests rather than for the benefit of all is not limited to federal government: 75 percent of Californians think the state government is run by a few big interests—the highest percentage in the 14 times the PPIC Statewide Survey has asked this question. In September 2009, the share saying this was similar (73%). Nearly eight in 10 likely voters (79%) hold this view today, as do three in four Democrats and over eight in 10 Republicans and independents. About two in three or more across political, regional, and demographic groups think the state government is run by a few big interests.

Distrust of state government is even higher than distrust of federal government. Seventy-nine percent—also a new record high—say they can trust the state government to do what is right only some of the time (67%) or none of the time (12%). Eighty-four percent of likely voters also hold this view. Seventy-eight percent of Democrats, 85 percent of independents, and 90 percent of Republicans say they can trust the state only some or none of the time. More than two in three across regional and demographic groups say they can trust the state government only some or none of the time.

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

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Just about always	3%	2%	1%	4%	1%
Most of the time	15	19	8	11	14
Only some of the time	67	71	66	72	69
None of the time (volunteered)	12	7	24	13	15
Don't know	3	1	1	–	1

Californians hold similar views of their state and federal governments when it comes to how much taxpayer money is wasted. Two-thirds of adults and likely voters think the people in state government waste a lot of money they pay in taxes; one in four say some is wasted, and only 6 percent say that they don't waste very much. The degree to which partisans hold this view varies: 80 percent of Republicans and 69 percent of independents think the state government wastes a lot of taxpayer money, compared to 54 percent of Democrats. Democrats are more likely than Republicans and independents to say some money is wasted. Adults in the Central Valley (70%) and the Other Southern California region (69%) are the most likely to say a lot of money is wasted, followed by residents in Los Angeles (63%), and the San Francisco Bay Area (54%). About two-thirds of Latinos, whites, men, and women think a lot is wasted; younger adults are slightly less likely than those 35 and older to think a lot is wasted. The view that a lot of state taxpayer money is wasted decreases somewhat as education levels rise.

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

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
A lot	66%	54%	80%	69%	67%
Some	26	33	18	25	25
Don't waste very much	6	10	1	4	6
Don't know	2	3	1	2	2

CITIZENS' INITIATIVE PROCESS

California has an active citizens' initiative process. Since 1990, 83 citizens' initiatives have appeared on November general election ballots, 35 of which were approved by voters. On November 2, California voters will decide nine more initiatives. Most adults and likely voters believe that the public policy decisions made by voters through the initiative process are probably better than those made by the governor and state legislature. Attitudes on this issue have been remarkably consistent over time: in seven surveys since October 2000, majorities from 56 to 61 percent have said voter decisions are probably better than those made by elected officials, while between 23 to 28 percent have said voters' decisions are probably worse. Today Republicans and independents (66% each) are far more likely than Democrats (50%) to say voters' policy decisions are better. At least half across regions and demographic groups say policy decisions made at the ballot box are probably better than decisions made by the governor and legislature, but the percentage holding this view declines as age and income levels rise. College graduates are much less likely than others to hold this view.

“Overall, do you think public policy decisions made through the initiative process by California voters are probably better or probably worse than public policy decisions made by the governor and state legislature?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Probably better	59%	50%	66%	66%	55%
Probably worse	25	33	18	21	30
Same (volunteered)	5	5	5	5	6
Don't know	11	12	11	8	9

Despite this confidence in voters' policy decisions, the percentage saying they are not satisfied with the way the initiative process is working in California (39%) has grown over time. Between October 2000 and August 2006, about one in four said they were not satisfied; this had grown to 34 percent in October 2008, and to 39 percent today. Still, satisfaction today is higher than dissatisfaction: 5 percent are very satisfied and 50 percent are somewhat satisfied. Independents are the most likely to express satisfaction (60%), followed by Republicans (54%) and Democrats (53%). While 50 percent or more across regions and demographic groups are at least somewhat satisfied with the way the initiative process is working today, fewer than eight percent say they are very satisfied. Whites are much more likely than Latinos to be dissatisfied (43% to 31%) and dissatisfaction rises as age rises. Among those who say voters' policy decisions are probably better than those of elected officials, 67 percent are very or somewhat satisfied with the process; among those who say voters' decisions are worse, 64 percent are dissatisfied.

“Generally speaking, would you say you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with the way the initiative process is working in California today?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Very satisfied	5%	3%	10%	6%	6%
Somewhat satisfied	50	50	44	54	46
Not satisfied	39	42	42	35	43
Don't know	6	5	4	5	5

CITIZENS’ INITIATIVE PROCESS (CONTINUED)

Consistent with their growing dissatisfaction with the initiative process, half of Californians (52%) now say it is in need of major changes, an increase of 16 points since September 2008. Another 29 percent call for minor changes, while just 14 percent say the process is fine the way it is (down 15 points since September 2008). Since September 2008, the view that major changes are needed has increased 19 points among Democrats, 18 points among Republicans, and 17 points among independents.

“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?”

	October 2000	September 2004	September 2005	September 2006	September 2008	October 2010
Major changes	32%	35%	29%	37%	36%	52%
Minor changes	43	33	34	31	28	29
Fine the way it is	19	21	29	25	29	14
Don't know	6	11	8	7	7	5

Likely voters hold similar views as all adults about the need for changes in the initiative process. Across parties, Democrats (55%) are more likely than Republicans and independents (46% each) to say major changes are needed. Fewer than one in five across regions and demographic groups say the initiative process is fine the way it is. Los Angeles residents (58%) are the most likely to say major changes are needed, followed by those in the Central Valley (51%), the San Francisco Bay Area (48%), and the Other Southern California region (47%). Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos are far more likely than whites to hold this view (64% to 47%). The percentage saying major changes are needed decreases with rising education and income, while about half or more across age groups hold this view.

Among those who are not satisfied with the way the initiative process is working or who say voters’ decisions on policy are worse than elected officials’ decisions, strong majorities believe the process is in need of major changes. Even among those who say voters’ decisions are probably better than those of the governor and legislature, a plurality (46%) believe the process needs major changes.

“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?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Major changes	52%	55%	46%	46%	49%
Minor changes	29	29	30	34	30
Fine the way it is	14	11	18	14	15
Don't know	5	5	6	6	6

REGIONAL MAP



METHODOLOGY

The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, president and CEO and survey director at the Public Policy Institute of California, with assistance from Dean Bonner, project manager for this survey, and survey research associates Sonja Petek and Nicole Willcoxon. The *Californians and Their Government* series is supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation. We benefit from discussions with PPIC staff, foundation staff, and other policy experts; however, the methods, questions, and content of this report were solely determined by Mark Baldassare and the survey staff.

Findings in this report are based on a survey of 2,002 California adult residents, including 1,802 interviewed on landline telephones and 200 interviewed on cell phones. Interviewing took place on weekday nights and weekend days between October 10 and 17, 2010. Interviews took an average of 17 minutes to complete.

Landline interviews were conducted using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers that ensured that both listed and unlisted numbers were called. All landline telephone exchanges in California were eligible for selection and the sample telephone numbers were called as many as six times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (age 18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing using the “last birthday method” to avoid biases in age and gender.

Cell phone interviews were included in this survey to account for the growing number of Californians who use them. These interviews were conducted using a computer-generated random sample of cell phone numbers. All cell phone numbers with California area codes were eligible for selection and the sample telephone numbers were called as many as eight times to increase the likelihood of reaching an eligible respondent. Once a cell phone user was reached, it was verified that this person was age 18 or older, a resident of California, and in a safe place to continue the survey (e.g., not driving). Cell phone respondents were offered a small reimbursement to help defray the potential cost of the call. Cell phone interviews were conducted with adults who have cell phone service only and with those who have both cell phone and landline service in the household.

Landline and cell phone interviewing was conducted in English and Spanish according to respondents’ preferences. Accent on Languages, Inc. translated the survey into Spanish, with assistance from Renatta DeFever. Abt SRBI Inc. conducted the telephone interviewing.

With assistance from Abt SRBI 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 the census and state figures. Abt SRBI used data from the 2008 National Health Interview Survey and data from the 2005–2007 American Community Survey for California, both to estimate landline and cell phone service in California and to compare it against landline and cell phone service reported in the survey. The survey data in this report were statistically weighted to account for any differences in demographics and telephone service.

The sampling error, taking design effects from weighting into consideration, is ± 3.1 percent at the 95 percent confidence level for the total sample of 2,002 adults. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 3 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for subgroups is larger: For the 1,582 registered voters, it is ± 3.4 percent; for the 1,067 likely voters, it is ± 3.5 percent. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

We present results for four geographic regions, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population. “Central Valley” includes Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. “San Francisco Bay Area” includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. “Los Angeles” refers to Los Angeles County, and “Other Southern California” includes Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties. Residents from other geographic areas are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, and likely voters, but sample sizes for these less populated areas are not large enough to report separately.

We present specific results for Latinos because they account for about a third of the state’s adult population and constitute one of the fastest growing voter groups. Sample sizes for African Americans and Asian Americans are not large enough for separate analysis. We compare the opinions of registered Democrats, Republicans, and independents (those registered as “decline to state”). We also analyze the responses of likely voters—so designated by their responses to survey questions on past voting, current interest in politics, and voting intentions.

We compare current PPIC Statewide Survey results to those in our earlier surveys and to those in national surveys by CBS News, CNN/Opinion Research Corporation, Ipsos/Reuters, NBC News/*Wall Street Journal*, and *Washington Post/ABC News*.

QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESULTS

CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

October 10–17, 2010

2,002 California Adult Residents:
English, Spanish

MARGIN OF ERROR $\pm 3.1\%$ AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE

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

[code, don't read]

59% jobs, economy
10 state budget, deficit, taxes
8 education, schools
5 immigration, illegal immigration
3 government in general, elected officials, political parties
2 health care, health costs
10 other
3 don't know

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

16% right direction
73 wrong direction
11 don't know

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

25% good times
62 bad times
13 don't know

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

54% yes, serious recession
28 yes, moderate recession
5 yes, mild recession
10 no
3 don't know

- 4a. 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?)

28% yes, very concerned
17 yes, somewhat
44 no
9 have lost job already (*volunteered*)
2 don't know

- 4b. How concerned are you, if at all, about not having enough money to pay your rent or mortgage: very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned about this?

39% very concerned
23 somewhat concerned
15 not too concerned
22 not at all concerned
1 already behind (*volunteered*)/
don't know

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

80% yes [ask q5a]
20 no [skip to q6b]

- 5a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or as an independent?

45% Democrat [ask q6]
31 Republican [skip to q6a]
3 another party (specify) [skip to q7]
21 independent [skip to q6b]

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

52% strong
46 not very strong
2 don't know

[skip to q7]

- 6a. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

55% strong
41 not very strong
4 don't know

[skip to q7]

- 6b. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?

23% Republican Party
44 Democratic Party
26 neither (volunteered)
7 don't know

[delayed skip: if q5=no, skip to q24]

[responses recorded for questions 7 to 23 are for likely voters only]

7. If the November 2nd election for governor were being held today, would you vote for [rotate] (1) Meg Whitman, the Republican; (2) Jerry Brown, the Democrat; (3) Dale F. Ogden, the Libertarian; (4) Chelene Nightingale, the American Independent; (5) Laura Wells, the Green; (6) Carlos Alvarez, the Peace and Freedom candidate; or someone else?

36% Meg Whitman, the Republican
44 Jerry Brown, the Democrat
1 Dale F. Ogden, the Libertarian
2 Chelene Nightingale, the American Independent
1 Laura Wells, the Green
– Carlos Alvarez, the Peace and Freedom candidate
– someone else (specify)
16 don't know

8. In general, would you say you are satisfied or not satisfied with your choices of candidates in the election for governor on November 2nd?

42% satisfied
55 not satisfied
3 don't know

9. How closely are you following news about candidates for the 2010 governor's election?

39% very closely
50 fairly closely
9 not too closely
2 not at all closely

Regardless of your choice for governor, which of these candidates would do the better job on each of these issues—[rotate] (1) Jerry Brown [or] (2) Meg Whitman? First,

[rotate questions 10 to 13a]

10. How about the state budget and taxes?

40% Jerry Brown
48 Meg Whitman
7 neither (volunteered)
5 don't know

11. How about education?

- 47% Jerry Brown
- 37 Meg Whitman
- 6 neither (*volunteered*)
- 10 don't know

12. How about immigration?

- 43% Jerry Brown
- 37 Meg Whitman
- 8 neither (*volunteered*)
- 12 don't know

13. How about jobs and the economy?

- 39% Jerry Brown
- 47 Meg Whitman
- 5 neither (*volunteered*)
- 9 don't know

13a. How about the environment?

- 57% Jerry Brown
- 25 Meg Whitman
- 7 neither (*volunteered*)
- 11 don't know

14. If the November 2nd election for U.S.

Senate were being held today, would you vote for **[rotate]** (1) Carly Fiorina, the Republican; (2) Barbara Boxer, the Democrat; (3) Gail K. Lightfoot, the Libertarian; (4) Edward C. Noonan, the American Independent; (5) Duane Roberts, the Green; (6) Marsha Feinland, the Peace and Freedom candidate; or someone else?

- 38% Carly Fiorina, the Republican
- 43 Barbara Boxer, the Democrat
- 1 Gail K. Lightfoot, the Libertarian
- 2 Edward C. Noonan, the American Independent
- 2 Duane Roberts, the Green
- Marsha Feinland, the Peace and Freedom candidate
- 1 someone else (*specify*)
- 13 don't know

15. In general, would you say you are satisfied or not satisfied with your choices of candidates in the election for U.S. Senator on November 2nd?

- 62% satisfied
- 32 not satisfied
- 6 don't know

Next, we have a few questions to ask you about some of the propositions on the November ballot.

[rotate 4 blocks of questions randomly: (1) 16, 17; (2) 18, 19; (3) 20, 21; (4) 22, 23]

16. Proposition 19 is called the “Legalizes Marijuana Under California but Not Federal Law. Permits Local Governments to Regulate and Tax Commercial Production, Distribution, and Sale of Marijuana. Initiative Statute.” It allows people 21 years old or older to possess, cultivate, or transport marijuana for personal use. Depending on federal, state, and local government actions, fiscal impact is potential increased tax and fee revenues in the hundreds of millions of dollars annually and potential correctional savings of several tens of millions of dollars annually. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 19?

- 44% yes
- 49 no
- 7 don't know

17. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 19—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 52% very important
- 28 somewhat important
- 12 not too important
- 5 not at all important
- 3 don't know

18. Proposition 23 is called the “Suspends Implementation of Air Pollution Control Law AB 32 Requiring Major Sources of Emissions to Report and Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions That Cause Global Warming, Until Unemployment Drops to 5.5 Percent or Less for Full Year. Initiative Statute.” Fiscal impact is a likely modest net increase in overall economic activity in the state from suspension of greenhouse gases regulatory activity, resulting in a potentially significant net increase in state and local revenues. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 23?

- 37% yes
- 48 no
- 15 don't know

19. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 23—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 49% very important
- 33 somewhat important
- 7 not too important
- 3 not at all important
- 8 don't know

20. Proposition 24 is called the “Repeals Recent Legislation That Would Allow Businesses to Lower Their Tax Liability. Initiative Statute.” Fiscal impact is increased state revenues of about \$1.3 billion each year by 2012-13 from higher taxes paid by some businesses and smaller increases in 2010-11 and 2011-12. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 24?

- 31% yes
- 38 no
- 31 don't know

21. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 24—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 31% very important
- 37 somewhat important
- 13 not too important
- 3 not at all important
- 16 don't know

22. Proposition 25 is called the “Changes Legislative Vote Requirement to Pass Budget and Budget-related Legislation From Two-Thirds to a Simple Majority. Retains Two-Thirds Vote Requirement for Taxes. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.” The legislature permanently forfeits daily salary and expenses until budget bill passes. Fiscal impact is, in some years, the contents of the state budget could be changed due to the lower legislative vote requirement in this measure. The extent of changes would depend on the legislature’s future actions. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 25?

- 49% yes
- 34 no
- 17 don't know

23. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 25—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 50% very important
- 32 somewhat important
- 7 not too important
- 3 not at all important
- 8 don't know

Changing topics,

24. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling his job as governor of California?

- 28% approve
- 65 disapprove
- 7 don't know

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

- 16% approve
- 77 disapprove
- 7 don't know

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

- 3% just about always
- 15 most of the time
- 67 only some of the time
- 12 none of the time (*volunteered*)
- 3 don't know

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

- 75% a few big interests
- 17 benefit of all of the people
- 8 don't know

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

- 66% a lot
- 26 some
- 6 don't waste very much
- 2 don't know

On another topic, California uses the direct initiative process, which enables voters to bypass the legislature and have issues put on the ballot—as state propositions—for voter approval or rejection.

29. Overall, do you think public policy decisions made through the initiative process by California voters are probably better or probably worse than public policy decisions made by the governor and state legislature?

- 59% probably better
- 25 probably worse
- 5 same (*volunteered*)
- 11 don't know

30. Generally speaking, would you say you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with the way the initiative process is working in California today?

- 5% very satisfied
- 50 somewhat satisfied
- 39 not satisfied
- 6 don't know

31. 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?

- 52% major changes
- 29 minor changes
- 14 fine the way it is
- 5 don't know

32. Changing topics, overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barack Obama is handling his job as president of the United States?

- 55% approve
- 40 disapprove
- 5 don't know

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

- 31% approve
- 64 disapprove
- 5 don't know

34. Do you think things in the United States are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

- 36% right direction
- 58 wrong direction
- 6 don't know

35. On another topic, people have different ideas about the government in Washington. How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington today to do what is right—just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

- 5% just about always
- 25 most of the time
- 60 only some of the time
- 9 none of the time (*volunteered*)
- 1 don't know

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

- 68% a few big interests
- 24 benefit of all of the people
- 8 don't know

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

- 63% a lot
- 29 some
- 5 don't waste very much
- 3 don't know

Next,

[rotate questions 38 and 39]

38. Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of the Democratic Party?

- 47% favorable
- 43 unfavorable
- 10 don't know

39. Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of the Republican Party?

- 28% favorable
- 60 unfavorable
- 12 don't know

40. Do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of the political movement known as the Tea Party?

- 27% favorable
- 44 unfavorable
- 29 don't know

41. What is your preference for the outcome of this year's congressional elections: **[rotate]** a Congress controlled by Republicans **[or]** a Congress controlled by Democrats?

- 35% controlled by Republicans
- 48 controlled by Democrats
- 8 neither (*volunteered*)
- 9 don't know

41a. If control of the Congress switched from the Democrats to the Republicans after November's election, do you think that would be a good thing, a bad thing, or wouldn't it make any difference?

- 32% good thing
- 30 bad thing
- 34 would not make a difference
- 4 don't know

42. 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?

- 35% adequate job
- 53 third party is needed
- 12 don't know

43. Next, where do you get most of your information about what's going on in politics today—from **[rotate]** television, newspapers, radio, the Internet, magazines, or talking to other people?

- 37% television *[ask q43a]*
- 24 Internet *[skip to q43c]*
- 15 newspapers *[skip to q43b]*
- 10 radio *[skip to q43d]*
- 6 talking to other people *[skip to q43d]*
- 2 magazines *[skip to q43d]*
- 3 other *(specify) [skip to q43d]*
- 3 don't know *[skip to q43d]*

43a. Would that be mostly major network TV, mostly local TV, or mostly cable news stations such as CNN, Fox, or MSNBC?

- 23% major network TV
- 22 local TV
- 53 cable TV
- 1 other (*specify*)
- 1 don't know

[skip to q43d]

43b. Do you mostly read the paper version of the newspaper, or do you mostly read the newspaper online?

- 73% paper version of the newspaper
- 24 newspaper online
- 3 don't know

[skip to q43d]

43c. Do you mostly read the websites of newspapers or mostly other types of websites?

- 47% websites of newspapers
- 50 other types of websites
- 3 don't know

43d. Do you ever go online to get news and information on California politics and elections? (**if yes:** Do you do this often or only sometimes?)

- 22% yes, often
- 37 yes, sometimes
- 40 no
- 1 not applicable/don't use the Internet (*volunteered*)

44. Next, would you consider yourself to be politically:

[read list, rotate order top to bottom]

- 10% very liberal
- 18 somewhat liberal
- 29 middle-of-the-road
- 25 somewhat conservative
- 14 very conservative
- 4 don't know

45. Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in politics?

- 29% great deal
- 38 fair amount
- 26 only a little
- 6 none
- 1 don't know

45a. Thinking about the November 2nd election, are you more enthusiastic about voting than usual, or less enthusiastic?

- 41% more enthusiastic
- 36 less enthusiastic
- 14 same (*volunteered*)
- 6 cannot vote (*volunteered*)
- 3 don't know

[d1–d15: demographic questions]

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The institute's research focuses on the underlying forces shaping California's future, cutting across a wide range of public policy concerns, including economic development, education, environment and resources, governance, population, public finance, and social and health policy.

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Mark Baldassare is President and Chief Executive Officer of PPIC.
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