



PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY

NOVEMBER 2005

**Special Survey on Californians
and the Initiative Process**

in collaboration with

The James Irvine Foundation

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**Public
Policy
Institute of
California**

The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) is a private operating foundation established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. The Institute is dedicated to improving public policy in California through independent, objective, nonpartisan research.

PPIC's research agenda focuses on three program areas: population, economy, and governance and public finance. Studies within these programs are examining the underlying forces shaping California's future, cutting across a wide range of public policy concerns: the California economy, education, employment and income, immigration, infrastructure and urban growth, poverty and welfare, state and local finance, and the well-being of children and families.

PPIC was created because three concerned citizens – William R. Hewlett, Roger W. Heuens, and Arjay Miller – recognized the need for linking objective research to the realities of California public policy. Their goal was to help the state's leaders better understand the intricacies and implications of contemporary issues and make informed public policy decisions when confronted with challenges in the future. PPIC does not take or support positions on any ballot measure or on any local, state, or federal legislation, nor does it endorse, support, or oppose any political parties or candidates for public office.

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Preface

The PPIC Statewide Survey series provides policymakers, the media, and the general public with objective, advocacy-free information on the perceptions, opinions, and public policy preferences of California residents. Inaugurated in April 1998, the survey series has generated a database that includes the responses of more than 126,000 Californians. The current survey is the fourth in a special series on *Californians and the Initiative Process*, supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation.

On November 8th, California voters participated in a special election that included eight citizens' initiatives on a wide range of topics. Approximately 7.9 million voters participated, for a 50 percent turnout. Voters rejected all eight measures on the ballot, including a package of four initiatives that the governor had endorsed as his budget, education, and political reforms. The estimates for campaign spending by initiative proponents and opponents exceeded \$250 million. The last statewide special election was held in 2003, on the question of recalling the governor. Proposition-only special elections were held in 1973, 1979, and 1993.

The four special election surveys we conducted before and after November 8th are designed to provide information about Californians' opinions of the election and the ballot measures, about their attitudes toward the initiative process itself, and about the role that distrust of government plays in shaping public opinion of the legislative process, the initiative process, and fiscal and governance reforms. This survey series seeks to raise public awareness, inform decisionmakers, and stimulate public discussion about the state's system of governance, the initiative process, and various proposals for fiscal and governance reform.

The November 8th special election provided a unique opportunity to observe how voters view, react to, and approach information-gathering and ballot choices on citizens' initiatives. This report presents the responses of 2,002 special election voters throughout the state on a wide range of issues:

- The state political context, including the overall mood of the electorate, approval ratings of Governor Schwarzenegger and the state legislature, distrust in state government, confidence in ballot-box policymaking by California voters and policymaking by their state elected representatives, attitudes about voting on the special-election initiatives, and how voting in the special election made voters feel about California politics.
- The special election experience, including interest levels, information sources, and reasons for vote choices on Proposition 74 (teacher tenure), Proposition 75 (public union dues) Proposition 76 (state spending limit), and Proposition 77 (redistricting). We also asked about the perceived effects of the failure of these measures to pass and whether or not survey respondents thought the changes advocated by these measures were still necessary.
- Initiatives and election reforms, including overall evaluations of the initiative process, perceptions of the November 8th ballot measures, perceived need for change in the initiative process, and support for reforms of the initiative process, including those regarding qualification for election, the review process, and campaign practices.
- The extent to which voters differ in their perceptions, attitudes, and policy preferences, based on party affiliation, demographics, race/ethnicity, and region of residence.

This is the 61st PPIC Statewide Survey, which has included a number of special editions on the Central Valley (11/99, 3/01, 4/02, 4/03, 4/04), Los Angeles County (3/03, 3/04, 3/05), Orange County (9/01, 12/02, 12/03, 12/04), San Diego County (7/02), population growth (5/01), land use (11/01, 11/02), housing (11/04), the environment (6/00, 6/02, 7/03, 11/03, 7/04, 7/05), the state budget (6/03, 1/04, 5/04, 1/05, 5/05), and California's future (8/04).

Copies of this report may be ordered by e-mail (order@ppic.org) or phone (415-291-4400). Copies of this and earlier reports are posted on the publications page of the PPIC web site (www.ppic.org). For questions about the survey, please contact survey@ppic.org.

Regional Groupings Used in This Report



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Press Release

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<http://www.ppic.org/main/pressreleaseindex.asp>**

SPECIAL POST-ELECTION VOTER SURVEY

BAH, HUMBUG! ANGRY SPECIAL ELECTION VOTERS CAST VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE IN STATE LEADERS, POLICYMAKING PROCESS

Voters Reserve Greatest Criticism for Governor and Legislature But Are Open to Wide Array of Initiative Process Reforms

SAN FRANCISCO, California, December 5, 2005 — After months of speculation about where Californians stood and whether they would come, it was the angry voter who ruled the day on November 8th, according to a post-election survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), with funding from The James Irvine Foundation.

Before the election, a major unknown was whether the majority of voters who described the special election as a bad idea in pre-election surveys would make the effort to vote on November 8th. Apparently, they did. The new survey – which polled 2,002 special election voters in the 12 days following Election Day – finds that voters who think the special election was a bad idea outnumbered those who thought it was a good idea by a 24-point margin (60% to 36%).

But besides a large dose of skepticism about the special election, voters apparently brought something else with them to the polls on November 8th that may help explain the ultimate outcome – a bad mood. Almost seven in 10 special election voters (68%) say things in California are generally going in the wrong direction, compared to 62 percent of likely voters in October. Only 17 percent of special election voters think they can trust officials to do what is right always or most of the time, compared to 24 percent of likely voters in August. And 78 percent of special election voters think their state government is run by a few big interests, up from 71 percent among likely voters in August.

In keeping with their general gloom, special election voters also have a markedly negative view of the performance of their governor and state legislature. Majorities disapprove of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's overall performance in office (56%), of his handling of government reform issues (58%), and of the way he is using the initiative process in making public policy (60%). The legislature fares even worse, with 66 percent of voters disapproving of its performance. Voters regard their own individual representatives more favorably, but even that approval rating (37%) falls far short of a majority.

And while few voters hold positive opinions of the governor and legislature individually, the combination is lethal: An overwhelming majority (76%) disapprove of the way the two branches of government are working together in making public policy. Only 14 percent approve of the way the two work together.

"This was a vote of no confidence for state government as a whole," says PPIC survey director Mark Baldassare. "Special election voters took their disapproval and distrust with them to the polls on Election Day. The key question heading into the 2006 election year is where will all this anger go?" Adding to the challenge... Across the state, more voters say the special election has made them feel worse than better about California politics (38% to 21%).

What Drove the "No" Votes?

Although 85 percent of special election voters say they very closely or fairly closely followed news about the special election during the campaign, they are decidedly mixed about the experience of voting in it: 46 percent say they were at least somewhat happy about voting on initiatives on November 8th, while 51

percent were unhappy with the experience. Which ballot measure generated the greatest interest? Twenty-three percent named Proposition 73 (parental notification) as the measure they were most interested in, followed by Proposition 74 (teacher tenure, 19%) and Proposition 75 (union dues, 15%).

Nonetheless, voter interest in ballot measures did not translate into success on Election Day. Why did the vote go the way it did for the four reform measures actively supported by Governor Schwarzenegger?

- **Teacher tenure (Proposition 74)** – Among those who voted no, the top reasons were the belief that five years for tenure decisions is too long, belief that the measure would hurt teachers, a personal connection to teachers, the governor’s endorsement of the measure, and concern that it would discourage teacher recruitment. Opposition from Democrats (82%) and independents (53%) overwhelmed Republican support (78%) for this measure.
- **Use of union dues (Proposition 75)** – The main reasons for voting no were that unions should not be the only organizations with restrictions on campaign contributions, that unions give some people a voice that would be silenced, that union members can already opt out of having their dues used for political purposes, and that the voter has a personal connection with union members. While nonunion household voters were evenly divided (50% yes, 50% no), voters in union households were strongly opposed to this measure (38% yes, 62% no).
- **Spending and funding limits (Proposition 76)** – Voters rejected this measure for a variety of reasons, including the belief that it would take money from schools, that it would give too much power to the governor, that it was endorsed by the governor, as well as a general dislike for spending caps. Eighty-four percent of voters who approve of Governor Schwarzenegger’s performance in office say they voted yes, while 92 percent of those who disapprove voted no.
- **Redistricting (Proposition 77)** – “No” voters cited the belief that judges are not impartial, that redistricting is not necessary at this time, that the governor endorsed the measure, and that it would not benefit Democrats as key factors in their decision. Most Republican voters (70%) say they supported the measure, while most Democrats (84%) and independents (59%) voted no.

Despite their rejection of these specific measures, many voters agree that the special election raised issues that the governor and state legislature have not adequately addressed. For example, they believe that major changes are needed in the public education system (71%), in the way campaigns are financed (59%), and in the way the state handles spending (69%).

Initiative Process: Self-Reflective Voters See Need for Reform

Voters’ impressions of the dysfunctional relationship between the governor and legislature and the lack of state government attention to major issues influences their generally positive attitude about the initiative process. They are considerably more likely to express faith in California’s voters than in the state’s elected officials when it comes to making public policy (50% to 41%). However, the special election does appear to have tempered, at least temporarily, some of their overwhelming support for the initiative process. When asked to reflect on the special election, half (48%) say that the decisions generated by state voters are better than those developed by the governor and legislature, while only 3 in 10 say voters’ decisions are worse. In August, 58 percent of likely voters felt that voters’ decisions made through the initiative process were probably better than those made by state elected officials.

On a similar note, special election voters today are less inclined than likely voters in August to say they are at least somewhat satisfied with the way the process is working today (53% to 69%) and most (72%) think the state’s initiative process needs changes. Some specific criticisms of the special election initiatives include a belief that ballot wording was complicated and confusing (55%) and that too much money was spent to finance the campaigns (83%). With the recent election still fresh in their minds, what types of reforms are voters willing to support?

- **Qualifying Initiatives** – Voters who participated in the special election support the idea of limiting initiatives to November general election ballots (53%) and requiring the governor to have the approval of the legislature before calling special elections on initiatives (54%).

- **Reviewing Initiatives** – Strong majorities of likely voters support changing the current initiative process to allow for a period of time in which the initiative sponsor and the legislature could meet to attempt to forge a compromise (83%) and having a system of review and revision of proposed initiatives to avoid legal and drafting errors before initiatives go to the ballot (77%).
- **Initiative Campaigns** – On the heels of an election in which record sums were spent to finance initiative campaigns, a huge majority of voters (85%) favor increasing public disclosure of funding sources for initiative campaign and signature-gathering efforts. Nearly eight in 10 voters (77%) also favor requiring proponents and opponents of ballot measures to participate in televised debates.

About the Survey

This survey on the initiative process and special election – supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation – is a special edition of the PPIC Statewide Survey. This is the fourth in a series of surveys designed to provide information about Californians' attitudes toward the state's initiative process and the November special election. Findings of this survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,002 California special election voters interviewed between November 9th and November 20th, 2005. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. The sampling error for the total sample is +/- 2%. For more information on methodology, see page 19.

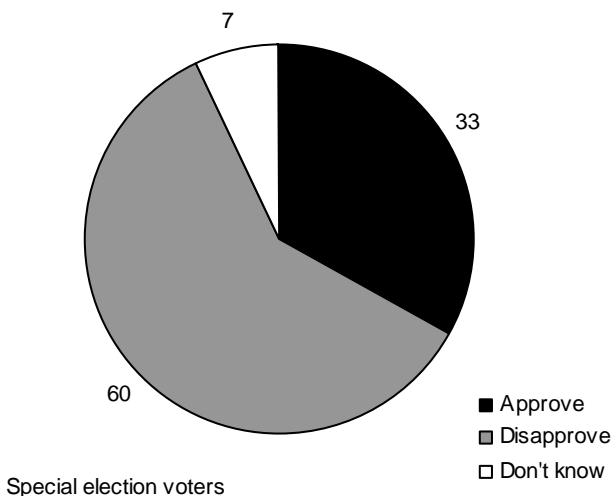
Mark Baldassare is research director at PPIC, where he holds the Arjay and Frances Fearing Miller Chair in Public Policy. He is founder of the PPIC Statewide Survey, which he has directed since 1998. His recent book, *A California State of Mind: The Conflicted Voter in a Changing World*, is available at www.ppic.org.

PPIC is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving public policy through objective, nonpartisan research on the economic, social, and political issues that affect Californians. The institute was established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. PPIC does not take or support positions on any ballot measure or on any local, state, or federal legislation, nor does it endorse, support, or oppose any political parties or candidates for public office.

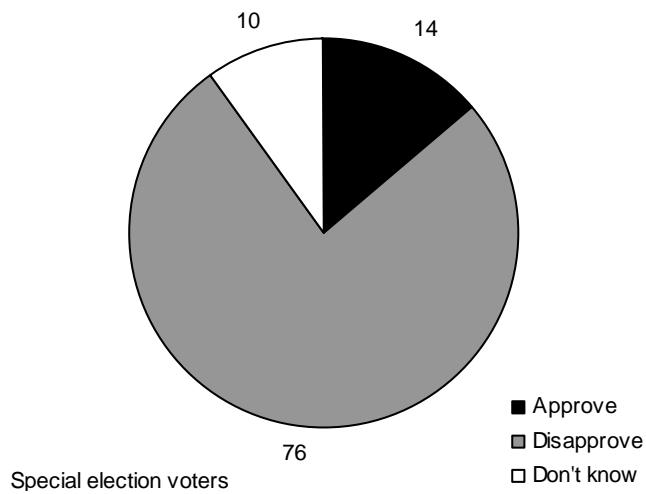
This report will appear on PPIC's website (www.ppic.org) on December 5.

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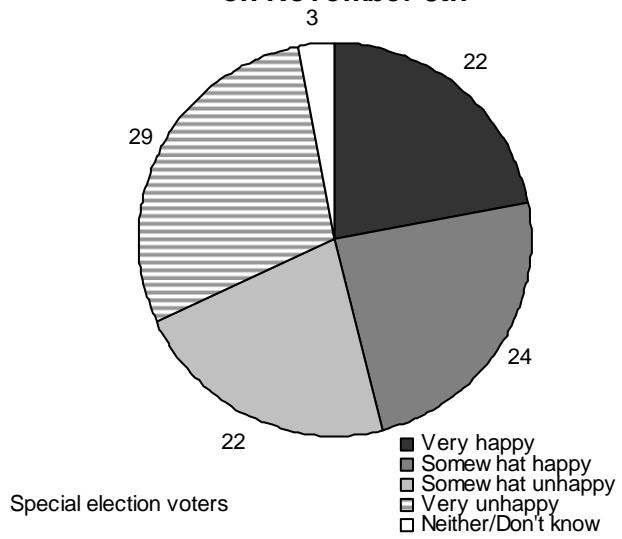
Governor's Use of Initiative Process



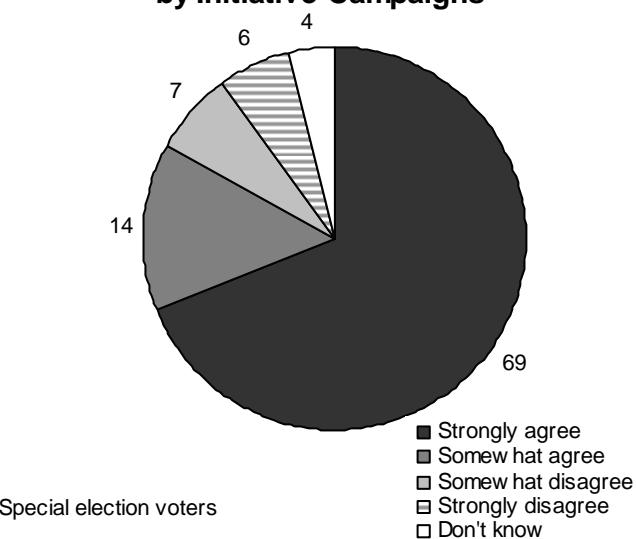
The Way Governor and Legislature Work Together



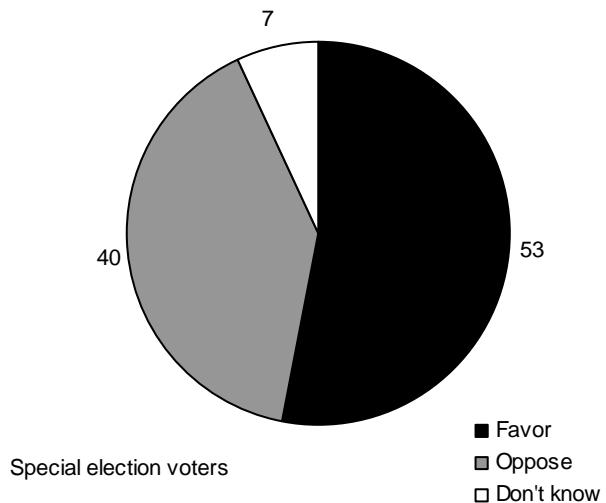
Attitudes About Voting on November 8th



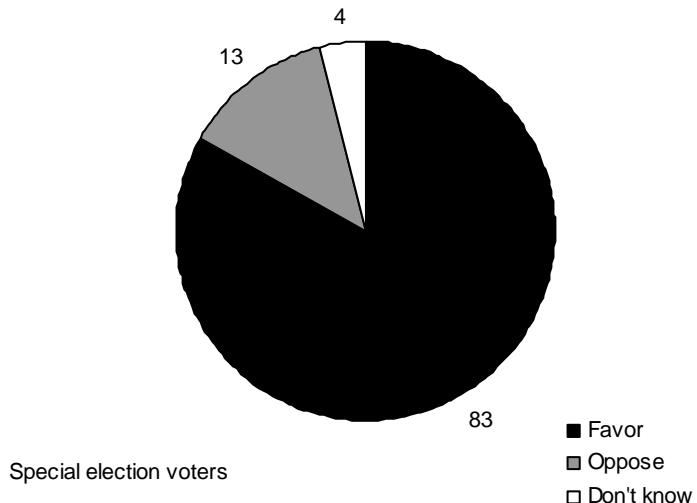
Too Much Money Spent by Initiative Campaigns



Reform Option: Voting on Initiatives Restricted to General Elections



Reform Option: Allowing Time for Initiative Compromises



State Political Context

Overall Mood

What is the general mood of voters who participated in the November 8th special election? In a word – pessimistic. Almost seven in 10 voters say things in California are generally going in the wrong direction, while only 23 percent say things are going in the right direction. These negative perceptions are evident among voters across the major political parties, state regions, and demographic groups.

Heading into the November 8th election, those identified as “special election voters” in our October survey were somewhat less pessimistic (63% wrong direction, 29% right direction). Voter groups with significant increases in negative perceptions of the state included Republicans, Other Southern California region voters, and those who approve overall of Governor Schwarzenegger’s performance in office.

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

Special Election Voters	Party			Region				
	Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Right direction	23%	19%	28%	20%	28%	18%	21%	24%
Wrong direction	68	73	62	68	63	72	69	69
Don't know	9	8	10	12	9	10	10	7

The November 8th special election voters rank the economy (18%) and education (18%) as the top two issues facing Californians today. While 11 percent name the state budget and taxes, fewer mention the other issues on the ballot—such as abortion, political contributions, redistricting, prescription drug costs, or electricity prices. Immigration is one of the three top concerns for Republicans but not for Democrats or independents. We found that the economy and education were also the top issues for special election voters in our October survey.

Bearing out these economic concerns, as well as voters’ negative attitudes about overall conditions, half of the state’s November 8th special election voters also believe the state will experience bad economic times over the next 12 months (50% bad times, 35% good times). Democrats (28% good times, 57% bad times) are much more negative than Republicans (44% good times, 40% bad times) about economic conditions, while 52 percent of independent voters also anticipate bad economic times.

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

Special Election Voters	Party			Region				
	Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Economy, jobs, unemployment	18%	19%	18%	16%	19%	17%	21%	15%
Education, schools, teachers	18	22	11	19	15	22	20	13
State budget, deficit, taxes	11	9	14	11	12	10	8	14
Immigration, illegal immigration	9	4	17	8	5	4	10	16
Health care, health costs	5	7	2	5	4	7	4	5

Governor's Approval Ratings

The voters who went to the polls on November 8th have a markedly negative view of the governor's performance in office. Schwarzenegger's overall post-election job ratings (39% approve, 56% disapprove) are comparable to his ratings among special election voters in our October survey (38% approve, 57% disapprove). While seven in 10 Republicans have a favorable opinion of his job performance, eight in 10 Democrats have an unfavorable view; independents are more divided but also negative (40% approve, 51% disapprove). Schwarzenegger's approval ratings are lower in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles than in the Central Valley and Other Southern California regions.

The governor receives less favorable marks for his job performance from Latinos (22% approve) than whites (44% approve), and from women (35% approve) than men (42% approve). Approval of the governor's overall job performance tends to increase somewhat with age, home ownership, and income.

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

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California
Approve	39%	13%	71%	40%	48%	25%	32%	51%
Disapprove	56	82	24	51	48	68	61	44
Don't know	5	5	5	9	4	7	7	5

When asked about the way Governor Schwarzenegger is handling the issue of reforming California government, about one in three (36%) approves while a majority (58%) disapprove. With the exception of Republicans (69% approve) and conservatives (63% approve), less than 50 percent of voters in other political and demographic groups approve of his handling of this issue. Men are more likely than women to approve of his handling of reform (40% to 31%), as are whites more than Latinos (41% to 22%) and homeowners more than renters (40% to 20%). In our October survey, a similar 37 percent of special election voters approved, while 58 percent disapproved, of his handling of government reforms.

Voters in the special election give Schwarzenegger low marks on his use of the initiative process in making public policy – 33 percent approve while 60 percent disapprove. High approval ratings on this issue come from Republicans (62% approve) and conservatives (56% approve), while fewer than half of voters in other political and demographic groups approve. Disapproval on this issue is higher in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area than elsewhere. Schwarzenegger gets higher marks on this issue from whites (38% approve) than Latinos (18% approve) and approval increases with income and age.

"Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Arnold Schwarzenegger is using the initiative process in making public policy?"

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California
Approve	33%	11%	62%	31%	39%	20%	27%	46%
Disapprove	60	84	30	59	54	72	66	48
Don't know	7	5	8	10	7	8	7	6

Legislature's Approval Ratings

The state legislature received even lower job approval ratings than the governor from those who went to the polls on November 8th (20% approve, 66% disapprove). Special election voters in our October survey had similar assessments of the legislature (21% approve, 69% disapprove). Among those voting on November 8th, one in four Democrats (26%) gives the legislature favorable marks, while even fewer Republicans (15%) and independents (17%) say they approve of the legislature. Low opinion of the legislature is similar across regions.

Disapproval of the legislature's overall job performance increases with education, income, and age. Whites (67%) are somewhat more likely to disapprove of the legislature than Latinos (61%), and homeowners (69%) are much more likely to disapprove than renters (57%).

Voters' regard their own individual representatives to the state legislature much more favorably than the legislature as a whole. Still, approval of their representatives is lower than disapproval by a 10-point margin (37%, 47%). Democrats (46%) are more likely than Republicans (29%) or independents (34%) to approve of their representatives. In our October survey, a similar 38 percent of special election voters said they approved while 45 percent disapproved of the overall job performance of their own representatives to the state legislature.

"Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California legislature is handling its job?"

	Special Election Voters	Party			Region			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California
Approve	20%	26%	15%	17%	23%	22%	19%	17%
Disapprove	66	58	76	68	67	63	66	69
Don't know	14	16	9	15	10	15	15	14

While few voters hold positive opinions of the governor and legislature, even fewer approve of the way the executive and legislative branches are working together in making public policy. Three in four special election voters say they disapprove, while only 14 percent says they approve of their joint policy efforts. Seventy percent or more of voters across political parties and geographic regions say they disapprove of the way these two branches of state government are working together. Similarly low approval ratings on this issue are found across demographic groups. Of those who approve of the governor's job performance, only 21 percent approve of the way that he and the legislature are working together. Similarly, of those who approve of the job the legislature is doing, only 25 percent approve of the way that it and the governor work together.

"Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California legislature and the governor are working together in making public policy?"

	Special Election Voters	Party			Region			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California
Approve	14%	12%	20%	14%	19%	10%	15%	16%
Disapprove	76	78	70	77	71	82	75	74
Don't know	10	10	10	9	10	8	10	10

Trust in Government

The voters who went to the polls on November 8th express very little faith in state government. Only 17 percent think they can trust officials in Sacramento to do what is right just about always (2%) or most of the time (15%), while eight in 10 say the state government can be trusted only some of the time (73%) or none of the time (8%). By comparison, 24 percent of likely voters in our August survey said they trust the state government to do what is right just about always or most of the time, and three in four likely voters said they could trust state government only some of the time (69%) or none of the time (6%).

In the post-election survey, fewer than one in five Democrats, Republicans, and independents say that the government in Sacramento can be trusted either always or most of the time. This measure of trust in state government tends to decline with age, education, and income and is low across all regions. Of those who disapprove of the state legislature, only 11 percent trust the state government to do what is right always or most of the time. Of those who disapprove of the governor, just 15 percent say they trust the government in Sacramento to do what is right just about always or most of the time.

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

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
Just about always	2%	3%	3%	1%
Most of the time	15	16	15	14
Only some of the time	73	72	72	74
None of the time, not at all (volunteered)	8	7	9	9
Don't know	2	2	1	2

Most voters (61%) also believe that the state government is wasting a lot of the money they pay in taxes. Republicans (68%) and independents (62%) are more likely than Democrats (54%) to say the state government wastes a lot of money. However, majorities of voters across demographic categories and the major regions of the state hold this perspective. The view that government wastes a lot of money decreases with income and education. Of those voters who disapprove of the governor, 55 percent say the state wastes a lot of money while 69 percent of those who disapprove of the legislature feel that way.

Nearly eight in 10 special election voters (78%) say that their state government is run by a few big interests. This marks an increase from the August survey, when 71 percent of likely voters felt this way. Overwhelming majorities of voters across regions and demographic groups also hold this view. Across political parties, only about one in six special election voters considers the state government to be run for the benefit of all of the people.

“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?”

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
A few big interests	78%	77%	75%	80%
All of the people	15	15	18	15
Don't know	7	8	7	5

Confidence in Policymaking

Californians who voted in the special election are not particularly trusting of state officials when it comes to making public policy. Four in 10 voters say they have a great deal (3%) or a fair amount (38%) of confidence in elected officials, but 58 percent say they have not too much (45%) or no confidence at all (13%) in state officials when it comes to making public policy. Majorities of Democrats, Republicans, and independents say they have not too much or no confidence in policymaking by the state's elected officials. Of those who think California is heading in the right direction, 67 percent have a great deal or fair amount of confidence in lawmakers, while only 32 percent of those who think the state is heading in the wrong direction express confidence in state officials.

While the majority of voters say that they lack confidence in the state's elected officials when it comes to policymaking, 50 percent of voters say they have a great deal or fair amount of confidence in California's voters when it comes to policymaking; 49 percent say they have not too much or no confidence in the voters. While 61 percent of Democrats say they have a great deal or fair amount of confidence in California's voters, just 41 percent of Republicans say they have this level of confidence in the voters. Independents are split, with 48 percent having at least some confidence in the voters and 51 percent expressing little or no confidence in the voters.

Latinos (57%) are more likely than whites (47%) to say they have a great deal or fair amount of confidence in the voters. Women (53%) are somewhat more likely than men (47%) to say they have a great deal or fair amount of trust in California's voters when it comes to making policy at the ballot box. Confidence in California's voters tends to decrease with age, education, and income.

Of those who disapprove of the governor, 60 percent say they have a great deal or fair amount of confidence in California's voters, while only 35 percent of those who approve of the governor's performance feel the same way. Similarly, 56 percent of those who said the special election was a bad idea say they have a great deal or fair amount of confidence in the California electorate, while only 40 percent of those who thought the special election was a good idea expressed similar levels of trust and confidence.

Similar trends in confidence in elected officials and voters were evident in our *November 2004* post-election survey. At that time, 48 percent of voters expressed a great deal or fair amount of confidence in state government to make public policy, while 55 percent expressed a great deal or fair amount of confidence in California voters when it comes to making choices on election day.

<i>How much trust and confidence do you have in...</i>	Special Election Voters	Party		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
<i>... the state's elected officials when it comes to making public policy?</i>	A great deal	3%	4%	2%
	A fair amount	38	42	35
	Not too much	45	42	47
	None at all	13	11	14
	Don't know	1	1	2
<i>... California's voters when it comes to making public policy at the ballot box?</i>	A great deal	11	15	9
	A fair amount	39	46	32
	Not too much	36	31	39
	None at all	13	7	19
	Don't know	1	1	1

Voting in a Special Election

Californians give the unique experience of voting on initiatives in a special election decidedly mixed reviews. Forty six percent say they were very happy (22%) or somewhat happy (24%) about having to vote on the initiatives in the special election, while 51 percent say they were somewhat unhappy (22%) or very unhappy (29%) about having to vote on November 8th. Republicans (34%) are far more likely than others to say they were very happy about voting, while Democrats (43%) were far more likely than others to say they were very unhappy about voting. Voters who approve of the governor's job performance overwhelmingly say they felt very happy or somewhat happy about participating (75%). However, those who disapprove of the governor were similarly likely to say they felt very unhappy or somewhat unhappy about having to vote on the November 8th ballot initiatives (72%). Whites (52%) are more likely than Latinos (43%) to say they felt very unhappy or somewhat unhappy about voting in the special election.

“Overall, how did you feel about having to vote on initiatives in the November 8th special election—would you say you were very happy, somewhat happy, somewhat unhappy, or very unhappy?”

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
Very happy	22%	14%	34%	19%
Somewhat happy	24	17	32	25
Somewhat unhappy	22	24	16	27
Very unhappy	29	43	14	25
Neither (volunteered)	2	2	2	2
Don't know	1	0	2	2

Among those who participated in the special election, 38 percent of California voters say the special election has made them feel worse about California politics. Republicans (46%) are more likely than Democrats (33%) or independents (39%) to say that the special election made them feel worse about politics. Across the state's regions, more voters say the November 8th special election made them feel worse than better about California politics. Latinos (33%) are more likely than whites (18%) to say they feel better about California politics. The likelihood of saying the special election has caused them to feel worse about politics increases with income, age, and education. Among those who approve of the governor, 13 percent say the special election made them feel better about politics, 46 percent say it made them feel worse, and 38 percent say the special election made no difference. Among those who disapprove of the governor, 28 percent say that the special election made them feel better about state politics, 34 percent say it made them feel worse, and 37 percent say the special election made no difference.

“Overall, would you say the November 8th special election has made you feel better, worse, or no different about California politics?”

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
Better	21%	27%	16%	20%
Worse	38	33	46	39
No different	38	39	36	39
Don't know	3	1	2	2

Special Election

Voters' Interests

Before the election, a major unknown was whether the majority of voters who described the special election as a bad idea in pre-election surveys would make the effort to vote on November 8th.

Apparently, they did. In this survey of people who voted in the election, those who think it was a bad idea outnumber those who think it was a good idea by a 24-point margin (60% to 36%). Perspectives differ widely by party: 80 percent of Democrats believe it was a bad idea, while 61 percent of Republicans think it was a good one. Perspectives also differ depending on attitudes toward the governor: 72 percent of voters who approve of him say the election was a good idea, while 85 percent of those who disapprove of him say it was a bad idea. Voters who say it was a bad idea outnumber those who say it was a good idea in all age, education, gender, income, and racial/ethnic groups.

In our October survey of special election voters, 43 percent described the special election as a good idea, while somewhat fewer (54%) than in our current survey said it was a bad idea.

How interested were voters in the four propositions that Governor Schwarzenegger endorsed? When asked which of the eight propositions interested them the most, 50 percent of the voters name one of the governor's four measures. The governor's measures that generated the most interest were Propositions 74 (teacher tenure) and 75 (public union dues), which lost by narrower margins on election night. In comparison, the measures that generated less interest were Propositions 76 (spending limit) and 77 (redistricting), which lost by larger margins. This pattern of responses on initiative interest is similar across political parties, regions, and racial/ethnic and demographic groups; among those who say that the special election was a good or a bad idea; and for those who approve or disapprove of the governor's overall performance in office. However, Proposition 73 (parental notification of abortion) is the single proposition that generated the most interest (23%), while only 8 percent of voters overall stated that they were most interested in Propositions 78 and 79 (drug discounts and drug rebates) and Proposition 80 (electricity regulation).

"Governor Schwarzenegger called a special election on November 8th to vote on budget, educational, and governmental reform measures. In general, do you think the special election was a good idea or a bad idea?"

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
Good idea	36%	17%	61%	39%
Bad idea	60	80	35	59
Neither (volunteered)	2	1	2	1
Don't know	2	2	2	1

"Which one of the eight state propositions on the ballot were you most interested in?"

<i>Of the four supported by the governor</i>	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
Proposition 74	19%	20%	18%	21%
Proposition 75	15	14	16	15
Proposition 76	7	7	8	6
Proposition 77	9	6	12	11

Proposition 74: Teachers Waiting Period for Permanent Status and Dismissal

Proposition 74, which was endorsed by the governor, sought to change the time-to-tenure for public school teachers from two to five years. It was voted down in the election by a 10-point margin (45% yes, 55% no).

Why did the vote go this way? Among those who voted no, the top reasons are that five years for tenure decisions is too long, that it would hurt teachers, that the voter has a personal connection to a teacher, that the governor endorsed the measure, and that it would discourage teacher recruitment. Those who voted yes cite the belief that teacher tenure is too quick, that there are teacher-quality issues, that it would make it easier to remove unsatisfactory teachers, and that teachers should be held accountable.

Although relatively few name the governor's endorsement as a reason for voting yes or no, how they voted still correlates highly with ratings of Schwarzenegger's performance in office. Moreover, there is a sharp partisan divide in support—Democrats strongly opposed this measure, independents opposed it by a 6-point margin, and Republicans strongly supported it.

Proposition 74 was opposed by all age, education, income, gender, length-of-residence, and homeownership groups, and by voters with or without children in public schools. The proposition was more strongly opposed by Latinos (69%) than whites (50%).

Few voters think that the failure of Proposition 74 will have either a positive (18%) or a negative (22%) effect, overall, on public schools. Most (55%) say the outcome will make no difference. Nevertheless, 71 percent of voters believe that major changes in the public education system are still needed, while fewer believe that minor changes are in order (23%) or that the public school system is fine the way it is (3%). Majorities of those voting either yes or no on Proposition 74 say that major changes are needed. High levels of support for such change are also consistent across political parties, regions, racial/ethnic and demographic groups, people with or without children in public schools, and people who approve or disapprove of the governor.

Special Election Voters	Party			Governor Approval		Race/ethnicity	
	Dem	Rep	Ind	Approve	Disapprove	Whites	Latinos
Prop. 74	Yes	18%	78%	47%	87%	14%	50%
	No	82	22	53	13	86	69

"As you may know, Proposition 74 did not pass. Do you think the public education system in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or is it fine the way it is?"

Special Election Voters	Prop. 74	
	Yes	No
Major changes	79%	64%
Minor changes	17	29
Fine the way it is	1	5
Don't know	3	2

Proposition 75: Public Employee Union Dues and Political Contributions

Also endorsed by Governor Schwarzenegger, Proposition 75 would have required unions to get members' written permission before using dues to support political candidates and causes. It lost by a 8-point margin (46% yes, 54% no).

The top reasons given for voting "no" are that unions should not be the only organizations with restrictions on their campaign contributions, that unions give some people a political voice that would be silenced by Proposition 75, that union members can already opt out of having their dues used for political purposes, and that the voter has a personal connection with union members. The two main reasons for voting "yes" are that union members should have a say over where their dues go and that unions currently have too much political power.

Support for Proposition 75 varies sharply along partisan lines: 78 percent of Republicans say they voted for it, 83 percent of Democrats say they opposed it, and independents are split (52% no, 48% yes). Support for the initiative also correlates with ratings of the governor: 87 percent of those who approve of his performance say they voted for Proposition 75; 88 percent of those who disapprove say they voted no.

Voters in union households strongly opposed Proposition 75, while non-union household voters were evenly divided. Proposition 75 is more strongly opposed by Latinos than by whites (68%, 49%), by younger than older residents, by less-affluent than more-affluent voters, by renters than homeowners, and by women than men.

Half of the voters (49%) say the defeat of Proposition 75 is of no consequence to campaign finance in California (38% of "yes" voters, 57 % of "no" voters). Still, 59 percent of all voters think campaign finance in California needs major changes, including majorities of "yes" and "no" voters on Proposition 75. The need for such changes has majority support across political groups and major regions of the state; among education, gender, homeownership, income, and racial/ethnic groups; and in union and non-union households.

Special Election Voters	Party			Governor Approval		Union Household	
	Dem	Rep	Ind	Approve	Disapprove	Yes	No
Prop. 75	Yes	17%	78%	48%	87%	12%	38%
	No	83	22	52	13	88	62

"As you may know, Proposition 75 did not pass. Do you think the way campaigns are financed in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or is it fine the way it is?"

Special Election Voters	Prop. 75	
	Yes	No
Major changes	66%	56%
Minor changes	20	24
Fine the way it is	7	14
Don't know	7	6

Proposition 76: State Spending and School Funding Limits

Another initiative that was endorsed by Governor Schwarzenegger, Proposition 76, would have limited state spending, changed the minimum school funding requirements, and given the governor new power to cut the budget. It was defeated by 24 points in the special election (38% yes, 62% no.).

The top reasons special election voters give for voting no on Proposition 76 are that it would take money away from schools, that it would give too much power to the governor, that it was endorsed by Schwarzenegger, and that voters disliked the idea of a spending cap. The main reasons for voting yes are that it would get state spending under control, that it would keep the state from a budget deficit, that it would give the governor more budget authority, and that the governor endorsed it.

Proposition 76 had strong backing by Republicans (71%) but even stronger opposition by Democrats (87%). Independents rejected it by a 26-point margin (63% no, 37% yes). Eighty-four percent of voters who approve of Schwarzenegger's performance in office voted yes on the measure, while 92 percent of those who disapprove voted no.

Voters who think the state is headed in the wrong direction rejected Proposition 76 by a wide margin. Those with a positive view of the state's direction are somewhat more divided – but still voted against the measure by an 8-point margin. Although the measure failed in all demographic and racial/ethnic groups, men favor it more than women (43%, 34%) and whites support it more than Latinos (43%, 25%). Proposition 76 is also more strongly supported by older than younger residents, more affluent than less-affluent voters, and homeowners than renters.

About half of the special election voters (49%) say the defeat of Proposition 76 will make no difference for state spending. Most supporters of Proposition 76 think its defeat will have a negative effect on state spending (59%), while a similar proportion of opponents think its defeat will have no fiscal consequences (58%). A strong majority of voters (69%) believe that major changes concerning state spending are needed, including most of those who voted against Proposition 76 (64%) and those who supported it (84%). This opinion is shared by strong majorities across political groups, in every region of the state, and across age, education, gender, homeownership, income, and racial/ethnic categories.

Special Election Voters	Party			Governor Approval		Direction of California	
	Dem	Rep	Ind	Approve	Disapprove	Right	Wrong
Prop. 76	Yes	13%	71%	37%	84%	8%	46%
	No	87	29	63	16	92	54
							65

"As you may know, Proposition 76 did not pass. Do you think the way the governor and legislature go about state spending in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or is it fine the way it is?"

Special Election Voters	Prop. 76	
	Yes	No
Major changes	84%	64%
Minor changes	13	26
Fine the way it is	2	6
Don't know	1	4

Proposition 77: Redistricting

Another of Governor Schwarzenegger's initiatives in his "year of reform" package, Proposition 77, would have changed the way political districts are drawn in California. It would have taken the responsibility for drawing legislative districts away from the governor and state legislature and given it to a panel of retired judges. It failed by a 20-point margin (40% yes, 60% no) on November 8th.

Among "no" voters, the main reasons given for rejecting Proposition 77 are that judges are not impartial, that redistricting is not necessary right now, that the governor endorsed it, and that it would not benefit Democrats. The main reasons for voting "yes" are that Proposition 77 would prevent districts from being drawn unfairly to support a political party, that it would shift control to impartial judges, that it would shake up the political establishment, and that the legislature is the problem.

As with the other Schwarzenegger-backed measures, support for Proposition 77 divides sharply along party lines, with 70 percent of Republicans voting yes, 84 percent of Democrats voting no, and independents rejecting it by an 18-point margin (41% yes, 59% no). Again, opinions of Schwarzenegger correlated with voting on this proposition, with 79 percent of those who approve of his performance supporting the measure and 88 percent who disapprove voting no. Confidence in the state legislature is also related to voter choices: 82 percent of those who approve of the legislature's performance voted against this proposal to take away their authority to draw political districts. However, half of those who disapprove of the legislature also rejected Proposition 77.

The measure received less than majority support among all racial/ethnic and demographic groups, although it was favored more by men than women (46% to 34%), by whites than Latinos (46% to 24%), by older than younger voters, and by more-affluent than less-affluent voters.

The majority of special election voters (52%) do not think the outcome will affect the state's legislative districts. However, the response to Proposition 77 differs from the response to the other three measures in that fewer than half think major changes are needed (49%). Moreover, 75 percent of those who voted "yes" on this measure do believe major changes in the redistricting process are needed, compared to only 35 percent of "no" voters. Attitudes also divide along partisan lines, with most Republicans (59%) but fewer than half of Democrats (41%) or independents (47%) saying major changes are needed. The belief that the redistricting system needs major changes is more prevalent among men than women and whites than Latinos, and it increases with age and for voters who have a negative view of the legislature's performance.

Special Election Voters	Party			Governor Approval		Approval of Legislature	
	Dem	Rep	Ind	Approve	Disapprove	Approve	Disapprove
Prop. 77	Yes	16%	70%	41%	79%	12%	18%
	No	84	30	59	21	88	51%

"As you may know, Proposition 77 did not pass. Do you think the way the governor and legislature go about the redistricting process in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or is it fine the way it is?"

	Prop. 77	
	Yes	No
Major changes	75%	35%
Minor changes	20	30
Fine the way it is	2	26
Don't know	3	9

Special Election

Voter Information Sources

More than eight in 10 voters in the special election say they very closely (44%) or fairly closely (41%) followed election news. The level of attention to election news was similarly high across the major parties and regions, and for those who thought the election was a good idea and a bad idea, among those who approve and disapprove of the governor, and those who were very happy and very unhappy about voting.

Despite how closely voters followed election news, when special election voters were asked about the information source that was most helpful in deciding how to vote, news coverage ranked behind the official voter information guide and campaign advertising. Independent voters are somewhat more likely than major party voters to mention the official voter information guide. Paid advertisements are the top-mentioned source for lower-income and less-educated voters, while the official voter information guide is mentioned most often by those with at least some college education and those with household incomes of \$40,000 or more.

Eight in 10 voters say they were very satisfied (40%) or somewhat satisfied (43%) with the amount of information that was available to make choices on the ballot propositions. Only 15 percent say they were not too satisfied (11%) or not at all satisfied (4%). Republicans (44%) are somewhat more likely than Democrats (38%) and independents (37%) to say they were very satisfied with the information. Most voters across political groups, in every region, and in all racial/ethnic and demographic categories reported satisfaction with the amount of information available.

"Regardless of how you voted, before deciding how to vote on these eight propositions, how closely were you following news about these measures—very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?"

	Special Election Voters	Party		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
Very closely	44%	47%	48%	34%
Fairly closely	41	38	40	48
Not too closely	10	11	7	13
Not at all closely	5	4	5	5

"People learned about the ballot propositions a number of different ways, which way did you find the most helpful in deciding how to vote on the eight state propositions?"

	Special Election Voters	Party		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
The official voter information guide and sample ballot	29%	25%	31%	36%
Advertisements – radio / television / newspaper / in the mail	23	24	23	22
News and media coverage – radio / television / newspaper	16	15	17	15
Newspaper endorsements – columns / editorials	10	12	9	9

Initiatives and Election Reforms

Overall Evaluations

When asked to reflect on the November 8th special election, half of those who voted in the election (48%) said that public policies generated by the initiative process are probably better than those developed by the governor and legislature. Only three in 10 said that the voters' decisions are probably worse. Democrats (52%) and independents (50%) are more optimistic than Republicans (42%) about the decisions made by voters. Central Valley voters (52%) are the most likely to think voters' decisions on initiatives are better than those made by officials in Sacramento, while Other Southern California voters (44%) are the least likely to agree. Latino voters are more positive than whites about policies created by initiatives (55%, 45%). Confidence in the initiative process declines with age, education, and income.

In our August survey, when asked what they generally thought about the initiative process, 58 percent of likely voters felt that voters' decisions made through the initiative process were probably better than those made by state elected officials; 26 percent thought that such decisions were probably worse.

Even though all eight of the special election initiatives failed to pass, two in three voters (66%) still somewhat or strongly agree that the ballot initiatives brought up important issues that were not adequately addressed by their elected officials. Democrats (62%) are less likely than Republicans (72%) and independents (69%) to agree that the initiatives brought up important issues. In our September survey, 79 percent of likely voters generally believed that initiatives bring up important issues that elected officials have not fully addressed.

“Thinking about the November special election, overall, do you think the public policy decisions made through the initiative process by California voters are probably better or probably worse than public policy decisions that are made by the governor and state legislature?”

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California
Probably better	48%	52%	42%	50%	52%	48%	49%	44%
Probably worse	30	28	35	28	31	28	31	30
Same (volunteered)	9	6	10	11	6	9	8	11
Don't know	13	14	13	11	11	15	12	15

“In thinking about the November 8th special election, [do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree that] the citizens' initiatives that were on the state ballot brought up important public policy issues that the governor and state legislature had not adequately addressed?”

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California
Strongly agree	34%	33%	40%	35%	35%	30%	38%	35%
Somewhat agree	32	29	32	34	30	34	31	31
Somewhat disagree	14	16	13	13	16	16	12	15
Strongly disagree	12	15	8	12	12	14	12	9
Don't know	8	7	7	6	7	6	7	10

Specific Perceptions

Californians' positive feelings toward the initiative process temper somewhat when they are asked specifically about the special election ballot. A majority of voters strongly or somewhat agree that the wording of state initiatives on the November ballot was too complicated and confusing (55%). Majorities of Democrats and independents agree with this statement, while Republicans are divided. Perceptions of initiative wording as being too complicated declines with education and income. Latinos (58%) are more likely than whites (52%) and women (62%) are more likely than men (46%) to consider the ballot wording confusing.

Although a majority of special election voters think that the wording of the initiatives on the ballot was too confusing, 57 percent strongly or somewhat disagree that there were too many propositions on the ballot. Republicans (68%), independents (60%), and those who were very happy about voting in the election (76%) are especially likely to disagree. Those most inclined to say that there were too many propositions are Democrats (52%) and voters who were very unhappy about voting in the special election (57%), although even in these groups, many do not think the November ballot had too many propositions.

There is one issue that voters in the special election resoundingly agree upon—too much money was spent by the initiative campaigns. More than eight in 10 strongly (69%) or somewhat (14%) agree with this statement. Solid majorities in all political and demographic groups strongly agree that the initiative campaigns spent too much money. While a majority of Republicans (58%) strongly agree that the initiative campaigns spent too much money, they are not as likely as Democrats (79%) and independents (70%) to hold this opinion. Voters who say the special election was a bad idea (81%), and those who were very unhappy about voting in the special election (88%), are also more likely than others to strongly agree that too much money was spent. This perception is higher among women than men and among whites than Latinos, and it also increases with education.

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
The wording of citizens' initiatives on the state ballot was too complicated and confusing	Strongly agree	28%	31%	25%
	Somewhat agree	27	30	24
	Somewhat disagree	25	22	26
	Strongly disagree	18	14	22
	Don't know	2	3	2
There were too many propositions on the state ballot	Strongly agree	26	36	17
	Somewhat agree	15	16	13
	Somewhat disagree	29	26	31
	Strongly disagree	28	20	37
	Don't know	2	2	2
There was too much money spent by the initiative campaigns	Strongly agree	69	79	58
	Somewhat agree	14	9	18
	Somewhat disagree	7	4	11
	Strongly disagree	6	4	7
	Don't know	4	4	6

Need for Change

While special election voters express positive attitudes about the voters' role in shaping public policy at the ballot box—and 53 percent are either very (10%) or somewhat (43%) satisfied with the way the initiative process is working in the state today—a sizeable 44 percent are not satisfied. By comparison, in our August survey, 69 percent of likely voters were either very (9%) or somewhat (60%) satisfied with the initiative process, while only 26 percent were not satisfied.

How is the experience of the special election related to voter dissatisfaction with the initiative process? Sixty percent of those who were very unhappy about voting in the special election—and 50 percent of those who say the special election was a bad idea—are not satisfied with the initiative process. Moreover, those who say they feel better about California politics after the special election (64%) are more likely than those who now feel worse (44%) to be satisfied with the state's initiative system. Independents (57%) and Republicans (55%) are somewhat more likely than Democrats (50%) to be very or somewhat satisfied with the way the initiative process is working in California today. Satisfaction is highest in the Other Southern California region and in the Central Valley and lowest in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Seventy-two percent of special election voters think the state's initiative process needs either major (38%) or minor changes (34%). Following the trend of increasing dissatisfaction since the November 8th ballot, special election voters (38%) are more likely to want major changes in the initiative system today than did likely voters in our September survey (28%). Among the special election voters who say they were very unhappy about voting in the special election, 48 percent say the initiative process needs major changes. Among those who say the special election was a bad idea, 43 percent say that major changes are needed. Democrats (43%) are more likely than Republicans (36%) and independents (33%) to say major changes are needed. Women are more likely than men (43%, 32%) and Latinos are more likely than whites (46%, 36%) to say the initiative process is in need of major changes.

"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?"

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California
Very satisfied	10%	8%	11%	14%	11%	6%	12%	11%
Somewhat satisfied	43	42	44	43	45	40	41	46
Not satisfied	44	46	43	41	42	51	43	41
Don't know	3	4	2	2	2	3	4	2

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

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California
Major changes	38%	43%	36%	33%	37%	38%	38%	39%
Minor changes	34	36	32	36	36	37	35	32
Fine the way it is	23	17	28	27	23	21	22	25
Don't know	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	4

Qualifying Initiatives

After participating in the recent special election, majorities of voters favor a number of reforms to the state's initiative process. A majority support restricting initiatives to November general elections, rather than continuing the current system that allows initiatives to be entered on any statewide ballot, including special elections and primaries. However, while support for this reform is strong among Democrats (58%) and independents (55%), only half of Republicans (49%) favor such restriction.

The idea of allowing initiatives only on November general election ballots is favored by a majority in all regions and demographic groups, except for voters ages 18 to 34. Support is somewhat stronger among Latinos than whites (57%, 53%) and increases with age. Special election voters who think the recent election was a bad idea are considerably more likely than those who think it was a good idea to favor this change (61%, 42%). This change is also supported much more strongly by those who were very unhappy about voting in the special election than by those who were very happy about it (66%, 38%).

A majority also favor allowing the governor to call special elections on initiatives only with the approval of the legislature. This change from the current system, which allows the governor to call a special election on his own, is favored strongly by Democrats (66%) and independents (54%); however, it is opposed by a majority of Republicans (56%). While the idea of calling a special election only with the approval of the legislature is favored by majorities in all regions, support is stronger in the San Francisco Bay Area (62%) than elsewhere, and more so among women than men (57%, 50%).

Voters who believe the election was a bad idea are much more likely to favor this reform than are those who think it was a good idea (69%, 31%). Similarly, voters who were very unhappy about voting in the November special election favor this proposed reform significantly more than do those who were very happy about voting (75%, 34%). Support for having both the governor and legislature agree on a special election is greater among those who approve of the way the California legislature is doing its job than among those who disapprove (69%, 48%), and support is much higher among those who disapprove of the way that Governor Schwarzenegger is doing his job than among those who approve (71%, 30%).

"How about only allowing initiatives in November general elections instead of in any statewide election, such as primaries or special elections?"

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>			<u>Special Election</u>	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Good Idea	Bad Idea
Favor	53%	58%	49%	55%	42%	61%
Oppose	40	34	46	37	53	31
Don't know	7	8	5	8	5	8

"How about only allowing the governor to call special elections on initiatives with the approval of the legislature, instead of allowing the governor to call them without the legislature's approval?"

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>			<u>Special Election</u>	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Good Idea	Bad Idea
Favor	54%	66%	38%	54%	31%	69%
Oppose	41	30	56	41	65	27
Don't know	5	4	6	5	4	4

Initiative Reviews

In addition to support for reforms limiting the use of special elections for initiative ballots, an even stronger majority of special election voters (77%) favor creating a system of review and revision of proposed initiatives to try to avoid legal issues and drafting errors. Support for this initiative reform is strong among Democrats (78%), Republicans (76%), and independents (77%) alike. Three in four or more voters in all regions of California favor a system of review and revision for proposed initiatives.

Support for an initiative review system is somewhat higher than it was in our October survey, when 73 percent of voters who were likely to cast ballots in the special election favored this measure.

Solid majorities in all demographic groups approve of this initiative reform. Importantly, support for a system of initiative review and revision is high among both those who approve and those who disapprove of the performance of Governor Schwarzenegger (77%, 78%), those who approve and those who disapprove of the performance of the state legislature (79%, 78%), those who think the special election was a good idea and those who think it was a bad idea (74%, 79%), and those who were very happy and those who were very unhappy about voting in the special election (72%, 81%).

Just months after the governor and the legislature failed to reach an agreement that could have prevented the November 8th special election, an overwhelming majority of special election voters (83%) favor requiring time for the initiative sponsor and the legislature to attempt a compromise solution before initiatives can be presented on the ballot. Solid majorities of Democrats (86%), Republicans (83%), and independents (81%) alike support building a time delay into the initiative process. Support is also strong in all regions. In our October survey, 77 percent of special election voters favored this proposed reform.

Eight in 10 voters in all demographic groups support this reform. It is favored strongly by voters who approve and who disapprove of the governor (81%, 85%), by those who approve and disapprove of the legislature (87%, 83%), by those who thought the special election was a good idea and a bad idea (78%, 88%), and by those who were very happy and very unhappy about voting (76%, 89%).

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

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California
Favor	77%	78%	76%	77%	80%	76%	75%	77%
Oppose	15	14	14	16	15	14	16	15
Don't know	8	8	10	7	5	10	9	8

**"How about a period of time in which the initiative sponsor and the legislature could meet
to see if there is a compromise solution before initiatives go to the ballot?"**

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California
Favor	83%	86%	83%	81%	86%	84%	83%	82%
Oppose	13	10	14	15	12	11	13	14
Don't know	4	4	3	4	2	5	4	4

Initiative Campaigns

Special election voters also want reforms that provide more information about initiatives and their sponsors. Voters (85%) overwhelmingly favor increasing public disclosure of funding sources for signature gathering and initiative campaigns. Support for greater financial disclosure is high among Democrats (84%), Republicans (87%), and independents (85%). Large majorities in all regions favor this reform. In our October survey, a similar 84 percent of special election voters favored this proposal.

More than seven in 10 special election voters in all demographic groups favor increased public disclosure of initiative funding sources. Support is greater among whites than Latinos (89%, 72%) and increases with education and income. Both voters who think the special election was a good idea and those who think it was a bad idea express strong support for this reform (85%, 86%).

Similarly, more than three in four special election voters favor requiring proponents and opponents of the initiative campaigns to participate in a series of televised debates. Solid majorities of Democrats (78%), Republicans (78%), and independents (76%) alike favor this campaign reform. Support for a series of televised debates by initiative sponsors and opponents is strong among voters in all regions of California. By comparison, in our November 2002 survey, 56 percent of likely voters favored the idea of requiring candidates for governor to participate in a minimum of five prime-time publicly broadcasted debates.

Three in four or more in all demographic groups would like to see televised debates on initiatives. Favor is equally strong among those who think the special election was a good idea and those who think it was a bad idea (78%, 77%), among those who were very happy and those who were very unhappy about voting (79%, 77%), and among those who say the election made them feel better about politics in California and those who say it made them feel worse (77%, 78%).

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

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California
Favor	85%	84%	87%	85%	87%	86%	81%	85%
Oppose	11	12	9	13	10	10	14	9
Don't know	4	4	4	2	3	4	5	6

**“How about requiring the yes and no sides of the initiative campaigns
to participate in a series of televised debates?”**

	Special Election Voters	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California
Favor	77%	78%	78%	76%	77%	75%	76%	77%
Oppose	19	17	19	21	18	21	19	20
Don't know	4	5	3	3	5	4	5	3

Survey Methodology

The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, research director and survey director at the Public Policy Institute of California, with assistance in research and writing from Dean Bonner, project manager for this survey, and survey research associates Lunna Lopes, Jennifer Paluch, and Sonja Petek. The survey was conducted with funding from The James Irvine Foundation. It benefited from discussions with program staff, grantees, and others with expertise and interests in the state's elections and initiative process, as well as regional focus groups of voters, also funded by the foundation. However, the survey methods, questions, and content of the report were solely determined by Mark Baldassare.

The findings of this survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,002 California voters in the special election who were interviewed between November 9th and November 20th, 2005. Interviewing took place mostly on weekday and weekend evenings, using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers that ensured that both listed and unlisted numbers were called. All telephone exchanges in California were eligible for calling. Telephone numbers in the survey sample 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 by using the "last birthday method" to avoid biases in age and gender. Eligible respondents were those who reported that they had voted in the November 8th special election either at their local polling place or by absentee ballot. Interviews took an average of 18 minutes to complete. Interviewing was conducted in English or Spanish. *Accent on Languages* translated the survey into Spanish with assistance from Renatta DeFever. Schulman, Ronca & Bucuvalas, Inc. conducted the telephone interviewing. We used the PPIC Statewide Survey database to compare the demographic characteristics of "special election voters" in our October survey to the characteristics of this survey sample. We also analyzed the voting statistics for the November 8th special election from the California Secretary of State. The survey sample of voters' characteristics was comparable to the special election voters in our October survey and to the state figures. The survey data in this report were statistically weighted to account for differences, although the findings did not change significantly.

The sampling error for the total sample of 2,002 voters is +/- 2 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for subgroups—such as political affiliations, age and income brackets, and regional and ethnic/racial categories—is larger. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject, and results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

Throughout the report, we refer to four geographic regions. "Central Valley" includes Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. "SF Bay Area" includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. "Los Angeles" refers to Los Angeles County, and "Other Southern California" includes the mostly suburban regions of Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties. These four regions were chosen for analysis because they are major population centers that account for approximately 90 percent of the state population.

We present specific results for Latino voters because they account for about 30 percent of the state's adult population and constitute one of the fastest growing voter groups. The sample sizes for the African American and Asian subgroups are not large enough for separate statistical analysis. We do compare the opinions of registered Democrats, Republicans, and independents. The "independents" category includes one of the fastest growing groups of California voters, who are registered to vote as "decline to state."

To analyze time trends, we compare this survey's responses to responses recorded in earlier PPIC Statewide Surveys of likely voters, special election voters in October, and November 2004 election voters.

**PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY:
SPECIAL SURVEY ON CALIFORNIANS AND THE INITIATIVE PROCESS
NOVEMBER 9TH – 20TH, 2005
2,002 CALIFORNIA VOTERS IN THE NOVEMBER 8TH ELECTION: ENGLISH AND SPANISH
MARGIN OF ERROR +/-2% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE**

1. 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]

18%	economy, jobs
18	education, schools, teachers
11	state budget, deficit, state spending
9	immigration, illegal immigration
5	health care, health costs, health insurance
3	government reform
3	housing costs, housing availability
2	electricity costs, energy supply
2	environment, pollution
2	gasoline prices
21	other (<i>specify</i>)
6	don't know

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

39%	approve
56	disapprove
5	don't know

3. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling the issue of reforming California government?

36%	approve
58	disapprove
6	don't know

4. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Arnold Schwarzenegger is using the initiative process in making public policy?

33%	approve
60	disapprove
7	don't know

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

20%	approve
66	disapprove
14	don't know

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

37%	approve
47	disapprove
4	mixed (<i>volunteered</i>)
12	don't know

7. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California legislature and the governor are working together in making public policy?

14%	approve
76	disapprove
10	don't know

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

23%	right direction
68	wrong direction
9	don't know

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

35%	good times
50	bad times
15	don't know

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

2%	just about always
15	most of the time
73	only some of the time
8	none of the time, not at all (<i>volunteered</i>)
2	don't know

11. 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?

78%	a few big interests
15	all of the people
7	don't know

12. 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?

61% a lot
32 some
4 don't waste very much
3 don't know

13. In general, how much trust and confidence do you have in the state's elected officials when it comes to making public policy—a great deal, a fair amount, not too much, or none at all?

3% a great deal
38 a fair amount
45 not too much
13 none at all
1 don't know

14. How much trust and confidence do you have in California's voters when it comes to making public policy at the ballot box—a great deal, a fair amount, not too much, or none at all?

11% a great deal
39 a fair amount
36 not too much
13 none at all
1 don't know

Thinking about the special election, the ballot included eight state initiatives

15. Overall, how did you feel about having to vote on initiatives in the November 8th special election—would you say you were very happy, somewhat happy, somewhat unhappy, or very unhappy?

22% very happy
24 somewhat happy
22 somewhat unhappy
29 very unhappy
2 neither (*volunteered*)
1 don't know

16. Overall, would you say the November 8th special election has made you feel better, worse, or no different about California politics?

21% better
38 worse
38 no different
3 don't know

17. Governor Schwarzenegger called a special election on November 8th to vote on budget, educational, and governmental reform measures. In general, do you think the special election was a good idea or a bad idea?

36% good idea
60 bad idea
2 neither (*volunteered*)
2 don't know

18. Regardless of how you voted, before deciding how to vote on these eight propositions, how closely were you following news about these measures—very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?

44% very closely
41 fairly closely
10 not too closely
5 not at all closely

19. People learned about the ballot propositions a number of different ways—which way did you find the most helpful in deciding how to vote on the eight state propositions?

[read only if necessary]

29% the official voter information guide and sample ballot
23 advertisements—radio, television, newspaper, in the mail
16 news and media coverage—radio, television, newspaper
10 newspaper endorsements—columns, editorials
8 Internet
4 the opinions of friends, family members, coworkers
2 forum, debate, meeting
2 endorsements—interest groups, politicians, celebrities
7 other
1 don't know

20. Overall, how satisfied were you with the information you had to make choices on the ballot propositions—very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not too satisfied, or not at all satisfied?

40% very satisfied
43 somewhat satisfied
11 not too satisfied
4 not at all satisfied
1 it depends (*volunteered*)
1 don't know

21. Which one of the eight state propositions on the ballot were you most interested in?

[code, don't read]

- | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|
| 23% | Proposition 73 |
| 19 | Proposition 74 |
| 15 | Proposition 75 |
| 7 | Proposition 76 |
| 9 | Proposition 77 |
| 4 | Proposition 78 |
| 2 | Proposition 79 |
| 2 | Proposition 80 |
| 7 | none of them (<i>volunteered</i>) |
| 6 | all equally (<i>volunteered</i>) |
| 1 | other answer (<i>specify</i>) |
| 5 | don't know |

For each of the following please tell me if you voted yes or no on the measure:

22. Proposition 74 was called the "Public School Teachers Waiting Period for Permanent Status and Dismissal Initiative." Did you vote yes or no on this measure?
[*actual vote]

- | | |
|-----|-----------|
| 45% | voted yes |
| 55 | voted no |

[question 23a asked of respondents who say they voted yes]

23a. And why did you vote yes?

[code, don't read]

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 31% | teacher tenure too quick, five years is better, fair |
| 11 | teacher quality |
| 9 | no other industry gets tenure, job guaranteed for life, tenure is not a good thing |
| 9 | teachers need to be accountable |
| 9 | makes it easier to remove bad teachers |
| 6 | education system in need of change |
| 2 | governor endorsed it |
| 18 | some other reason (<i>specify</i>) |
| 5 | don't know |

[question 23b asked of respondents who say they voted no]

23b. And why did you vote no?

[code, don't read]

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 20% | five years is too long for teacher tenure, probationary period too long |
| 13 | teachers would be hurt |
| 8 | I am/family member is a teacher |
| 7 | governor endorsed it, don't trust governor |
| 6 | need more teachers, discourages recruitment of new teachers |
| 6 | already ways to remove bad teachers |
| 3 | problems with firing after two unsatisfactory reviews |
| 1 | retaliation against teachers' union |
| 30 | some other reason (<i>specify</i>) |
| 6 | don't know |

[questions 23c and 23d asked of a random split sample of respondents]

23c. As you may know, Proposition 74 did not pass. Do you think this will have a positive effect or negative effect on the public school system, or will it make no difference?

- | | |
|-----|-----------------|
| 18% | positive effect |
| 22 | negative effect |
| 55 | no difference |
| 5 | don't know |

23d. As you may know, Proposition 74 did not pass. Do you think the public education system in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or is it fine the way it is?

- | | |
|-----|--------------------|
| 71% | major changes |
| 23 | minor changes |
| 3 | fine the way it is |
| 3 | don't know |

24. Proposition 75 was called the "Public Employee Union Dues, Restrictions on Political Contributions Initiative." Did you vote yes or no on this measure?
[*actual vote]

- | | |
|-----|-----------|
| 46% | voted yes |
| 54 | voted no |

* Source: California Secretary of State, results as of December 1st, 2005

[question 25a asked of respondents who say they voted yes]

25a. And why did you vote yes?

[code, don't read]

- 51% union members should control their dues, say where their money goes
- 20 unions have too much political power
- 6 I am/family member is in a union
- 3 eliminate special interest groups from elections
- 3 governor endorsed it
- 12 some other reason (*specify*)
- 5 don't know

[question 25b asked of respondents who say they voted no]

25b. And why did you vote no?

[code, don't read]

- 14% unions should not be the only ones with restrictions, double standard
- 11 unions give people a political voice, 75 would quiet voice
- 11 members can opt out already
- 8 I am/family member is in a union
- 7 governor endorsed it, don't trust governor
- 5 governor trying to break up unions
- 4 too hard for union members to agree on contributions
- 31 some other reason (*specify*)
- 9 don't know

[questions 25c and 25d asked of a random split sample of respondents]

25c. As you may know, Proposition 75 did not pass. Do you think this will have a positive effect or negative effect on campaign finance, or will it make no difference?

- 21% positive effect
- 20 negative effect
- 49 no difference
- 10 don't know

25d. As you may know, Proposition 75 did not pass. Do you think the way campaigns are financed in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or is it fine the way it is?

- 59% major changes
- 22 minor changes
- 11 fine the way it is
- 8 don't know

26. Proposition 76 was called the "State Spending and School Funding Limits Initiative." Did you vote yes or no on this measure? *[*actual vote]*

- 38% voted yes
- 62 voted no

[question 27a asked of respondents who say they voted yes]

27a. And why did you vote yes?

[code, don't read]

- 34% limit state spending, fiscal discipline, live within our means
- 8 keep us from a budget deficit
- 6 gives governor authority over state budget
- 5 governor endorsed it
- 4 legislature isn't responsive, legislature is the problem
- 4 don't want to pay more taxes
- 27 some other reason (*specify*)
- 12 don't know

[question 27b asked of respondents who say they voted no]

27b. And why did you vote no?

[code, don't read]

- 21% takes money away from schools, schools need money
- 12 too much power for the governor
- 12 governor endorsed it, don't trust governor
- 8 don't like a cap on state spending
- 4 maintain minimum funding for schools, Proposition 98
- 2 I am/family member is a teacher
- 24 some other reason (*specify*)
- 17 don't know

[questions 27c and 27d asked of a random split sample of respondents]

27c. As you may know, Proposition 76 did not pass. Do you think this will have a positive effect or negative effect on state spending, or will it make no difference?

- 18% positive effect
- 25 negative effect
- 49 no difference
- 8 don't know

27d. As you may know, Proposition 76 did not pass. Do you think the way the governor and legislature go about state spending in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or is it fine the way it is?

- 69% major changes
- 22 minor changes
- 4 fine the way it is
- 5 don't know

28. Proposition 77 was called the “Redistricting Initiative.” Did you vote yes or no on this measure? [**actual vote*]

40% voted yes
60% voted no

[*question 29a asked of respondents who say they voted yes*]

29a. And why did you vote yes?

[*code, don't read*]

38% change unfair voting districts, gerrymandered districts
13 shifts control to impartial judges, judges are better than legislature
9 shake up the political establishment
7 legislature is problem
4 governor endorsed it
22 some other reason (*specify*)
7 don't know

[*question 29b asked of respondents who say they voted no*]

29b. And why did you vote no?

[*code, don't read*]

30% judges would not be impartial, judges less accountable because appointed, not elected
9 governor endorsed it, don't trust governor
9 not necessary right now
6 I am a Democrat, outcome of redistricting wouldn't be beneficial
3 should be the work of the legislature
2 too much money, additional expenses
27 some other reason (*specify*)
14 don't know

[*questions 29c and 29d asked of a random split sample of respondents*]

29c. As you may know, Proposition 77 did not pass. Do you think this will have a positive effect or negative effect on legislative districts, or will it make no difference?

16% positive effect
26 negative effect
52 no difference
6 don't know

29d. As you may know Proposition 77 did not pass. Do you think the way the governor and legislature go about the redistricting process in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or is it fine the way it is?

49% major changes
27 minor changes
16 fine the way it is
8 don't know

30. Thinking about the November special election, overall do you think the public policy decisions made through the initiative process by California voters are probably better or probably worse than public policy decisions that are made by the governor and state legislature?

48% probably better
30 probably worse
9 same (*volunteered*)
13 don't know

In thinking about the November 8th special election, please say if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements.

[*rotate questions 31 to 34*]

31. The citizens' initiatives that were on the state ballot brought up important public policy issues that the governor and state legislature had not adequately addressed. (Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree?)

34% strongly agree
32 somewhat agree
14 somewhat disagree
12 strongly disagree
8 don't know

32. The wording of citizens' initiatives on the state ballot was too complicated and confusing. (Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree?)

28% strongly agree
27 somewhat agree
25 somewhat disagree
18 strongly disagree
2 don't know

33. There were too many propositions on the state ballot. (Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree?)

26% strongly agree
15 somewhat agree
29 somewhat disagree
28 strongly disagree
2 don't know

34. There was too much money spent by the initiative campaigns. (Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree?)

69% strongly agree
14 somewhat agree
7 somewhat disagree
6 strongly disagree
4 don't know

35. 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?

10% very satisfied
43 somewhat satisfied
44 not satisfied
3 don't know

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

38% major changes
34 minor changes
23 fine the way it is
5 don't know

Reforms have been suggested to address issues that arise in the initiative process. For each of the following please say whether you favor or oppose this reform.

[rotate questions 37 to 42]

37. How about only allowing initiatives in November general elections, instead of in any statewide election, such as primaries or special elections? (Do you favor or oppose this reform?)

53% favor
40 oppose
7 don't know

38. How about only allowing the governor to call special elections on initiatives with the approval of the legislature, instead of allowing the governor to call them without the legislature's approval? (Do you favor or oppose this reform?)

54% favor
41 oppose
5 don't know

39. How about a system of review and revision of proposed initiatives to try to avoid legal issues and drafting errors? (Do you favor or oppose this reform?)

77% favor
15 oppose
8 don't know

40. How about a period of time in which the initiative sponsor and the legislature could meet to see if there is a compromise solution before initiatives go to the ballot? (Do you favor or oppose this reform?)

83% favor
13 oppose
4 don't know

41. How about increasing public disclosure of funding sources for signature gathering and initiative campaigns? (Do you favor or oppose this reform?)

85% favor
11 oppose
4 don't know

42. How about requiring the yes and no sides of the initiative campaigns to participate in a series of televised debates? (Do you favor or oppose this reform?)

77% favor
19 oppose
4 don't know

43. Are you registered to vote as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or as an independent?

43%	Democrat	<i>[go to q.43b]</i>
36	Republican	<i>[go to q. 43c]</i>
6	another party (specify)	<i>[go to q.44]</i>
15	independent	<i>[go to q.43a]</i>

43a. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?

25%	Republican party
42	Democratic party
29	neither (<i>volunteered</i>)
4	don't know

[go to q.44]

43b. Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or not a very strong Democrat?

58%	strong
40	not very strong
2	don't know

[go to q.44]

43c. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

59%	strong
38	not very strong
3	don't know

44. On another topic, would you consider yourself to be politically:

[rotate list as a set, starting from either the top or the bottom; read list]

9%	very liberal
22	somewhat liberal
31	middle-of-the-road
23	somewhat conservative
13	very conservative
2	don't know

[45-48: background and demographic questions]

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