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Californians & their government



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in collaboration with
The James Irvine Foundation



PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The PPIC Statewide Survey provides policymakers, the media, and the public with objective, advocacy-free information on the perceptions, opinions, and public policy preferences of California residents. Inaugurated in April 1998, this is the 123rd PPIC Statewide Survey in a series that has generated a database of responses from more than 260,000 Californians.

This survey is the 50th in the *Californians and Their Government* series, which is conducted periodically to examine the social, economic, and political trends that influence public policy preferences and ballot choices. The series is supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation. This survey seeks to inform decisionmakers, raise public awareness, and stimulate policy discussions and debate about important state and national issues, with a particular focus on the California state budget.

This survey was conducted in the wake of the release of Governor Brown's 2012 budget proposal. To close the state's \$9.2 billion budget deficit, the proposal includes cuts to social service programs and a proposed initiative to raise taxes that voters would have to approve in November. New revenues from the taxes would go toward K–12 education but if voters reject it, automatic cuts to schools would ensue. The new year marks the completion of Jerry Brown's first year in office and the beginning of the Republican presidential primary process. We also assess Californians' confidence in state and federal elected officials in the context of legislative gridlock last year.

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

- State fiscal issues, including preferred approach to deal with the budget gap; attitudes towards spending levels; support for higher taxes to maintain funding for major program areas; attitudes towards specific taxes; attitudes towards Governor's Brown's budget proposal, including proposed tax increases and spending cuts; perceptions of state and local tax systems; opinions on the shifting of some responsibilities from the state to the local level, including corrections responsibilities; and knowledge of state and local budgets.
- State and national political context, including perceptions of the most important issue for the governor and legislature in 2012; approval ratings of Governor Brown and the legislature, and residents' own state legislators; approval ratings of President Obama and Congress, California's U.S. senators, and residents' own Congressional representatives; and opinions on whether the governor and legislature and the president and Congress will be able to work together in the coming year. We also examine candidate preferences in the Republican primary process, and satisfaction with candidate choices for the 2012 presidential election.
- Time trends, national comparisons, and the extent to which Californians may differ in their perceptions, attitudes, and preferences regarding state and national issues, based on their political party affiliation, region of residence, race/ethnicity, and other demographics.

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

NEWS RELEASE

EMBARGOED: Do not publish or broadcast until 9:00 p.m. PST on Tuesday, January 24, 2012.

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

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

Strong Support for Brown Tax Plan, Opposition to School ‘Trigger Cuts’

BUT MOST ALSO FEEL STATE COULD CUT SPENDING WITHOUT CUTTING SERVICES

SAN FRANCISCO, January 24, 2012—Strong majorities of Californians favor Governor Jerry Brown’s proposed tax initiative and oppose the automatic cuts that public schools will face if voters fail to approve the measure in November. These are among the key findings of a statewide survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), with funding from The James Irvine Foundation.

The initiative would temporarily increase the state sales tax and the personal income taxes of wealthy Californians, with the new revenue going to K–12 education. When read a summary, 72 percent of adults and 68 percent of likely voters favor the proposal. (The survey was taken before the attorney general released the measure’s official title and summary language.) Eighty-five percent of Democrats and 65 percent of independents favor the tax increase. Republicans are slightly more likely to favor (53%) than oppose it (46%). If the initiative fails, Brown says there will be automatic cuts to public schools. Seventy-nine percent of adults and 75 percent of likely voters oppose these trigger cuts, as do strong majorities of Democrats (83%), Republicans (67%), and independents (67%).

The tax initiative and trigger cuts are part of the governor’s 2012-13 budget proposal designed to close a multibillion-dollar deficit. His plan also includes spending cuts in welfare, child care, Medi-Cal, and other social service programs. Californians give these cuts negative reviews: 58 percent of adults oppose them and 39 percent are in favor. Likely voters are more closely divided (51% oppose, 44% favor).

When read a brief summary of Brown’s budget proposal that includes these elements—tax increases with increased funding for schools and cuts in social services—half of adults (50%) are in favor and 43 percent are opposed. Likely voters are split (48% favor, 46% oppose).

Californians hold these views at a time when most (62% adults, 60% likely voters) say their local government services have been affected a lot by recent state budget cuts. Most (55% adults, 59% likely voters) say that K–12 public education is the area of state spending they most want to protect from budget cuts. Far fewer adults choose one of the three other main areas of state spending: higher education (19%), health and human services (17%), and prisons and corrections (6%).

But while 40 percent of adults and likely voters prefer closing the state’s budget gap with a mix of spending cuts and tax increases—the approach Brown has proposed—similar proportions (35% adults, 41% likely voters) prefer closing it mainly through spending cuts. Indeed, Californians are far from happy with the way the state spends their money. Most (59% adults, 55% likely voters) believe state government could cut spending and still provide the same level of services. Most (59% adults, 62% likely voters) also favor strictly limiting the amount of money that state spending could increase each year.

“There remains a strong belief that the state government could spend less and provide the same services even as Californians notice local service reductions from state spending cuts and show early support for a tax increase,” says Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO.

SPLIT ROLL, TAXING THE RICH, CORPORATIONS FAVORED—SALES TAX HIKE IS NOT

When asked if they would pay higher taxes to maintain funding levels for the state’s four largest areas of spending, Californians are most willing to do so for K–12 public education (72%, adults, 62% likely voters), followed by health and human services (57% adults, 49% likely votes) and higher education (57% adults, 46% likely voters). Just 13 percent of adults and 12 percent of likely voters would pay higher taxes to maintain funding for prisons and corrections.

The PPIC survey asked separate questions about specific taxes that could be increased to help reduce the budget deficit, including two that are part of the governor’s tax initiative: income taxes on the wealthy and the state sales tax. Californians strongly favor (74% adults, 68% likely voters) raising the top rate of state income tax paid by the wealthiest residents. Most Democrats (85%) and independents (71%) favor this idea, while Republicans are slightly more likely to be opposed (52% oppose, 46% favor). But large majorities of Californians (69% adults, 64% likely voters) oppose raising the state sales tax. Majorities across parties are against this idea, although Democrats (54%) are less likely to oppose it than independents (71%) or Republicans (74%).

“The challenge the governor faces with his tax initiative is that one generally popular tax increase—raising personal income taxes on the wealthy—is paired with one generally unpopular one—raising the state sales tax,” Baldassare notes.

Among other potential tax increases that have been discussed, most residents (68% adults, 61% likely voters) favor raising the taxes on California corporations—a record-high level of support since PPIC first asked the question in May 2005. Most Californians (60% adults and likely voters) also favor the so-called split roll property tax, which would lift Proposition 13 limits on commercial property tax increases and instead tax this property at current market values. But most (54% adults and likely voters) oppose the idea of extending the state sales tax to services that are not currently taxed.

At a time when a number of proposals to raise taxes are being discussed, how do Californians feel about the fairness of the state and local tax system? Most adults say it is fair (7% very fair, 50% moderately fair), as do likely voters (4% very fair, 49% moderately fair). Fewer (41% adults, 45% likely voters) say it is not too fair or not at all fair. Across income groups, majorities view the system as fair (57% under \$40,000, 58% \$40,000 to \$80,000, 55% \$80,000 or more). While most view the system as fair, 46 percent of adults say they pay more than they should, 47 percent say they pay about the right amount, and 6 percent say they pay less than they should. Opinions among likely voters are similar.

Asked a fundamental question about the size of government, 51 percent of Californians would prefer to pay higher taxes and have a state government that provides more services, while 41 percent would prefer to pay lower taxes and have a state government that provides fewer services. Likely voters are more evenly split: 45 percent want higher taxes and more services and 48 percent want lower taxes and fewer services. Since PPIC first asked this question in February 2003, neither response has generated overwhelming preference.

OPTIMISM FADES THAT BROWN, LEGISLATURE CAN WORK TOGETHER

When Brown took office in January 2011, he had a job approval rating of 41 percent among adults and 47 percent among likely voters. Today, 46 percent of adults approve of his job performance—a new high—while 31 percent disapprove. The percentage of adults who are unsure of his job performance—23 percent—is the lowest since he took office. Among likely voters, Brown’s job approval rating is 44 percent, with 38 percent disapproving and 17 percent unsure.

The legislature's approval rating remains far lower—at 28 percent among adults and 17 percent among likely voters. Californians view their own representatives in the assembly and state senate more positively: 36 percent of adults and 32 percent of likely voters approve of these lawmakers' job performance.

Last January, most Californians (58%) said they thought the governor and legislature would be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the year to come. Today, there is less optimism: 44 percent say the governor and legislature will be able to work together and 47 percent say they will not.

In contrast, Californians are more pessimistic when asked this question about federal elected officials: 35 percent think President Barack Obama and the U.S. Congress will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year and 62 percent do not.

AS HE FACES RE-ELECTION, OBAMA'S APPROVAL AT 54 PERCENT AMONG ADULTS

As this election year begins, Obama has the approval of 54 percent of Californians, while 42 percent disapprove and 4 percent are unsure. Likely voters are split (49% approve, 49% disapprove, 2% unsure). His job approval among Californians has declined from 70 percent in February 2009, just after he took office. It is now the same as President George W. Bush's in January 2004 (54%), when he faced re-election. A large majority of Democrats (81%) approve of Obama's job performance and a large majority of Republicans (83%) disapprove. Independents are divided (44% approve, 48% disapprove). Nationally, adults are more evenly split on Obama's job performance (47% approve, 45% disapprove), according to a recent CBS News/*New York Times* poll.

Just a quarter of Californians (25%) approve of the U.S. Congress, whose job approval rating sank to a record-low 20 percent in December 2011. Likely voters are even less likely (14%) to approve of Congress.

Californians are more positive about their own representatives in Congress. Forty-six percent of adults (47% likely voters) approve of their representative in the U.S. House. U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein—who faces re-election this year—has an approval rating of 47 percent among adults and likely voters. Senator Barbara Boxer's approval rating is 46 percent among adults and 45 percent among likely voters.

ROMNEY LEADS IN GOP PRIMARY RACE

In the PPIC survey, conducted before the South Carolina primary, Mitt Romney leads (37%) among California's Republican likely voters, followed by Newt Gingrich (18%), Rick Santorum (15%), and Ron Paul (11%), with 17 percent undecided. To report the preferences of all Republican likely voters, the survey allocated the supporters of Jon Huntsman and Rick Perry to their second-choice candidates.

Just over half of likely voters (53%) are satisfied with their choices of candidates, and 42 percent are not. Among Democrats, 67 percent are satisfied. Half of Republicans (52%) and independents (51%) are not.

MORE KEY FINDINGS

- **Two-thirds favor state-local realignment**—page 14

Most Californians favor an idea Brown introduced in his budget plan a year ago: shifting tax dollars and fees and the responsibility for operating some programs from the state to local governments. Half are confident (38% somewhat, 12% very) that their local governments can handle the shift of some lower-risk inmates from state prisons to county jails, a change that began last October.

- **Few know where the money comes from and where it goes**—page 16

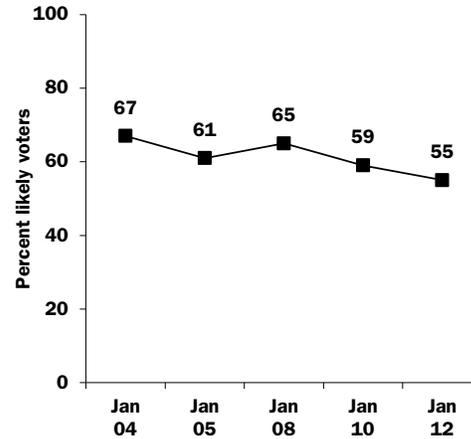
Sixteen percent of adults say they know a lot about how state and local governments spend and raise money, and 38 percent say they know some. But among those who say they have a lot or some knowledge, only 18 percent are aware that K-12 education is the largest area of spending.

CALIFORNIA BUDGET AND FISCAL ATTITUDES

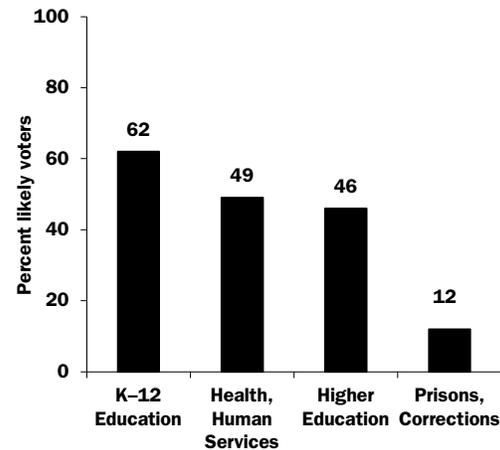
KEY FINDINGS

- Two in three adults say the state budget situation is a big problem. To reduce the budget deficit, 35 percent prefer spending cuts and 40 percent a mix of spending cuts and tax increases. Majorities say the state could spend less and still maintain the same level of services. (pages 7, 8)
- Most Californians choose K-12 education as the budget area they most want to protect from cuts, and are also willing to pay higher taxes to maintain current funding levels for K-12 education. (pages 7, 9)
- Seven in 10 likely voters favor raising the top rate of the income tax paid by the wealthiest Californians; two in three oppose raising the state sales tax. (page 11)
- When read a brief summary of Governor Brown's 2012 budget proposal, likely voters are divided in their support. About half oppose proposed spending cuts to social service programs. Strong majorities favor Governor Brown's tax initiative and oppose the automatic cuts to K-12 education that would occur if the tax initiative does not pass. (pages 12, 13)
- Two in three Californians continue to favor shifting some state responsibilities to local governments. There is confidence in their ability to handle this shift, but confidence is lower about shifting lower-risk prison inmates to county jails. (page 14)
- Majorities view the current state and local tax system as very (7%) or moderately (50%) fair. Nearly half (47%) say they pay about the right amount in taxes. Sixteen percent of adults and 22 percent of likely voters say they know a lot about state and local government finances. (pages 15, 16)

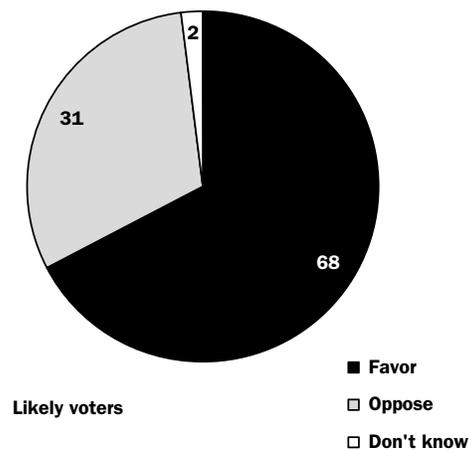
Percent Saying the State Could Spend Less and Maintain Same Level of Services



Willingness to Pay Higher Taxes to Maintain Current Funding Levels



Support for Governor Brown's Proposed Tax Initiative



ASSESSING THE CURRENT BUDGET SITUATION

Large majorities of adults (64%) and likely voters (78%) describe the state budget situation in California as a big problem. A year ago, 68 percent of adults and 83 percent of likely voters said that the state budget situation was a big problem. Today, a majority of adults (62%) and likely voters (60%) say that their local government services have been affected a lot by recent state budget cuts, while fewer than one in 10 in each group says they have not. Last September, 67 percent of adults and 68 percent of likely voters said their local services had been affected a lot by recent state budget cuts.

“Would you say that your local government services—such as those provided by city and county governments and public schools—have or have not been affected by recent state budget cuts? (if they have: Have they been affected a lot or somewhat?)”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Affected a lot	62%	69%	52%	59%	60%
Affected somewhat	27	24	30	28	28
Not affected	8	4	14	7	8
Don't know	4	2	5	5	3

Governor Brown has proposed a mix of spending cuts and tax increases to deal with the state budget gap. Although 40 percent of adults and likely voters prefer this approach, similar shares prefer to deal with the state’s budget gap mostly through spending cuts. A year ago, responses to this question were similar. There is a partisan divide on this question, with 67 percent of Democrats favoring either a mix of spending cuts and tax increases (48%) or mostly tax increases (19%), while 62 percent of Republicans favor dealing with the budget gap mostly through spending cuts; 55 percent of independents prefer either a mix of spending cuts and tax increases (47%), or mostly tax increases (8%).

“As you may know, the state government currently has an annual budget of around \$85 billion and faces a multibillion-dollar gap between spending and revenues. How would you prefer to deal with the state’s budget gap—mostly through spending cuts, mostly through tax increases, through a mix of spending cuts and tax increases, or do you think that it is okay for the state to borrow money and run a budget deficit?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
A mix of spending cuts and tax increases	40%	48%	25%	47%	40%
Mostly through spending cuts	35	25	62	35	41
Mostly through tax increases	13	19	7	8	13
Okay to borrow money and run a budget deficit	6	5	2	5	3
Other	1	1	2	1	1
Don't know	4	2	2	4	2

Governor Brown has said he wants to shield K–12 public education from state spending cuts. When the four largest areas for state spending are named, 55 percent of adults and 59 percent of likely voters say that K–12 public education is the one they most want to protect from spending cuts, while far fewer name higher education, health and human services, and prisons and corrections. Democrats (56%), Republicans (59%), independents (56%), just over half across the state’s major regions, and pluralities across all age, education, income, and racial/ethnic groups would most like to protect K–12 public schools from spending cuts. We have found a public preference for most wanting to protect K–12 public schools from state spending cuts since we first asked this question during the 2003 budget crisis.

ATTITUDES TOWARD STATE SPENDING LEVELS

Californians would prefer to pay higher taxes and have a state government that provides more services than pay lower taxes and receive fewer services (51% to 41%). Likely voters are split in their opinions. Since we first asked this question in February 2003, neither response has generated overwhelming preference, and Californians are often divided on this size-of-government question. Today, this question divides voters sharply along partisan lines: 67 percent of Democrats would prefer paying higher taxes for more services, but an even greater share of Republicans (74%) would prefer paying lower taxes for fewer services. Independents prefer smaller government (52%) to larger government (42%).

**“In general, which of the following statements do you agree with more:
I’d rather pay higher taxes and have a state government that provides more services, or
I’d rather pay lower taxes and have a state government that provides fewer services?”**

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Higher taxes and more services	51%	67%	20%	42%	45%
Lower taxes and fewer services	41	25	74	52	48
Don’t know	8	7	6	6	7

There is a perception among Californians that the state government could do the same with less: 59 percent of adults and 55 percent of likely voters believe the state government could cut spending and still provide the same level of services. How much less? Among adults who say the state could spend less and provide the same service levels, nearly one in five (18%) say state government could cut less than 10 percent, four in 10 (41%) say it could cut spending 10 to under 20 percent, and one in three (34%) say the state could cut spending 20 percent or more and still maintain services. The share who believe the state could cut spending and still provide the same services has declined 8 points since January 2004 (from 67% to 59%); among likely voters, the share has dropped 12 points (from 67% to 55%). Majorities of Republicans (70%) and independents (64%) say the state could cut its spending without affecting service levels, while Democrats are more likely to say it could not (43% could, 53% could not).

Most Californians (59%) also believe it is a good idea to strictly limit the amount of money that state spending could increase each year; 33 percent consider this a bad idea. In the 13 times this question has been asked since 2003, majorities have said a spending limit is a good idea; however, the percentage expressing this view has declined 13 points since last May (from 72% to 59%). Majorities across parties say a spending limit is a good idea and 62 percent of likely voters agree. Among those who prefer smaller government, 68 percent think it is a good idea to strictly limit spending increases. And among those who say the state could spend less, 66 percent say a spending limit is a good idea.

“Fiscal reforms have been proposed to address the structural issues in the state budget. Do you think it is a good idea or a bad idea to strictly limit the amount of money that state spending could increase each year?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Good idea	59%	53%	72%	62%	62%
Bad idea	33	40	20	34	30
Don’t know	8	7	8	4	7

RAISING REVENUES FOR SPECIFIC BUDGET AREAS

When asked if they would pay higher taxes to maintain funding levels for the state's four largest areas of spending, a strong majority say they would do so for K–12 public education (72%) and smaller majorities would for health and human services (57%) and higher education (57%). By contrast, just 13 percent would do so for prisons and corrections (85% would not). Findings were fairly similar last May.

**“What if the state said it needed more money just to maintain current funding for...?
Would you be willing to pay higher taxes for this purpose, or not?”**

<i>All adults</i>	K–12 public education	Health and human services	Higher education	Prisons and corrections
Yes	72%	57%	57%	13%
No	27	42	42	85
Don't know	1	2	1	1

Seven in 10 adults (72%) and 62 percent of likely voters would pay higher taxes to maintain funding for K–12 education. Governor Brown has proposed to ask voters to do just that through a November ballot initiative. Strong majorities of Democrats (82%) and independents (60%) say they would pay higher taxes for this purpose, while a majority of Republicans would not (46% yes, 53% no). At least six in 10 Californians across regions and demographic groups would pay higher taxes for K–12 education.

Fifty-seven percent of adults and 49 percent of likely voters would pay higher taxes to maintain funding for health and human services, but there are large differences across parties: 73 percent of Democrats would pay higher taxes for this purpose, while most Republicans (22% yes, 77% no) and independents (46% yes, 53% no) would not. Support drops as income rises.

Nearly six in 10 Californians (57%) would pay higher taxes to maintain funding for higher education. Likely voters are more opposed (46% yes, 53% no). A strong majority of Democrats (69%) would pay higher taxes to benefit higher education, while majorities of Republicans (26% yes, 73% no) and independents (41% yes, 56% no) would not. At least half across regions would pay higher taxes to maintain funding for higher education. Support declines with rising age and income levels.

When it comes to maintaining funding for prisons, less than 20 percent of adults, likely voters, voters across parties, and Californians across regions and demographic groups would pay higher taxes.

<i>Percent willing to pay higher taxes</i>		K–12 public education	Health and human services	Higher education	Prisons and corrections
All Adults		72%	57%	57%	13%
Likely Voters		62	49	46	12
Party	Democrats	82	73	69	11
	Republicans	46	22	26	11
	Independents	60	46	41	12
Region	Central Valley	73	52	57	13
	San Francisco Bay Area	70	59	52	15
	Los Angeles	72	61	61	15
	Other Southern California	70	52	55	11
Household Income	Under \$40,000	78	67	65	14
	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	69	56	54	12
	\$80,000 or more	68	47	49	12

RAISING REVENUES

The survey included five questions about specific taxes that could be increased to help reduce the state’s large budget deficit. In addition to the two tax increases that are part of Governor Brown’s tax initiative— income taxes on the wealthy and the state sales tax—three tax increases have been proposed by others—extending the sales tax, raising corporate taxes, and the split-roll property tax.

Proposition 13 in 1978 strictly limited residential and commercial property taxes. When it comes to taxing commercial properties according to their current market value—a split roll property tax—most Californians and likely voters (60% each) are in favor. In response to a similar question, majorities of Californians have said taxing commercial properties at their current market value is a good idea (52% February 2003, 57% June 2003, 60% January 2004, 59% May 2004, 58% September 2009). Most Democrats (68%) and independents (58%) favor taxing commercial properties according to current market value, while Republicans are divided (46% favor, 47% oppose).

“Under Proposition 13, residential and commercial property taxes are both strictly limited. What do you think about having commercial properties taxed according to their current market value? Do you favor or oppose this proposal?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	60%	68%	46%	58%	60%
Oppose	33	24	47	37	34
Don’t know	7	8	7	4	5

Nearly seven in 10 Californians (68%) and six in 10 likely voters (61%) favor raising the taxes paid by California corporations. This marks a record-high level of support among Californians since this question was first asked in May 2005 (60% May 2005, 59% May 2007, 63% May 2008, 60% January 2009, 58% May 2010, 44% September 2010, 60% January 2011, 68% today). An overwhelming majority of Democrats (82%) and 63 percent of independents favor increasing taxes on corporations, while a majority of Republicans are opposed (42% favor, 56% oppose).

Another idea that some people have proposed to raise revenues is extending the state sales tax to services that are not currently taxed. Most Californians and likely voters (54% each) oppose this idea. Findings among adults were identical last May and majorities have opposed this idea since May 2005 (63% May 2005, 65% May 2007, 62% January 2008, 59% May 2008, 58% May 2010, 54% May 2011, 54% today). Seven in 10 Republicans (70%) and most independents (55%) oppose extending the sales tax to services, while Democrats are somewhat more likely to favor than oppose the idea (51% to 43%). At least half of Californians across regions and most demographic groups oppose extending the sales tax to services, with the exception of Asians (45% favor, 47% oppose), college graduates (46% favor, 45% oppose), and those with annual household incomes of \$80,000 or more (46% favor, 48% oppose).

“Tax and fee increases could be used to help reduce the state’s large gap between spending and revenues. For each of the following, please say if you favor or oppose the proposal. How about extending the state sales tax to services that are not currently taxed?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	39%	51%	24%	39%	39%
Oppose	54	43	70	55	54
Don’t know	6	7	6	6	7

RAISING REVENUES (CONTINUED)

When it comes to the two types of taxes that will be part of Governor Brown’s tax initiative, Californians strongly oppose raising the state sales tax (29% favor, 69% oppose) but strongly support raising the top rate of the state income tax paid by the wealthiest Californians (74% favor, 24% oppose).

Since January 2004, at least six in 10 Californians have opposed the idea of raising the state sales tax to reduce the state’s deficit (60% January 2004, 64% January 2005, 71% May 2005, 64% January 2008, 61% May 2008, 69% January 2011, 73% May 2011, 69% today).

Nearly two in three likely voters oppose raising the state sales tax (35% favor, 64% oppose). Majorities across parties oppose this idea, although Democrats (54%) are less likely than independents (71%) or Republicans (74%) to express opposition. More than six in 10 across regions and demographic groups oppose raising the state sales tax. Latinos (74%) and Asians (73%) are more likely than whites (64%) to express opposition; opposition declines somewhat with rising age, education, and income. Among those who prefer to close the state deficit mostly through spending cuts, the vast majority (82%) oppose raising the sales tax for this purpose. But there is also majority opposition (61%) to raising the sales tax among those who prefer closing the deficit through a mix of spending cuts and tax increases.

“How about raising the state sales tax on all purchases?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	29%	44%	25%	28%	35%
Oppose	69	54	74	71	64
Don’t know	2	2	–	1	1

The most popular idea for raising revenues is increasing the top rate of the state income tax paid by the wealthiest Californians: 74 percent favor this idea, while 24 percent oppose it. At least 65 percent of Californians have favored this idea since we first asked this question in January 2004 and support is at a record high today (71% January 2004, 69% January 2005, 68% May 2005, 65% January 2006, 73% January 2008, 69% May 2008, 72% January 2009, 67% May 2010, 74% today).

Sixty-eight percent of likely voters favor—and 31 percent oppose—raising the top rate of the state income tax paid by the wealthiest Californians. Across parties, strong majorities of Democrats (85%) and independents (71%) favor this idea, while Republicans are slightly more likely to be opposed (46% favor, 52% oppose). Across regions and demographic groups, more than two in three express support for raising taxes on the wealthy, including at least seven in 10 across all income groups (79% under \$40,000, 76% \$40,000–\$80,000, 71% \$80,000 or more).

“How about raising the top rate of the state income tax paid by the wealthiest Californians?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	74%	85%	46%	71%	68%
Oppose	24	13	52	28	31
Don’t know	2	2	2	1	2

GOVERNOR'S BUDGET PROPOSAL

Governor Brown has released his budget plan for closing a multibillion-dollar state budget deficit. The proposed 2012–13 plan includes spending cuts to health and social service programs and a tax increase that would go to the voters on the November 2012 ballot through the citizens' initiative process. (Last year, the governor was unsuccessful in his efforts to achieve, through the legislative process, a two-thirds vote for a tax increase to go to the voters on a 2011 special election ballot.) When read a brief summary of the proposed budget plan, 50 percent of adults are in favor and likely voters are divided (48% favor, 46% oppose) on the governor's budget plan. While 61 percent of Democrats favor the plan, 58 percent of Republicans oppose it, and independents are divided (42% favor, 48% oppose). About half across regions support the governor's budget plan. Support is higher among college-educated residents, and although support rises as income rises, it declines with age.

“Governor Brown proposed a budget plan for the current and next fiscal year to close the state's projected \$9.2 billion budget deficit. It includes spending cuts to welfare, child care, Medi-Cal, and other social service programs, and increases funding for K–12 public education. The proposal includes tax increases that would have to be approved by voters through an initiative on the November ballot. In general, do you favor or oppose the governor's budget plan?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	50%	61%	37%	42%	48%
Oppose	43	33	58	48	46
Haven't heard anything about the budget (vol)	1	2	1	2	1
Don't know	6	4	4	9	5

After this question, we asked a series of questions to gauge current levels of support and opposition to three of the proposal's key features. One element of the governor's budget plan to reduce the multibillion-dollar budget gap is spending cuts in welfare, child care, Medi-Cal programs, and a variety of other social service programs. Unlike overall views of the governor's budget plan, this specific proposal receives more negative reviews. Thirty-nine percent of adults are in favor of these spending cuts and 58 percent oppose them. Likely voters are more divided (44% favor, 51% oppose) than adults. Sixty-three percent of Democrats oppose these spending cuts, 57 percent of Republicans favor them, and independents are divided (47% favor, 48% oppose). Majorities across regions, age groups, and education levels oppose these cuts. There is more support for these specific spending cuts among higher-income residents than among lower-income residents. Whites (45%) and Asians (40%) are somewhat more likely than Latinos (33%) to say they favor these proposed spending cuts. Residents who favor the governor's overall budget plan are divided about these spending cuts (51% favor, 46% oppose). Those who oppose the governor's overall budget plan are strongly opposed to these cuts (26% favor, 70% oppose).

“Do you favor or oppose Governor Brown's proposed spending cuts to welfare, child care, Medi-Cal, and other social service programs?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	39%	34%	57%	47%	44%
Oppose	58	63	37	48	51
Don't know	4	3	6	5	5

GOVERNOR’S BUDGET PROPOSAL (CONTINUED)

Another key element of the governor’s budget plan is a proposed tax initiative that would increase the state personal income tax on wealthy Californians and increase the state sales tax, with the new revenues going to K–12 public schools. When read our brief summary of the proposal, 72 percent of adults and 68 percent of likely voters say they favor this proposed tax initiative. (Survey interviews were completed prior to the Attorney General’s release of the official title and summary of the proposed initiative.) Eighty-five percent of Democrats and 65 percent of independents favor the tax increase, and Republicans are slightly more likely to favor (53%) than oppose (46%) it.

Positive responses to this tax initiative are in line with responses we received to a similar question in our December 2011 survey (65% of all adults and 60% of likely voters in favor).

More than two in three across regions and racial/ethnic groups support the tax initiative. Strong majorities across income, education, and age groups support the tax initiative, although support is lower among older residents. The tax increase is favored among adults who approve of Brown’s job performance (86%) and his budget plan (85%) while support is lower among adults who disapprove of Brown (54% favor, 45% oppose) and oppose his budget plan (56% favor, 41% oppose).

“Governor Brown’s proposed tax initiative on the November ballot includes a temporary four-year half-cent increase in the state sales tax and a temporary five-year increase in the state personal income tax on those earning more than \$250,000 annually. The initiative would raise about \$5 to \$7 billion annually with the new revenues going to K–12 public schools. Do you favor or oppose the proposed tax initiative?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	72%	85%	53%	65%	68%
Oppose	26	13	46	32	31
Don’t know	2	2	1	3	2

Governor Brown has said that there will be automatic spending cuts to K–12 public schools if his tax initiative is rejected by voters in November. Seventy-nine percent of adults and 75 percent of likely voters say they oppose the automatic spending cuts to K–12 public schools. Strong majorities of Democrats, Republicans, and independents say they are opposed to these spending cuts to K–12 public schools.

More than three in four adults across the state’s regions and strong majorities in all age, education, income, and racial/ethnic groups are currently opposed to the automatic spending cuts to K–12 public schools. Among those who favor the governor’s budget plan, 83 percent are opposed to the K–12 spending cuts, and among those adults who are in favor of the spending cuts for health and human service programs in the governor’s budget plan, 70 percent oppose these K–12 public school spending cuts. For those adults who favor the governor’s tax initiative, 84 percent oppose the automatic spending cuts to K–12 public schools.

“If voters reject the proposed tax initiative on the November ballot, Governor Brown has said that automatic spending cuts will be made to K–12 public schools. Do you favor or oppose these automatic spending cuts to K–12 public schools?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	20%	15%	31%	31%	24%
Oppose	79	83	67	67	75
Don’t know	2	2	2	2	2

STATE AND LOCAL REALIGNMENT

A year ago Governor Brown introduced state and local realignment as part of his budget plan. Today, two in three Californians and likely voters (66% each) favor a shift of some tax dollars and fees from the state government to local governments in order for local governments to take on the responsibility of running certain programs currently run by the state. Solid majorities of Californians have expressed support throughout the past year (71% January, 61% September, 69% December, 66% today). Today, solid majorities across parties (64% Democrats, 69% Republicans, 71% independents) and regions favor the idea of realignment. Asians (87%) are far more likely than whites (66%) or Latinos (61%) to be in favor.

Californians also remain confident in local government’s ability to take on the responsibility associated with realignment. Six in 10 Californians (10% very, 49% somewhat) and likely voters (13% very, 47% somewhat) are confident that local government would be able to take on these responsibilities. Confidence has been similar each time we asked this question over the past year (63% January, 59% September, 63% December, 59% today). Today, majorities across parties (64% Republicans, 63% independents, 58% Democrats) are at least somewhat confident, as are majorities across regions. Confidence is higher among Asians (70%) than among whites (60%) or Latinos (55%) and three times higher among those who favor (74%) rather than oppose (25%) realignment in general.

“If the state were to shift some tax dollars and fees to local governments, how confident are you that local governments would be able to take on the responsibilities of running certain programs currently run by the state? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?”

	All Adults	Region				Likely Voters
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Very confident	10%	5%	11%	10%	10%	13%
Somewhat confident	49	50	51	46	51	47
Not too confident	23	23	28	23	18	21
Not at all confident	16	19	8	18	19	16
Don’t know	2	2	2	3	2	2

When it comes to the shift of some lower-risk inmates from state prisons to county jails, half of Californians (12% very, 38% somewhat) and likely voters (11% very, 38% somewhat) express confidence in their local government’s ability to handle this shift. Confidence was similar last September and December. About half across parties are confident (51% Democrats, 50% independents, 48% Republicans). Confidence is highest in the San Francisco Bay Area (56%) followed by the Other Southern California region (48%), Los Angeles (46%), and the Central Valley 41%). Confidence is much higher among those who favor (55%) than oppose (38%) realignment in general.

“As you may know, state funding is being provided to shift some of the lower-risk inmates from state prisons to county jails to reduce prison overcrowding and lower state costs. How confident are you that your local government is able to take on this responsibility? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?”

	All Adults	Region				Likely Voters
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Very confident	12%	10%	15%	12%	9%	11%
Somewhat confident	38	31	41	34	39	38
Not too confident	26	23	30	28	26	24
Not at all confident	22	33	11	22	22	24
Don’t know	3	2	3	3	3	3

STATE AND LOCAL TAX SYSTEM

With the governor set to put his tax plan on the November ballot, how do Californians view the present state and local tax system? Majorities of Californians (7% very, 50% moderately) and likely voters (4% very, 49% moderately) view the system as fair while fewer view it as not too or not at all fair (41% adults, 45% likely voters). Views among adults that the tax system is fair were similar last January (57%) and in January 2010 (53%), while more adults viewed the system as fair in June 2003 (66%). Today, Democrats (62%) are more likely than independents (53%) or Republicans (50%) to say the tax system is fair. Majorities across regions view the system as at least moderately fair (61% Central Valley, 58% Other Southern California region, 55% Los Angeles, 53% San Francisco Bay Area). Asians (66%) and Latinos (61%) are more likely than whites (53%) to say the system is at least moderately fair. At least half across age and education groups say the system is fair. Across income groups, perceptions that the tax system is fair are similar (57% under \$40,000, 58% \$40,000–\$80,000, 55% \$80,000 or more). Among those who say they pay about the right amount in state and local taxes, 73 percent say the system is fair; among those who say they pay much more than they should, 31 percent say the system is fair.

“Overall, how fair do you think our present state and local tax system is—would you say it is very fair, moderately fair, not too fair, or not at all fair?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Very fair	7%	7%	5%	2%	4%
Moderately fair	50	55	45	51	49
Not too fair	27	27	28	27	29
Not at all fair	14	11	21	17	16
Don't know	3	1	2	2	1

While nearly six in 10 Californians view the state and local tax system as fair, 46 percent say they pay much more (21%) or somewhat more (25%) than they should; 47 percent think they pay about the right amount and 6 percent say they pay less than they should. Opinions of likely voters are similar. More adults last January (26% much more, 27% somewhat more, 39% about the right amount) and in January 2010 (31% much more, 25% somewhat more, 35% about the right amount) said they paid more than they should, while fewer thought they paid about the right amount. Republicans (62%) and independents (51%) are much more likely than Democrats (35%) to say that they pay more than they should. Those with incomes of \$40,000 or more are somewhat more likely than those with lower incomes to think they pay more than they should. Among those who say the tax system is fair, 32 percent say they pay more than they should. Among those who say the tax system is not fair, 64 percent hold this view.

“When you combine all of the taxes you pay to state and local governments, do you feel that you pay much more than you should, somewhat more than you should, about the right amount, or less than you should?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Much more	21%	13%	30%	21%	20%
Somewhat more	25	22	32	30	27
About the right amount	47	55	32	43	44
Less	6	10	5	5	8
Don't know	2	1	–	1	1

KNOWLEDGE OF THE STATE BUDGET SITUATION

Governor Brown proposes to ask California voters to make major tax and spending decisions at the ballot box, but how many Californians view themselves as very knowledgeable on this subject? Sixteen percent of adults and 22 percent of likely voters say they know a lot about how the state and their local governments spend and raise money, while a plurality say they know some about this topic. Over time, the percentage of Californians who claim to know “a lot” or “some” has not increased since the 2003 budget crisis. Republicans and independents are slightly more likely than Democrats to say they know a lot about state and local spending and revenues.

“In general, how much would you say you know about how your state and local governments spend and raise money—a lot, some, very little, or nothing?”

	All Adults	Education			Likely Voters
		High school or less	Some college	College graduate	
A lot	16%	14%	16%	20%	22%
Some	38	34	44	39	47
Very little	35	39	31	33	27
Nothing	9	11	7	7	4
Don't know	2	1	2	1	1

Governor Brown also proposes to ask voters to raise taxes for K–12 public education, or else trigger spending cuts in this area. Fewer than one in four adults (16%) and likely voters (22%) are aware that K–12 education is the largest area of state spending. Residents 55 years or older and those earning \$80,000 or more are more likely than others to correctly name K–12 education. The percentage naming K–12 education was higher in May 2007 (30%) and May 2005 (29%). Among those who say they know a lot or some about fiscal issues, 18 percent correctly name K–12 education as the top spending area.

“I’m going to name some of the largest areas for state spending. Please tell me the one that represents the most spending in the state budget: K–12 public education, higher education, health and human services, prisons and corrections.”

	All Adults	Age			Likely Voters
		18–34	35–54	55 and older	
K–12 public education	16%	10%	15%	23%	22%
Higher education	5	7	3	7	4
Health and human services	27	30	28	21	28
Prisons and corrections	47	50	49	40	40
Don't know	5	2	5	9	5

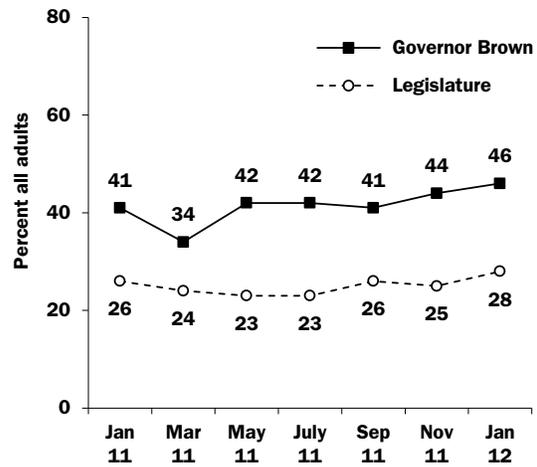
The proposed tax initiative on the November ballot would raise the state’s personal income tax on the wealthiest Californians and also raise the state sales tax. How many Californians are aware of the relative value of the state’s revenue sources? Three in 10 adults (29%) and 35 percent of likely voters correctly name the personal income tax as the largest state revenue source, but majorities in both groups incorrectly name the sales tax, corporate taxes, or motor vehicle fees. The level of fiscal knowledge has not increased over time and it is the older, more educated, and higher-income residents that are the most likely to know one of the basic facts about the state’s revenue sources. Among those who say they know a lot or some about fiscal issues, 31 percent correctly name personal income tax. Among Californians, just 7 percent can correctly name both K–12 education and personal income tax as the top spending and revenue areas. Among likely voters, just 11 percent identify the correct areas.

STATE AND NATIONAL POLITICAL CONTEXT

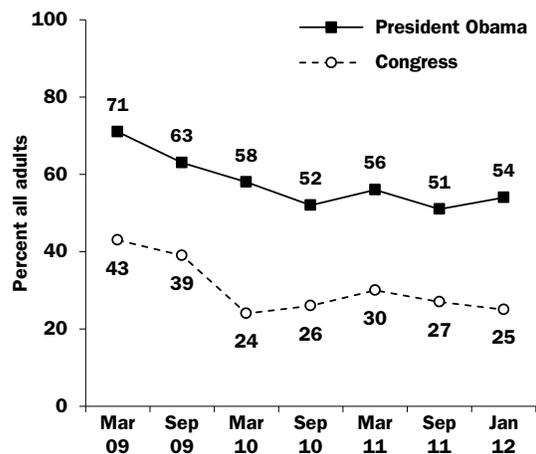
KEY FINDINGS

- Residents begin the year in a pessimistic mood, with majorities saying the state is heading in the wrong direction, and believing that California is currently in a serious or moderate recession. Californians name jobs and the economy (38%), the state budget (18%), or education (16%) as the most important issue for the governor and the legislature to work on. *(page 18)*
- Approval of Governor Brown's job performance is at a record high of 46 percent, while the state legislature receives low approval ratings. Thirty-six percent of Californians approve of their own legislators in the assembly and senate. *(page 19)*
- Californians are divided regarding the ability of Governor Brown and the state legislature to work together this year. Six in 10 say President Obama and the U.S. Congress will not be able to work together. *(page 20)*
- Approval of President Obama is at 54 percent, while the U.S. Congress receives low approval ratings. Californians are more likely to approve than disapprove of their own representative to the U.S. Congress, and of Senators Feinstein and Boxer. *(pages 21, 22)*
- Just over half of likely voters are satisfied with their choices of candidates in the 2012 presidential election. More than eight in 10 say they are following news about the election either very or fairly closely. Mitt Romney leads Newt Gingrich, Rick Santorum, and Ron Paul in the Republican presidential primary. *(page 23)*

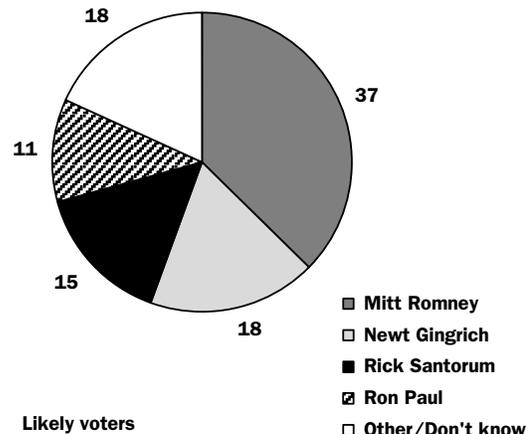
Approval Ratings of State Elected Officials



Approval Ratings of Federal Elected Officials



2012 Republican Presidential Primary



OVERALL MOOD IN THE STATE

Californians name jobs and the economy (38%) as the most important issue for the governor and legislature to work on in 2012. Eighteen percent mention the state budget and 16 percent name education and schools as the top issue. Mention of jobs and the economy today is similar to January 2011 (34%), January 2010 (35%), and January 2009 (42%), but is higher than January 2008 (19%).

Across political parties, regions, and demographic groups, most name jobs and the economy as the state's top issue. Likely voters (25%) are more likely to mention the state budget as the top issue than all adults are (18%). Republicans (34%) are more likely than independents (22%), and much more likely than Democrats (17%) to mention the state budget. Democrats (24%) are more likely than independents (14%) and much more likely than Republicans (5%) to mention education and schools.

“Which one issue facing California today do you think is the most important for the governor and state legislature to work on in 2012?”

Top four issues mentioned	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Jobs, economy	38%	36%	36%	39%	37%
State budget, deficit, taxes	18	17	34	22	25
Education, schools	16	24	5	14	17
Immigration, illegal immigration	7	3	9	4	6

What about the economy? Today, 43 percent of Californians believe that the state is in a serious recession, 34 percent say it is in a moderate recession, 9 percent a mild one, and 13 percent say the state is not in a recession. The share believing that the state is in a serious recession is similar to last January's share (48%). Residents continue to have a negative economic outlook for the year, with 56 percent saying the state will face bad times financially; just 35 percent expect good times. Pessimism levels are similar to those in January 2011 (56%), but are lower than in January 2010 (67%), January 2009 (77%), and January 2008 (72%). Republicans (76%) are much more likely than independents (60%) and far more likely than Democrats (51%) to say the state will have bad times financially.

Nearly six in 10 Californians (57%) also say that things in California are generally going in the wrong direction. In January 2011, the share saying “wrong direction” was similar (54%) and at least half have said this since September 2007. Likely voters are more likely to express pessimism (66%). Democrats are slightly more likely to say the state is going in the right direction (51%) than in the wrong direction (43%). Most Republicans (80%) and independents (68%) say the state is going in the wrong direction. Pessimism is lowest in the San Francisco Bay Area (50%) and higher in Los Angeles (58%), the Central Valley (61%), and the Other Southern California region (63%).

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

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Right direction	37%	51%	14%	29%	29%
Wrong direction	57	43	80	68	66
Don't know	6	6	6	4	5

APPROVAL RATINGS OF STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS

Today, a record-high 46 percent of adults approve of Governor Brown’s job performance; 31 percent disapprove and 23 percent are unsure. When Brown took office last January, 41 percent approved, and except for lows in February and March (34% each), his approval ratings have remained close to 42 percent. The share unsure of his job performance is at its lowest this month (23%). In 2011, more than one in four were unsure of how Brown was handling his job as governor of California. Among likely voters today, 44 percent approve and 38 percent disapprove. A solid majority of Democrats (63%) approve of the governor while 54 percent of Republicans disapprove. Independents are as likely to approve (35%) as they are to disapprove (34%) or be unsure (31%) of Brown’s performance.

Approval ratings of the California Legislature continue to be much lower than those of the governor, with 28 percent saying they approve and 56 percent saying they disapprove. These findings are similar to last January’s (26% approve, 55% disapprove). Although approval today is at its highest point since March 2008 (30%), more than half have disapproved of the legislature since January 2008. Likely voters (71%) are much more likely than others to disapprove of the legislature. Across parties, 75 percent of Republicans, 66 percent of independents, and 57 percent of Democrats disapprove of the legislature. Among racial/ethnic groups, whites (67%) are much more likely than Asians (53%) and far more likely than Latinos (39%) to disapprove of the legislature.

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

		All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
<i>...Jerry Brown is handling his job as governor of California?</i>	Approve	46%	63%	22%	35%	44%
	Disapprove	31	20	54	34	38
	Don't know	23	17	24	31	17
<i>...the California Legislature is handling its job?</i>	Approve	28	27	12	18	17
	Disapprove	56	57	75	66	71
	Don't know	16	16	12	16	12

Californians’ approval of their individual state legislators is higher than their approval of the legislature overall, with 36 percent approving and 47 percent disapproving of their own legislators’ performance. Approval of individual state legislators is similar to last September (35%) and March (36%). Likely voters are slightly more disapproving (55%) than all adults (47%). Across parties, Democrats (41%) are much more likely than independents (25%) and Republicans (22%) to approve of their own legislators. Among racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (46%) are much more likely to express approval than whites (31%) and Asians (30%). Fewer than four in 10 across regions express approval (31% Los Angeles, 35% Central Valley, 37% San Francisco Bay Area, 39% Other Southern California region).

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

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	36%	41%	22%	25%	32%
Disapprove	47	42	65	56	55
Don't know	17	17	13	20	14

PROSPECTS FOR WORKING TOGETHER

Partisan differences and policy conflicts emerged at both the state and federal level last year. How do Californians view the chances of elected officials working together in the coming year?

At the state level, Californians are divided, with 44 percent saying Governor Brown and the state legislature will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year, and 47 percent saying they will not be able to do so. Last January, residents were more optimistic, with 58 percent saying the new governor and the legislature would be able to work together.

Today, likely voters are less optimistic than all adults, with nearly six in 10 (59%) saying that the governor and legislature will not be able to work together, and 32 percent saying that they will. Democrats are more likely to say the governor and legislature will be able to work together (51%) than not (39%). Most Republicans and independents say the governor and the legislature will not be able to work together, but Republicans (70%) are much more likely to say this than independents (56%). Among racial/ethnic groups, Asians are divided (48% work together, 47% not), Latinos are optimistic (65% work together), and whites are pessimistic (61% not).

“Do you think that Governor Brown and the state legislature will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year, or not?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Yes, will be able to work together	44%	51%	25%	29%	32%
No, will not be able to work together	47	39	70	56	59
Don't know	9	10	5	15	8

Californians are less optimistic about working relations at the federal level. Sixty-two percent say President Obama and the U.S. Congress will not be able to work together, while 35 percent say that they will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year. This view has changed from January 2010, when 56 percent said they would be able to work together and 38 percent said they would not. In January 2009, when President Obama first took office and Democrats controlled the U.S. Congress, 81 percent said that President Obama and the U.S. Congress would be able to work together.

Likely voters are even more pessimistic than all adults about the chances of federal elected officials being able to cooperate in the next year (77% not work together, 19% work together). Across parties, Republicans (84%) and independents (72%) are more likely than Democrats (58%) to think that President Obama and the U.S. Congress will not be able to work together. Pessimism about these relationships rises as age, education, and income increase. Latinos are more likely to say that they will be able to work together (53%) than not (42%), while whites (78%) and Asians (64%) think that the president and the U.S. Congress will not be able to work together.

“Do you think that President Obama and the U.S. Congress will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year, or not?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Yes, will be able to work together	35%	37%	13%	26%	19%
No, will not be able to work together	62	58	84	72	77
Don't know	3	4	4	2	4

APPROVAL RATINGS OF FEDERAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

At the beginning of a presidential election year, Barack Obama has the approval of 54 percent of Californians, while 42 percent disapprove. In February 2009, just after Obama took office, 70 percent expressed approval. The share approving of his performance declined to 61 percent by December 2009 and reached a low of 51 percent in September 2011. Today, Obama’s approval ratings are the same as George W. Bush’s in January 2004 (54%), at the start of the last presidential election year.

Partisan differences exist between Democrats (81% approve) and Republicans (83% disapprove). Independents are divided (44% approve, 48% disapprove), as are likely voters (49% each saying approve and disapprove). Adults nationwide are divided about President Obama’s job performance (47% approve, 45% disapprove), according to a recent CBS News/*New York Times* poll.

One in four Californians (25%) approve of the U.S. Congress, while nearly seven in 10 (69%) disapprove. Approval of Congress declined to a record low in December 2011 (20%). In January 2010, at the beginning of the midterm election year, 36 percent approved of Congress. Across parties today, overwhelming majorities disapprove of Congress. Likely voters are even more disapproving (82%). In a recent CBS News/*New York Times* poll, 79 percent adults nationwide disapprove of Congress, and 13 percent approve.

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

		All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
...Barack Obama is handling his job as president of the United States?	Approve	54%	81%	16%	44%	49%
	Disapprove	42	16	83	48	49
	Don't know	4	3	1	7	2
...the U.S. Congress is handling its job?	Approve	25	25	15	21	14
	Disapprove	69	73	77	75	82
	Don't know	5	3	8	4	4

Californians are more likely to approve (46%) than disapprove (39%) of their member of the U.S House of Representatives, while 15 percent are unsure. These approval ratings were similar last year (48% September, 50% March). Republicans and independents are more likely to disapprove, while Democrats are more likely to approve. Less than half across regions approve (47% Los Angeles, 45% San Francisco Bay Area, 44% Central Valley, 44% Other Southern California).

“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way your own representative to the U.S. House of Representatives in Congress is handling his or her job?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	46%	58%	37%	37%	47%
Disapprove	39	30	50	47	41
Don't know	15	12	14	15	12

APPROVAL RATINGS OF FEDERAL ELECTED OFFICIALS (CONTINUED)

Senator Dianne Feinstein is running for reelection this year. Forty-seven percent of all adults approve of her job performance, 35 percent disapprove, and 18 percent are unsure. Among likely voters, 47 percent approve, 42 percent disapprove, and 11 percent are unsure. Approval among all adults today is similar to September (46%) and March 2011 (48%), and similar to March 2006 (51%), prior to her last reelection.

Partisan differences are apparent, with 71 percent of Democrats approving of her job performance, and 66 percent of Republicans disapproving. Independents are more likely to disapprove (43%) than approve (36%), with one in five (21%) unsure of how to rate her job performance. Nearly six in 10 residents in the San Francisco Bay Area (58%) approve of her performance, compared to more than four in 10 and fewer than half in the state’s other major regions (47% Central Valley, 46% Los Angeles, 41% Other Southern California region). Approval is higher among Asians (56%) and Latinos (51%) than among whites (42%). Among Californians who approve of President Obama, 67 percent also approve of Senator Feinstein. Among those who approve of Senator Boxer, 82 percent approve of Senator Feinstein.

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

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	47%	71%	21%	36%	47%
Disapprove	35	17	66	43	42
Don't know	18	12	13	21	11

Forty-six percent of adults approve of U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer, while 38 percent disapprove and 17 percent are unsure. Likely voters are divided in their ratings of Senator Boxer (45% approve, 45% disapprove, 10% unsure). Approval is similar to September (49%) and March 2011 (45%).

Today, partisans differ greatly in their views of Senator Boxer, with seven in 10 Democrats (72%) approving and seven in 10 Republicans (72%) disapproving. Independents are more likely to disapprove (43%) than approve (34%), while 23 percent are unsure. Regional differences also exist, with residents in the San Francisco Bay Area (54%) most likely to approve, followed by residents in Los Angeles (45%), the Other Southern California region (42%), and the Central Valley (40%). Approval is higher among Latinos (54%) and Asians (51%) than among whites (39%). Among Californians who approve of President Obama, 66 percent also approve of Senator Boxer. Among those who approve of Senator Feinstein, 80 percent approve of Senator Boxer.

“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barbara Boxer is handling her job as U.S. senator?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	46%	72%	15%	34%	45%
Disapprove	38	18	72	43	45
Don't know	17	10	13	23	10

2012 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

After months of debates, the Republican primary season began in early January. With strong finishes in Iowa on January 3 and New Hampshire January 10, Mitt Romney (37%) holds the lead among Republican primary likely voters in California, followed by Newt Gingrich (18%), Rick Santorum (15%), and Ron Paul (11%). Seventeen percent are undecided. (Interviews were conducted before the South Carolina primary.) In our December survey, Newt Gingrich led Mitt Romney (33% to 25%) among likely voters.

Just over half of likely voters (53%) are satisfied with their choices of candidates in the election for president this year, while four in 10 (42%) are not satisfied. In December, 49 percent were satisfied and 45 percent were not satisfied. Two in three Democrats (67%) are satisfied, while half of Republicans (52%) and independents (51%) are not satisfied. While today's findings among Republicans are similar to those in December (47% satisfied, 47% not satisfied), satisfaction among Democrats has increased 10 points since December (57%). Independents were slightly more likely to be dissatisfied in December (58%) than they are today (51%). Similar majorities of men and women are satisfied with their choices of candidates in the 2012 presidential election, although men more often express dissatisfaction.

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

Likely voters only	All Likely Voters	Party			Gender	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Men	Women
Satisfied	53%	67%	44%	39%	51%	54%
Not satisfied	42	28	52	51	45	38
Don't know	6	5	5	11	4	8

Eighty-five percent of likely voters are following news about the 2012 presidential election very (36%) or fairly (49%) closely, while 16 percent report following news not too (13%) or not at all closely (3%). In December a similar 82 percent were closely following election news (40% very closely, 42% fairly closely). In September 2007, about five months before the state's February 2008 primary election, overall attention to the news was similar among likely voters, but the percentage paying very close attention is higher today (36% to 29% in 2007).

Today, eight in 10 or more likely voters across parties are following campaign news at least fairly closely, although Republicans (40%) are slightly more likely than Democrats (34%) or independents (32%) to say they are following it very closely. Men (43%) are much more likely than women (29%) to report following the news very closely, as are likely voters 55 and older (43%) compared to younger likely voters (30%).

"How closely are you following news about candidates for the 2012 presidential election—very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?"

Likely voters only	All Likely Voters	Party			Gender	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Men	Women
Very closely	36%	34%	40%	32%	43%	29%
Fairly closely	49	47	48	53	47	50
Not too closely	13	15	11	11	7	17
Not at all closely	3	4	—	4	2	3

METHODOLOGY

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

Findings in this report are based on a survey of 2,002 California adult residents, including 1,602 interviewed on landline telephones and 400 interviewed on cell phones. Interviews took an average of 20 minutes to complete. Interviewing took place on weekday nights and weekend days from January 10 to 17, 2012.

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

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

Cell phone respondents were offered a small reimbursement to help defray the cost of the call. Cell phone interviews were conducted with adults who have cell phone service only and with those who have both cell phone and landline service in the household.

Live landline and cell phone interviews were conducted by Abt SRBI Inc. in English and Spanish according to respondents’ preferences. Accent on Languages, Inc. translated the survey into Spanish, with assistance from Renatta DeFever.

With assistance from Abt SRBI we used recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2007–2009 American Community Survey (ACS) through the University of Minnesota’s Integrated Public Use Microdata Series for California to compare certain demographic characteristics of the survey sample—region, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and education—with the characteristics of California’s adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to the ACS figures. Abt SRBI used data from the 2008 National Health Interview Survey and data from the 2007–2009 ACS for California both to estimate landline and cell phone service in California and to compare the data against landline and cell phone service reported in this survey. We also used voter registration data from the California Secretary of State to compare the party registration of registered voters in our sample to party registration statewide. The landline and cell phone samples were then integrated using a frame integration weight, while sample balancing adjusted for any differences across regional, age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, telephone service, and party registration groups.

The sampling error, taking design effects from weighting into consideration, is ± 3.4 percent at the 95 percent confidence level for the total sample of 2,002 adults. This means that 95 times out

of 100, the results will be within 3.4 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for subgroups is larger: For the 1,337 registered voters, it is ± 3.8 percent; for the 894 likely voters, it is ± 4.2 percent; for the 308 Republican primary likely voters, it is ± 7.3 percent. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

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

We present specific results for non-Hispanic whites and for Latinos, who account for about a third of the state’s adult population and constitute one of the fastest-growing voter groups. We also present results for non-Hispanic Asians, who make up about 14 percent of the state’s adult population. Results for other racial/ethnic groups—such as non-Hispanic blacks and Native Americans—are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, and likely voters, but sample sizes are not large enough for separate analysis. We compare the opinions of those who report they are registered Democrats, registered Republicans, and decline-to-state or independent voters; the results for those who say they are registered to vote in another party are not large enough for separate analysis. We also analyze the responses of likely voters—so designated by their responses to voter registration survey questions, previous election participation, and current interest in politics.

In reporting the presidential primary preferences of all Republican likely voters, we allocated the Jon Huntsman and Rick Perry supporters to their second-choice candidates. The results reflect these alternate choices.

The percentages presented in the report tables and in the questionnaire may not add to 100 due to rounding.

We compare current PPIC Statewide Survey results to those in our earlier surveys and to those in national surveys by CBS News/*New York Times*. Additional details about our methodology can be found at <http://www.ppic.org/content/other/SurveyMethodology.pdf> and are available upon request through surveys@ppic.org.

QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESULTS

CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

January 10–17, 2012

**2,002 California Adult Residents:
English, Spanish**

MARGIN OF ERROR $\pm 3.4\%$ AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE
PERCENTAGES MAY NOT ADD TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING

1. First, which one issue facing California today do you think is the most important for the governor and state legislature to work on in 2012?

[code, don't read]
38% jobs, economy
18 state budget, deficit, taxes
16 education, schools
7 immigration, illegal immigration
2 crime, gangs, drugs
2 health care, health costs
9 other
8 don't know
2. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Jerry Brown is handling his job as governor of California?
46% approve
31 disapprove
23 don't know
3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job?
28% approve
56 disapprove
16 don't know
4. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the job that the state legislators representing your assembly and senate districts are doing at this time?
36% approve
47 disapprove
17 don't know
5. Do you think that Governor Brown and the state legislature will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year, or not?
44% yes, will be able to work together
47 no, will not be able to work together
9 don't know
6. Do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?
37% right direction
57 wrong direction
6 don't know
7. 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
56 bad times
9 don't know
8. Would you say that California is in an economic recession, or not? (**if yes:** Do you think it is in a serious, a moderate, or a mild recession?)
43% yes, serious recession
34 yes, moderate recession
9 yes, mild recession
13 no
2 don't know

9. On another topic, in general, how much would you say you know about how your state and local governments spend and raise money—a lot, some, very little, or nothing?

- 16% a lot
- 38 some
- 35 very little
- 9 nothing
- 2 don't know

10. In general, do you think the state government could spend less and still provide the same level of services, or not?

- 59% yes, could *[ask q10a]*
- 37 no, could not *[skip to q11]*
- 4 don't know *[skip to q11]*

10a. *[of those who answered yes to q10]* How much could the state government cut its spending without reducing services: under 10 percent, 10 percent to under 20 percent, 20 percent to under 30 percent, 30 percent or more?

- 18% under 10 percent
- 41 10 percent to under 20 percent
- 19 20 percent to under 30 percent
- 15 30 percent or more
- 8 don't know

[rotate questions 11 and 12]

11. I'm going to name some of the largest areas for state spending. Please tell me the one that represents the most spending in the state budget. *[rotate]* (1) K–12 public education, (2) higher education, (3) health and human services, *[or]* (4) prisons and corrections.

- 16% K–12 public education
- 5 higher education
- 27 health and human services
- 47 prisons and corrections
- 5 don't know

12. I'm going to name some of the largest areas for state revenues. Please tell me the one that represents the most revenue for the state budget. *[rotate]* (1) personal income tax, (2) sales tax, (3) corporate tax, *[or]* (4) motor vehicle fees.

- 29% personal income tax
- 28 sales tax
- 18 corporate tax
- 19 motor vehicle fees
- 6 don't know

13. Next, do you think the state budget situation in California—that is, the balance between government spending and revenues—is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem for the people of California today?

- 64% big problem
- 30 somewhat of a problem
- 4 not a problem
- 2 don't know

14. Would you say that your local government services—such as those provided by city and county governments and public schools—have or have not been affected by recent state budget cuts? *(if they have, ask: Have they been affected a lot or somewhat?)*

- 62% affected a lot
- 27 affected somewhat
- 8 not affected
- 4 don't know

15. As you may know, the state government currently has an annual budget of around \$85 billion and faces a multibillion-dollar gap between spending and revenues. How would you prefer to deal with the state's budget gap—mostly through spending cuts, mostly through tax increases, through a mix of spending cuts and tax increases, or do you think that it is okay for the state to borrow money and run a budget deficit?

- 35% mostly through spending cuts
- 13 mostly through tax increases
- 40 through a mix of spending cuts and tax increases
- 6 okay to borrow money and run a budget deficit
- 1 other (*specify*)
- 4 don't know

16. In general, which of the following statements do you agree with more—**[rotate]** (1) I'd rather pay higher taxes and have a state government that provides more services, **[or]** (2) I'd rather pay lower taxes and have a state government that provides fewer services?

- 51% higher taxes and more services
- 41 lower taxes and fewer services
- 8 don't know

17. Some of the largest areas for state spending are: **[rotate]** (1) K–12 public education, (2) higher education, (3) health and human services, **[and]** (4) prisons and corrections. Thinking about these four areas of state spending, I'd like you to name the one you most want to protect from spending cuts.

- 55% K–12 public education
- 19 higher education
- 17 health and human services
- 6 prisons and corrections
- 3 don't know

Tax increases could be used to help reduce the state budget deficit. For each of the following, please indicate whether you would be willing to pay higher taxes for this purpose, or not.

[rotate questions 18 to 21]

18. What if the state said it needed more money just to maintain current funding for K–12 public education? Would you be willing to pay higher taxes for this purpose, or not?

- 72% yes
- 27 no
- 1 don't know

19. What if the state said it needed more money just to maintain current funding for higher education? Would you be willing to pay higher taxes for this purpose, or not?

- 57% yes
- 42 no
- 1 don't know

20. What if the state said it needed more money just to maintain current funding for health and human services? Would you be willing to pay higher taxes for this purpose, or not?

- 57% yes
- 42 no
- 2 don't know

21. What if the state said it needed more money just to maintain current funding for prisons and corrections? Would you be willing to pay higher taxes for this purpose, or not?

- 13% yes
- 85 no
- 1 don't know

Tax and fee increases could be used to help reduce the state's large gap between spending and revenues. For each of the following, please say if you favor or oppose the proposal.

[rotate questions 22 to 25]

22. How about raising the top rate of the state income tax paid by the wealthiest Californians?

- 74% favor
- 24 oppose
- 2 don't know

23. How about raising the state sales tax on all purchases?
- 29% favor
 - 69 oppose
 - 2 don't know
24. How about extending the state sales tax to services that are not currently taxed?
- 39% favor
 - 54 oppose
 - 6 don't know
25. How about raising the state taxes paid by California corporations?
- 68% favor
 - 30 oppose
 - 2 don't know
26. Under Proposition 13, residential and commercial property taxes are both strictly limited. What do you think about having commercial properties taxed according to their current market value? Do you favor or oppose this proposal?
- 60% favor
 - 33 oppose
 - 7 don't know
27. On another topic, Governor Brown proposed a budget plan for the current and next fiscal year to close the state's projected \$9.2 billion budget deficit. It includes spending cuts to welfare, child care, Medi-Cal, and other social service programs, and increases funding for K–12 public education. The proposal includes tax increases that would have to be approved by voters through an initiative on the November ballot. In general, do you favor or oppose the governor's budget plan?
- 50% favor
 - 43 oppose
 - 1 haven't heard anything about the budget (*volunteered*)
 - 6 don't know
28. Do you favor or oppose Governor Brown's proposed spending cuts to welfare, child care, Medi-Cal, and other social service programs?
- 39% favor
 - 58 oppose
 - 4 don't know
29. Governor Brown's proposed tax initiative on the November ballot includes a temporary four-year half-cent increase in the state sales tax and a temporary five-year increase in the state personal income tax on those earning more than \$250,000 annually. The initiative would raise about \$5 to \$7 billion annually with the new revenues going to K–12 public schools. Do you favor or oppose the proposed tax initiative?
- 72% favor
 - 26 oppose
 - 2 don't know
30. If voters reject the proposed tax initiative on the November ballot, Governor Brown has said that automatic spending cuts will be made to K–12 public schools. Do you favor or oppose these automatic spending cuts to K–12 public schools?
- 20% favor
 - 79 oppose
 - 2 don't know
31. Fiscal reforms have been proposed to address the structural issues in the state budget. Do you think it is a good idea or a bad idea to strictly limit the amount of money that state spending could increase each year?
- 59% good idea
 - 33 bad idea
 - 8 don't know

32. Overall, how fair do you think our present state and local tax system is—would you say it is very fair, moderately fair, not too fair, or not at all fair?

- 7% very fair
- 50 moderately fair
- 27 not too fair
- 14 not at all fair
- 3 don't know

33. When you combine all of the taxes you pay to state and local governments, do you feel that you pay much more than you should, somewhat more than you should, about the right amount, or less than you should?

- 21% much more
- 25 somewhat more
- 47 about the right amount
- 6 less than you should
- 2 don't know

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

- 66% favor
- 25 oppose
- 9 don't know

34a. If the state were to shift some tax dollars and fees to local governments, how confident are you that local governments would be able to take on the responsibilities of running certain programs currently run by the state? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

- 10% very confident
- 49 somewhat confident
- 23 not too confident
- 16 not at all confident
- 2 don't know

35. As you may know, state funding is being provided to shift some of the lower-risk inmates from state prisons to county jails to reduce prison overcrowding and lower state costs. How confident are you that your local government is able to take on this responsibility? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

- 12% very confident
- 38 somewhat confident
- 26 not too confident
- 22 not at all confident
- 3 don't know

36. On another topic, overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barack Obama is handling his job as president of the United States?

- 54% approve
- 42 disapprove
- 4 don't know

[rotate questions 37 and 38]

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

- 47% approve
- 35 disapprove
- 18 don't know

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

- 46% approve
- 38 disapprove
- 17 don't know

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

- 25% approve
- 69 disapprove
- 5 don't know

40. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way your own representative to the U.S. House of Representatives in Congress is handling his or her job?

- 46% approve
- 39 disapprove
- 15 don't know

41. Do you think that President Obama and the U.S. Congress will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year, or not?

- 35% yes, will be able to work together
- 62 no, will not be able to work together
- 3 don't know

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

- 67% yes *[ask q42a]*
- 33 no *[skip to q43b]*

42a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or are you registered as a decline-to-state or independent voter?

- 44% Democrat *[ask q43]*
- 31 Republican *[skip to q43a]*
- 5 another party *(specify) [skip to q45]*
- 21 independent *[skip to q43b]*

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

- 55% strong
- 43 not very strong
- 2 don't know

[skip to q45]

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

- 55% strong
- 44 not very strong
- 2 don't know

[skip to q44]

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

- 24% Republican Party
- 45 Democratic Party
- 24 neither *(volunteered)*
- 7 don't know

[skip to q45]

Changing topics,

44. ***[Republican primary likely voters only]*** If the 2012 Republican primary for president were being held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for? ***[rotate names and then ask "or someone else?"]***

- 36% Mitt Romney
- 16 Newt Gingrich
- 14 Rick Santorum
- 9 Ron Paul
- 4 Rick Perry
- 3 Jon Huntsman
- 1 someone else *[specify]*
- 16 don't know

44. ***[Republican primary likely voters only; Jon Huntsman and Rick Perry supporters allocated based on their 2nd choice]*** If the 2012 Republican primary for president were being held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for? ***[rotate names and then ask "or someone else?"]***

- 37% Mitt Romney
- 18 Newt Gingrich
- 15 Rick Santorum
- 11 Ron Paul
- 1 someone else *[specify]*
- 17 don't know

45. ***[likely voters only]*** In general, would you say you are satisfied or not satisfied with your choices of candidates in the election for U.S. president in 2012?

- 53% satisfied
- 42 not satisfied
- 6 don't know

46. **[likely voters only]** How closely are you following news about candidates for the 2012 presidential election—very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?

- 36% very closely
- 49 fairly closely
- 13 not too closely
- 3 not at all closely
- don't know

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

[read list, rotate order top to bottom]

- 11% very liberal
- 23 somewhat liberal
- 28 middle-of-the-road
- 23 somewhat conservative
- 12 very conservative
- 2 don't know

48. Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in politics—a great deal, a fair amount, only a little, or none?

- 20% great deal
- 39 fair amount
- 34 only a little
- 7 none
- don't know

[d1-d17: demographic questions]

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PPIC

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

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Mark Baldassare is President and CEO of PPIC.

Gary K. Hart is Chair of the Board of Directors.

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