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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

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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. This is the 131st PPIC Statewide Survey in a series that was inaugurated in April 1998 and has generated a database of responses from more than 276,000 Californians.

This is the 55th survey in the *Californians and Their Government* series. The survey is conducted periodically to examine the social, economic, and political trends that influence public policy preferences and ballot choices. Supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation, the series seeks to inform decisionmakers, raise public awareness, and stimulate policy discussions and debate about important state and national issues.

This survey began the week after Governor Brown released his 2013–14 budget proposal and ended the day after President Obama's inauguration events. Compared with recent multibillion dollar structural deficits, the state's fiscal situation is much improved this year and the governor's proposed budget projects a slight surplus. Following passage of the Proposition 30 tax initiative last November, the governor proposes increasing funding for K–12 public schools by \$2.7 billion. His proposal also includes increased funding for higher education and health and human services, \$4.2 billion to pay down state debt, and \$1 billion for the state's reserve. Legislators will deliberate the details ahead of their June 15 deadline to pass a budget. At the national level, President Obama begins his second term. The president and Congress will tackle the debt ceiling and deficit; they will also consider immigration reform and, in the aftermath of the Newtown mass shooting, gun regulation. Health care reform will roll out in a year's time and the Supreme Court will hear two same-sex marriage cases this spring, including one on California's Proposition 8.

This survey presents the responses of 1,704 adult residents throughout the state, interviewed in English or Spanish by landline or cell phone. It includes findings on these topics:

- State government, including Californians' overall mood; whether the governor and legislature will be able to cooperate in the coming year; the perceived effect of the Democrats' two-thirds majority in the legislature; approval ratings of state elected officials; perceptions of the state's budget situation; preferences for raising new revenues and for fiscal reforms; confidence in local government to handle prison realignment and in school districts to handle increased flexibility over spending decisions; preferences for who should make state budget decisions and handle long-term fiscal reform; and attitudes toward the governor's budget proposal.
- Federal government, including Californians' overall outlook; whether the country will be united or divided behind President Obama in his second term and whether he and Congress can cooperate in 2013; approval ratings of federal elected officials; approval of the president and congressional Republicans in handling the deficit and debt ceiling; and preferences for gun regulations, health care reform, immigration reform, and same-sex marriage.
- Time trends, national comparisons, and the extent to which Californians may differ in their perceptions, attitudes, and preferences regarding state and federal government, based on political party affiliation, likelihood of voting, region of residence, race/ethnicity, and other demographics.

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

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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EMBARGOED: Do not publish or broadcast until 9:00 p.m. PST on Wednesday, January 30, 2013.

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

### **PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT**

## **Brown's Budget Gets Broad Support, and Majority Back Him on Paying Down Debt**

AS OBAMA STARTS NEW TERM, JOB APPROVAL UP IN CALIFORNIA—TWO-THIRDS FAVOR ASSAULT WEAPON BAN

SAN FRANCISCO, January 30, 2013—Strong majorities of Californians favor Governor Jerry Brown's budget proposal and, specifically, his plan to direct extra money to school districts with more English Learner and lower-income students. Fewer—but still a majority of residents—back the governor's plan to pay down the state's debt and create a reserve, rather than restore funding for social services that has been cut in recent years. 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.

When read a brief description of the governor's overall plan, 69 percent of adults say they favor it and 22 percent are opposed. Across parties, 79 percent of Democrats, 72 percent of independents, and a slim majority of Republicans—51 percent—are in favor. Brown's 2013–14 budget, which projects a small surplus for the first time in many years, proposes increasing spending on K–12 schools, higher education, and health and human services, as well as paying down the state's debt and creating a reserve. Support was far lower for Brown's budget plan in January 2012 (50%).

Asked about the governor's proposal to direct much of the increased public school funding to districts with more English Learner and lower-income students, 75 percent of Californians are in favor and 21 percent are opposed. Overwhelming majorities of Democrats (81%) and independents (75%) are in favor, as are 52 percent of Republicans.

Brown's budget includes \$4.2 billion to pay down state debt and creates a \$1 billion reserve. Asked whether they support Brown's plan or would prefer to restore some funding to social service programs, 55 percent choose the governor's approach (38% prefer more spending on social services). Most Republicans (73%) and independents (62%) prefer to pay down the debt and build up the reserve, while Democrats are divided (47% pay down the debt, 48% more spending for social services).

The PPIC survey—which began the week after Brown released his budget and ended the day after President Barack Obama's inauguration events—shows rising optimism among Californians after years of recession and state fiscal problems. The proportion of residents who say things in the state are going in the right direction—51 percent—is over 50 percent for the first time since January 2007 (55%). And 49 percent expect good economic times in the next year—not a majority, but a higher percentage than at any time since January 2007 (50%). Most (57%) say that Brown and the state legislature will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year, up 13 points since last January.

Californians give the governor a record-high 51 percent job approval rating (28% disapprove, 21% don't know). His approval rating was 46 percent in January 2012 and 41 percent when he began his term in January 2011. The approval rating of the legislature is less positive but improved: 41 percent of Californians approve and 42 percent disapprove (17% don't know). Approval of the legislature is the highest it has been since December 2007 (41%). Asked how they feel about the Democratic supermajority in the legislature, 40 percent say it is a good thing, 27 percent say it is a bad thing, and 29 percent say it makes no difference. As the legislative session begins, Californians' approval of their individual state legislators is at 45 percent (34% disapprove, 20% don't know). A year ago, 36 percent expressed approval (47% disapproved).

"Governor Brown's approval rating and the legislature's are rising as the outlook on the state economy is improving," says Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO. "Still, many Californians are expressing concerns about the direction of the economy and the state budget situation."

Californians say the most important issues for the governor and legislature to work on this year are jobs and the economy (31%), the state budget (17%), and education (17%). Despite an improved fiscal picture, a large majority (63%) continue to characterize the state budget situation as a big problem. And 63 percent say their local government services have been affected a lot by recent state budget cuts. When asked which of the four largest areas of state spending they most want to protect from cuts, most (55%) name K-12 public education, while others name higher education (18%), health and human services (17%), and prisons and corrections (6%).

### **STRONG SUPPORT FOR CIGARETTE TAX, OPPOSITION TO EXTENDING SALES TAX**

In the wake of passage of Proposition 30, what is the public's appetite for more tax increases? The survey asked about three potential taxes to address the state budget situation. With a tobacco tax initiative being discussed for the 2014 ballot, 70 percent of Californians support a cigarette tax increase. A small majority of Californians (54%) favor raising the state taxes paid by California corporations. Only 32 percent favor extending the state sales tax to services not currently taxed.

Asked about specific fiscal reforms, 71 percent support shifting some funding and responsibility for certain programs from the state to local governments. A high-profile example of this shift began in fall 2011, when some lower-risk offenders were shifted from state prisons to county jails. About half of Californians today are confident (9% very confident, 40% somewhat confident) that their local governments can handle this responsibility. They express more confidence that local government can handle another aspect of state-local realignment: giving school districts more say in how state money is spent. Most residents are confident (23% very, 48% somewhat) that districts would use the money wisely.

A majority of Californians (57%) say it would be a good idea to lower the voting requirement to pass parcel taxes for local public schools from two-thirds to 55 percent. A third reform—a strict limit on state spending—has the support of 68 percent of adults.

### **OPTIMISM ALSO GROWS ABOUT DIRECTION OF NATION**

A majority (56%) say the U.S. is headed in the right direction, the highest level since May 2009 (57%). The president's inauguration speech influenced Californians' views: 54 percent interviewed before the speech said things in the U.S. are generally going in the right direction, and 63 percent responded this way afterward. Obama's approval rating among Californians is 65 percent, the highest since July 2009. Approval of Congress is at 34 percent, the highest since January 2010 (36%). Californians continue to give their own representatives in the U.S. House favorable ratings (56%), matching the record high reached in September 2009. California's two senators have higher job approval ratings than they did a year ago: Dianne Feinstein is at 54 percent, up from 47 percent in January 2012, and Barbara Boxer is at 52 percent, up from 46 percent.

Will the president and Congress be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year? About half (51%) think so, and 44 percent do not. In the PPIC survey—conducted after the fiscal cliff negotiations and as

lawmakers started focusing on the federal debt limit—most Californians (56%) approve of the way Obama is handling the federal deficit and debt ceiling. Most (63%) disapprove of the way congressional Republicans are handling these issues.

### **TWO-THIRDS SAY GOVERNMENT FALLS SHORT IN REGULATING GUNS**

In the aftermath of the Newtown school shooting, Obama has made gun control a key issue. Two-thirds of Californians (65%) say the government does not do enough to regulate access to guns, and a third (31%) say the government goes too far in restricting the rights of citizens to own guns. Two-thirds (65%) support a nationwide ban on the sale of assault weapons. Democrats (79%) and independents (55%) are in favor, while Republicans are more divided (45% support, 52% oppose). Majorities across regions and demographic groups support a ban. Latinos and women (75% each) are much more likely than whites (59%) and men (55%) to favor it. Among adults with guns, rifles, or pistols in their homes, less than half (47%) support an assault weapon ban, and 50 percent are opposed.

Baldassare notes: “Strong majorities of Californians want the government to do more about regulating guns, and many worry that a mass shooting could happen in their own communities.”

A majority of residents worry—35 percent a great deal and 26 percent somewhat—that a mass shooting could take place in their communities. Fewer say they do not worry much (20%) or at all (18%). Latinos (79%) and women (70%) are much more likely to be worried than whites (44%) and men (52%).

### **SUPPORT FOR FEDERAL HEALTH CARE REFORM RISES TO NEW HIGH**

With federal health care reform scheduled to be fully implemented in a year, a record-high 55 percent of Californians support the changes that have been enacted by Congress and the Obama administration, while 37 percent are opposed. Support has increased 8 points since last March (47%). There is a partisan divide: Democrats (76%) are supportive, independents are divided (44% support, 47% oppose), and Republicans are opposed (78%). When asked how they think their families will fare under health care reform, nearly half (48%) say it will not make a difference, 25 percent say they will be better off, and 23 percent say they will be worse off.

### **IMMIGRATION REFORM: RECORD-HIGH SUPPORT FOR PATH TO LEGAL STATUS**

The president says comprehensive immigration reform is a priority for his second term. Among Californians, a record-high 63 percent say immigrants are a benefit to the state because of their hard work and job skills. A record-low 31 percent say immigrants are a burden because they use public services. The survey also asked what should happen to most illegal immigrants who have lived and worked in the U.S. for at least two years. A record-high 76 percent say these immigrants should be given a chance to keep their jobs and eventually apply for legal status, and 21 percent—a new low—say they should be deported to their native countries.

### **SLIM MAJORITY FAVOR LEGALIZING SAME-SEX MARRIAGE**

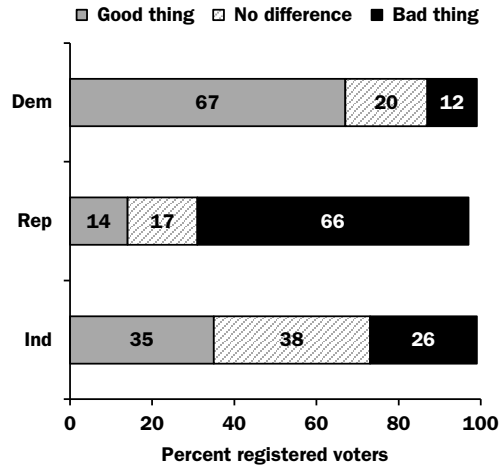
Now that several states have legalized same-sex marriage, what are Californians' views? Slightly more than half (53%) favor allowing gay and lesbian couples to legally marry and 41 percent are opposed. Support was similar last March (52%) and May (54%). Support is highest among residents of the San Francisco Bay Area (65%), and there is majority support in Los Angeles (54%) and Orange/San Diego Counties (51%). Majorities are opposed in the Central Valley (53%) and the Inland Empire (56%). As the U.S. Supreme Court prepares to take up the constitutionality of Proposition 8—which banned same-sex marriage—a solid majority of Californians say the court's decision is important (38% very important, 26% somewhat important). Opponents of same-sex marriage are more likely to say it is very important (46%) than proponents (36%).

# STATE GOVERNMENT

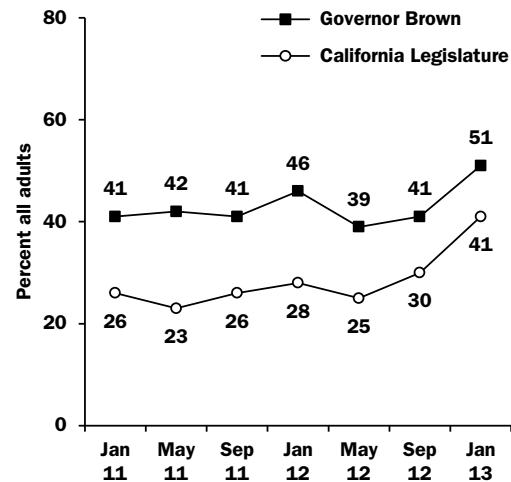
## KEY FINDINGS

- A majority of Californians (57%) expect the governor and legislature to work together and accomplish a lot this year, up 13 points since last year. There is a wide partisan rift over whether the Democrats' new supermajority in the legislature is good for the state. (page 7)
- Following the passage of the Proposition 30 tax initiative and the release of his 2013–14 budget proposal, Governor Brown's approval ratings are up to a record-high 51 percent. The legislature's approval ratings have also jumped. (page 8)
- Despite an improved fiscal picture, a solid majority of Californians still see the budget situation as a big problem and 63 percent say their local services have been affected a lot by state budget cuts. (page 9)
- Seven in 10 Californians favor raising revenues by upping cigarette taxes and 54 percent favor raising corporate taxes. Six in 10 oppose extending the sales tax to services. On fiscal reforms, about seven in 10 support state-local realignment and a strict state spending limit, while 57 percent favor lowering the vote requirement to 55 percent to pass local parcel taxes for public schools. (pages 10, 11)
- Most Californians are confident in local school districts' ability to use state funding wisely, but confidence is lower in local governments' ability to handle prison realignment. (page 12)
- Strong majorities favor the governor's budget proposal overall and his proposal to direct school funding to districts that have more English Learners and lower-income students; fewer, but still a majority, favor his proposal to pay down debt rather than spend more on social services. (page 14)

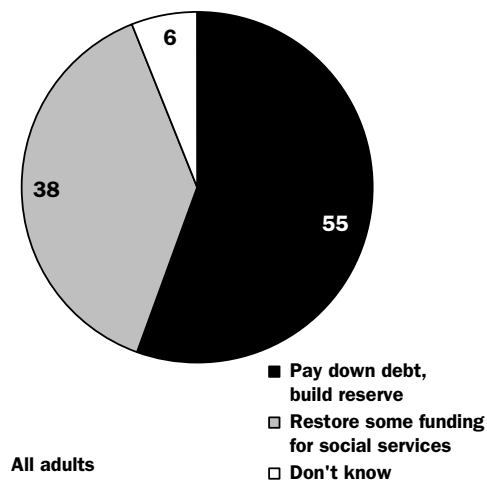
**Democrats' New Two-thirds Majority in the Legislature**



**Approval Ratings of State Elected Officials**



**Preference Regarding State Budget Tradeoffs**



## OVERALL MOOD

At the start of a new legislative session, Californians name jobs and the economy (31%), the state budget (17%), and education (17%) as the most important issues for the governor and legislature to work on in 2013. The same issues were on top in January 2012 (38% jobs and economy, 18% state budget, 16% education). In 2011, as Governor Brown was entering office and the legislative session was beginning, Californians also cited jobs and the economy (34%), the state budget (23%), and education (15%) as the most important issues. Today, residents across most political, regional, age, and income groups name jobs and the economy as the top issue. However, Republicans and those with household incomes of \$80,000 or more are as likely to name the state budget as jobs and the economy.

Californians' outlook on the state's economy is still decidedly mixed—yet it is improving. Forty-nine percent expect good economic times and 40 percent expect bad economic times in the next 12 months. While optimists are not in the majority, the proportion expecting good economic times is much higher today than it was in January 2012 (35%) or January 2011 (36%), and at any time since January 2007 (50%). Across political parties and regions, the share expecting good times eclipses 50 percent only among Democrats (62%) and San Francisco Bay Area residents (55%). Similarly, 51 percent of residents say things in California are generally going in the right direction; 40 percent say things are going in the wrong direction. The proportion saying “right direction” was much lower in January 2012 (37%) and January 2011 (38%); it is above 50 percent for the first time since January 2007 (55%). Democrats (67%) are far more likely to say right direction than independents (42%) or Republicans (24%). The San Francisco Bay Area (62%) leads other regions in the perception that things are going in the right direction.

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Good times	49%	62%	26%	42%	44%
Bad times	40	28	64	48	44
Don't know	11	10	9	10	11

A majority of Californians (57%) say that Governor Brown and the state legislature will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year, while 33 percent say they will not be able to do so. Opinions were more negative last January, with 47 percent saying they would not be able to work together and 44 percent saying they would. When Governor Brown entered office in January 2011, residents were as optimistic as they are today (58% would be able to work together, 29% would not). Today, Democrats (69%) are more likely than Republicans (36%) and independents (46%) to say the governor and legislature will be able to work together. As for the impact of the Democratic supermajority on California, 40 percent say it is a good thing, 27 percent say it is a bad thing, and 29 percent say it makes no difference. Public opinion about the Democratic supermajority is predictably divided along party lines.

### “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	57%	69%	36%	46%	51%
No	33	24	54	44	40
Don't know	11	7	10	11	9

## APPROVAL RATING OF STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS

Governor Brown’s approval rating stands at a record high of 51 percent today. In January 2012, 46 percent approved of the governor’s job performance. When Brown entered office in January 2011, 41 percent approved of his job performance. Among likely voters today, 50 percent approve. A solid majority of Democrats (67%) approve of the governor, while 55 percent of Republicans disapprove; independents are more likely to approve (46%) than to disapprove (33%) of Brown’s job performance. The governor has higher approval than disapproval ratings across regions and demographic groups.

Compared to the governor’s, approval ratings of the California Legislature are more mixed—and yet they have also improved. Today, 41 percent approve and 42 percent disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job. A year ago, 28 percent approved and 56 percent disapproved. Findings were similar in January 2011 (26% approve, 55% disapprove). Approval of the legislature today is the highest it has been since December 2007 (41%). And while a majority of likely voters (55%) today disapprove of the legislature, approval (31%) is the highest it has been since December 2007 (35%). Across parties, 50 percent of Democrats, 30 percent of independents, and 17 percent of Republicans approve of the legislature. The legislature’s approval ratings are under 50 percent in all regions and decline as age increases. Approval ratings are lower among those with incomes of \$40,000 or more than among lower-income residents.

### “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>	<b>Approve</b>	51%	67%	28%	46%	50%
	<b>Disapprove</b>	28	19	55	33	36
	<b>Don’t know</b>	21	14	17	21	14
<i>The California Legislature is handling its job?</i>	<b>Approve</b>	41	50	17	30	31
	<b>Disapprove</b>	42	37	70	57	55
	<b>Don’t know</b>	17	13	13	13	14

Today, at the start of the new legislative session, Californians’ approval of their individual state legislators is at 45 percent; 34 percent express disapproval and 20 percent are unsure. A year ago, 36 percent approved and 47 percent disapproved of their own legislators’ performance; results were similar in March 2011 (36% approve, 43% disapprove). Likely voters today are about as likely to approve (39%) as to disapprove (42%). Democrats (53%) are much more likely than independents (36%) and Republicans (33%) to approve of their own legislators. Approval ratings vary across regions (53% Central Valley, 50% San Francisco Bay Area, 43% Los Angeles, 43% Orange/San Diego Counties, 38% Inland Empire) and are much higher among Latinos than whites (57% to 37%). Approval is higher among those ages 18 to 34, those with a high school education or less, and lower-income residents.

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Approve</b>	45%	53%	33%	36%	39%
<b>Disapprove</b>	34	31	47	47	42
<b>Don’t know</b>	20	17	19	17	20



## STATE BUDGET SITUATION

Despite passage of Proposition 30 and an improving economy, large majorities of all adults (63%) and likely voters (71%) continue to describe the state budget situation in California as a big problem. A year ago, a similar 64 percent of all adults and 78 percent of likely voters held this view. In January 2011, 68 percent of all adults and 83 percent of likely voters said the budget situation was a big problem. Today, at least six in 10 residents across regions describe the budget situation as a big problem. Majorities in all political groups view the state budget situation as a big problem, but this perception is more widely held by Republicans (84%) and independents (77%) than by Democrats (57%). Far more whites (76%) hold this view than Latinos (48%). This perception is higher among those age 55 and older than among younger residents and among those with incomes of \$40,000 or more than among those with lower incomes.

**“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?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Big problem</b>	63%	57%	84%	77%	71%
<b>Somewhat of a problem</b>	28	36	11	16	23
<b>Not a problem</b>	6	6	3	5	4
<b>Don't know</b>	3	1	1	2	1

Large majorities of adults (63%) and likely voters (63%) continue to say that their local government services have been affected a lot by recent state budget cuts. About one in 10 in each group say they have not. A year ago, similarly large majorities of adults (62%) and likely voters (60%) said that their local government services had been affected a lot by recent state budget cuts. Today, more than half of residents in all parties, regions, and demographic groups say that local government services have been affected a lot by state budget cuts. Among public school parents, 68 percent hold this view.

**“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?”)**

	All adults	Region					Public school parents
		Central Valley	San Francisco	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
<b>Affected a lot</b>	63%	60%	56%	66%	65%	66%	68%
<b>Affected somewhat</b>	24	27	30	20	24	18	21
<b>Not affected</b>	9	11	11	9	5	9	9
<b>Don't know</b>	5	3	3	6	6	6	1

What areas of state spending does the public most want to protect from budget cuts? When the four largest areas of state spending are named, 55 percent of adults say that K–12 public education is the one they most want to protect, 18 percent name higher education, 17 percent name health and human services, and 6 percent name prisons and corrections. We found a similar preference for protecting K–12 public schools a year ago, and every time we have asked this question since the 2003 budget crisis. Today, majorities among likely voters (55%), across political parties, and in the state’s major regions wish to protect K–12 public education. Pluralities of at least 48 percent across all age, education, income, and racial/ethnic groups would most like to protect K–12 public schools from spending cuts.

## NEW REVENUES

What are the public's preferences for raising state taxes in the wake of the passage of Proposition 30? We asked about three possible new revenue sources to address the state budget situation. Seven in 10 adults (70%) and likely voters (69%) favor increasing taxes on cigarettes. Last March and May, 63 percent of likely voters favored this proposal, and a proposition to raise cigarette taxes in the June primary failed. Today, slim majorities of adults (54%) favor raising the state taxes paid by California corporations, compared to 68 percent in January 2012. Only three in 10 adults (32%) today favor extending the state sales tax to services that are not currently taxed, compared to 39 percent in January 2012.

**“New revenue sources have been proposed to address the state budget situation. For each of the following, please say if you favor or oppose the proposal. How about...”**

<i>All adults</i>	<b>Increasing taxes on the purchase of cigarettes?</b>	<b>Raising the state taxes paid by California corporations?</b>	<b>Extending the state sales tax to services that are not currently taxed?</b>
<b>Favor</b>	70%	54%	32%
<b>Oppose</b>	28	41	61
<b>Don't know</b>	2	6	7

Public support for each of these three new revenue sources is very similar among all adults and likely voters. Democrats are much more likely than Republicans to favor increasing taxes on cigarettes, raising taxes paid by California corporations, and extending the sales tax to services. There is majority support for increasing taxes on cigarettes across parties and regions, and among all age, education, and income groups. A partisan divide exists on raising the state taxes paid by California corporations, but there is slim majority support across regions. Support for extending the sales tax to services falls well short of a majority across all parties and regions, and among all age, education, and income groups.

<i>Percent saying favor</i>	<b>Increasing taxes on the purchase of cigarettes?</b>	<b>Raising the state taxes paid by California corporations?</b>	<b>Extending the state sales tax to services that are not currently taxed?</b>
<b>All adults</b>	70%	54%	32%
<b>Likely voters</b>	69	52	30
<b>Party</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	77	37
	<b>Republicans</b>	53	20
	<b>Independents</b>	71	28
<b>Region</b>	<b>Central Valley</b>	64	31
	<b>San Francisco Bay Area</b>	77	35
	<b>Los Angeles</b>	72	33
	<b>Orange/San Diego</b>	64	26
<b>Age</b>	<b>Inland Empire</b>	72	32
	<b>18 to 34</b>	76	37
	<b>35 to 54</b>	69	31
	<b>55 and older</b>	66	29
<b>Household income</b>	<b>Under \$40,000</b>	72	34
	<b>\$40,000 to \$80,000</b>	69	35
	<b>\$80,000 or more</b>	73	30

## FISCAL REFORMS

Since taking office, Governor Brown has stressed the importance of “bringing government closer to the people.” A strong majority of Californians (71%) and likely voters (69%) say it is a good idea to shift funding and responsibility for running certain programs from the state government to local governments. Strong majorities of Californians and likely voters (68% each) also consider a strict state spending limit a good idea. A third fiscal reform is supported by 57 percent of Californians and 51 percent of likely voters: lowering the vote requirement to 55 percent for voters to pass parcel taxes for local public schools.

**“Fiscal reforms have been proposed to address the structural issues in the state budget and local budget issues. For each of the following, please say if you think the proposal is a good idea or a bad idea. How about...”**

<i>All adults</i>	<b>Shifting 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?</b>	<b>Strictly limiting the amount of money that state spending could increase each year?</b>	<b>Replacing the two-thirds vote requirement with a 55 percent majority vote for voters to pass local parcel taxes for the local public schools?</b>
<b>Good idea</b>	71%	68%	57%
<b>Bad idea</b>	22	25	37
<b>Don't know</b>	7	7	6

Support among all adults for realigning government responsibilities (71%) was similarly high last January (66%) and in January 2011 (71%). Republicans (76%) and independents (75%) are especially likely to say realignment is a good idea; most Democrats (65%) agree. Across regions and demographic groups, at least 64 percent say good idea. The share of all adults saying it is a good idea to strictly limit state spending (68%) is up 9 points since last January (59%), but is similar to January 2011 (71%) and January 2010 (69%). There has been majority support for a strict state spending limit since we first asked this question in June 2003. Republicans (84%) are much more likely than independents (71%) and Democrats (58%) to support a spending limit. Today's support among all adults (57%) for lowering the vote required to pass parcel taxes is higher than in April 2011 (48%) and April 2009 (45%). A strong majority of public school parents today (65%) say this is a good idea. Democrats (60%) are more likely than independents (52%) and Republicans (46%) to hold this view.

<i>Percent saying good idea</i>	<b>Shift responsibilities to local level</b>	<b>State spending limit</b>	<b>55 percent vote to pass parcel taxes</b>
<b>All adults</b>	71%	68%	57%
<b>Likely voters</b>	69	68	51
<b>Public school parents</b>	76	70	65
<b>Party</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	65	58
	<b>Republicans</b>	76	84
	<b>Independents</b>	75	71
<b>Region</b>	<b>Central Valley</b>	77	69
	<b>San Francisco Bay Area</b>	69	69
	<b>Los Angeles</b>	69	69
	<b>Orange/San Diego</b>	72	74
	<b>Inland Empire</b>	64	61
<b>Household income</b>	<b>Under \$40,000</b>	75	68
	<b>\$40,000 to \$80,000</b>	69	70
	<b>\$80,000 or more</b>	65	70

## STATE AND LOCAL FISCAL RELATIONS

The first high-profile example of state-local realignment began in the fall of 2011, when some of the state’s lower-risk inmates were moved from state prisons to county jails. About half of Californians are confident (9% very, 40% somewhat) in their local governments’ ability to handle this responsibility. The other half are not too (24%) or not at all (25%) confident. Among likely voters, 43 percent are confident and 54 percent are not confident. Since we first asked about this in 2011, about 50 percent of all adults have been very or somewhat confident in their local governments (48% September 2011, 53% December 2011, 50% January 2012, 49% today). Across parties, Republicans (36%) are less likely than independents (49%) and Democrats (50%) to express confidence. About half in the San Francisco Bay Area (52%), Orange/San Diego Counties (52%), Inland Empire (50%), and Los Angeles (48%) express confidence; 44 percent in the Central Valley agree. Confidence decreases sharply as age increases. Among those who say realignment in general is a good idea, 51 percent are confident that local government can handle the prisoner shift; among those who say realignment is a bad idea, 45 percent are confident.

**“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				
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire
<b>Very confident</b>	9%	9%	8%	9%	8%	5%
<b>Somewhat confident</b>	40	35	44	39	44	45
<b>Not too confident</b>	24	23	24	27	25	20
<b>Not at all confident</b>	25	33	21	22	21	29
<b>Don't know</b>	2	–	3	3	1	2

One response to the fiscal downturn and state budget cuts was to give local school districts more say in how state funding is spent. The governor would like to increase this local flexibility. Seventy-one percent of Californians are confident (23% very, 48% somewhat) that their local school districts would use state money wisely. This is far higher than confidence in local government to handle prison realignment (49%). Confidence in school districts was similar last April (68%), but the share saying they are very confident has grown (from 14% to 23% today). More than 65 percent across parties, regions, and demographic groups are at least somewhat confident that their local school districts will spend money wisely, including 71 percent of public school parents. Among those who say realignment is a good idea, 73 percent are confident; among those who say it is a bad idea, 64 percent also have confidence in their school districts.

**“If the state were to give local school districts more flexibility over how state funding is spent, how confident are you that local school districts would use this money wisely? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?”**

	All adults	Region					Public school parents
		Central Valley	San Francisco	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
<b>Very confident</b>	23%	23%	27%	20%	17%	22%	24%
<b>Somewhat confident</b>	48	50	46	46	53	44	47
<b>Not too confident</b>	18	18	17	21	16	20	19
<b>Not at all confident</b>	11	8	9	12	13	14	9
<b>Don't know</b>	1	1	1	–	1	–	1

## FISCAL DECISIONMAKING

In a more stable fiscal environment this year, who do Californians prefer to make the tough choices involved in the state budget? Fifty-six percent prefer the approach of Democrats—either Governor Brown (25%) or the Democrats in the legislature (31%), while 24 percent prefer the approach of Republicans in the legislature. Among likely voters, half prefer either the governor’s (26%) or legislative Democrats’ (25%) approach, and 33 percent prefer that of legislative Republicans. In January 2011, just as Governor Brown took office, preferences were similar (26% governor, 28% Democrats, 26% Republicans). During Governor Schwarzenegger’s tenure, support for his approach was highest soon after he took office in January 2004 (33%) and reached a low of 11 percent in May 2010, near the end of his last term. Support for Governor Davis’s approach was similarly low prior to his recall (13% February 2003).

Democrats now hold a supermajority in the legislature, meaning they could override gubernatorial vetoes. Registered Democrats are far more likely to prefer the approach of legislative Democrats (56%) to Governor Brown’s (30%). Republicans also prefer legislators from their party (69%). Among independents, 25 percent prefer the governor, 20 percent favor legislative Democrats, and 23 percent favor legislative Republicans. Latinos (45%) are far more likely than whites (17%) to prefer the legislative Democrats, while whites are twice as likely as Latinos to prefer the legislative Republicans (35% to 16%); similar shares prefer the governor (26% Latinos, 27% whites).

**“When it comes to the tough choices involved in the state budget, both in deciding how much Californians should pay in taxes and how much to fund state programs, whose approach do you most prefer—Governor Brown’s, the Democrats’ in the legislature, or the Republicans’ in the legislature?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Governor Brown’s</b>	25%	30%	15%	25%	26%
<b>Democrats’</b>	31	56	4	20	25
<b>Republicans’</b>	24	8	69	23	33
<b>Other/None (volunteered)</b>	5	2	6	10	7
<b>Don’t know</b>	15	5	6	23	9

When it comes to long-term fiscal reform, most Californians (76%) and likely voters (72%) prefer that their fellow voters make the decisions; just 21 percent of adults and 24 percent of likely voters prefer the governor and legislature. More than six in 10 have preferred voters’ decisions since we first asked this question in January 2004. The general finding reflected in this survey that California voters probably make better public policy decisions than the governor and legislature has been a consistent attitudinal trend since we began asking questions about this issue in 2000. Solid majorities across parties, regions, and demographic groups agree that voters should make the decisions about long-term fiscal reform.

**“And when it comes to long-term issues of reforming the state budget process, both in terms of changing the way the state taxes and spends money, which approach do you most prefer—the governor and legislature should decide; or the California voters should decide?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Governor and legislature</b>	21%	25%	18%	19%	24%
<b>California voters</b>	76	71	80	76	72
<b>Other (volunteered)</b>	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Don’t know</b>	3	2	1	3	2

## GOVERNOR'S BUDGET PROPOSAL

Governor Brown released his 2013–14 budget proposal on January 10. For the first time in many years, he projected that the state would have a slight budget surplus rather than a multibillion-dollar structural deficit. He proposed increasing spending on K–12 schools, higher education, and health and human services, creating a \$1 billion reserve, and paying down state debt. When read a brief description of this plan, 69 percent of all adults and 66 percent of likely voters favor it while 22 percent of all adults and 25 percent of likely voters are opposed. By comparison, support was far lower for Brown's budget proposal last January (50% all adults, 48% likely voters). Across parties today, more than seven in 10 Democrats (79%) and independents (72%) favor his plan, and even a slim majority of Republicans (51%) express support. Last year about four in 10 Republicans and independents favored the governor's plan.

**“Governor Brown proposed a budget plan for the next fiscal year that will increase spending on K–12 schools, higher education, and health and human services, create a \$1 billion reserve, and pay down the state's debt. In general, do you favor or oppose the governor's budget plan?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Favor</b>	69%	79%	51%	72%	66%
<b>Oppose</b>	22	15	36	20	25
<b>Haven't heard about it/ Don't know (volunteered)</b>	9	6	13	9	10

Governor Brown proposes increased funding for K–12 public schools (largely due to Proposition 30 revenues) and changing the way school funding is distributed. For the second year in a row, he is proposing a formula that would direct extra funding to districts that have more English Learners and lower-income students. Three in four Californians (75%) and nearly seven in 10 likely voters (68%) say they favor this idea. Overwhelming majorities of Democrats (81%) and independents (75%) favor it, as do 52 percent of Republicans. More than six in 10 across regions and demographic groups support this approach, and Latinos (91%) are far more likely than whites (63%) to do so. Support declines as age, education, and income increase. Nearly eight in 10 public school parents (78%) favor the idea. Even among those who oppose the governor's overall budget plan, 54 percent favor this idea.

**“Governor Brown's budget plan includes new K–12 school funding that will mostly go to local school districts that have more English language learners and lower-income students. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Favor</b>	75%	81%	52%	75%	68%
<b>Oppose</b>	21	16	42	20	26
<b>Don't know</b>	3	3	6	5	5

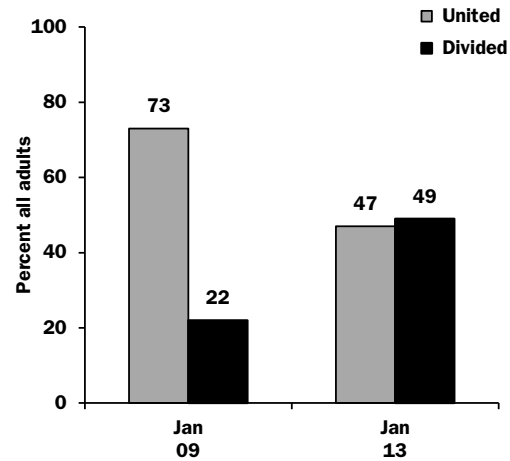
The governor's budget plan includes \$4.2 billion to pay down state debt and creates a \$1 billion reserve. Some may argue that a portion of this money should be spent restoring funding to social services programs that have been cut in recent years. When it comes to this fiscal tradeoff, a majority of Californians back the governor's plan (55%), compared with 38 percent who would prefer more spending on social services. Six in 10 likely voters prefer paying down debt. Majorities of Republicans (73%) and independents (62%) prefer paying down debt, while Democrats are divided. Preference for paying down debt is much higher among whites than Latinos (66% to 46%) and increases as education and income levels rise.

# FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

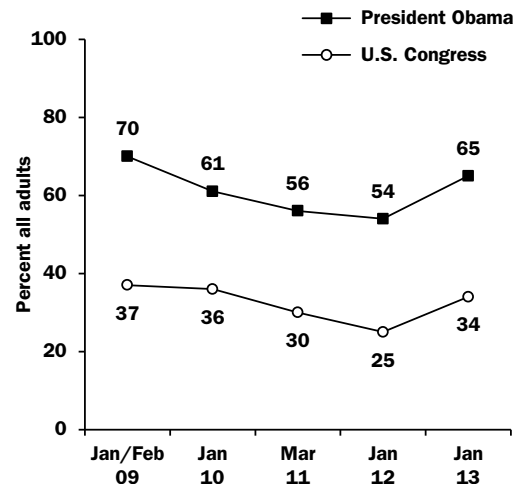
## KEY FINDINGS

- For the first time since May 2009, a majority of Californians (56%) say the country is headed in the right direction. But Californians are much more pessimistic than they were four years ago about whether the country will be united behind President Obama over the course of his second term. *(page 16)*
- Approval of President Obama (65%) is the highest it has been since July 2009, and approval of Congress is also up. Majorities approve of Senator Feinstein, Senator Boxer, and their own House representatives. Californians are more than twice as approving of the president's handling of the deficit and debt ceiling as they are of congressional Republicans'. *(pages 17-19)*
- Support for more gun regulation has jumped (from 53% to 65%) since last March—and in the wake of the Newtown mass shooting. A solid majority support a nationwide ban on assault weapons. Many, especially Latinos and public school parents, worry that a mass shooting could occur in their community. *(page 20)*
- Support for national health care reform is up 8 points (to 55%) since last March, with a deep partisan divide on this issue, while only one in four say they will be better off under this law. *(page 21)*
- On immigration reform, a record high (76%) favor giving illegal immigrants who have been working here the chance to keep their jobs and apply for legal status. *(page 22)*
- In line with recent trends, 53 percent favor allowing same-sex marriage, with voters deeply divided along party lines. Those opposed to same-sex marriage are more likely than those in favor to consider the outcome of the Supreme Court's decision very important. *(page 23)*

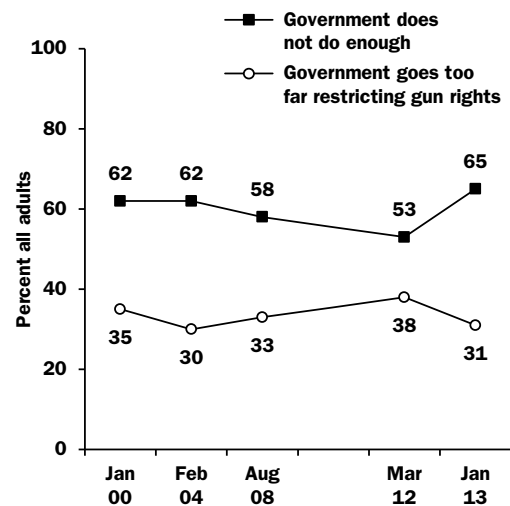
Whether the Country Will Be United or Divided behind Barack Obama over Next Four Years



Approval Ratings of Federal Elected Officials



Regulating Guns



## OVERALL OUTLOOK

At the start of a new year, 56 percent of Californians say that things in the United States are generally going in the right direction and 39 percent say wrong direction. This level of optimism was last seen in May 2009 (57%) and has increased 10 points since October 2012 (46%). In a recent NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll among adults nationwide, 35 percent said right direction and 57 percent said things are off on the wrong track. In our survey, national outlook differs across parties, with 73 percent of Democrats saying right direction, and 76 percent of Republicans saying wrong direction. Seven in 10 Latinos say the country is going in the right direction, compared with four in 10 whites. Optimism declines with rising age and income and is higher among those with a high school education or less than others.

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters	Interviewed before/after Obama's inauguration speech	
		Dem	Rep	Ind		Before	After
<b>Right direction</b>	56%	73%	19%	50%	47%	54%	63%
<b>Wrong direction</b>	39	23	76	47	49	40	34
<b>Don't know</b>	5	3	5	4	4	5	3

After a year of partisan strife, how do Californians view the prospect of federal elected officials working together in the new year? Half of Californians (51%) believe that President Obama and the U.S. Congress will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year; 44 percent say they will not. This negative view has changed since last January, when 62 percent said they would be unable to work together. At the start of Barack Obama's presidency, 81 percent believed that the new president and Congress would be able to work together. Today, a majority of likely voters (57%) are pessimistic about the prospects of cooperation at the federal level. Across parties, six in 10 Democrats say federal officials will work together, while 77 percent of Republicans and half of independents (52%) hold the opposite view. In interviews completed prior to President Obama's inauguration speech, 49 percent said they would be able to cooperate, compared with 55 percent in interviews conducted after his speech.

### “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	Interviewed before/after Obama's inauguration speech	
		Dem	Rep	Ind		Before	After
<b>Yes</b>	51%	61%	17%	40%	37%	49%	55%
<b>No</b>	44	36	77	52	57	45	41
<b>Don't know</b>	5	3	6	8	5	5	4

When it comes to their outlook for President Obama's second term, Californians are divided as to whether the country will unite behind him and allow him to accomplish a lot (47%) or be divided and make it difficult for him to accomplish a lot (49%) in the next four years. Californians were far more optimistic in January 2009 when President Obama first took office, with 73 percent saying the country would be united behind him (22% divided). In January 2005, at the beginning of President Bush's second term, 35 percent said united, and 60 percent divided. In 2001, 44 percent said the country would be able to unite behind George W. Bush at the start of his presidency (50% divided). Today, likely voters are pessimistic (62% divided, 34% united) about the president's second term. Six in 10 Democrats (63%) say united, while eight in 10 Republicans (83%) and 64 percent of independents say divided. A solid majority of Latinos foresee a united nation (65%); a similar share of whites (66%) foresee a divided one.



## APPROVAL RATINGS OF FEDERAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

After reelection, President Obama’s approval rating is up to 65 percent. His approval was last at this level in July 2009. Last January, his approval was at 54 percent; it grew 9 points by October (63%), just before the general election in November. In a recent nationwide NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll, 52 percent of adults approved of Obama and 44 percent disapproved. In our survey, approval is lower among likely voters (56%) than among all adults. Eighty-eight percent of Democrats approve of the president and 76 percent of Republicans disapprove. A majority of independents approve (53%). President Obama’s approval ratings decline as age increases. Lower-income residents (73%) are much more likely to approve than those earning \$40,000 to \$80,000 (61%) or more (58%). Latinos (83%) are far more likely than whites (50%) to approve. Approval is higher in Los Angeles (73%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (71%), than in the Inland Empire (62%), the Central Valley (55%), and Orange/San Diego Counties (55%).

Approval of the U.S. Congress is at 34 percent, up 9 points since last January (25%). The U.S. Congress last had an approval rating above 30 percent in October 2010 (31%), shortly before the mid-term elections; approval was at 37 percent at the start of President Obama’s first term. The NBC/Wall Street Journal poll among adults nationwide shows approval of the U.S. Congress at 14 percent (81% disapprove). Among likely voters in our survey, 21 percent approve of Congress. Approval declines as age increases and is higher among those with lower education and income levels. Fifty-seven percent of Latinos approve of the Congress; far fewer whites (16%) hold this view.

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

		All adults	Party			Likely voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Barack Obama is handling his job as president of the United States?</b>	Approve	65%	88%	23%	53%	56%
	Disapprove	29	9	76	40	41
	Don't know	6	3	1	6	3
<b>The U.S. Congress is handling its job?</b>	Approve	34	29	20	25	21
	Disapprove	59	66	73	64	73
	Don't know	7	5	7	11	6

Californians continue to give favorable ratings to their own representative to the U.S. House. The share approving of their representative (56%) matches the record high reached in September 2009. Last January, approval was 46 percent, and in September it was 48 percent. Likely voters hold similar views to all adults. Democrats (64%) are much more likely to approve than independents (47%) and Republicans (45%). Majorities across regions say they approve of their own representative (60% Inland Empire, 58% Los Angeles, 56% San Francisco Bay Area, 55% Orange/San Diego Counties, 54% Central Valley). Approval declines with rising education and income levels.

### “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	56%	64%	45%	47%	52%
Disapprove	27	23	34	33	31
Don't know	18	13	22	21	17

## CALIFORNIA’S U.S. SENATORS

After winning reelection by a wide margin, Senator Dianne Feinstein’s approval rating is at 54 percent. One in four disapprove, while one in five are unsure how to rate her job performance. Her approval rating was 47 percent last January and grew to 51 percent in September, just before the November election. Likely voters (35%) are somewhat more disapproving of her job performance than all adults (25%). Three in four Democrats approve of Senator Feinstein’s job performance, while 58 percent of Republicans disapprove. About half of independents (49%) approve and three in 10 disapprove. Across ideological groups, 66 percent of liberals, 57 percent of moderates, and 42 percent of conservatives approve.

Across regions, Senator Feinstein’s approval is highest in the San Francisco Bay Area (63%) and Los Angeles (58%), followed by the Inland Empire (53%) and the Central Valley (52%); it is lowest in Orange/San Diego Counties (40%). Women (58%) are somewhat more likely to approve of her than men are (50%). Latinos (60%) are much more likely than whites (47%) to approve of Senator Feinstein. Majorities across age, education, and income groups approve of Senator Feinstein. Among those who approve of the U.S. Congress, Senator Feinstein’s approval rating is at 65 percent; among those who disapprove of the U.S. Congress, her approval rating is at 52 percent.

**“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	
<b>Approve</b>	54%	75%	33%	49%	55%
<b>Disapprove</b>	25	15	58	30	35
<b>Don’t know</b>	21	11	9	21	10

Senator Barbara Boxer’s approval rating is at 52 percent; 27 percent disapprove of her job performance and 21 percent are unsure. Her approval rating was 46 percent last January and 48 percent in September 2012. Likely voters (40%) are much more disapproving than all adults (27%). There are partisan differences: 75 percent of Democrats approve and 64 percent of Republicans disapprove of Senator Boxer’s job performance (independents: 45% approve, 33% disapprove).

Approval of Senator Boxer is highest among Californians living in the San Francisco Bay Area (61%) and Los Angeles (58%), followed by those in the Inland Empire (51%) and the Central Valley (49%); it is lowest in Orange/San Diego Counties (38%). Women (57%) are more likely than men (46%) to say they approve of Senator Boxer. Sixty-five percent of Latinos approve, compared with 39 percent of whites. Californians ages 18 to 34 (61%) are more approving of Senator Boxer than older residents are (47% 35 to 54, 48% 55 and older). Approval declines with rising income. Renters (59%) are more likely to approve of her than homeowners (46%). Among those approving of the U.S. Congress, 69 percent say they approve of Senator Boxer, and among those who disapprove of the U.S. Congress, 45 percent approve of her.

**“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	
<b>Approve</b>	52%	75%	25%	45%	51%
<b>Disapprove</b>	27	16	64	33	40
<b>Don’t know</b>	21	9	11	22	10

## BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

Our survey was conducted after the fiscal cliff negotiations and when lawmakers were starting to focus on the federal debt limit. We completed interviews just before the House passed legislation to temporarily raise the debt ceiling, which would put off decision making on the debt ceiling to late May. Lawmakers meanwhile will debate spending cuts and deficit reduction.

When asked about President Obama’s role in handling the federal deficit and debt ceiling, a majority of Californians (56%) approve and 38 percent disapprove of how he is handling this issue. Likely voters are closely divided (49% approve, 47% disapprove). While three in four Democrats approve of the way the president is handling the federal deficit and debt ceiling, a similar share of Republicans (77%) disapprove. Independents are divided (43% approve, 48% disapprove). Majorities across regions, except those in the Central Valley (43%), approve of how President Obama is handling the federal deficit and debt ceiling. Approval declines with age and income. Among those who approve of President Obama’s job performance overall, 78 percent approve of his role in handling the federal deficit and debt ceiling.

**“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Obama is handling the federal deficit and debt ceiling?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Approve</b>	56%	76%	20%	43%	49%
<b>Disapprove</b>	38	20	77	48	47
<b>Don't know</b>	6	4	3	9	4

Californians hold an unfavorable view of how the Republicans in Congress are handling the federal deficit and debt ceiling. A solid majority (63%) say they disapprove, and one in four approve. Disapproval is higher among likely voters (70%). Nearly eight in 10 Democrats (79%) and a solid majority of independents (64%) disapprove of the way that the Republicans in Congress are handling this issue. A slim majority of Republicans (52%) also say they disapprove, while 41 percent approve.

Majorities across regions and demographic groups disapprove of Republicans’ handling of the deficit and debt ceiling, with some variation. Disapproval is higher in the San Francisco Bay Area (71%) than in other regions. Among racial/ethnic groups, whites (71%) are much more likely to disapprove than Latinos (52%). Disapproval increases with income. Among those who approve of the U.S. Congress overall, 43 percent approve and 42 percent disapprove of the way that the Republicans are handling the federal deficit and debt ceiling. Among those who disapprove of the Congress, 77 percent disapprove of Republicans’ handling of these issues.

Fifteen percent say they approve of the way that both the president and the Republicans in Congress are handling the federal deficit and debt ceiling, 24 percent say they disapprove of both.

**“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the Republicans in Congress are handling the federal deficit and debt ceiling?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Approve</b>	26%	17%	41%	27%	25%
<b>Disapprove</b>	63	79	52	64	70
<b>Don't know</b>	11	4	6	9	5

## GUN REGULATIONS

In the wake of the mass shooting in Newtown, the debate over gun control has intensified, and President Obama has made it a central issue for his second term. How do Californians weigh in on this debate? Two in three Californians (65%) say government does not do enough to regulate access to guns, while three in 10 (31%) say government goes too far in restricting the rights of citizens to own guns. The perception that government does not do enough has increased since last March (53%) and August 2008 (58%), but is similar to February 2004 and January 2000 (62% each). An overwhelming majority of Democrats (80%) say government does not do enough; 57 percent of Republicans say government goes too far. A majority of independents (54%) say government doesn't do enough. Majorities across regions and demographic groups say government does not do enough. Twenty-one percent of Californians report having a firearm in their home. Opinion is divided among this group (49% goes too far, 47% does not do enough) whereas a strong majority of those without firearms say government does not do enough (73%).

Two in three Californians (65%) and likely voters (64%) would support a law requiring a nationwide ban on the sale of assault weapons. Democrats (79%) and independents (55%) support this proposal, while Republicans are more divided (45% support; 52% oppose). Majorities of residents across regions and demographic groups are in support. Latinos and women (75% each) are much more likely than whites (59%) and men (55%) to be in support. Support is much higher among those without firearms in their homes (73%) than among those with firearms in their homes (47% support, 50% oppose). In a recent ABC News/Washington Post poll, adults nationwide (58% support, 39% oppose) were somewhat less likely than Californians in our survey (65%) to support this ban.

### “Would you support or oppose a law requiring a nationwide ban on the sale of assault weapons?”

	All adults	Party			Have gun, rifle, or pistol in home	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
<b>Support</b>	65%	79%	45%	55%	47%	73%
<b>Oppose</b>	32	20	52	39	50	25
<b>Don't know</b>	3	1	2	5	2	3

When asked how worried they are, if at all, that a mass shooting could happen in their community, six in 10 Californians say they worry either a great deal (35%) or somewhat (26%), while fewer say they do not worry so much (20%) or do not worry at all (18%). Concern is greater among Democrats (68% very/somewhat worried) than independents (50%) or Republicans (40%). Latinos (79%) and women (70%) are much more worried than whites (44%) and men (52%). Strong majorities of parents of children 18 or younger (71%), including public school parents (74%), worry a great deal or somewhat. Concern is higher among those without guns in their homes (69%) than among those with firearms in their homes (41%). Californians in our survey are more likely to worry a great deal (35%) than adults nationwide in the ABC/Washington Post poll (24% a great deal, 31% somewhat, 24% not so much, 21% not at all).

### “How worried are you, if at all, that a mass shooting could happen in your community—is that something that worries you a great deal, somewhat, not so much, or not at all?”

	All adults	Race/ethnicity		Household income		
		Latinos	Whites	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	\$80,000 or more
<b>Great deal</b>	35%	60%	15%	47%	27%	23%
<b>Somewhat</b>	26	19	29	23	32	28
<b>Not so much</b>	20	10	29	16	22	27
<b>Not at all</b>	18	10	26	14	19	22

## HEALTH CARE REFORM

With federal health care reform set to be implemented in a year’s time, a record-high 55 percent of Californians support the changes to the health care system that have been enacted by Congress and the Obama administration; 37 percent are opposed. Support has increased 8 points since last March (47%); in previous surveys dating back to September 2009, about half were in support. Democrats (76%) are supportive, while Republicans (78%) are opposed and independents are divided (44% support, 47% oppose). Six in 10 residents in the San Francisco Bay Area (60%) and Los Angeles (59%) support these changes, compared to about half of Inland Empire (51%), Orange/San Diego (49%), and Central Valley (47%) residents. Latinos (70%) are far more likely than whites (43%) to support changes to the health care system. Those with health insurance (54% support) and without it (58% support) hold similar opinions.

**“Overall, given what you know about them, would you say you support or oppose the changes to the health care system that have been enacted by Congress and the Obama administration?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Support</b>	55%	76%	19%	44%	51%
<b>Oppose</b>	37	19	78	47	45
<b>Don’t know</b>	8	5	3	8	4

When asked if their families will be better off or worse off under the health reform law, nearly half of Californians (48%) say it won’t make a difference, 25 percent say they will be better off, and 23 percent say they will be worse off. Likely voters are less likely to say no difference and more likely to say they will be worse off (27% better off, 31% worse off, 39% no difference). In a September Kaiser Family Foundation poll, adults nationwide were less likely to say no difference (31% better off, 26% worse off, 33% no difference) than Californians in our survey. Democrats (38% better off, 11% worse off, 48% no difference) are more positive about the effects of health reform, while half of Republicans think reform will have a negative impact (9% better off, 53% worse off, 33% no difference). Californians without health insurance (32% better off, 22% worse off, 43% no difference) are more likely than those with insurance (23% better off, 23% worse off, 49% no difference) to say they will be better off.

**“Do you think that you and your family will be better off or worse off under the health reform law, or don’t you think it will make much difference?”**

		Better off	Worse off	Won’t make much difference	Don’t know
<b>All adults</b>		25%	23%	48%	5%
<b>Likely voters</b>		27	31	39	3
<b>Age</b>	<b>18 to 34</b>	21	12	63	4
	<b>35 to 54</b>	28	24	43	5
	<b>55 and older</b>	24	33	38	6
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	<b>Latinos</b>	32	11	55	3
	<b>Whites</b>	21	37	37	5
<b>Household income</b>	<b>Under \$40,000</b>	29	17	49	5
	<b>\$40,000 to \$80,000</b>	21	25	49	5
	<b>\$80,000 or more</b>	22	29	46	3
<b>Have health insurance</b>	<b>Yes</b>	23	23	49	5
	<b>No</b>	32	22	43	3

## IMMIGRATION POLICY REFORM

A record-high 63 percent of Californians view immigrants as a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills, while a record-low 31 percent view immigrants as a burden to California because they use public services. Majorities of Californians have viewed immigrants as a benefit since February 2000. Seven in 10 Democrats (72%) and half of independents (52%) view immigrants as a benefit, while six in 10 Republicans (60%) view them as a burden. More than half across regions view immigrants as a benefit. Latinos (84%) are far more likely than whites (45%) to say immigrants are a benefit. The view that immigrants are a benefit is higher among lower-income Californians, declines with age, and is far lower among U.S.-born residents than among immigrants.

**“Please indicate which statement comes closest to your own view—even if neither is exactly right. Immigrants today are a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills, or immigrants today are a burden to California because they use public services.”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Benefit</b>	63%	72%	33%	52%	54%
<b>Burden</b>	31	23	60	37	39
<b>Don't know</b>	6	5	6	12	7

Comprehensive immigration reform is near the top of President Obama’s list of things he hopes to achieve during his second term. When asked what they think should happen to most illegal immigrants who have lived and worked in the United States for at least two years, a record-high 76 percent of Californians say these immigrants should be given a chance to keep their jobs and eventually apply for legal status. A record-low 21 percent say they should be deported back to their native country. Since first asking this in 2007, at least 65 percent have said working immigrants should have a chance to keep their jobs. Majorities across parties, regions, and demographic groups think immigrants should be given a chance to keep their jobs. Among those who view immigrants as a benefit, 92 percent say they should be able to apply for legal status, while those who view immigrants as a burden are divided (47% keep jobs, 49% be deported).

**“If you had to choose, what do you think should happen to most illegal immigrants who have lived and worked in the United States for at least two years? They should be given a chance to keep their jobs and eventually apply for legal status, or they should be deported back to their native country?”**

		Chance to keep jobs	Deported	Don't know
<b>All adults</b>		76%	21%	3%
<b>Likely voters</b>		72	25	3
<b>Party</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	85	13	2
	<b>Republicans</b>	59	36	5
	<b>Independents</b>	68	28	4
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	<b>Latinos</b>	92	7	2
	<b>Whites</b>	63	33	4
<b>Age</b>	<b>18 to 34</b>	82	16	2
	<b>35 to 54</b>	77	20	3
	<b>55 and older</b>	68	28	4
<b>Perception of immigrants in California</b>	<b>Benefit</b>	92	7	1
	<b>Burden</b>	47	49	3

## LEGALIZATION OF SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Nine states and the District of Columbia have legalized same-sex marriage. How do Californians view same-sex marriage today? Just over half of Californians (53%) favor allowing gay and lesbian couples to be legally married, while 41 percent are opposed. Likely voters hold similar opinions (54% favor, 40% oppose). Support among all adults was similar last May (54%) and March (52%), and at least half of Californians have been in favor since March 2010. Californians hold similar opinions to adults nationwide (51% favor, 40% oppose), according to an NBC/Wall Street Journal poll conducted in December.

Two in three Democrats (67%) are in favor and two in three Republicans are opposed (65%) to same-sex marriage. Fifty-nine percent of independents are in favor of allowing gay and lesbian couples to marry. Support is highest among residents in the San Francisco Bay Area (65%), although there is majority support among residents in Los Angeles (54%) and Orange/San Diego Counties (51%). A majority of Central Valley (53%) and Inland Empire (56%) residents are opposed. Whites (56%) are more likely than Latinos (48%) to favor same-sex marriage. Support increases as income levels rise; it goes down as age increases. Majorities of those with at least some college education are in favor while those with a high school education or less are divided. Support is much greater among those who have never been married (69%) than among those who are currently married or widowed (46%) or were previously married (49%).

### “Do you favor or oppose allowing gay and lesbian couples to be legally married?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Favor</b>	53%	67%	30%	59%	54%
<b>Oppose</b>	41	28	65	34	40
<b>Don't know</b>	6	4	5	7	5

As the U.S. Supreme Court prepares to hear the case concerning the constitutionality of Proposition 8, how important is the outcome of this case to Californians? A solid majority of Californians view the Supreme Court's decision as either very (38%) or somewhat important (26%), while fewer view it as not too (16%) or not at all important (19%). Likely voters hold similar opinions (44% very, 25% somewhat, 13% not too, 17% not at all important). While majorities across parties view the outcome as important, Democrats (73%) are somewhat more likely than Republicans (66%) and independents (66%) to hold this view. Similar shares of proponents (69%) and opponents (64%) of same-sex marriage view the court decision as at least somewhat important, but opponents are more likely to say it is very important. More than half of Californians across regions and demographic groups view the decision as important. Whites (72%) are more likely than Latinos (53%) and women (68%) are more likely than men (60%) to say the outcome is important. Perceived importance increases with rising income.

### “How important to you is the outcome of the U.S. Supreme Court decision on the constitutional right to same-sex marriage?”

	All adults	Party			Same-sex marriage	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Favor	Oppose
<b>Very important</b>	38%	47%	43%	39%	36%	46%
<b>Somewhat important</b>	26	26	23	27	33	18
<b>Not too important</b>	16	14	11	15	17	13
<b>Not at all important</b>	19	12	20	16	13	23
<b>Don't know</b>	1	1	3	1	1	1

# REGIONAL MAP

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# METHODOLOGY

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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, project manager for this survey, and survey research associates Dean Bonner and Jui Shrestha. 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 1,704 California adult residents, including 1,192 interviewed on landline telephones and 512 interviewed on cell phones. Interviews took an average of 20 minutes to complete. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights from January 15–22, 2013.

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 new survey questions into Spanish, with assistance from Renatta DeFever.

With assistance from Abt SRBI, we used data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2009–2011 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. To estimate landline and cell phone service in California, Abt SRBI used 2011 state-level estimates released by the National Center for Health Statistics (which used data from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) and the ACS) and 2012 estimates for the West Census Region in the latest NHIS report. The estimates for California were then compared 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 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  $\pm 3.5$  percent at the 95 percent confidence level for the total unweighted sample of 1,704 adults. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 3.5 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for unweighted subgroups is larger: For the 1,386 registered voters, the sampling error is  $\pm 3.8\%$ ; for the 1,116 likely voters, it is  $\pm 4.2\%$ ; for the 423 public school parents, it is  $\pm 6.5\%$ . 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 five 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, “Inland Empire” refers to Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, and “Orange/San Diego” refers to Orange and San Diego Counties. Residents of other geographic areas are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, likely voters, and public school parents, but sample sizes for these less populated areas are not large enough to report separately.

We present specific results for non-Hispanic whites and also for Latinos, who account for about a third of the state’s adult population and constitute one of the fastest-growing voter groups. Results for other racial/ethnic groups—such as non-Hispanic Asians, blacks, and Native Americans—are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, likely voters, and public school parents, 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 other parties 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.

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 ABC News/Washington Post, the Kaiser Family Foundation, and NBC News/Wall Street Journal. Additional details about our methodology can be found at [www.ppic.org/content/other/SurveyMethodology.pdf](http://www.ppic.org/content/other/SurveyMethodology.pdf) and are available upon request through [surveys@ppic.org](mailto:surveys@ppic.org).

# QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESULTS

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## CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

January 15–22, 2013

1,704 California Adult Residents:  
English, Spanish

MARGIN OF ERROR  $\pm 3.5\%$  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 2013? *[code, don't read]*
  - 31% jobs, economy
  - 17 education, schools, teachers
  - 17 state budget, deficit, taxes
  - 6 immigration, illegal immigration
  - 4 crime, gangs, drugs, legalizing marijuana
  - 4 guns, gun control, mass shootings, school safety
  - 4 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?
  - 51% approve
  - 28 disapprove
  - 21 don't know
3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job?
  - 41% approve
  - 42 disapprove
  - 17 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?
  - 45% approve
  - 34 disapprove
  - 20 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?
  - 57% yes, will be able to work together
  - 33 no, will not be able to work together
  - 11 don't know
- 5a. As you may know, the Democrats in the state legislature gained a two-thirds majority as a result of the November 2012 election. Do you think that the Democrats having a two-thirds majority in the state legislature is *[rotate]* (1) a good thing *[or]* (2) a bad thing for California, or does it make no difference?
  - 40% good thing
  - 27 bad thing
  - 29 no difference
  - 5 don't know
6. Do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?
  - 51% right direction
  - 40 wrong direction
  - 9 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?
  - 49% good times
  - 40 bad times
  - 11 don't know

8. 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?

- 63% big problem
- 28 somewhat of a problem
- 6 not a problem
- 3 don't know

9. 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?)

- 63% affected a lot
- 24 affected somewhat
- 9 not affected
- 5 don't know

10. 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
- 18 higher education
- 17 health and human services
- 6 prisons and corrections
- 3 don't know

New revenue sources have been proposed to address the state budget situation. For each of the following, please say if you favor or oppose the proposal.

*[rotate questions 11 to 13]*

11. How about increasing taxes on the purchase of cigarettes?

- 70% favor
- 28 oppose
- 2 don't know

12. How about extending the state sales tax to services that are not currently taxed?

- 32% favor
- 61 oppose
- 7 don't know

13. How about raising the state taxes paid by California corporations?

- 54% favor
- 41 oppose
- 6 don't know

Fiscal reforms have been proposed to address the structural issues in the state budget and local budget issues. For each of the following, please say if you think the proposal is a good idea or a bad idea.

*[rotate questions 14 to 16]*

14. How about strictly limiting the amount of money that state spending could increase each year?

- 68% good idea
- 25 bad idea
- 7 don't know

15. How about shifting 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?

- 71% good idea
- 22 bad idea
- 7 don't know

16. How about replacing the two-thirds vote requirement with a 55-percent majority vote for voters to pass local parcel taxes for the local public schools?

- 57% good idea
- 37 bad idea
- 6 don't know

17. When it comes to the tough choices involved in the state budget, both in deciding how much Californians should pay in taxes and how much to fund state programs, whose approach do you most prefer—*[rotate]* (1) Governor Brown’s, (2) the Democrats’ in the legislature, *[or]* (3) the Republicans’ in the legislature?

- 25% Governor Brown’s
- 31 Democrats’
- 24 Republicans’
- other (*volunteered*)
- 5 none (*volunteered*)
- 15 don’t know

18. And when it comes to long-term issues of reforming the state budget process, both in terms of changing the way the state taxes and spends money, which approach do you most prefer—*[rotate]* (1) the governor and legislature should decide; *[or]* (2) the California voters should decide?

- 21% governor and legislature
- 76 California voters
- 1 other (*volunteered*)
- 3 don’t know

19. 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?

- 9% very confident
- 40 somewhat confident
- 24 not too confident
- 25 not at all confident
- 2 don’t know

20. If the state were to give local school districts more flexibility over how state funding is spent, how confident are you that local school districts would use this money wisely? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

- 23% very confident
- 48 somewhat confident
- 18 not too confident
- 11 not at all confident
- 1 don’t know

21. On another topic, Governor Brown proposed a budget plan for the next fiscal year that will increase spending on K–12 schools, higher education, and health and human services, create a \$1 billion reserve, and pay down the state’s debt. In general, do you favor or oppose the governor’s budget plan?

- 69% favor
- 22 oppose
- 3 haven’t heard anything about the budget (*volunteered*)
- 6 don’t know

22. Governor Brown’s budget plan includes new K–12 school funding that will mostly go to local school districts that have more *[rotate]* English language learners *[and]* lower-income students. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

- 75% favor
- 21 oppose
- 3 don’t know

23. Governor Brown’s budget plan includes \$4.2 billion to pay down state debt and creates a \$1 billion reserve. In general, *[rotate]* (1) do you prefer the governor’s plan to pay down state debt and build up the reserve, *[or]* (2) would you prefer to use some of this money to restore some funding for social service programs that were cut in recent years?

- 55% governor’s plan to pay down debt and build up reserve
- 38 restore funding for social services
- 6 don’t know

24. 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?

65% approve  
29 disapprove  
6 don't know

25. Which of these two statements comes closer to your point of view: **[rotate]** (1) the country will be able to unite behind Barack Obama, who will be able to accomplish a lot in the next four years; **[or]** (2) the country will be divided, and it will be hard for Barack Obama to accomplish a lot over the next four years?

47% country will be able to unite  
49 country will be divided  
4 don't know

**[rotate questions 26 and 27]**

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

54% approve  
25 disapprove  
21 don't know

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

52% approve  
27 disapprove  
21 don't know

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

34% approve  
59 disapprove  
7 don't know

29. 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?

56% approve  
27 disapprove  
18 don't know

30. 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?

51% yes, will be able to work together  
44 no, will not be able to work together  
5 don't know

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

56% right direction  
39 wrong direction  
5 don't know

**[rotate questions 32 and 33]**

32. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Obama is handling the federal deficit and debt ceiling?

56% approve  
38 disapprove  
6 don't know

33. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the Republicans in Congress are handling the federal deficit and debt ceiling?

26% approve  
63 disapprove  
11 don't know

34. Please indicate which statement comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right. **[rotate]** (1) The government goes too far in restricting the rights of citizens to own guns; **[or]** (2) the government does not do enough to regulate access to guns.

31% government goes too far  
65 government does not do enough  
4 don't know

34a. **[asked starting Jan.16]** Would you support or oppose a law requiring a nationwide ban on the sale of assault weapons?

65% support  
32 oppose  
3 don't know

35. How worried are you, if at all, that a mass shooting could happen in your community—is that something that worries you a great deal, somewhat, not so much, or not at all?

- 35% a great deal
- 26 somewhat
- 20 not so much
- 18 not at all
- don't know

36. Changing topics, overall, given what you know about them, would you say you support or oppose the changes to the health care system that have been enacted by **[rotate]** (1) Congress **[and]** (2) the Obama administration?

- 55% support
- 37 oppose
- 8 don't know

37. Do you think that you and your family will be **[rotate]** (1) better off **[or]** (2) worse off under the health reform law, or don't you think it will make much difference?

- 25% better off
- 23 worse off
- 48 not much difference
- 5 don't know

38. On another topic, please indicate which statement comes closest to your own view—even if neither is exactly right. **[rotate]** (1) Immigrants today are a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills; **[or]** (2) immigrants today are a burden to California because they use public services.

- 63% immigrants are a benefit to California
- 31 immigrants are a burden to California
- 6 don't know

39. If you had to choose, what do you think should happen to most illegal immigrants who have lived and worked in the United States for at least two years? **[rotate]** (1) They should be given a chance to keep their jobs and eventually apply for legal status; **[or]** (2) they should be deported back to their native country?

- 76% chance to keep their jobs
- 21 deported back to their native country
- 3 don't know

40. On another topic, do you favor or oppose allowing gay and lesbian couples to be legally married?

- 53% favor
- 41 oppose
- 6 don't know

41. How important to you is the outcome of the U.S. Supreme Court decision on the constitutional right to same-sex marriage—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 38% very important
- 26 somewhat important
- 16 not too important
- 19 not at all important
- 1 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?

- 68% yes **[ask q42a]**
- 32 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]**
- 29 Republican **[skip to q43a]**
- 5 another party (specify) **[skip to q44]**
- 22 independent **[skip to q43b]**

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

- 59% strong
- 39 not very strong
- 1 don't know

**[skip to q44]**

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

- 49% strong
- 47 not very strong
- 4 don't know

**[skip to q44]**

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

- 25% Republican Party
- 50 Democratic Party
- 17 neither (*volunteered*)
- 9 don't know

44. Next, would you consider yourself to be politically: **[read list, rotate order top to bottom]**

- 10% very liberal
- 23 somewhat liberal
- 31 middle-of-the-road
- 22 somewhat conservative
- 12 very conservative
- 2 don't know

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

- 22% great deal
- 41 fair amount
- 31 only a little
- 7 none
- don't know

**[d1–d3a: demographic questions]**

D3b. Do you happen to have any guns, rifles, or pistols in your home?

- 21% yes
- 79 no
- 1 don't know

**[d4–d16: demographic questions]**



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