



# Californians & Their Government

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**PPIC**

PUBLIC POLICY  
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

The PPIC Statewide Survey provides a voice for the public and likely voters—informing policymakers, encouraging discussion, and raising awareness on critical issues of the day.

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## News Release

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### PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY:

## Clinton, Sanders in Close Race—Each Leads Trump in Fall Matchup

HARRIS, SANCHEZ LEAD SENATE CONTEST, WITH NEARLY A THIRD OF LIKELY VOTERS UNDECIDED

SAN FRANCISCO, May 25, 2016—Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders are in a tight race in the Democratic presidential primary, while Donald Trump has the support of most Republican primary likely voters. In potential November matchups, Trump trails both Clinton and Sanders.

These are among the key findings in a statewide survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), with funding from The James Irvine Foundation.

Among Democratic primary likely voters, 46 percent support Clinton and 44 percent support Sanders. These voters include Democrats and independents who say they will vote in the Democratic primary. Clinton has a slight lead over Sanders among registered Democrats (49% to 41%).

Voters age 45 and older are more likely to support Clinton (59%), while younger voters are more likely to favor Sanders (66%). Both men (46% Sanders, 42% Clinton) and women (49% Clinton, 42% Sanders) are divided.

Asked if they would vote for Trump or someone else, most Republican primary likely voters (67%) choose Trump, while 26 percent say they would vote for someone else. Men (72%) are more likely than women (62%) to say they would vote for Trump.

In a fall presidential matchup, Clinton has support from 49 percent of likely voters, while 39 percent favor Trump, and another 11 percent would vote for someone else or are undecided. Women support Clinton by a wide margin (61% to 30%), and men are more likely to favor Trump (49% to 38% Clinton). In a matchup between Sanders and Trump, 53 percent of likely voters favor Sanders, 36 percent support Trump, and 11 percent would vote for someone else or are undecided. Sanders has much more support than Trump among women (61% to 28%), but men are more divided (45% Sanders, 43% Trump).

Compared to Clinton, Sanders performs better against Trump among independents (61% Sanders, 51% Clinton) and among younger voters (77% Sanders, 66% Clinton). Among Democratic primary likely voters, 85 percent of those who support Clinton in the primary would vote for Sanders against Trump in the fall, while 75 percent of Sanders supporters would choose Clinton over Trump.

Fewer than half of California's likely voters (42%) are satisfied with their choice of presidential candidates, lower than in May 2012 (57%). While most Democrats (53%) today are satisfied, just over a third of Republicans (36%) and independents (35%) are. Satisfaction among Republican likely voters has fallen each month since the survey began asking this question in December 2015.

"California's June primary finds voters with polarized perceptions that will define their ballot choices," said Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO. "Most Republicans are unhappy, while most Democrats are satisfied with the political and economic status quo."

## Harris, Sanchez Ahead in Senate Primary—Harris Leads in Fall Matchup

In the race to replace retiring U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer, nearly a third of likely voters (31%) remain undecided less than a month before the primary. Among the candidates, Democrat Kamala Harris leads with the support of 27 percent of likely voters. Democratic U.S. Representative Loretta Sanchez has the support of 19 percent in a race in which the two candidates with the most votes—regardless of party—will advance to the November election. They are followed by Republicans Tom Del Beccaro (8%), Ron Unz (6%), and Duf Sundheim (3%). Among Democratic likely voters, Harris leads Sanchez (43% to 32%), with 19 percent undecided. Among Republicans, nearly half (46%) are undecided, as are 35 percent of independents. Latino voters are most likely to support Sanchez (48%), though 19 percent favor Harris. White voters are the most likely to be undecided (36%) or support Harris (24%).

If Harris and Sanchez advance to the November election, 34 percent of likely voters say they would vote for Harris and 26 percent would vote for Sanchez (24% volunteer that they would not vote and 15% are undecided). Just under half of Democrats (46%) would vote for Harris, while half of Republicans (51%) say they would not vote. Latinos support Sanchez over Harris. Whites support Harris over Sanchez, with nearly a third saying they would not vote.

## Republican Party's Favorability Falls

Asked for their views on the two major political parties, half of Californians (49%) have a favorable impression of the Democratic Party, while only 23 percent have a favorable view of the Republican Party. Likely voters are more inclined to have a favorable view of the Democratic Party than the Republican Party (42% to 23%). While favorability toward the Democratic Party is similar today to survey findings in December (51% adults, 47% likely voters favorable), favorability toward the Republican Party has declined by 7 points among all adults (23%, down from 30% in December) and by 10 points among likely voters (23%, down from 33%).

Most Democrats (74%) view their party favorably, but only 38 percent of Republicans have a favorable view of theirs—a substantial drop from December when 74 percent of Republicans had a favorable impression of their party. Solid majorities of each racial/ethnic group have an unfavorable impression of the Republican Party (87% black, 69% Asian, 69% Latino, 69% white).

"As the presidential primary season comes to a close, the Republican Party's favorability rating has declined while the Democratic Party's favorability rating has held steady," Baldassare said. "Particularly noteworthy is the big disconnect on immigration policy between Californians and the Republican front runner."

## Most Oppose Building a Wall on the Border

The survey asks Californians about two issues being debated in the presidential campaigns:

- **Immigration policy.** A strong majority of likely voters (65%) oppose building a wall along the entire border with Mexico, as Trump has promised to do. There is a stark partisan divide: 86 percent of Democrats and 72 percent of independents oppose building a wall, while 59 percent of Republicans favor it. Asked whether or not undocumented immigrants living in the United States should be allowed to stay legally, 75 percent of likely voters favor allowing them to stay. Majorities across parties say undocumented immigrants should be allowed to stay.
- **U.S. Supreme Court.** At a time when the court has issued rulings on a number of polarizing topics, California likely voters are divided in how they rate the court: 46 percent approve of the way the

court is handling its job and 44 percent disapprove. Asked whether they think the Senate should confirm Obama's nominee, Merrick Garland, to the court, about half of likely voters (51%) say it should (33% should not).

Just over half of likely voters (52%) approve of the way President Obama is handling his job. Among those who say they would vote for Clinton in the Democratic primary, 90 percent say they approve of Obama's job performance. Job approval of the president is slightly lower among those who favor Sanders in the primary (83% approve). Just 12 percent of Republican likely voters approve of the president's job performance. Only 15 percent of likely voters approve of the way Congress is handling its job. Strong majorities across parties disapprove of Congress' job performance.

## Californians Balk at Vehicle Fee, Higher Gas Tax

The survey asked about the governor's revised state budget proposal for the next fiscal year, which includes increased spending and funds to pay down state debt and build reserves. After hearing a description of the plan that includes these elements, most likely voters (60%) favor it. The budget also includes a proposal to raise revenue for transportation infrastructure projects with a new fee on all vehicles and an increase in the state gasoline tax. After hearing a description of this part of the governor's proposal, likely voters are much less likely to support his budget plan (37%).

Baldassare noted: "The governor's budget plan includes a mix of increased spending and savings that has the public's backing, while his efforts to increase revenues for surface transportation have hit a serious roadblock."

Asked about other revenue sources for surface transportation projects, 52 percent of likely voters say they would vote yes on a state bond measure to pay for them. The idea of a local sales tax—which several local governments will have on their ballots this year—fares less well: 38 percent of likely voters would vote yes on such a measure, far short of the two-thirds majority required for passage.

With the state projected to have a budget surplus of several billion dollars, Californians were asked whether they would prefer to pay down state debt and build up the reserve or use part of the money to restore some social service programs that were cut in recent years. Likely voters prefer paying down debt (55% to 40% restore funding).

In the wake of his budget revision, Governor Brown has a job approval rating of 50 percent among likely voters. The legislature's job approval rating is lower, at 38 percent among likely voters.

## Majorities Favor Legalizing Marijuana, Raising Cigarette Tax

The survey asked about three issues likely to be on the November ballot:

- **Marijuana legalization.** A majority (60%) of likely voters say that, in general, marijuana use should be legal, and 37 percent say it should not be legal. It is estimated that the initiative to legalize marijuana—if passed—would generate about \$1 billion in tax revenue annually, most of which would be directed toward substance abuse prevention and treatment. Among likely voters, 43 percent say that spending the revenue this way is very important.
- **Extension of the Proposition 30 tax on high-earners.** A majority of likely voters (58%) favor extending the tax on earnings above \$250,000 for 12 years to fund education and health care (39% oppose).
- **Increase in cigarette tax.** A strong majority of likely voters (67%) favor increasing the tax on the purchase of cigarettes to fund health care (31% oppose). Majorities across parties are in favor.

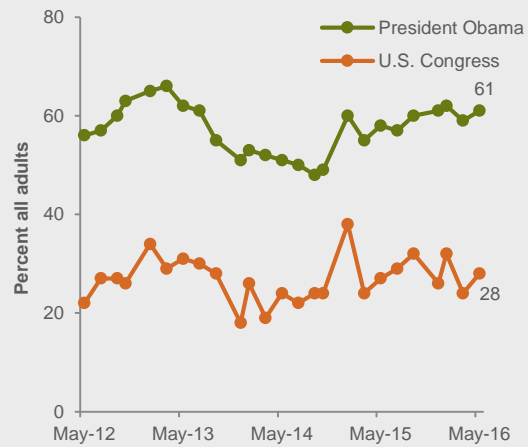
"California seems poised to show its blue state credentials in the fall," Baldassare said. "Voters today are signaling their early support for Democratic statewide candidates, tax initiatives, and marijuana legalization."

# Election and National Issues

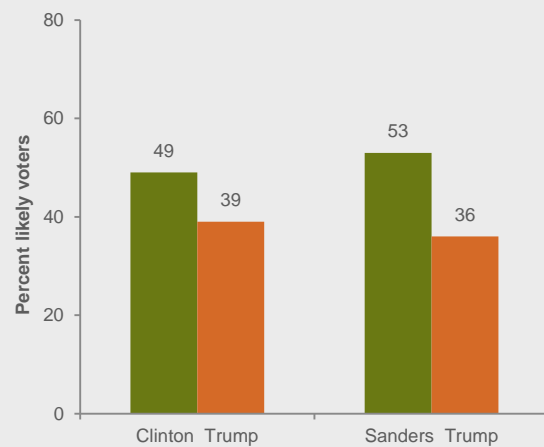
## Key Findings

- Fewer than half of likely voters (42%) are satisfied with their choice of presidential candidates; Democrats are much more likely than Republicans or independents to be satisfied. Hillary Clinton (46%) and Bernie Sanders (44%) are in a close race in the Democratic primary, while Donald Trump has the support of 67 percent of Republican primary likely voters. In potential general election matchups, Trump trails both Clinton and Sanders. *(pages 7, 8)*
- Nearly six in 10 likely voters (57%) are satisfied with their choice of candidates for the open U.S. Senate seat; Democrats are much more likely than Republicans and independents to be satisfied. Three in 10 likely voters are unsure how they would vote if the primary were held today. As we found in March, Democrats Kamala Harris and Loretta Sanchez are currently the top two vote-getters. In a November matchup, Harris leads Sanchez by 8 points. *(page 9)*
- Six in 10 Californians (61%) approve of President Obama, while three in 10 (28%) approve of Congress. *(page 10)*
- Overwhelmingly, with majorities across parties, Californians say undocumented immigrants currently in the United States should be able to stay legally if they meet certain requirements. Californians overall also overwhelmingly oppose building a wall along the Mexican border, though a majority of Republicans (59%) favor this proposal. *(page 11)*
- Californians are divided on their opinion of the Supreme Court; half think the Senate should confirm Merrick Garland. *(page 12)*
- About half of Californians (49%) view the Democratic Party favorably; one in four (23%) have a favorable impression of the Republican Party. *(page 13)*

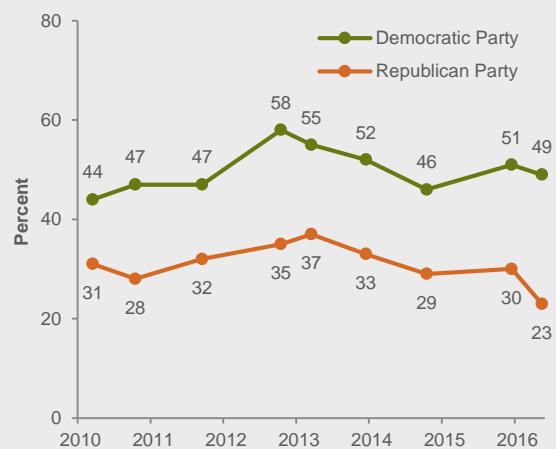
Approval ratings of federal elected officials



Potential November presidential matchups



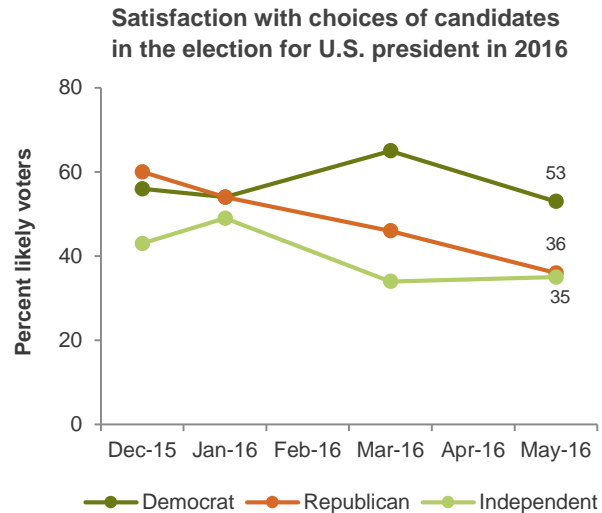
Party favorability over time



## California Presidential Primary

On June 7, California voters will weigh in on the Democratic and Republican presidential nominations. A majority of likely voters—including majorities across parties—say they are following news about the candidates very closely. Attention to news today (55% very closely, 34% fairly) is higher than in May 2012 (42% very closely, 44% fairly). About four in 10 likely voters (42%) are satisfied with their choices of candidates for president—lower than in May 2012 (57%). Most Democrats (53%) today are satisfied, while fewer than half of Republicans (36%) and independents (35%) are satisfied. Satisfaction among Republican likely voters has fallen each month since we began asking this question in December 2015.

Among Democratic primary likely voters (including Democrats and independent voters who say they will vote in the Democratic primary), support for Hillary Clinton is at 46 percent, while 44 percent support Bernie Sanders. Clinton has a slight lead over Sanders among registered Democrats (49% to 41%).



As we found in March, likely voters age 45 and older are more likely to support Clinton (59%), while those younger than 45 are more likely to support Sanders (66%). Latino voters are slightly more likely to support Clinton (52% to 43%), while white voters are more divided (47% Clinton, 41% Sanders). Also divided are men (42% Clinton, 46% Sanders) and women (49% Clinton, 42% Sanders). Sanders leads Clinton among those who are very liberal (64% to 35%). Clinton leads Sanders among those who describe themselves as politically somewhat liberal (54% to 33%) or middle-of-the-road (55% to 37%).

### “If the 2016 Democratic primary for president were being held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for?”

Democratic primary likely voters only	Likely voters	Age		Gender	
		18 to 44	45 and older	Men	Women
Hillary Clinton	46%	27%	59%	42%	49%
Bernie Sanders	44	66	28	46	42
Someone else	4	2	6	6	3
Would not vote in presidential primary ( <i>volunteered</i> )	1	–	2	2	–
Don't know	4	4	5	3	5

With the Republican nomination for president essentially decided since Donald Trump is the only candidate remaining in the race, we asked Republican primary likely voters if they would vote for Donald Trump or someone else. Most Republican likely voters (67%) say they would vote for Trump, and 26 percent say they would vote for someone else; 6 percent are undecided. Men (72%) are more likely than women (62%) to support Trump. Likely voters who describe themselves as politically very conservative (76%) are much more likely than voters who describe themselves as somewhat conservative (56%) to support Trump.

## Presidential Race

Looking ahead to potential presidential election matchups, Donald Trump trails Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders among likely voters. In a Clinton-Trump matchup, Hillary Clinton has the support of 49 percent of likely voters, while 39 percent support Trump and another 11 percent would vote for someone else (7%) or are undecided (4%). Eighty-five percent of Democratic likely voters support Clinton and 78 percent of Republicans would vote for Trump, while half of independents support Clinton (51%, 33% Trump). Most Latino likely voters support Clinton (71%, 17% Trump), but whites are more divided (40% Clinton, 49% Trump). Women support Clinton over Trump by a wide margin (61% to 30%), while men are more likely to support Trump (49% to 38%). Clinton leads Trump among likely voters age 18 to 34 (66% to 28%), while those age 35 and older are divided (45% Clinton, 42% Trump). Support for Clinton declines as income level increases (68% under \$40,000; 49% \$40,000 to \$80,000; 40% \$80,000 or higher).

**“If the November 8 presidential election were being held today, and these were the candidates, would you vote for?”**

All likely voters	Likely voters	Party			Race/Ethnicity	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Latinos	Whites
Hillary Clinton, the Democrat	49%	85%	9%	51%	71%	40%
Donald Trump, the Republican	39	11	78	33	17	49
Someone else (volunteered)	7	1	8	10	9	7
Don't know	4	2	5	6	3	4

In a Sanders-Trump matchup, Bernie Sanders has the support of 53 percent of likely voters, 36 percent would vote for Donald Trump, and another 11 percent would vote for someone else (7%) or are undecided (4%). Most Democratic (85%) and independent (61%) likely voters support Sanders, while most Republicans support Trump (73%). Three in 10 Latinos support Sanders (73%, 14% Trump), while whites are more divided (43% Sanders, 45% Trump). Women support Sanders over Trump by a wide margin (61% to 28%), but men are more divided (45% Sanders, 43% Trump). Support for Sanders is especially high among those age 18 to 34 (77% Sanders, 17% Trump), while those age 35 and older are more divided (47% Sanders, 40% Trump). Support for Sanders declines as income level increases (67% under \$40,000; 56% \$40,000 to \$80,000; 45% \$80,000 or higher).

**“If the November 8 presidential election were being held today, and these were the candidates, would you vote for?”**

All likely voters	Likely voters	Party			Race/Ethnicity	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Latinos	Whites
Bernie Sanders, the Democrat	53%	85%	15%	61%	73%	43%
Donald Trump, the Republican	36	9	73	26	14	45
Someone else (volunteered)	7	4	7	6	10	7
Don't know	4	2	6	7	2	4

There are notable differences in the two matchups: in a matchup with Trump, Sanders has more support than Clinton among independents (61% Sanders, 51% Clinton) and younger voters (77% Sanders, 66% Clinton). Among Democratic primary likely voters who support Clinton in the primary, 85 percent would vote for Sanders against Trump; 75 percent of Sanders supporters would vote for Clinton over Trump.



## U.S. Senate Race

Less than a month before the June election, nearly six in 10 likely voters (57%) are satisfied with their choice of candidates in the election for U.S. Senate. Most Democrats (71%) are satisfied, while fewer independents (55%) and Republicans (43%) are satisfied. Satisfaction has increased since March (47%).

Under California's top-two primary system, in place since 2011, the primary race to replace retiring Senator Barbara Boxer includes all candidates, regardless of party, and is open to all registered voters. The top two vote-getters will advance to the November election. Today, 31 percent of likely voters say they are undecided. Among the candidates, state attorney general Kamala Harris, a Democrat, leads with support from 27 percent of likely voters, followed by Democratic U.S. Representative Loretta Sanchez at 19 percent. Tom Del Beccaro, former chairman of the state Republican Party, has support from 8 percent of likely voters; Ron Unz has 6 percent support and Duf Sundheim, also a former chairman of the state Republican Party, has 3 percent support. Results were similar in our March survey, which was conducted before Ron Unz entered the race (26% Harris, 17% Sanchez, 31% don't know). Today, Harris leads Sanchez among Democratic likely voters (43% to 32%), with one in five (19%) undecided. Among Republican voters, 46 percent say they are undecided, while 35 percent of independents are undecided. Latino voters are most likely to support Sanchez (48%), but 19 percent would vote for Harris. White voters are most likely to be undecided (36%) or to support Harris (24%).

**“If the June primary for U.S. senator were being held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for?”**

All likely voters	Likely voters	Party			Race/Ethnicity	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Latinos	Whites
Kamala Harris, a Democrat	27%	43%	7%	33%	19%	24%
Loretta Sanchez, a Democrat	19	32	5	13	48	12
Tom Del Beccaro, a Republican	8	1	16	6	2	10
Ron Unz, a Republican	6	–	13	4	2	7
Duf Sundheim, a Republican	3	–	9	3	1	4
Someone else	6	4	4	6	9	6
Don't know	31	19	46	35	18	36

If the current top-two primary leaders, both Democrats, advance to the general election, 34 percent of likely voters say they would support Harris, while 26 percent would support Sanchez. Twenty-four percent volunteer that they would not vote, and 15 percent are undecided. Just under half of Democrats support Harris, while half of Republicans say they would not vote. Latinos support Sanchez over Harris, while whites support Harris over Sanchez, with three in 10 saying they would not vote.

**“If the November 8 election for the U.S. Senate were being held today, and these were the top-two candidates in the June Primary, would you vote for?”**

All likely voters	Likely voters	Party			Race/Ethnicity	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Latinos	Whites
Kamala Harris, a Democrat	34%	46%	20%	40%	23%	32%
Loretta Sanchez, a Democrat	26	36	13	27	53	21
Neither/would not vote (volunteered)	24	4	51	15	13	29
Don't know	15	14	16	17	12	18

## Approval Ratings of Federal Elected Officials

Six in ten Californians (61%) and about half of likely voters (52%) approve of the way President Obama is handling his job. The president’s approval rating was similar in March (59% adults, 53% likely voters), and a majority of Californians have expressed approval since January 2015. Californians are more likely to approve of the president than are adults nationwide (51%), according to a May ABC/Washington Post poll.

There are stark partisan differences: Democrats (84%) are far more likely than independents (57%) and Republicans (15%) to approve of the president. Across racial/ethnic groups, blacks (90%), Asians (74%), and Latinos (69%) are much more likely than whites (47%) to approve of the way President Obama is handling his job. Younger Californians (age 18 to 34) are far more likely than older adults (age 55 or older) to approve of the president (76% to 49%).

Among likely voters who say they would vote for Hillary Clinton in the Democratic primary, 90 percent say they approve of the way President Obama is handling his job. Among those who say they would vote for Bernie Sanders in the Democratic primary, 83 percent approve of the president. Notably, only 12 percent of Republican likely voters approve of the president’s job performance.

### “Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barack Obama is handling his job as president of the United States?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	61%	84%	15%	57%	52%
Disapprove	36	15	83	37	46
Don't know	2	1	2	6	2

Twenty-eight percent of Californians and 15 percent of likely voters approve of the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job. Approval was similar in March (24% adults, 14% likely voters) and has been similar over the past year. Californians in our survey are twice as likely to approve of Congress compared to adults nationwide (14% in a May CBS News/New York Times poll).

Unlike the stark partisan divide in the president’s approval ratings, approval of Congress is low across parties. Fewer than one in four Democrats (21%), independents (20%), and Republicans (17%) approve of the way Congress is handling its job. Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (43%), Asians (41%), and blacks (34%) are far more likely than whites (12%) to approve. Regionally, residents in Los Angeles (32%) are the most likely to approve of Congress, while residents in the Central Valley (23%) are the least likely to express approval. Approval of Congress is lower among college graduates (19%) than among those with no college education (38%).

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	28%	21%	17%	20%	15%
Disapprove	67	75	81	75	82
Don't know	6	4	3	5	3

## Immigration Policy

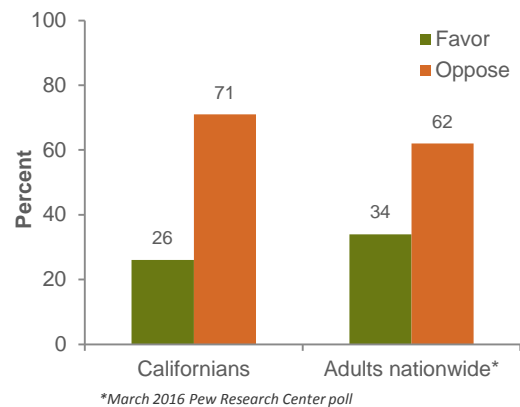
An overwhelming majority of Californians (83%) say there should be a way for undocumented immigrants to stay in the United States legally, if certain requirements are met. Fourteen percent say they should not be allowed to stay. Overwhelming majorities of Democrats (90%) and independents (86%), as well as a majority of Republicans (58%), say undocumented immigrants should be allowed to stay. Indeed, three in four or more Californians across all regions and demographic groups say undocumented immigrants should be allowed to stay if certain requirements are met. A similar 82 percent said immigrants should be allowed to stay in our January survey. Californians are slightly more likely to say undocumented immigrants should be able to stay legally than adults nationwide (75% in a March 2016 Pew Research Center poll).

**“Which comes closer to your view about how to handle undocumented immigrants who are living in the U.S.? There should be a way for them to stay in the country legally, if certain requirements are met or they should not be allowed to stay in this country legally?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Allowed to stay legally	83%	90%	58%	86%	75%
Not allowed to stay legally	14	7	38	12	22
Don't know	2	3	4	2	3

Donald Trump has promised that if he is elected president he will build a wall along the entire U.S. border with Mexico. How do Californians feel about this proposal? Seven in ten (71%) Californians and 65 percent of likely voters oppose building a wall along the Mexican border. Just 26 percent of Californians and a third of likely voters express support. Californians in our survey are less supportive of building a wall than adults nationwide (34%, according to a March Pew Research Center poll).

**Support for building a wall along the entire border with Mexico**



There are stark party differences on this issue in California. While an overwhelming majority of Democrats (86%) and a solid majority of independents (72%) oppose building a wall along the entire border with Mexico, 59 percent of Republicans favor this proposal. Today, majorities across all regions and demographic groups oppose building a wall. But men are somewhat more likely than women to favor this proposal (30% to 21%). Support for building a wall along the Mexican border increases as age and income increase. Across racial/ethnic groups, whites (39%) and Asians (26%) are more likely than blacks (15%) and Latinos (11%) to favor building a wall. Notably, among Republican likely voters who say they will vote for Trump in the primary, 78 percent favor building a wall along the Mexican border.

**“All in all, would you favor or oppose building a wall along the entire border with Mexico?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	26%	13%	59%	25%	33%
Oppose	71	86	37	72	65
Don't know	3	1	4	4	2

## Supreme Court

Over the last year, the U.S. Supreme Court has issued rulings on a number of hotly debated topics, such as gay marriage and the Affordable Care Act. In light of recent rulings, how do Californians rate the Supreme Court? Today, Californians are divided, with 45 percent approving of the way the Supreme Court is handling its job while a similar proportion disapprove (42%). Approval of the Supreme Court was slightly higher in August 2005 (52% approve), shortly after Justice Sandra Day O’Connor announced her retirement. In a February CBS News poll, 49 percent of adults nationwide approved of the way the Supreme Court was handling its job just days after the death of Justice Antonin Scalia.

Across parties, slightly more than half of California Democrats (53%) approve of the Supreme Court’s job performance, while a majority of Republicans (56%) disapprove. Independents are more divided (48% approve, 41% disapprove). Asians (62%) are more likely than whites (44%), Latinos (41%), and blacks (40%) to approve of the Court. Californians age 18 to 34 (51%) are more likely than those age 55 or older (40%) to approve of the way the Supreme Court is handling its job.

**“Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Supreme Court is handling its job?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	45%	53%	33%	48%	46%
Disapprove	42	37	56	41	44
Don't know	13	10	12	11	10

On March 16, President Obama nominated federal judge Merrick Garland to fill the current Supreme Court vacancy. Senate Republicans have refused to hold confirmation hearings for the nominee. Today, half of Californians (50%) say that the Senate should confirm Judge Garland to the Supreme Court, while one in four (24%) say the Senate should not. A quarter of Californians say they have not heard enough to have an opinion (14%) or are unsure (11%). In a March Pew Research Center poll, 46 percent of adults nationwide said the Senate should confirm Merrick Garland while 30 percent said the Senate should not.

There are stark partisan differences on this issue: a strong majority of Democrats (72%) are in favor of Judge Garland’s confirmation, while a solid majority of Republicans (64%) are opposed. Among independents, a slight majority (54%) favor confirming Judge Garland, while one in four (24%) say the Senate should not confirm him. College graduates (56%) are more likely than those with no college education (45%) to say that the Senate should confirm Judge Garland. Across racial/ethnic groups, blacks (62%) and Asians (61%) are more likely than whites (47%) and Latinos (46%) to say the Senate should confirm him.

**“As you may know, Barack Obama has nominated federal judge Merrick Garland to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. From what you've seen and heard so far, do you think the Senate should or should not confirm Merrick Garland?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Should confirm	50%	72%	22%	54%	51%
Should not confirm	24	10	64	24	33
Have not heard enough to have an opinion ( <i>volunteered</i> )	14	10	9	10	9
Don't know	11	8	5	11	7

## Party Favorability

With the 2016 election campaigns in full swing, how do Californians feel about the two major political parties? About half of Californians (49%) have a favorable impression of the Democratic Party, and 23 percent have a favorable impression of the Republican Party. Among adults nationwide in the ABC/Washington Post poll, 48 percent have a favorable opinion of the Democratic Party and 36 percent have a favorable view of the Republican Party. California likely voters are more inclined to have favorable impressions of the Democratic Party (42%) than of the Republican Party (23%). While the Democratic Party’s favorability was similar in December (51% favorable), the Republican Party’s favorability was 7 percentage points higher (30%). Among likely voters, Republican Party favorability has declined by 10 percentage points since December (23%, down from 33%).

According to the most recent report from the California Secretary of State, 44 percent of California voters are registered as Democrats, 28 percent as Republicans, 5 percent with other parties, and 24 percent as independents (i.e., no party preference).

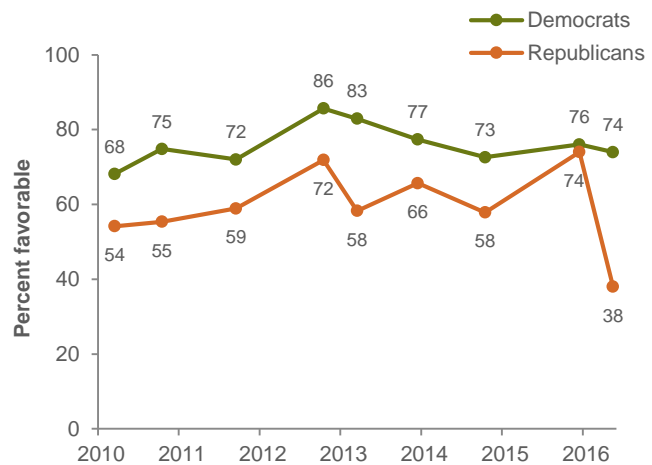
### “Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of the Democratic Party?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favorable	49%	74%	10%	41%	42%
Unfavorable	44	23	87	50	54
Don't know	7	2	3	9	4

Among registered Democrats, three in four (74%) view their party favorably, while one in four (23%) view it unfavorably. Among registered Republicans, 38 percent view their party favorably—a notable decrease from December, when 74 percent had a favorable impression of their party. Half of registered independents have an unfavorable impression of the Democratic Party (50%), and a strong majority have an unfavorable impression of the Republican Party (69%).

Across racial/ethnic groups, blacks (70%) and Latinos (61%) are much more likely than Asians (46%) and whites (38%) to have a favorable impression of the Democratic Party. Solid majorities of each racial/ethnic group have an unfavorable impression of the Republican Party (69% Asians, 69% Latinos, 69% whites, 87% blacks).

Favorability toward their own party over time



### “Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of the Republican Party?”

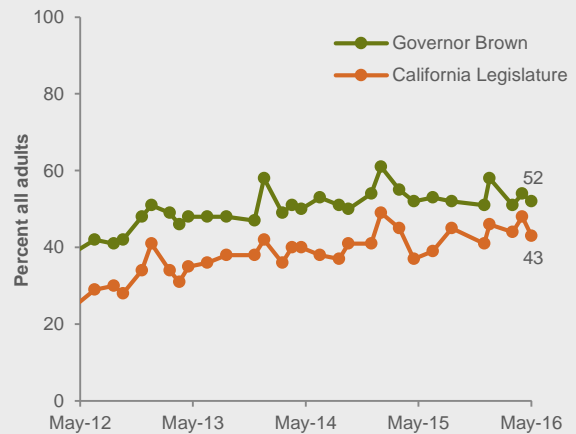
	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favorable	23%	8%	38%	23%	23%
Unfavorable	70	90	57	69	75
Don't know	7	2	4	8	3

# State and Fiscal Issues

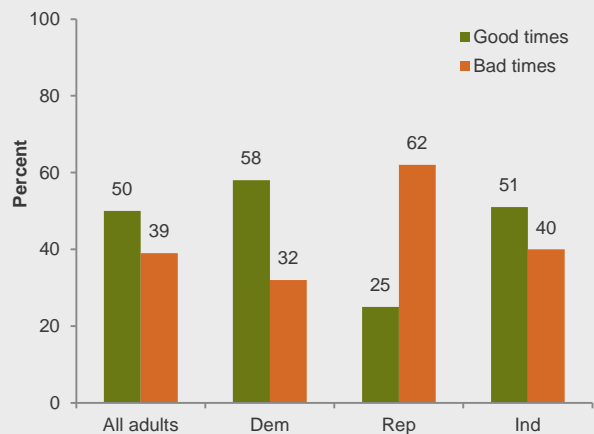
## Key Findings

- Fifty-two percent of Californians approve of Governor Jerry Brown and 43 percent approve of the state legislature. *(page 15)*
- Three in 10 Californians name jobs and the economy as the most important issue facing people in the state. Californians are divided along party lines about whether the state is headed in the right direction or will have good times financially. *(page 16)*
- Forty-four percent of California adults and 51 percent of likely voters say the state budget situation is a big problem. Californians are divided across parties in their preferences for using the budget surplus. *(page 17)*
- Solid majorities of Californians and likely voters favor the governor’s budget proposal when his transportation plan is not mentioned. Support drops when the plan—which includes a new fee and a higher gasoline tax—is outlined. *(page 18)*
- About six in 10 adults and likely voters favor extending the Proposition 30 income taxes to fund education and health care. About seven in 10 adults and likely voters favor increasing the tax on the purchase of cigarettes to fund health care. *(page 19)*
- Majorities of Californians and likely voters would vote yes on a state bond to pay for surface transportation projects; Democrats and Republicans are on opposing sides. About four in 10 adults and likely voters would vote yes to raise the local sales tax to fund transportation projects. *(page 20)*
- Majorities of adults and likely voters continue to favor marijuana legalization. Forty-five percent of Californians think it is very important that revenues from taxing marijuana go to substance abuse prevention and treatment. *(page 21)*

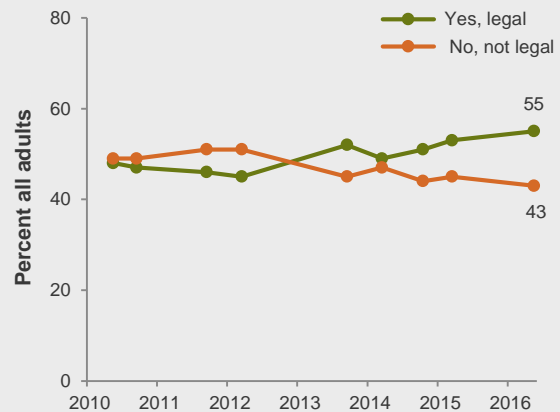
Approval ratings of state elected officials



Economic outlook for state



Marijuana legalization



## Approval Ratings of State Elected Officials

Following the May budget revision, 52 percent of adults and 50 percent of likely voters approve of the way Jerry Brown is handling his job as California governor. Brown’s approval rating was similar in April (54% adults, 56% likely voters) and last May (52% adults, 54% likely voters). Today, the governor’s approval rating is much higher among Democrats (66%) and independents (59%) than among Republicans (27%). Approval is slightly higher in the San Francisco Bay Area (58%) than in other regions. Asians (59%), blacks (58%), and Latinos (55%) are somewhat more likely than whites (48%) to approve.

**“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Jerry Brown is handling his job as governor of California?”**

		Approve	Disapprove	Don't know
All adults		52%	28%	20%
Likely voters		50	39	10
Party	Democrats	66	21	14
	Republicans	27	63	10
	Independents	59	27	14
Region	Central Valley	51	28	21
	San Francisco Bay Area	58	18	24
	Los Angeles	52	31	17
	Orange/San Diego	50	33	17
	Inland Empire	52	29	20

As state lawmakers approach the June budget deadline, 43 percent of adults and 38 percent of likely voters approve of the way the California Legislature is handling its job. Approval of the legislature was in a similar range in April (48% adults, 40% likely voters), but it was somewhat lower last May (37% adults, 30% likely voters). Today, a majority of Democrats (54%) approve of the legislature, while fewer independents (44%) and Republicans (17%) hold this view. Asians (54%), Latinos (51%), and blacks (49%) are more likely than whites (33%) to approve.

**“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job?”**

		Approve	Disapprove	Don't know
All adults		43%	37%	20%
Likely voters		38	49	13
Party	Democrats	54	29	17
	Republicans	17	70	14
	Independents	44	42	14
Region	Central Valley	37	42	22
	San Francisco Bay Area	47	32	22
	Los Angeles	43	40	17
	Orange/San Diego	44	36	20
	Inland Empire	44	30	26

## Overall Mood

What is the public’s mood before the California Primary on June 7? When asked to identify the most important issue facing people in California today, most say either jobs and the economy (30%) or water and the drought (16%). The same issues were on top in March (27% economy, 20% water) and last May (39% water, 20% economy), but mentions of water and the drought have declined. Today, Central Valley residents are slightly more likely than others to mention water. Likely voters and all adults hold similar views on the top two issues.

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

Top five issues	All adults	Region					Likely voters
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
Jobs, economy	30%	29%	29%	33%	26%	34%	32%
Water, drought	16	23	16	11	18	14	16
Immigration, illegal immigration	6	3	2	7	11	9	6
Education, schools, teachers	6	3	8	6	7	9	9
Crime, gangs, drugs	5	5	4	6	3	5	3

Californians are divided about the direction of the state. Fifty-one percent of all adults and 45 percent of likely voters say that things in California are generally going in the right direction. The view that the state is headed in the right direction was similar in March (50% adults, 45% likely voters) and slightly lower last May (45% adults, 40% likely voters). Today, Democrats (66%) are more likely than independents (52%) and Republicans (19%) to say that things are going in the right direction. San Francisco Bay Area residents (62%) are more likely to say that things are going in the right direction than residents in other regions (49% Inland Empire, 49% Orange/San Diego, 48% Los Angeles, 43% Central Valley). Blacks (64%), Asians (62%), and Latinos (55%) are much more likely than whites (42%) to have this positive outlook.

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Right direction	51%	66%	19%	52%	45%
Wrong direction	43	30	78	41	51
Don't know	6	5	3	6	4

When it comes to the state’s economic outlook, half of all adults (50%) and 45 percent of likely voters say that California will have good times financially in the next 12 months. Expectations for good economic times were similar in March (51% adults, 46% likely voters) and last May (48% adults, 44% likely voters). Today, Democrats (58%) and independents (51%) are twice as likely as Republicans (25%) to expect good economic times. Half or more residents in Los Angeles (55%), the Inland Empire (54%), and the San Francisco Bay Area (51%) expect good economic times (46% Central Valley, 44% Orange/San Diego). Latinos (59%) and Asians (54%) are somewhat more likely than blacks (46%) and whites (43%) to expect good economic times. Men (54%) are slightly more likely than women (47%) to have positive economic expectations, and these expectations decline with age.



## State Budget Situation

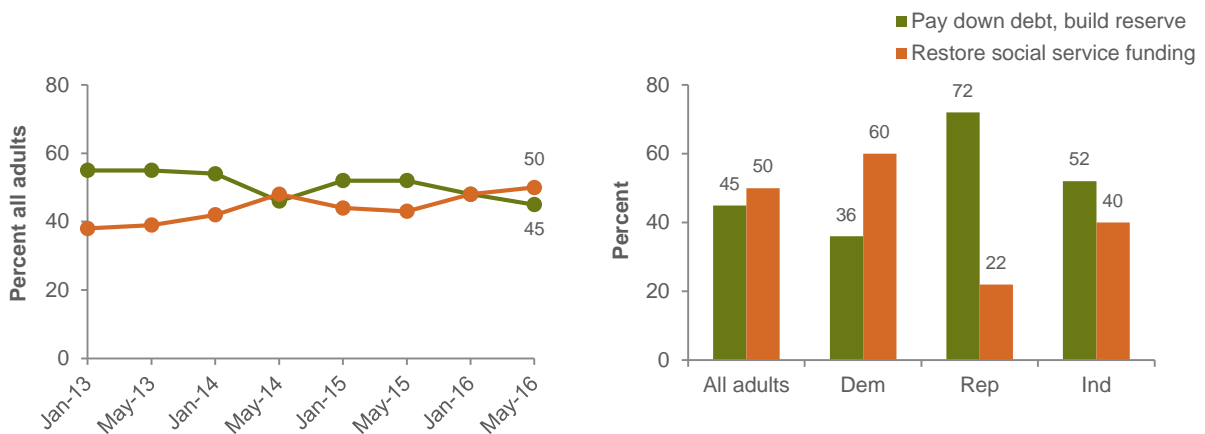
As the governor and legislature deliberate spending and revenues for the next year, 44 percent of California adults and 51 percent of likely voters say the budget situation is a big problem. Most Republicans (76%) call the budget a big problem, compared to far fewer independents (44%) and Democrats (34%). The view that the budget situation is a big problem was similar in March (48% adults, 55% likely voters) and last May (47% adults, 52% likely voters). But this view is much less common now than it was a few years ago when the state had a large gap between annual spending and revenues.

**“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	
Big problem	44%	34%	76%	44%	51%
Somewhat of a problem	37	45	17	41	33
Not a problem	13	16	5	11	13
Don't know	6	5	2	5	3

When asked about how they would prefer to use the projected budget surplus, just under half of adults prefer to pay down debt and build the reserve (45%) while half would restore funding for social services (50%). Likely voters prefer paying down debt and building up the reserve (55%, 40% restore funding). These responses are consistent with results from January for all adults (48% pay debt; 48% restore funding), and likely voters (54% pay debt; 42% restore funding). Today, the majority of Democrats (60%) prefer to restore funding, while most Republicans (72%) and half of independents (52%) prefer to pay down debt and build the reserve. Blacks (62%), Latinos (59%), and Asians (52%) are more likely than whites (40%) to prefer restoring funding for social services. Support for restoring social service funding is higher among women (57%) than men (42%) and declines sharply with income.

**“The state is projected to have a budget surplus of several billion dollars. Would you prefer to pay down state debt and build up the reserve or would you prefer to use some of this money to restore some funding for social service programs that were cut in recent years?”**



## Governor’s Budget Proposal

On May 13, Governor Brown released his revised state budget proposal for the next fiscal year, which includes increased spending, funds to pay down state debt and build reserves, and a proposal to raise revenue for transportation infrastructure projects. After hearing a description of the budget that excludes the transportation proposal, solid majorities of adults (65%) and likely voters (60%) are in favor. Democrats (74%) and independents (69%) are far more likely than Republicans (45%) to favor the budget. At least six in 10 across regions and racial/ethnic, age, education, and income groups are in favor. Favorability toward the budget is linked to approval of Governor Brown, with 78 percent of those who approve of the governor’s job performance favoring his budget. Last May, 73 percent of adults and 70 percent of likely voters favored the governor’s budget proposal.

**“Governor Brown recently released a revised budget plan for the next fiscal year that will increase spending on K–12 and higher education, health and human services, prisons, and courts. The plan includes funds to pay down the state’s debt and puts \$2 billion into the state’s rainy day fund. In general, do you favor or oppose the governor’s budget plan?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	65%	74%	45%	69%	60%
Oppose	26	20	45	22	32
Have not heard anything about the budget ( <i>volunteered</i> )	3	2	3	3	3
Don't know	6	4	7	6	5

Governor Brown’s budget proposal includes a new fee on vehicles and an increase in the state gasoline tax to fund transportation infrastructure projects. After this element is described, support for the governor’s budget plan drops to 35 percent among adults and 37 percent among likely voters. Across parties, a majority of Democrats (53%) are in favor, but a majority of independents (55%) and eight in 10 Republicans (82%) are opposed. Majorities across age, education, and income groups are opposed.

Fewer than half of those who initially favored the governor’s budget plan (47%) remain in favor after hearing about the transportation proposal.

In January, we assessed attitudes toward the governor’s initial budget proposal after providing a description that included increased spending, funds to pay down debt and build the reserve, and the transportation proposal. At that time, we found that 48 percent of adults and 46 percent of likely voters favored the governor’s budget plan.

**“The proposed budget plan also includes a new fee on all vehicles and an increase in the state gasoline tax to fund transportation infrastructure projects. Knowing this, in general, do you favor or oppose the governor’s budget plan?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	35%	53%	15%	38%	37%
Oppose	61	44	82	55	59
Have not heard anything about the budget ( <i>volunteered</i> )	2	1	1	3	1
Don't know	3	2	1	4	2

## Raising Revenues

In November 2012, voters passed Proposition 30 (55% yes), which included a temporary income tax increase on wealthy Californians and a temporary state sales tax increase. This November’s ballot is likely to include an initiative that would extend the Proposition 30 tax on earnings above \$250,000 for 12 years to fund education and health care. About six in 10 adults (64%) and likely voters (58%) favor extending the tax for that purpose. Support for this proposal was similar in March (61% adults, 58% likely voters). Today, solid majorities of Democrats (80%) and independents (68%) favor extending the income tax increase, compared to only 31 percent of Republicans. Though majorities across regions and demographic groups favor the extension, support decreases as age and income levels increase.

Those who say the state budget situation is a big problem are slightly more likely to favor extending the Proposition 30 income tax than to oppose it (52% to 46%). Those who have a more positive view of the budget situation are much more likely to favor the extension (73% somewhat of a problem, 81% not a problem).

**“As you may know, voters passed Proposition 30 in November 2012. It increased taxes on earnings over \$250,000 until 2018 and sales taxes by one quarter cent until 2016. Do you favor or oppose extending for 12 years the tax increase on earnings over \$250,000 to fund education and health care?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	64%	80%	31%	68%	58%
Oppose	32	17	66	29	39
Don't know	4	3	3	3	2

The November ballot may also include a tax increase on cigarettes to fund health care. About seven in 10 adults and likely voters favor increasing cigarette taxes for this purpose. In January, 53 percent of adults said that raising cigarette taxes to pay for health care was very important to them. Today, majorities across parties are in favor, though Democrats (82%) are much more likely to favor an increase than are independents (68%) or Republicans (53%). Across regions and racial/ethnic, age, education, and income groups, at least six in 10 favor increasing the tax on cigarettes.

The initiative that may appear on the November ballot would increase the cigarette tax by \$2 per pack. In June 2012, Proposition 29—which would have raised the state cigarette tax by \$1 per pack to fund cancer research—fell short of the simple majority needed to pass (49.8% yes).

**“In general, would you favor or oppose increasing the tax on the purchase of cigarettes to fund health care?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	69%	82%	53%	68%	67%
Oppose	29	17	45	31	31
Don't know	2	2	2	2	2

## Surface Transportation Funding

In January, we asked Californians about their preferences for increasing the state government’s current level of funding for roads and infrastructure projects. We found that a plurality preferred using only surplus budget funds (31%), with an additional 24 percent preferring to issue state bonds. What is the level of support today for a state bond to fund transportation?

Sixty-one percent of adults and 52 percent of likely voters say they would vote yes on a state bond measure to pay for surface transportation projects if it appeared on the ballot. Across parties, Democrats (69%) are most likely to support a state bond measure, followed by 58 percent of independents and 37 percent of Republicans. Majorities across regions would vote yes (67% San Francisco Bay Area, 66% Los Angeles, 61% Orange/San Diego, 56% Inland Empire, 54% Central Valley). Strong majorities of Asians (76%), blacks (74%), and Latinos (69%) would vote yes, and about half of whites (51%) would do so. In April, we found higher levels of support for a statewide bond measure to pay for school construction projects (76% adults, 63% likely voters), with at least half in favor across parties.

**“If the state ballot had a bond measure to pay for surface transportation projects in California, would you vote yes or no?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Yes	61%	69%	37%	58%	52%
No	32	26	56	36	42
Don't know	6	4	6	6	7

Another potential revenue source for surface transportation projects is a local sales tax increase, which has required a two-thirds majority since Proposition 13 passed. Local voters have passed these types of measures, and several local governments will have transportation tax measures on their ballots this year. Statewide, we find that only 43 percent of adults and 38 percent of likely voters would vote yes on such a local tax, far short of the two-thirds majority requirement. Slightly more than half of Democrats (54%) would vote yes, while majorities of independents (57%) and Republicans (73%) would vote no. Across the state, support does not exceed 50 percent in any region.

Support for a local sales tax increase to pay for transportation projects is far higher among those who would vote yes on a transportation bond than among those who would vote no on such a bond (62% to 12%). Support is also far higher among those who favor the governor’s budget, including his transportation proposal, than among those who oppose it (67% to 29%).

**“If your local ballot had a measure to increase the local sales tax to pay for surface transportation projects in your part of California, would you vote yes or no?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Yes	43%	54%	23%	37%	38%
No	52	44	73	57	58
Don't know	5	2	4	6	5

## Marijuana Legalization

An initiative planned for this November’s ballot would legalize the recreational use of marijuana in California. In November 2010, Proposition 19, which also sought to legalize marijuana, fell short of the majority needed to pass (46.5% yes). Today, 55 percent of adults and 60 percent of likely voters say that, in general, the use of marijuana should be legal. Public support was similar last May (54% adults, 56% likely voters). Democrats (69%) and independents (65%) are much more likely than Republicans (45%) to say the use of marijuana should be legal. Two in three adults under age 35 favor legalization, while about half of older adults are in favor. Across racial/ethnic groups, strong majorities of blacks (78%) and whites (65%) favor legalization, while fewer Asians (50%) and Latinos (40%) do so. An overwhelming majority of those who say they have tried marijuana favor legalization (78%), while a solid majority of those who have never tried it are opposed (63%). Compared to Californians in our survey (55%), adults nationwide in an April CBS/New York Times poll (56%) are about as likely to say the use of marijuana should be legal.

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

		Yes, legal	No, not legal	Don't know
All adults		55%	43%	3%
Likely voters		60	37	3
Party	Democrats	69	29	2
	Republicans	45	54	2
	Independents	65	31	4
Age	18 to 34	66	33	1
	35 to 54	50	46	3
	55 and above	49	48	3
Ever tried marijuana?	Yes	78	20	2
	No	35	63	3

If the initiative passes, it is estimated that legalized marijuana would generate about \$1 billion in tax revenue annually, most of which would be directed toward substance abuse prevention and treatment programs. More than seven in 10 adults and likely say this is very or somewhat important. Those who favor or oppose legalization are equally likely to say this is very important (44% legal, 46% not legal).

**“An initiative on the November ballot would legalize, tax, and regulate the use of marijuana and is expected to generate about \$1 billion annually in state and local tax revenues. How important is it to you that this revenue be spent on substance abuse prevention and treatment. Is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?”**

	All adults	Party			Should marijuana be legal?	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very important	45%	50%	34%	43%	44%	46%
Somewhat important	27	28	26	29	31	23
Not too important	10	9	15	12	10	10
Not at all important	15	12	22	11	14	18
Don't know	2	1	3	4	1	3

# Regional Map



# Methodology

The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, president and CEO and survey director at the Public Policy Institute of California, with assistance from associate survey director Dean Bonner, project manager for this survey, and survey research associates David Kordus and Lunna Lopes. The Californians and Their Government series is supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation. The PPIC Statewide Survey invites input, comments, and suggestions from policy and public opinion experts and from its own advisory committee, but survey methods, questions, and content are determined solely by PPIC's survey team.

Findings in this report are based on a survey of 1,704 California adult residents, including 853 interviewed on landline telephones and 851 interviewed on cell phones. Interviews took an average of 19 minutes to complete. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights from May 13–22, 2016.

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

Cell phone interviews were 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.

Abt SRBI uses the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010–2014 American Community Survey's (ACS) Public Use Microdata Series for California (with regional coding information from 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 2014 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 2015 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  $\pm 3.3$  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 3.3 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California

were interviewed. The sampling error for unweighted subgroups is larger: for the 1,338 registered voters, the sampling error is  $\pm 3.8$  percent; for the 996 likely voters, it is  $\pm 4.3$  percent; for the 552 Democratic Primary likely voters, it is  $\pm 5.7$  percent; for the 284 Republican Primary likely voters, it is  $\pm 7.4$  percent. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

We present results for 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, and likely voters, but sample sizes for these less populous areas are not large enough to report separately.

We present specific results for non-Hispanic whites, who account for 43 percent of the state's adult population, 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. We also present results for non-Hispanic Asians, who make up about 15 percent of the state's adult population, and non-Hispanic blacks, who comprise about 6 percent. Results for other racial/ethnic groups—such as Native Americans—are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, and likely voters, but sample sizes are not large enough for separate analysis. We compare the opinions of those who report they are registered Democrats, registered Republicans, and decline-to-state or independent voters; the results for those who say they are registered to vote in other parties are not large enough for separate analysis. We also analyze the responses of likely voters—so designated per 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/Washington Post, CBS News, CBS News/New York Times, and Pew Research Center. 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

## CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

May 13–22, 2016

1,704 California Adult Residents:  
English, Spanish

MARGIN OF ERROR ±3.3% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE  
PERCENTAGES MAY NOT ADD TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING

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

*[code, don't read]*

- 30% jobs, economy
- 16 water, drought
- 6 education, schools, teachers
- 6 immigration, illegal immigration
- 5 crime, gangs, drugs
- 4 environment, pollution, global warming
- 4 housing costs, housing availability
- 4 state budget, deficit, taxes
- 3 government in general, election
- 3 homelessness
- 2 health care, health insurance
- 2 infrastructure
- 11 other (*specify*)
- 4 don't know

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

- 52% approve
- 28 disapprove
- 20 don't know

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

- 43% approve
- 37 disapprove
- 20 don't know

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

- 51% right direction
- 43 wrong direction
- 6 don't know

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

- 50% good times
- 39 bad times
- 11 don't know

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

- 62% yes *[ask Q6a]*
- 38 no *[skip to Q7f]*

**6a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or are you registered as a decline-to-state or independent voter?**

- 43% Democrat *[ask Q7]*
- 28 Republican *[skip to Q7a]*
- 5 another party (*specify*) *[skip to Q9]*
- 24 independent *[skip to Q7b]*

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

- 56% strong
- 41 not very strong
- 3 don't know

*[skip to Q8a]*

**7a. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?**

- 51% strong
- 45 not very strong
- 4 don't know

*[skip to Q8b]*

**7b. In a few words, can you tell me the main reason why you are registered as a decline-to-state or independent voter and not as a member of a political party?**

*[code, don't read]*

- 41% not satisfied with parties, parties don't reflect my views
- 23 vote for candidates, not party
- 5 corruption
- 5 privacy/confidentiality
- 3 don't want political mailings or phone calls
- 2 politicians/elected officials
- 15 other (*specify*)
- 6 don't know

**7c. And, were you previously registered with a major party or have you always been a decline-to-state or independent voter?**

- 38% previously registered *[ask Q7d]*
- 60 always been a decline-to-state or independent voter *[skip to Q7e]*
- 2 don't know *[skip to Q7e]*

**7d. And what party were you previously registered with?**

*[code, don't read]*

- 49% Democratic Party
- 37 Republican Party
- 4 Libertarian Party
- 3 American Independent Party
- 4 other (*specify*)
- 3 don't know

**7e. Would you join a political party if it was a good reflection of your political views or do you prefer to be unaffiliated with any specific party?**

- 41% join a political party
- 55 remain unaffiliated
- 4 don't know

**7f. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?**

- 21% Republican Party
- 52 Democratic Party
- 20 neither (*volunteered*)
- 7 don't know

**7g. *[independent voters only]* California voters like you will be able to choose between voting in the Democratic primary, or selecting a nonpartisan ballot on June 7th. Both ballots include state proposition measures. Do you plan to vote in the Democratic presidential primary or on the nonpartisan ballot?**

- 35% Democratic presidential primary *[ask Q8a]*
- 45 nonpartisan ballot *[skip to Q9]*
- 8 not planning to vote (*volunteered*) *[skip to Q9]*
- 12 don't know *[skip to Q9]*

**8a. *[Democratic primary likely voters only]* If the 2016 Democratic primary for president were being held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for? *[rotate names and then ask "or someone else?"]***

- 46% Hillary Clinton
- 44 Bernie Sanders
- 4 someone else (*specify*)
- 1 would not vote in presidential primary (*volunteered*)
- 4 don't know

*[skip to Q9]*

**8b. [Republican primary likely voters only] If the 2016 Republican primary for president were being held today, would you vote for Donald Trump or someone else?**

- 67% Donald Trump
- 26 someone else (*specify*)
- 1 would not vote in presidential primary (*volunteered*)
- 6 don't know

**9. [likely voters only] In general, would you say you are satisfied or not satisfied with your choices of candidates in the election for U.S. President in 2016?**

- 42% satisfied
- 55 not satisfied
- 1 both (*volunteered*)
- 2 don't know

**10. [likely voters only] How closely are you following news about candidates for the 2016 presidential election—very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?**

- 55% very closely
- 34 fairly closely
- 9 not too closely
- 3 not at all closely
- don't know

[question 11 deleted]

[rotate questions 12 and 12a]

**12. [likely voters only] If the November 8<sup>th</sup> presidential election were being held today, and these were the candidates, would you vote for: [rotate in same order for Q12 and Q12a] (1) Hillary Clinton, the Democrat [or] (2) Donald Trump, the Republican?**

- 49% Hillary Clinton, the Democrat
- 39 Donald Trump, the Republican
- 7 someone else (*volunteered, specify*)
- 4 don't know

**12a. [likely voters only] If the November 8<sup>th</sup> presidential election were being held today, and these were the candidates, would you vote for: [rotate in same order for Q12 and Q12a] (1) Bernie Sanders, the Democrat [or] (2) Donald Trump, the Republican?**

- 53% Bernie Sanders, the Democrat
- 36 Donald Trump, the Republican
- 7 someone else (*volunteered, specify*)
- 4 don't know

**13. [likely voters only] As you may know, California now has a top-two primary system for statewide races in which voters can cast ballots for any candidate, regardless of party, and the two candidates receiving the most votes—regardless of party—will advance to the general election. If the June primary for U.S. Senator were being held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for? [rotate names and then ask "or someone else?"]**

- 27% Kamala Harris, a Democrat
- 19 Loretta Sanchez, a Democrat
- 8 Tom Del Beccaro, a Republican
- 6 Ron Unz, a Republican
- 3 Duf Sundheim, a Republican
- 6 someone else (*specify*)
- 31 don't know

**14. [likely voters only] In general, would you say you are satisfied or not satisfied with your choices of candidates in the election for U.S. Senate in 2016?**

- 57% satisfied
- 21 not satisfied
- 1 both (*volunteered*)
- 21 don't know

**14a. [likely voters only] If the November 8<sup>th</sup> election for the U.S. Senate were being held today, and these were the top-two candidates in the June Primary, would you vote for: [rotate] (1) Kamala Harris, a Democrat [or] (2) Loretta Sanchez, a Democrat?**

- 34% Kamala Harris, a Democrat
- 26 Loretta Sanchez, a Democrat
- 24 neither/would not vote for U.S. Senator (*volunteered*)
- 15 don't know

**15. 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?**

- 44% big problem
- 37 somewhat of a problem
- 13 not a problem
- 6 don't know

**16. As you may know, voters passed Proposition 30 in November 2012. It increased taxes on earnings over \$250,000 until 2018 and sales taxes by one quarter cent until 2016. Do you favor or oppose extending for 12 years the tax increase on earnings over \$250,000 to fund education and healthcare?**

- 64% favor
- 32 oppose
- 4 don't know

**17. In general, would you favor or oppose increasing the state tax on the purchase of cigarettes to fund healthcare?**

- 69% favor
- 29 oppose
- 2 don't know

*[question 18 deleted]*

**19. On another topic, Governor Brown recently released a revised budget plan for the next fiscal year that will increase spending on K–12 and higher education, health and human services, prisons, and courts. The plan includes funds to pay down the state's debt and puts \$2 billion into the state's rainy day fund. In general, do you favor or oppose the governor's budget plan?**

- 65% favor
- 26 oppose
- 3 haven't heard anything about the budget (*volunteered*)
- 6 don't know

**19a. The proposed budget plan also includes a new fee on all vehicles and an increase in the state gasoline tax to fund transportation infrastructure projects. Knowing this, in general, do you favor or oppose the governor's budget plan?**

- 35% favor
- 61 oppose
- 2 haven't heard anything about the budget (*volunteered*)
- 3 don't know

**20. The state is projected to have a budget surplus of several billion dollars. In general, how would you prefer to use this extra money? *[rotate]* (1) Would you prefer 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?**

- 45% pay down debt and build up reserve
- 50 restore funding for social services
- 6 don't know

*[question 21 deleted]*

Next, please tell me if you would vote yes or no on each of the following proposals to increase state and local funding for surface transportation projects in California.

*[rotate questions 22 to 23]*

**22. If the state ballot had a bond measure to pay for surface transportation projects in California, would you vote yes or no?**

- 61% yes
- 32 no
- 6 don't know

**23. If your local ballot had a measure to increase the local sales tax to pay for surface transportation projects in your part of California, would you vote yes or no?**

- 43% yes
- 52 no
- 5 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?**

- 61% approve
- 36 disapprove
- 2 don't know

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

- 28% approve
- 67 disapprove
- 6 don't know

*[question 26 deleted]*

Changing topics,

**27. Which comes closer to your view about how to handle undocumented immigrants who are living in the U.S.? *[rotate]* (1) There should be a way for them to stay in the country legally, if certain requirements are met *[or]* (2) They should not be allowed to stay in this country legally.**

- 83% allowed to stay legally
- 14 not allowed to stay legally
- 2 don't know

**28. All in all, would you favor or oppose building a wall along the entire border with Mexico?**

- 26% favor
- 71 oppose
- 3 don't know

**29. On another topic, do you approve or disapprove of the way the Supreme Court is handling its job?**

- 45% approve
- 42 disapprove
- 13 don't know

**30. As you many know, Barack Obama has nominated federal judge Merrick Garland to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. From what you've seen and heard so far, do you think the Senate should or should not confirm Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court?**

- 50% should confirm
- 24 should not confirm
- 14 have not heard enough to have an opinion (*volunteered*)
- 11 don't know

On another topic,

*[rotate questions 31 and 32]*

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

- 49% favorable
- 44 unfavorable
- 7 don't know

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

- 23% favorable
- 70 unfavorable
- 7 don't know

Changing topics,

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

- 55% yes, legal
- 43 no, not legal
- 3 don't know

**34. An initiative on the November ballot would legalize, tax, and regulate the use of marijuana and is expected to generate about \$1 billion annually in state and local tax revenues. How important is it to you that this revenue be spent on substance abuse prevention and treatment. Is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?**

- 45% very important
- 27 somewhat important
- 10 not too important
- 15 not at all important
- 2 don't know

**34a. Keeping in mind that all of your answers in the survey are confidential, have you ever tried marijuana? (If yes ask: Have you used marijuana in the last 12 months?)**

- 19% yes have tried marijuana, used in the past year
- 27 yes, have tried marijuana, not in the past year
- 54 no, have not tried marijuana
- 1 don't know

**35. Next, would you consider yourself to be politically:**

*[read list, rotate order from top to bottom]*

- 13% very liberal
- 19 somewhat liberal
- 27 middle-of-the-road
- 22 somewhat conservative
- 15 very conservative
- 3 don't know

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

- 25% great deal
- 34 fair amount
- 32 only a little
- 9 none
- don't know

*[d1 to d15: demographic questions]*

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