

# **PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and Their Government**

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**Public  
Policy  
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*of*  
California**

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## Preface

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California is in the midst of historic changes that will profoundly affect its future. To understand these changes and how they influence voters' choices at the ballot box, PPIC is conducting a series of comprehensive statewide surveys on the theme of "Californians and Their Government." This report presents the results of the eighth of these statewide surveys, which will continue up to the November 2000 election. The first seven surveys in this series were conducted in September, November, and December of 1999 and in January, February, June, and July of 2000. Several of these surveys were special editions, focusing on particular regions and themes (November 1999 on the Central Valley, June 2000 on the environment, and July 2000 on San Diego County).

The purpose of the PPIC Statewide Survey is to develop an in-depth profile of the social, economic, and political forces affecting California elections and public policy preferences. The surveys are intended to provide the public, the media, and policymakers with relevant, non-partisan, advocacy-free information on the following:

- What Californians know about government at all levels, how they rate elected officials and public services, and what government actions they prefer.
- The public's interest in civic affairs and politics, their current and preferred information sources, their attention to state political news, and their ratings of the media.
- How growing regions and groups—such as the Central Valley, suburban regions, Latinos, and independent voters—affect the state's elections and policy debates.
- The political attitudes and perceptions that are tied to "voter distrust" of government, and the social, economic, and political factors that explain low voter turnout in state elections.
- The role of political, social, and economic attitudes in public support for citizens' initiatives and government reform proposals.

Copies of earlier survey reports or additional copies of this report may be ordered by e-mail ([order@ppic.org](mailto:order@ppic.org)) or phone (415-291-4400).

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## Press Release

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### **CALIFORNIA'S UP FOR GRABS — PRESIDENTIAL RACE IS NEARLY EVEN Voucher and School Bond Initiatives Lack Majority Support; Public Resents Court's Role in Initiative Process**

SAN FRANCISCO, California, August 10, 2000 — Is California's political gold slipping through Al Gore's fingers? As Democrats gather for their convention in Los Angeles, a new survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) reveals a presidential toss-up in this bellwether state. But it's hard to find any evidence of "Clinton fatigue." Instead, remarkably engaged voters in California appear eager to cut through the glitter of party conventions to learn the views of today's candidates on the issues that matter most to them — education, Social Security, and taxes.

Currently, Vice President Gore (40%) and Texas Governor George W. Bush (37%) are running neck-and-neck in California, with Green Party candidate Ralph Nader (8%) attracting significant support. Bush (79%) makes a stronger showing among Republicans than Gore (68%) does among Democrats. Voters outside the two major parties favor Bush over Gore (33% to 23%), although many are supporting Nader (21%) or remain undecided (20%). There is also a sizable gender gap in the presidential race, with men favoring Bush over Gore (43% to 34%) and women choosing Gore over Bush (45% to 32%). Latinos favor Gore by a wide margin (55% to 29%), while more non-Hispanic whites support Bush than Gore (41% to 36%).

"Democrats cannot take California for granted: The conventional wisdom that says the state is solidly Democratic is off the mark," said PPIC Statewide Survey Director Mark Baldassare. "California's Electoral College prize will go to the candidate who connects with voters on the issues. And even at this early stage, the electorate is paying attention."

Indeed, more than three months before the November election, 85% of the state's likely voters say they are following news stories about the 2000 presidential race "very closely" (41%) or "fairly closely" (44%). Half of the voters also place at least some importance on the party conventions this summer, although only 17 percent say that the conventions are very important to them in deciding which candidate to support. Interestingly, Latino voters are twice as likely as voters generally to say the conventions are very important in determining their vote.

#### **"Clinton Fatigue" Contained in California**

President Clinton is ending his term on a high note — with 61 percent of Californians rating his job performance as excellent or good — but there are undercurrents of disaffection. One in three Republicans gives him an excellent or good rating and fewer Californians give him a poor rating (16%) than at any time in the past two years. Among likely voters in the state, 64 percent give the Clinton Administration at least some credit for the booming economy. However, only one in four gives the Administration "a lot" of credit for the current prosperity. And although most likely voters (62%) say they like Clinton's policies, a majority (53%) also say they dislike him personally.

While many observers might expect the voters' ambivalence toward Clinton to rub off on Gore, there is little evidence that this is taking place. As expected, Gore is overwhelmingly the favorite among those who like Clinton and like his policies and who give the Clinton Administration a lot of credit for the state's economy. However, Gore also holds a wide lead over Bush among those voters who

dislike Clinton personally but like his policies (42% to 27%) and those who give the Administration only some credit for the good economic times (45% to 27%).

“Incumbency has its limits in this race,” said Baldassare. “Gore’s inability to maintain momentum in California has less to do with a Clinton effect than with the fact that voters won’t hand this election over on a silver platter. They are not yet convinced that the Vice President is a leader in his own right.” Indeed, among the 72 percent of optimistic California voters who foresee good economic times in the next year, Gore barely leads Bush (41% to 37%).

### **What Voters Want**

A majority of voters say they hope to learn about the candidates’ stands on the issues (54%) from the conventions, rather than their character (20%), experience (15%), or party’s platform (9%). Although candidates have their own campaign priorities, California voters list schools and education (17%), Social Security and Medicare (11%), and tax cuts (10%) as the top issues they want to hear the candidates talk about. Gore is leading Bush among voters most interested in education, Social Security, and health care, while Bush is ahead of Gore among voters who want the candidates to talk about taxes and foreign policy.

A majority of Californians (52%) have serious doubts that Social Security benefits will be available for their retirement, and only one in four younger Californians (ages 18 to 34) is optimistic about Social Security’s future. In fact, state residents are more likely than the nation as a whole (45%) to expect Social Security to fail them. The majority (64%) say they support the idea of allowing individuals to invest their Social Security contributions in the stock market. Interestingly, support for this proposal is similar among residents who currently invest in the market and those who do not. In addition, most Californians (65%) believe that strengthening the system should be a higher priority for the next president than cutting taxes.

### **Despite Voter Concern, Education Initiatives Floundering**

Although the state government has focused almost singularly on education issues in the past year, California voters remain unhappy with the state of affairs in California’s schools. Only one in ten voters gives the quality of their local school an “A,” and less than four in 10 give their school an “A” or “B.” However, their concern does not translate into broad support for the two education-related initiatives on the ballot in November.

Voters are evenly divided over Proposition 38, the school vouchers initiative that would provide state payments for students to attend private and religious schools. Forty-five percent would vote for Prop. 38 and 44 percent would oppose it. Interestingly, Latino voters (56%) side with Republican voters (57%) in supporting the initiative. Most voters think that the voucher initiative will affect local school quality if it passes; Slightly more believe schools would improve rather than decline (38% to 31%). By a narrow margin, voters also say they would be more likely rather than less likely to vote for a presidential candidate who endorses Prop. 38 (25% to 19%). Currently, those who support Prop. 38 favor Bush over Gore (50% to 30%), while those who oppose it favor Gore over Bush (51% to 25%).

Just months after a similar measure was defeated on the primary ballot, Proposition 39 — which would make it possible to approve local school bonds with a 55 percent majority rather than a two-thirds vote — faces an uphill battle in the November election: 55 percent of likely voters now oppose the measure and only 35 percent support it. Even among the 62 percent of voters who believe that their local schools are underfunded, only 43 percent say they would vote yes. Ironically, voters who

give their local schools high marks are more likely to support Prop. 39 than are those who give their schools a failing grade.

### **Public Anger Over Court Challenges to Initiatives**

Most Californians (64%), especially independent voters (70%), are not pleased with the recent Supreme Court ruling against the California open primary initiative passed by the voters in 1996. At the same time, more residents feel that the open primary — which was in effect in the June 1998 and March 2000 primaries — has made no difference in state elections (45%) than see a positive (22%) or negative (22%) effect. However, 71 percent of Californians support passing a state law that would make it possible for independent voters to cast ballots for party candidates in state primaries.

Californians also hold a dim view of the current court challenge to Proposition 208, which passed in 1996 and imposed strict campaign donor limits in the state. Fifty-three percent — including a majority of Democrats, Republicans, and independent voters — oppose the challenge. They are also highly suspicious of Proposition 34, a campaign finance initiative placed on the November ballot with the support of the Governor and Legislature. When they learn that donor limits are less strict under this initiative than under Prop. 208, a narrow majority of Californians (50%) say they would oppose Prop. 34. While a majority of Californians (56%) believe that having virtually no limits on campaign contributions in state and legislative elections is a bad thing, most Californians (57%) also oppose the idea of public financing of campaigns, even if it costs taxpayers only a few dollars a year.

### **Other Key Findings**

#### ***Mexican Elections*** (page 21)

Many Californians (51%) are optimistic about recent political changes in Mexico. More Latinos watched the Mexican presidential race very closely (38%) than are very closely following the current U.S. campaign (31%).

#### ***California-Mexico Relations*** (page 22)

Most Californians (88%) believe that political and economic developments in Mexico are very or somewhat important to California. A majority (52%) name immigration as the most important issue between the state and Mexico, followed by drugs (22%) and trade (14%).

#### ***California Senate Race*** (page 6)

Senator Dianne Feinstein maintains her comfortable lead over Republican challenger Congressman Tom Campbell (52% to 33%).

#### ***Internet Politics*** (page 28)

Nearly one-third of likely voters in California (29%) say they often or sometimes visit the Web sites of political candidates, political parties, or political causes.

### **About the Survey**

The purpose of the PPIC Statewide Survey is to develop an in-depth profile of the social, economic, and political forces affecting California elections and public policy preferences. PPIC will conduct large-scale public opinion surveys on a regular basis leading up to the November 2000 election. Findings of the current survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,003 California adult residents interviewed from July 28 to August 4, 2000. Interviews were conducted in English or Spanish. The sampling error for the total sample is +/- 2%. The sampling error for the 1,597 registered voters is

+/- 2.5% and for the 988 likely voters is +/- 3.5%. For additional information on survey methodology, see page 31.

[Dr. Mark Baldassare](#) is a senior fellow at PPIC. He is founder and director of the PPIC Statewide Survey, which he has conducted since 1998. For over two decades, he has directed surveys for the University of California, Irvine, and major news organizations, including the Orange County Edition of the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Orange County Register*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, KCAL-TV, and KRON-TV. Dr. Baldassare is the author of numerous books, including *California in the New Millennium: The Changing Social and Political Landscape* (University of California Press, 2000).

PPIC is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to objective, nonpartisan research on economic, social, and political issues that affect the lives of Californians. The Institute was established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. This report will appear on PPIC's Web site ([www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org)) on August 10, 2000.

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## California 2000 Election

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### Presidential Election

With the Democratic convention in Los Angeles just a few days off, the presidential election is a toss-up in California. Vice President Al Gore (40%) and Texas Governor George W. Bush (37%) are neck-and-neck in their effort to gain the biggest Electoral College prize on November 7<sup>th</sup>. Ralph Nader (8%) is attracting significant support, Patrick Buchanan (1%) has only a small following, and 14 percent of likely voters are undecided.

Bush has a stronger showing among Republicans (79%) than Gore has among Democrats (68%) but is still not ahead, because Democrats outnumber Republicans in California elections. Voters outside the two major parties favor Bush over Gore (33% to 23%), although many are supporting Nader (21%) or are still undecided (20%). Gore is way ahead of Bush in Los Angeles County and the San Francisco Bay area, but Bush has a big lead in Southern California outside of Los Angeles and in the Central Valley. Latinos currently favor Gore over Bush (55% to 29%), while non-Hispanic whites support Bush over Gore (41% to 36%).

Support for the two candidates also varies by gender, age, education, and income. Men favor Bush over Gore (43% to 34%), and women support Gore over Bush (45% to 32%). Voters under age 35 give Gore more support than Bush (41% to 35%), but older voters give them about equal support. College graduates give Gore the nod over Bush (43% to 36%), but the vote is split among people with less education. Gore leads Bush among those with annual incomes under \$40,000 (41% to 34%) and over \$80,000 (43% to 37%), while the two have similar support among middle-income voters.

"If the election for president were held today, who would you vote for?"

Likely Voters	
Al Gore	40%
George W. Bush	37
Ralph Nader	8
Pat Buchanan	1
Don't know	14

	<u>Likely Voters (August 2000)</u>							
	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>				<u>Latino</u>
	Dem	Rep	Other Voters	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b>Al Gore</b>	68%	8%	23%	29%	49%	49%	33%	55%
<b>George W. Bush</b>	9	79	33	46	25	30	49	29
<b>Ralph Nader</b>	8	2	21	6	14	8	2	3
<b>Pat Buchanan</b>	0	1	3	3	1	2	1	0
<b>Don't know</b>	15	10	20	16	11	11	15	13

## The Conventions

During this convention season, California voters are following presidential election news—85 percent closely and 41 percent “very closely.” Democrats and Republicans are paying much closer attention than voters outside the two major parties. Latinos and non-Hispanic whites are equally likely to be closely following news stories about the presidential candidates.

In deciding which candidate to support, half of the voters say that the party conventions this summer are at least somewhat important. However, only one in six voters rates the conventions as very important in terms of deciding whom to vote for. Democrats (52%) and Republicans (57%) are similar in ranking the conventions as at least somewhat important, while most *other* voters (68%) rate them as not important. Latinos (63%) place more importance on the conventions than non-Hispanic whites (47%). As a point of contrast, candidate *debates* are rated as at least somewhat important by 85 percent of California voters and as highly important by 33 percent.

Among the California voters who are very closely following the election news stories and among those who say the conventions are very important to their presidential voting decision, Bush and Gore are tied.

"How closely have you been following the news stories about candidates for the 2000 presidential election?"

	<u>Likely Voters (August 2000)</u>				
	<u>All Likely Voters</u>	<u>Party</u>			<u>Latino</u>
		Democrat	Republican	Other	
Very closely	41%	41%	47%	30%	41%
Fairly closely	44	43	43	48	41
Not too closely	11	11	7	17	11
Not at all closely	4	5	3	5	7

"In deciding who to vote for in the presidential election, how important to you are the national conventions for the Republican and Democratic parties this summer?"

	<u>Likely Voters (August 2000)</u>				
	<u>All Likely Voters</u>	<u>Party</u>			<u>Latino</u>
		Democrat	Republican	Other	
Very Important	17%	18%	20%	11%	34%
Somewhat important	33	34	37	21	29
Not important	50	48	43	68	37

## Issues Matter

What do people want the conventions to tell them about a presidential candidate? A majority of voters (54%) are most interested in learning about the candidates' stands on the issues, rather than about the candidates' character, experience, or party platforms. This is true for both Latinos and non-Hispanic whites. However, character is mentioned more by Republicans (31%) than by Democrats (10%) or other voters (24%).

What are the most important issues they would like to hear the candidates talk about at the conventions? Education is mentioned by 17 percent, followed by Social Security and Medicare (11%) and taxes (10%), while other issues, such as the economy, foreign policy, guns and gun control, abortion, immigration, and the environment, are mentioned by fewer than one in 10 voters. Democrats are much more likely than Republicans to want to hear about education, Social Security and Medicare, and health care. Republicans are much more likely than Democrats to want to hear about tax relief. Latinos are more likely to prefer to have the presidential candidates focus on the issues of education, Social Security and Medicare, and health care at the national party conventions.

Voters who are most interested in hearing about issues favor Gore over Bush by an 11-point margin (43% to 32%). Those who care most about the candidates' character overwhelmingly support Bush over Gore (66% to 18%). Those who want most to learn about the candidates' experience strongly favor Gore over Bush (56% to 21%). Gore is also ahead of Bush among voters most interested in hearing about education (52% to 29%), Social Security and Medicare (52% to 24%), and health care (59% to 16%). Bush leads Gore among those interested in tax cuts (72% to 12%) and foreign policy (55% to 22%).

"People have different ideas about what they want to learn about the presidential candidates from the national party conventions. Which of these is most important to you?"

	<u>Likely Voters (August 2000)</u>				
	<u>All Likely Voters</u>	<u>Party</u>			<u>Latino</u>
		<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Other</u>	
<b>Stands on the issues</b>	54%	58%	47%	51%	54%
<b>Character</b>	20	10	31	24	13
<b>Experience</b>	15	21	9	12	21
<b>Party platform</b>	9	9	9	10	10
<b>Other, don't know</b>	2	2	3	3	2

"Which one issue would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about at the national party conventions?" (open ended responses)

	<u>Likely Voters (August 2000)</u>				
	<u>All Likely Voters</u>	<u>Party</u>			<u>Latino</u>
		<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Other</u>	
Schools, education	17%	22%	13%	12%	20%
Social Security, Medicare	11	15	8	6	14
Taxes, cutting taxes	10	4	18	11	6
Health care, HMO reform	7	10	4	5	10
Foreign policy, defense	6	4	8	9	8
Jobs, the economy, unemployment	6	7	4	8	8
Environment, pollution	5	7	2	7	0
Abortion	4	3	6	3	6
Crime, gangs	3	3	2	3	4
Federal budget, spending	3	2	3	4	2
Guns, gun control	3	2	3	2	0
Morals, family values	3	1	5	4	4
Campaign finance reform	1	2	1	2	1
Immigration, illegal immigration	1	1	2	3	2
Other*	5	5	6	7	6
Don't know	15	12	15	14	9

\*Includes responses of 1% or less for issues such as poverty, welfare, homelessness, and race relations.

## The Clinton Effect

Voters continue to be very ambivalent about their President, creating uncertainty about the overall effects of Bill Clinton on Gore's candidacy. Most voters (62%) say they like Clinton's policies but most voters (53%) also say they dislike him personally, attitudes similar to those expressed last fall. Two in three Democrats say they like him and like his policies, while two in three Republicans say they dislike him and dislike his policies. Voters outside of the major parties are as likely to say they like him and his policies (36%) as to say they dislike him and his policies (32%). Latinos (56%) are much more likely than non-Hispanic whites (33%) to like Clinton and like his policies.

Most California voters (64%) give the Clinton Administration at least some credit for the economic conditions in California today. However, only 27 percent give Washington "a lot" of credit, raising questions about the power of incumbency for Gore. Most Democrats believe that the Clinton Administration deserves at least some credit, while most Republicans give them little or no credit. Latinos (37%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (23%) to give the Clinton Administration a lot of credit.

Among voters who like Clinton and his policies and who give the Clinton administration a lot of credit for economic conditions, Gore is overwhelmingly favored. Bush is the heavy favorite among those who dislike Clinton and dislike his policies and who give Clinton little or no credit for the economy. The margin is narrower, but Gore leads Bush among those voters who dislike Clinton but like his policies (42% to 27%) and who give the Clinton administration some credit for the economy (45% to 27%).

"Which of these statements is closest to your view of President Bill Clinton?"

	<u>Likely Voters (August 2000)</u>				
	<u>All Likely Voters</u>	<u>Party</u>			<u>Latino</u>
		<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Other</u>	
<b>I like Clinton and I like his policies</b>	40%	63%	9%	36%	56%
<b>I like Clinton but I dislike his policies</b>	5	4	6	8	8
<b>I dislike Clinton but I like his policies</b>	22	25	17	22	19
<b>I dislike Clinton and I dislike his policies</b>	31	5	65	32	16
<b>Don't know</b>	2	3	3	2	1

"How much credit do you think the Clinton Administration deserves for California's economic conditions today?"

	<u>Likely Voters (August 2000)</u>				
	<u>All Likely Voters</u>	<u>Party</u>			<u>Latino</u>
		Democrat	Republican	Other	
<b>A lot</b>	27%	41%	10%	19%	37%
<b>Some</b>	37	45	25	35	35
<b>Very little</b>	19	9	31	26	17
<b>None</b>	15	3	31	17	10
<b>Don't know</b>	2	2	3	3	1

### U.S. Senate Race

In the race for the U.S. Senate seat, Senator Dianne Feinstein is comfortably ahead of her Republican challenger, Congressman Tom Campbell. Just over half of likely voters support Feinstein, 33 percent would vote for Campbell, and 15 percent are undecided.

Feinstein is supported by 80 percent of Democrats, while 66 percent of Republicans favor Campbell. Voters outside of the major parties favor Feinstein over Campbell (44% to 33%), although 23 percent are undecided. Feinstein has a big lead over Campbell in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area and a narrow lead in the Central Valley. The one region where Campbell is currently winning is Southern California outside of Los Angeles. Latinos strongly back Feinstein over Campbell (60% to 21%), while non-Hispanic whites give Feinstein the edge over Campbell by a narrower 11-point margin (48% to 38%).

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

<u>Likely Voters</u>	
<b>Dianne Feinstein</b>	52%
<b>Tom Campbell</b>	33
<b>Don't know</b>	15

	<u>Likely Voters (August 2000)</u>							
	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>				<u>Latino</u>
	Dem	Rep	Other Voters	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b>Dianne Feinstein</b>	80%	17%	44%	44%	68%	56%	38%	60%
<b>Tom Campbell</b>	9	66	33	36	23	28	43	21
<b>Don't know</b>	11	17	23	20	9	16	19	19

## Proposition 38: School Vouchers

Voters are evenly divided on Proposition 38, the school vouchers initiative that would provide payments from the state for students to attend private and religious schools. Forty-five percent would vote for Proposition 38, and 44 percent would vote against it, while 11 percent are undecided.

Proposition 38 evokes a strong partisan reaction, with Democrats opposing the initiative (54% to 35%) and Republicans favoring it (57% to 31%). Although voters outside of the major parties narrowly favor Proposition 38, support falls just shy of a majority (49% to 44%).

Proposition 38 is opposed in the San Francisco Bay area, tied in Los Angeles, and is ahead in the Central Valley and in Southern California outside of Los Angeles. Latinos favor the school vouchers initiative (56% to 35%), even though most are Democrats and most Democrats oppose it. Non-Hispanic whites are rejecting Proposition 38, though by a narrow margin (47% to 42%).

This issue could affect how some people vote in the presidential election: If a candidate supported the school-vouchers initiative, 25 percent of the voters say it would make them more likely and 19 percent say it would make them less likely to vote for him. Those who are more likely to vote for a pro-voucher candidate favor Bush over Gore (52% to 29%), while those who are less likely to vote for such a candidate give Gore the nod over Bush (56% to 17%). This is consistent with the finding that voters who support Proposition 38 favor Bush over Gore (50% to 30%), and those who would vote against vouchers favor Gore over Bush (51% to 25%).

Most voters think that passage of the voucher initiative will affect the quality of their local public schools in the next five years. Slightly more expect schools to improve than to decline (38% to 31%) under a voucher system. Predictably, those who think vouchers will improve schools strongly favor Proposition 38 and those who think vouchers will cause a decline in quality strongly oppose the measure. If Proposition 38 does not pass, 49 percent of the voters expect the quality of their schools to stay the same over the next five years, 24 percent expect a decline, and 20 percent expect improvement. Those voters who think schools would stay the same without vouchers are evenly divided on Proposition 38, with 45 percent voting yes and 46 percent voting no.

Those who rate the quality of their local public schools as an "A" or "B" would vote against Proposition 38 (37% yes and 52% no), while those who give lower grades to their local public schools would vote for Proposition 38 (53% yes and 37% no).

**"Proposition 38, the 'school vouchers' initiative, will be on the November 2000 ballot. It authorizes annual payments from the state of at least \$4,000 per pupil as grants for new students at qualifying private and religious schools. It also allows the legislature to replace current constitutional funding priority and Proposition 98 guarantees with new minimum per pupil funding at no less than the national average.**

**Estimates of fiscal effects range from \$150 million to over \$600 million in annual costs, and from \$500 million in net annual costs to \$2.5 billion in net annual savings in the long run.**

**If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on proposition 38?"**

Likely Voters	
Yes	45%
No	44
Don't know	11

"If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on proposition 38?"

	<u>Likely Voters</u>							
	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>				<u>Latino</u>
	Dem	Rep	Other Voters	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b>Yes</b>	35%	57%	49%	49%	41%	43%	51%	56%
<b>No</b>	54	31	44	41	51	44	38	35
<b>Don't know</b>	11	12	7	10	8	13	11	9

"If a presidential candidate supports the school vouchers initiative, would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for that presidential candidate, or would it have no effect on your vote for president?"

<u>Likely Voters</u>	
<b>More likely</b>	25%
<b>Less likely</b>	19
<b>No effect</b>	52
<b>Don't know</b>	4

"Do you think that five years from now the quality of public schools in your community will improve, stay about the same, or decline compared to the way they are today if the voucher initiative ..."

	<u>Likely Voters</u>
<b><i>Passes</i></b>	
Improve	38%
Stay the same	24
Decline	31
Don't know	7
<b><i>Does not pass</i></b>	
Improve	20%
Stay the same	49
Decline	24
Don't know	7

**Proposition 39: 55 Percent Majority**

In the March primary, voters narrowly defeated an initiative (Proposition 26) that would have eased the two-thirds vote restrictions on passing local school bonds. In the November election, voters will be asked to vote on this issue again through Proposition 39 (the “son of Proposition 26”), which would make it possible to approve local school bonds with a 55 percent majority vote rather than a two-thirds vote. Currently, Proposition 39 is facing even greater opposition: 55 percent of likely voters oppose it. In the March election, Proposition 26 failed by 51 percent to 49 percent.

Democrats and voters in the San Francisco Bay area are evenly divided over this initiative, but it is strongly opposed by Republicans and other voters and well behind in the other three major regions of the state. Both Latinos and non-Hispanic whites oppose Proposition 39 and by almost equal margins.

Support for Proposition 39 is low even among those with children in the public schools (37%). It has more support among younger, better educated, and more affluent voters, but that support does not reach a majority in any group.

One of the problems facing Proposition 39 at this time may be voter resentment at having to revisit the issue. Almost half say they have an unfavorable opinion of being asked to reconsider an issue that was defeated on the March 2000 ballot. Of this group, only 12 percent would vote yes while 83 percent would vote no on Proposition 39. Even among voters with a favorable opinion of revisiting the issue, 29 percent plan to vote no in November.

Opposition to Proposition 39 reflects unhappiness with the current state of local public schools. Only 10 percent of voters give their local schools an “A” and 39 percent an “A” or “B” for the quality of education that those schools provide. Paradoxically, 46 percent of voters who give their local public schools an "A" support Proposition 39, while 63 percent that give their schools a "D" or "F" oppose the initiative.

Two in three say their local public schools are not getting enough money from the state. This perception is virtually unchanged from two years ago—despite the fact that the Governor and Legislature have allocated significant increases to schools as the state budget has been awash in surplus funds. But even among those voters who think their local public schools do not receive enough funding, only 43 percent would vote yes on Proposition 39, while 45 percent would vote no.

**"Proposition 39, the ‘school facilities, 55 percent local vote, bonds, taxes, accountability requirements’ initiative, will be on the November 2000 ballot. It would authorize local school districts to issue bonds for construction, rehabilitation, or replacement of school facilities if approved by 55 percent of local voters. It authorizes raising property taxes higher than the existing 1 percent limit by 55 percent vote, rather than the two-thirds currently required, to pay the bonds. The fiscal impacts include increased debt costs to many school districts, depending on future voter approval of local school bonds. Statewide, costs could be in the hundreds of millions of dollars each year within a decade. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on proposition 39?"**

Likely Voters	
Yes	35%
No	55
Don't know	10

"If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on proposition 39?"

	<u>Likely Voters (August 2000)</u>							
	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>				<u>Latino</u>
	Dem	Rep	Other Voters	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b>Yes</b>	43%	26%	29%	29%	44%	32%	35%	35%
<b>No</b>	44	67	62	63	47	57	54	57
<b>Don't know</b>	12	7	9	8	9	11	11	8

"California voters narrowly defeated Proposition 26 in the March 2000 primary, which would have allowed local school bonds to pass with a simple majority vote, rather than the two-thirds currently required. With Proposition 39 on the November ballot, voters are now being asked if they would be willing to allow local school bonds to pass with a 55 percent vote. Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of being asked to reconsider the issue of the two-thirds vote requirement for school bonds with Proposition 39?"

<u>Likely Voters</u>	
<b>Favorable</b>	45%
<b>Unfavorable</b>	46
<b>Don't know</b>	9

"Overall, how would you rate the quality of public schools in your neighborhood today?"

<u>Likely Voters</u>	
<b>A</b>	10%
<b>B</b>	29
<b>C</b>	30
<b>D</b>	15
<b>F</b>	8
<b>Don't know</b>	8

"Do you think that the current level of state funding for your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?"

	<u>Likely Voters</u>		
	Sep 98	Sep 99	Aug 00
<b>More than enough</b>	10%	10%	<b>10%</b>
<b>Just enough</b>	21	21	<b>23</b>
<b>Not enough</b>	63	65	<b>62</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	6	4	<b>5</b>

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## California Policy Issues

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### Job Performance Ratings for State Officials

Californians' ratings of Governor Gray Davis and the State Legislature have been remarkably steady in the past year, but the governor's ratings have been consistently higher. Fifty-one percent now say Governor Davis is doing an excellent or good job in office, 31 percent rate his performance as fair, and 12 percent think he is doing a poor job. Only 6 percent have no opinion.

Democrats (61%) are more likely than Republicans (43%) and voters outside of the major parties (41%) to give Davis either excellent or good ratings. Latinos (57%) give more positive ratings than non-Hispanic whites (48%). The Governor's excellent or good ratings are fairly consistent across regions: 53 percent in the San Francisco Bay area, 53 percent in the Central Valley, 49 percent in Los Angeles, and 46 percent in the Southern California counties outside of Los Angeles.

The public's ratings of the California Legislature are not as positive: 36 percent give the Legislature an excellent or good grade for its job performance, 43 percent rate the performance as fair, and 11 percent are uncertain.

Democrats (43%) are more generous in giving excellent or good grades to the Legislature than Republicans (30%) and those outside of the major parties (33%). Latinos (46%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (34%) to give positive marks to the Legislature. There is very little variation across regions. Ratings of the Legislature tend to decline modestly with greater age and income, while education has little effect.

"How would you rate the job performance of ..."

	<u>All Adults</u>				
	Sep 99	Dec 99	Jan 00	Feb 00	Aug 00
<b><i>Governor Gray Davis</i></b>					
<b>Excellent</b>	10%	9%	9%	10%	<b>10%</b>
<b>Good</b>	41	42	41	41	<b>41</b>
<b>Fair</b>	34	31	34	32	<b>31</b>
<b>Poor</b>	9	12	9	8	<b>12</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	6	6	7	9	<b>6</b>
<b><i>California Legislature</i></b>					
<b>Excellent</b>	2%	3%	3%	3%	<b>2%</b>
<b>Good</b>	30	34	31	34	<b>34</b>
<b>Fair</b>	48	41	44	41	<b>43</b>
<b>Poor</b>	13	13	11	10	<b>10</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	7	9	11	12	<b>11</b>

## California's Blanket Primary

Most Californians are not pleased that the Supreme Court has ruled unconstitutional California's blanket/open primary, which voters passed through an initiative in 1996. Sixty-four percent of voters view the ruling unfavorably, while 28 percent view it favorably.

Disapproval is highest among independent voters (70%), followed by those not registered to vote (66%), Democrats (65%), and Republicans (58%). Latinos and non-Hispanic whites are equally negative about the court decision. Those living in the Central Valley (71%) are even more negative about ending the blanket primary than those in Los Angeles (61%), the San Francisco Bay area (63%), and the Southern California region outside of Los Angeles (64%). Younger, less educated, and lower-income residents are all somewhat more negative about the court's decision.

Although Californians resent the loss of the blanket primary, they are not that impressed with its effects to date. Most felt that California's two blanket primaries really made no difference, while equal numbers saw them as a good thing and a bad thing for California elections.

Only 22 percent of all adults saw the open primary as a good thing for California elections. The most common response among Republicans, Democrats, and independents was that it had no real effect. Latinos (14%) were less likely than non-Hispanic whites (25%) to say it was a bad thing, although most in both groups said the blanket primary made no difference. There are no differences across regions, age, education, or income categories.

**"Recently, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against the California blanket primary, which was created by a voter initiative in 1996, on the ground it violates political parties' right of association. The court decision means that voters in the primaries can vote only for candidates of the party they registered for, and that independents cannot vote for any candidates who are running in the primaries. Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of the Court's decision on the California blanket primary?"**

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
Favorable	28%	28%	36%	25%	21%	29%
Unfavorable	64	65	58	70	66	64
Don't know	8	7	6	5	13	7

**"The blanket primary was in effect in the June 1998 primary and the March 2000 primary. In your opinion, was the blanket primary a good thing or a bad thing, or did it make no difference for California elections?"**

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
Good thing	22%	22%	25%	24%	16%	22%
Bad thing	22	21	26	26	15	14
No difference	45	47	39	43	52	53
Don't know	11	10	10	7	17	11

## Open Primary Proposal

The Governor and members of the California Legislature are proposing a bill that would allow independent voters to cast ballots for party candidates in state primaries. This bill has the support of 71 percent of Californians, it is opposed by 22 percent, and 7 percent are undecided.

The open-primary proposal receives the strongest endorsement from voters outside of the major parties (76%), but most Democrats (72%) and Republicans (68%) also favor it. Support is about equal among Latinos (73%) and non-Hispanic whites (71%). About seven in 10 Californians living in the Central Valley (70%), San Francisco Bay area (71%), Los Angeles and the Southern California region outside of Los Angeles (72% each) also support this bill. Although younger voters like the proposal more than those 55 and older (73% to 66%), support is overwhelming across age, education, and income groups.

"The Governor and members of the California Legislature are considering passing a bill that would permit independent voters to vote for party candidates in primary elections. Do you support or oppose this bill?"

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
Support	71%	72%	68%	76%	69%	73%
Oppose	22	21	25	17	23	22
Don't know	7	7	7	7	8	5

## Campaign Finance Reform

Just as they resented the Supreme Court ruling against the blanket/open primary, most Californians are unfavorably disposed toward a court challenge by the major political parties to Proposition 208. That proposition was passed in 1996 to impose strict campaign donation limits.

A majority of Democrats (52%) and Republicans (51%), and even more voters outside of the major political parties (60%), view this challenge unfavorably. There are no differences in attitude across regions of the state, between Latinos and non-Hispanic whites, or between more and less educated residents. Younger voters are more negative about the court challenge to Proposition 208 than those 55 and older (56% to 45%), and people with income of \$80,000 or more are more negative than people with lower incomes (58% to 52%).

The Governor and the Legislature have placed another proposition limiting campaign contributions (Proposition 34) on the November ballot. However, a narrow majority of Californians (50%) say they would vote no on Proposition 34 when they hear that the new contribution limits would be less strict than those set by Proposition 208. (Note: this question is not intended to measure support for Proposition 34, whose ballot wording was not available at the time the survey was designed.) After hearing about the impacts of Proposition 34 relative to Proposition 208, Republicans are evenly divided on the November ballot measure, while most Democrats and voters outside of the major parties would vote against it. Latinos (58%) have a more negative reaction to Proposition 34 than non-Hispanic whites (47%). The public response to Proposition 34 is more negative than positive across all regions and demographic groups.

**"On another topic, in 1996, voters passed Proposition 208, an initiative that imposed strict campaign donation limits. It is being challenged in the court by the two political parties and other opponents. Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of this court challenge to Proposition 208?"**

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
Favorable	35%	37%	37%	30%	33%	38%
Unfavorable	53	52	51	60	54	53
Don't know	12	11	12	10	13	9

**"The Governor and California Legislature have placed Proposition 34 on the November ballot, which would limit individual's contributions to \$3,000 for legislative candidates, \$5,000 for statewide candidates, and \$20,000 for candidates running for governor. Some campaign finance reform groups have criticized Proposition 34 because, if it passes, the stricter limits on campaign donations that the voters approved with Proposition 208 would not take effect. Knowing this, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 34?"**

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
Yes	37%	36%	41%	38%	35%	34%
No	50	53	44	50	53	58
Don't know	13	11	15	12	12	8

## Campaign Finance and State Policymaking

There are virtually no limits on campaign contributions in state and legislative elections in California. Most Californians (56%) believe this lack of limits is bad, while very few (14%) see it as good. A majority of Democrats, Republicans, and other voters and of people in every region of the state are negative about the lack of restrictions on contributions. However, non-Hispanic whites (65%) are much more likely than Latinos (37%) to perceive the lack of campaign contribution limits as a bad thing. Perception of the negative effects increases with age, income, and education.

Despite these views, most Californians are not willing to spend even a few dollars a year to pay for public finance of state and legislative campaigns: 57 percent are opposed to this proposal, 38 percent are in favor. Democrats are the most supportive, and Republicans are the most opposed. Latinos (63%) express more opposition to this idea than non-Hispanic whites (54%). Opposition is strong across age groups, though support does increase among college graduates (43%) and those with incomes of \$80,000 or more (42%). In The San Francisco Bay area, more people favor than oppose giving a few dollars a year for such a system (50% to 46%), while six in 10 residents in the Central Valley, Los Angeles, and the rest of Southern California oppose this idea.

"There are virtually no limits on campaign contributions in state and legislative elections in California. Do you think this is a good thing or a bad thing, or does it make no difference for making state laws and policies?"

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<b>Good</b>	14%	12%	14%	12%	24%	26%
<b>Bad</b>	56	61	59	60	40	37
<b>No Difference</b>	27	24	25	27	34	35
<b>Don't know</b>	3	3	2	1	2	2

Would you favor or oppose having a system of public finance for state and legislative campaigns in California, if it cost taxpayers a few dollars a year to fund?

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<b>Favor</b>	38%	44%	32%	42%	32%	32%
<b>Oppose</b>	57	49	63	54	64	63
<b>Don't know</b>	5	7	5	4	4	5

## News Attentiveness

How attentive are Californians to the news, and which stories do they follow most closely? A solid majority have been very or fairly closely following news about the presidential election (72%). About half have been attentive to the investigation and resignation of Insurance Commissioner Chuck Quackenbush (51%), the release of student test scores in California schools (50%), and Mexico's presidential election (46%). Fewer have closely followed news stories about the state budget passing (41%) and the court ruling against the blanket primary (30%).

There is little regional variation in attentiveness to the news stories about the 2000 presidential election, the Supreme Court ruling on the blanket primary, or the student test scores. However, the Quackenbush investigation was followed more closely in the San Francisco Bay area (59%) and Los Angeles (54%) than elsewhere. Central Valley residents were more tuned in to the state budget news (48%) and less attentive to Mexico's presidential elections (39%) than other state residents.

Among likely voters in California elections, many very or fairly closely followed news about the U.S. presidential election (85%) and the Quackenbush investigation (66%), student test scores (57%), the Mexican presidential election (56%), and the state budget (50%). Fewer voters had closely followed the Supreme court ruling against the California blanket primary (40%).

Where people get their news relates to how closely they follow stories. Those who indicate that newspapers are their main source of political news are more likely than those who rely primarily on television news to say they very or fairly closely followed the news across all issues: the U.S. presidential election (77% to 69%), the Quackenbush investigation (62% to 43%), student test scores (57% to 45%), the state budget (47% to 38%), the ruling against the blanket primary (34% to 24%), and the Mexican presidential election (53% to 41%).

In general, attentiveness to news stories increases with age, income, and education. Democrats and Republicans follow news stories more closely than other voters.

"I will read a list of some recent news stories covered by news organizations. As I read each one, tell me if you followed this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely."

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b><i>2000 presidential election</i></b>						
Very closely	30%	29%	30%	30%	31%	31%
Fairly closely	42	42	44	42	38	34
Not too closely	18	16	17	17	20	22
Not at all closely	10	13	9	11	11	13
<b><i>Quackenbush investigation</i></b>						
Very closely	24%	24%	28%	23%	23%	20%
Fairly closely	27	24	31	31	22	22
Not too closely	24	22	21	25	26	26
Not at all closely	25	30	20	21	29	32
<b><i>Passage and signing of state budget</i></b>						
Very closely	13%	17%	10%	10%	15%	15%
Fairly closely	28	31	28	29	25	25
Not too closely	30	22	32	34	30	30
Not at all closely	29	30	30	27	30	30
<b><i>Election of Mexican president</i></b>						
Very closely	18%	16%	17%	20%	20%	38%
Fairly closely	28	23	29	28	29	23
Not too closely	25	24	26	25	23	19
Not at all closely	29	37	28	27	28	20
<b><i>Court ruling on the blanket primary</i></b>						
Very closely	11%	10%	12%	10%	13%	13%
Fairly closely	19	22	18	18	19	15
Not too closely	26	23	27	28	24	31
Not at all closely	44	45	43	44	44	41
<b><i>Student test scores for public schools</i></b>						
Very closely	21%	20%	19%	23%	22%	25%
Fairly closely	29	28	27	30	31	26
Not too closely	23	22	22	20	24	25
Not at all closely	27	30	32	27	23	24

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## Political Trends

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### Job Performance Ratings for Bill Clinton

Bill Clinton is winding down his stay in the Oval Office on a high note. His job performance ratings in California are very strong today, as the Democratic convention in Los Angeles prepares to honor the party's leader for the past eight years: 61 percent say that he is doing a good or excellent job in office. These numbers are virtually identical to those of the October and December surveys of 1998, and six points higher than the ratings in the September and December surveys of 1999. Moreover, fewer respondents give Clinton a poor rating (16%) than in any previous PPIC Statewide Survey.

Democrats (83%) overwhelmingly believe that he is doing an excellent or good job as president. A majority of independents (57%) also give Clinton positive grades. Republicans (32%) are divided in their assessment, with one in three saying he is doing an excellent or good job, one in three saying he is doing a fair job, and one in three saying that he is doing a poor job as president.

Those living in Los Angeles (66%) and the San Francisco Bay area (70%) are more approving of Clinton than those in the Central Valley (54%) and the rest of Southern California (54%). Still, a majority of residents in all four regions say that he is doing an excellent or good job in office. Latinos (68%) are more positive toward Clinton's performance in office than non-Hispanic whites (57%). There are no large differences across age, education, gender, or income groups.

**"How do you rate the job performance of Bill Clinton?"**

<u>All Adults</u>					
	Oct 98	Dec 98	Sep 99	Dec 99	Aug 00
<b>Excellent</b>	26%	26%	16%	18%	<b>22%</b>
<b>Good</b>	34	33	39	37	<b>39</b>
<b>Fair</b>	19	20	27	25	<b>22</b>
<b>Poor</b>	21	20	18	19	<b>16</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	0	1	0	1	<b>1</b>

	<b>All Adults</b>	<u>Party</u>				<b>Latino</b>
		<b>Democrat</b>	<b>Republican</b>	<b>Other voters</b>	<b>Not Registered to Vote</b>	
<b>Excellent</b>	22%	36%	7%	14%	22%	25%
<b>Good</b>	39	47	25	43	43	43
<b>Fair</b>	22	12	32	27	25	24
<b>Poor</b>	16	4	36	16	9	8
<b>Don't know</b>	1	1	0	0	1	0

## Job Performance Ratings for Congress

Californians are about as likely to give Congress excellent or good ratings today (38%) as they were when they voted the current congressional delegation into office two years ago (39%). Residents are also less likely now than in any other PPIC Statewide Survey to say that Congress is doing a poor job. Still, the job ratings for Congress are far less generous than those given to President Clinton.

Despite the perception offered by pundits that the current Congress is highly polarized along party lines, partisan voters differ only modestly in their ratings of the institution: 42 percent of Republicans feel the Congress is doing an excellent or good job, compared to 36 percent of Democrats and 29 percent of those outside of the major parties. Interestingly, Latinos (46%)—despite their Democratic leanings in voter registration—are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (35%) to give the Republican-controlled Congress a good or excellent rating.

There are only modest differences in ratings of Congress across the four major regions of the state, ranging from a low of 37 percent in the San Francisco Bay area who believe that Congress is doing a good/excellent job to a high of 41 percent in the Southern California region outside of Los Angeles. Among demographic groups, those 55 and older are less approving of Congress than younger adults, and college-educated residents are less approving than those with less education. There are no differences across income groups.

Residents are more likely to give positive ratings (excellent/good) to their own representative to the U.S. House of Representatives (46%) than they are to approve of Congress as a whole (38%). Few respondents (8%) give their representative a poor rating. Democrats (52%) and Republicans (48%) offer equally positive ratings, while fewer independent voters (32%) offer such high marks. Latinos (49%) and non-Hispanic whites (46%) are equally positive about their representative. There are no variations across regions in the public's ratings of their representative.

"How do you rate the job performance of the U.S. Congress?"

All Adults					
	Oct 98	Dec 98	Sep 99	Dec 99	Aug 00
<b>Excellent</b>	5%	4%	2%	5%	4%
<b>Good</b>	34	29	24	30	34
<b>Fair</b>	40	42	48	44	45
<b>Poor</b>	19	22	21	18	14
<b>Don't know</b>	2	3	5	3	3

"What about the representative to the U.S. House of Representatives from your congressional district, how do you rate his or her job performance at this time?"

All Adults	
<b>Excellent</b>	7%
<b>Good</b>	39
<b>Fair</b>	31
<b>Poor</b>	8
<b>Don't know</b>	15

## The Mexico Elections

The dramatic results of the Mexican presidential election have impressed many Californians—especially the state’s Latinos. Indeed, Californians are attentive to the changing political landscape on the other side of the border—46 percent of all adults and 61 percent of Latinos—closely followed the news about the election of Vicente Fox.

Roughly nine in 10 of those with an opinion of the new president say they like him. Among Latinos, 51 percent have a favorable opinion of Fox, 5 percent have an unfavorable opinion, and 44 percent have not made up their minds. By contrast, fewer non-Hispanic whites have a favorable view (34%) or an unfavorable view (3%) because more have no opinion (63%) about the new president. The popularity of Fox varies somewhat across the major regions of the state. Specifically, Central Valley residents are the most likely to have no opinion of Fox. Older, more educated, and higher-income Californians are more likely to have a good opinion of him.

Among those who have very closely followed the news about the Mexican presidential election, 71 percent have a favorable view of Fox, 6 percent an unfavorable view, and 23 percent have no opinion.

Californians are highly optimistic about the effects of the changing political leadership in Mexico. Fifty-one percent are optimistic about the new regime, and only 4 percent pessimistic, while 38 percent say that the new leadership does not have any affect on their views of Mexico. Latinos (55%) and non-Hispanic whites (52%) express similar levels of optimism, and there are no differences across political parties. Optimism rises with age, education, and income. A majority in every major region except the Central Valley express optimism about the recent change in leadership.

Among those who have very closely followed the news about the Mexican presidential election, 76 percent are optimistic, 5 percent are pessimistic, and 16 percent say that their views on Mexico are unaffected by the election of Fox.

"Recently, Vicente Fox was elected president of Mexico, ending the PRI's 71-year rule in that country. Do you have a favorable or unfavorable view of Vicente Fox, or don't you know enough to have an opinion?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Favorable	36%	31%	37%	36%	38%	51%
Unfavorable	4	4	3	4	3	5
Don't know	61	65	60	60	59	44

"Does the recent change in political leadership in Mexico make you optimistic or pessimistic about the future of democracy and the economy in Mexico, or does it have no effect on your views about Mexico?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Optimistic	51%	40%	52%	51%	56%	55%
Pessimistic	4	6	2	4	4	4
No effect	38	45	37	39	35	34
Don't know	7	9	9	6	5	7

## California-Mexico Relations

Most Californians (88%) believe that political and economic developments in Mexico are important to California, while almost half (48%) describe events in Mexico as "very important." Few respondents believe that the politics and economics of Mexico are unimportant to California (11%).

Latinos (57%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (46%) to consider economic events in Mexico very important. Still, few non-Hispanic whites (11%) see Mexico as unimportant.

In every region except for the Central Valley, about half of the residents believe that events in Mexico are very significant for California. In all four regions, very few residents consider Mexico unimportant. The belief that Mexico is very important to California increases with age, education, and income. There are no differences between Democrats and Republicans (49% each), while other voters (41%) are less likely to say Mexico is very important.

When asked to choose from a list of four policy issues—immigration, drugs, trade, and pollution—Californians overwhelmingly said immigration (52%) was the most important issue in relations between California and Mexico today, followed by drugs (22%), trade (14%), and pollution (6%). Six percent either had no opinion or volunteered a variety of other policy issues. Latinos (50%) and non-Hispanic whites (53%) were equally likely to cite immigration as the most important policy issue. At least half of the residents in all four regions said that immigration was their top concern. Immigration was the most important issue across all political, age, education, and income groups.

"How important are political and economic developments within Mexico to what goes on in California—very important, somewhat important, or not important? "

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Very important	48%	41%	49%	50%	50%	57%
Somewhat important	40	45	38	38	39	32
Not important	11	12	12	11	10	10
Don't know	1	2	1	1	1	1

"What do you think is the most important issue in relations between California and Mexico today?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Immigration	52%	50%	53%	54%	53%	50%
Drugs	22	28	17	19	23	23
Trade	14	14	17	13	13	16
Pollution	6	4	8	6	7	6
Other, Don't know	6	4	5	8	4	5

## The Future of Social Security

A majority of Californians (52%) have serious doubts about how well the Social Security system will perform in the future. In fact, Californians are more likely than the nation as a whole to believe that the system will not provide the benefits they anticipate when they retire.

Expectations vary with age: 77 percent of those 55 and older (many of whom may already be receiving benefits) believe that the Social Security system will have the money, compared to 35 percent of those 35 to 54 years old, and just 25 percent of those who are under age 35.

Latinos (38%) are less likely than non-Hispanic whites (45%) to expect Social Security to provide retirement benefits. Democrats (48%) and Republicans (45%) are more likely than other voters (30%) to believe that Social Security will be there for them. Attitudes are similar across the four major regions.

Californians with incomes of \$80,000 or more (59%) and college graduates (57%) are mostly pessimistic about the future of the Social Security system. Those with high school educations or less, and with incomes of \$40,000 or less, are equally divided in their assessment of whether or not Social Security will have the money available to provide their retirement benefits.

**"Do you think the Social Security system will have the money available to provide the benefits you expect for your retirement?"**

	<u>All Adults</u>	
	U.S.*	California
<b>Yes</b>	48%	42%
<b>No</b>	45	52
<b>Don't know</b>	7	6

\*Source: National survey conducted by CBS/*York Times*, May 2000 ("yes" includes those volunteering that they already receive benefits)

	<b>All Adults</b>	<u>Age</u>		
		<b>18-34</b>	<b>35-54</b>	<b>55 and older</b>
<b>Yes</b>	42%	25%	35%	77%
<b>No</b>	52	71	58	18
<b>Don't know</b>	6	4	7	6

## Social Security Policies

If Californians seem sour about the prospects of Social Security, they are ready to try some remedies. A large majority (64%) support the idea of allowing individuals to invest their Social Security money in the stock market. A national survey by ABC/*Washington Post* in May 2000 found a similar 64 percent of Americans supported this plan for investing Social Security contributions.

Support for this proposal declines with age. There is little difference in support between Latinos and non-Hispanic whites or across regions and education groups. Support increases with higher income. Although there is a partisan split on the issue, a majority of Democrats (57%), independents (64%), and Republicans (71%) still support the idea.

About half of Californians (55%) already have money invested in the stock market. Those who currently own stocks (66%) are similar to those without stocks (62%) in voicing strong support for allowing individuals to invest some of their Social Security contributions in the market.

We also asked respondents if they felt the next president should focus more on cutting taxes or strengthening the Social Security system. Sixty-five percent want him to focus on saving Social Security, while only 32 percent prefer that he focus on tax cuts. There were strong partisan differences: only 19 percent of Democrats would rather have a tax cut, compared to 33 percent of independents and 48 percent of Republicans. There were no differences between Latinos and non-Hispanic whites. A majority across regions, age, education, and income groups want to focus on Social Security.

**"Would you support or oppose a plan in which people who chose to do so could invest some of their Social Security contributions in the stock market? "**

	All Adults	Age		
		18-34	35-54	55 and older
Support	64%	74%	66%	47%
Oppose	32	23	30	47
Don't know	4	3	3	6

**"Which should be a higher priority for the next president: cutting taxes or strengthening the Social Security system? "**

August 00 Survey	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other voters	Not Registered to Vote	
Strengthening Social Security	65%	79%	48%	64%	64%	67%
Cutting taxes	32	19	48	33	32	30
Don't know	3	2	4	3	4	3

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## Social and Economic Trends

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### Overall Mood

Californians continue to be in the positive mood that has dominated this state for the past two years, despite some setbacks in the stock market, higher interest rates, and rising energy and gasoline prices. By a two-to-one margin, Californians think things in their state are going in the right direction. Seven in 10 expect good economic times over the next 12 months. The ratings across both measures of the public's overall mood are very similar to the ratings registered a year ago.

The mood varies slightly across regions, with Central Valley residents (59%) the least likely and San Francisco Bay area residents (64%) the most likely to say the state is headed in the right direction. Similarly, Central Valley residents (68%) are the least likely and San Francisco Bay area residents (75%) the most likely to expect good economic times over the next 12 months.

The mood is positive across all demographic groups. However, Latinos (65%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (60%) to believe the state is headed in the right direction, while non-Hispanic whites (74%) are more likely than Latinos (69%) to expect good economic times over the next year. Residents with college degrees and earning \$80,000 or more in annual household income are the most likely to express an overall positive mood. There is little variation in the overall mood by age.

How does the mood of the state relate to politics and elections?

Democrats are more likely than Republicans and independent voters to have positive views of the state and the state's economy. The voters most likely to go to the polls in November overwhelmingly believe that the state is headed in the right direction (63%) and that there will be good economic times in the next 12 months (78%). However, this positive mood does not always translate into votes for Gore: Among those who say the state is headed in the right direction, only half support Gore over Bush (50% to 30%); and among those who expect good economic times in the next 12 months, Gore leads Bush by a narrower margin (41% to 37%).

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

<u>All Adults</u>									
	May 98	Sep 98	Oct 98	Dec 98	Sep 99	Dec 99	Jan 00	Feb 00	Aug 00
<b>Right direction</b>	56%	57%	62%	63%	61%	62%	66%	65%	<b>62%</b>
<b>Wrong direction</b>	34	34	30	28	34	31	26	27	<b>30</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	10	9	8	9	5	7	8	8	<b>8</b>

"Do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?"

<u>All Adults</u>				
	Sep 99	Dec 99	Feb 00	Aug 00
<b>Good times</b>	72%	76%	78%	<b>72%</b>
<b>Bad times</b>	23	19	15	<b>21</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	5	5	7	<b>7</b>

## Stock Market Investments

Only about half of Californians (54%) have stock market investments (including money that is in retirement accounts), demonstrating that not all Californians have been riding the long bull market.

Sixty-six percent of Latinos are currently not in the stock market, while 62 percent of non-Hispanic whites are market investors. Most of those with annual household incomes below \$40,000 (74%) say they have no stock market investments, while the overwhelming majority of Californians in higher income brackets do own shares of stocks or stock mutual funds. Stock market investments also increase with education: 32 percent of those with a high school education or less, 54 percent of those with some college, and 75 percent of college graduates are invested in the market. Most of those under 35 years old are not in the stock market today (59%), while most who are 35 or older have stock investments (62%).

Those who live in the San Francisco Bay area (63%) are more likely to own stocks than those residing in Los Angeles (49%), the Central Valley (50%), and the Southern California region outside of Los Angeles (56%). Republicans (63%) are more likely than Democrats and independent voters (58% each) to own stocks, while most of those who are not registered to vote do not own stocks (64%).

About one in six Californians say they have \$50,000 or more invested in the stock market at this time. Few residents with incomes under \$40,000 (5%) or \$40,000 to \$80,000 (18%) say they have this amount of stock investments, compared with almost half (45%) of Californians with annual household incomes of \$80,000 or more. Non-Hispanic whites (22%) are much more likely than Latinos (7%) to have \$50,000 or more invested in the market. San Francisco Bay area residents (23%) are more likely than those living in the Central Valley or Los Angeles (15% each) or the Southern California regions outside of Los Angeles (17%) to have \$50,000 or more in the stock market.

**"Do you own any shares of individual stocks or mutual funds that include stocks, including money that is in retirement accounts? "**

	All Adults	Annual Income			Latino
		Less than \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	More than \$80,000	
Yes	54%	26%	70%	84%	34%
No	46	74	30	16	66

**"Approximately how much money do you have invested in the stock market at this time?"**

	All Adults	Annual Income			Latino
		Less than \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	More than \$80,000	
Less than \$10,000	14%	10%	21%	11%	12%
\$10,000 to \$49,999	13	6	21	21	9
\$50,000 to \$99,999	7	3	10	13	3
\$100,000 or more	10	2	8	32	4
Don't invest/Don't know	56	79	40	23	72

## Computers and the Internet

In this, our most recent survey, three in four Californians say they have used a computer, and two in three say they have accessed the Internet. Among those who use the Internet, half say they do so on a frequent basis.

San Francisco Bay area residents (61%) are far more likely than those living in the Central Valley (41%), Los Angeles (48%), and the rest of Southern California (49%) to frequently access the Internet. Latinos (35%) are much less likely than non-Hispanic whites (54%) to frequently use the Internet.

The demographic groups that are least likely to often use the Internet are those with less than a high school education (27%), those with incomes under \$40,000 (33%), and those who are 55 and older (39%). Those most likely to use the Internet are under 55 years of age (66%), college graduates (68%), and those with annual household incomes of \$80,000 or more (78%).

It is important to note how connected to the Internet different voter groups are in this state, especially with a presidential election this fall. About half of the Democrats (50%), Republicans (53%), and other voters (54%) say they often access the Internet. Of the voters who are most likely to go to the polls in November, 55% often use the Internet. By contrast, only 42 percent of those who are not registered to vote frequently use the Internet.

"Do you ever go on line to access the Internet or World Wide Web or to send or receive e-mail? "

<u>All Adults</u>					
	Sep 99	Dec 99	Jan 00	Feb 00	Aug 00
Ever use computer at home, work, school	74%	76%	78%	72%	76%
Ever access the Internet or World Wide Web	60	61	64	60	66

	All Adults	<u>Party Registration</u>				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
Yes, often	50%	50%	53%	54%	42%	35%
Yes, sometimes	16	17	17	17	14	15
No, don't use computers	34	33	30	29	44	50

## Political Communications and the Internet

Frequent use of the Internet for political purposes is rare in California. Even among likely voters—a politically and technologically savvy group—only 4 percent frequently send or receive political e-mail or check out the web sites of the candidates and political causes. However, many likely voters use the Internet for political purposes on a less frequent basis—16 percent at least sometimes receive e-mail from political sources, 22 percent at least sometimes send e-mail to political sources, and 29 percent at least sometimes log on to the web sites of candidates and political causes.

Among all California adults, only 2 percent frequently use the Internet for any of the three political purposes mentioned in the tables below. It is interesting to note that there are only minor differences in overall use (i.e., often/sometimes) of the Internet for political purposes between Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. Those who are not registered to vote rarely use the Internet for political purposes. Very few Latinos are gaining political knowledge or sending political communications to others by way of the Internet. Non-Hispanic whites are about twice as likely to send or receive political e-mail or log on to political web sites. Sending or receiving political information through the Internet increases with education and income. There are no age differences in sending or receiving political e-mail; however, those under 55 (23%) are much more likely than those 55 and older (12%) to use the Internet to look at political web sites.

San Francisco Bay Area residents are more likely than those living in other regions of the state to use the Internet to send political e-mail (20%) or log on to political web sites (24%).

	Likely Voters
<b><i>Do you ever receive e-mail messages from elected officials, political candidates, political parties, or political causes?</i></b>	
Yes, often	4%
Yes, sometimes	12
No	55
Don't use Internet	29
<b><i>Do you ever send e-mail messages to elected officials, political candidates, political parties, or political causes?</i></b>	
Yes, often	4%
Yes, sometimes	18
No	49
Don't use Internet	29
<b><i>Do you ever go on line to visit the web sites of elected officials, political candidates, political parties, or political causes?</i></b>	
Yes, often	4%
Yes, sometimes	25
No	42
Don't use Internet	29

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<i>Do you ever receive e-mail messages from elected officials, political candidates, political parties, or political causes?</i>						
Yes, often	2%	3%	3%	4%	1%	2%
Yes, sometimes	9	10	9	10	4	5
No	55	54	58	57	51	43
Don't use Internet	34	33	30	29	44	50
<i>Do you ever send e-mail messages to elected officials, political candidates, political parties, or political causes?</i>						
Yes, often	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%	1%
Yes, sometimes	13	13	15	18	6	7
No	51	52	52	50	49	42
Don't use Internet	34	33	30	29	44	50
<i>Do you ever go on line to visit the web sites of elected officials, political candidates, political parties, or political causes?</i>						
Yes, often	2%	2%	3%	4%	1%	2%
Yes, sometimes	18	20	21	19	9	11
No	46	45	45	48	46	37
Don't use Internet	34	33	31	29	44	50

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## Survey Methodology

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The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, a senior fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California, with research assistance from Eric McGhee and Mina Yaroslavsky. The findings of this survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,003 California adult residents interviewed from July 28 to August 4, 2000. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights, using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers, ensuring that both listed and unlisted telephone numbers were called. All telephone exchanges in California were eligible for calling. Telephone numbers in the survey sample were called up to five times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing by using the “last birthday method” to avoid biases in age and gender. Each interview took an average of 20 minutes to complete. Interviewing was conducted in English or Spanish. Maria Tello translated the survey into Spanish.

We used recent U.S. Census and state figures to compare the demographic characteristics of the survey sample with characteristics of California's adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to U.S. Census and state figures. The survey data in this report were statistically weighted to account for any demographic differences.

The sampling error for the total sample of 2,003 adults is +/- 2 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for subgroups is larger. The sampling error for the 1,597 registered voters is +/- 2.5% and for the 988 likely voters is +/- 3.5%. Sampling error is just 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.

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

We present specific results for Latinos because they account for about 24 percent of the state's adult population and constitute one of the fastest growing voter groups. For likely voters, the sample sizes for the African American and Asian subgroups are not large enough for separate statistical analysis. We contrast the opinions of Democrats and Republicans with “other” or “independent” registered voters. This third category includes those who are registered to vote as “decline to state” as well as a fewer number who say they are members of other political parties.

In some cases, we compare PPIC Statewide Survey responses to responses recorded in national surveys conducted in 2000 by CBS/*New York Times* and ABC/*Washington Post*. We used 1998, 1999, and 2000 PPIC Statewide Surveys to analyze trends over time in California.

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

JULY 28 – AUGUST 4, 2000

2,003 CALIFORNIA ADULT RESIDENTS; ENGLISH AND SPANISH

MARGIN OF ERROR +/- 2% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE

*[Responses recorded for first 15 questions are from likely voters. All other responses are from all adults.]*

1. First, I have a few questions about the November 7<sup>th</sup> general election. If the election for president were held today, who would you vote for? (*rotate names, then ask "or someone else"*)

40% Al Gore, Democrat  
 37 George W. Bush, Republican  
 8 Ralph Nader, Green Party  
 1 Patrick Buchanan, Reform Party  
 0 someone else (*specify*)  
 14 don't know

2. In deciding who to vote for in the presidential election, how important to you are the national conventions for the Republican and Democratic parties this summer—very important, somewhat important, or not important?

17% very important  
 33 somewhat important  
 49 not important  
 1 don't know

3. People have different ideas about what they want to learn about the presidential candidates from the national party conventions. Which of these is most important to you? Would it be ... (*rotate*)

54% the candidates' stands on the issues  
 20 the candidates' character  
 15 the candidates' experience  
 9 the candidates' party platform  
 2 don't know

4. And which one issue would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about at the national party conventions? (*code don't read*)

17% schools, education  
 11 Social Security, Medicare  
 10 taxes, cutting taxes  
 7 health care, HMO reform  
 6 foreign policy, national security, defense  
 6 jobs, the economy, unemployment  
 5 environment, pollution  
 4 abortion  
 3 crime, gangs  
 3 federal budget, spending surplus  
 3 guns, gun control  
 3 morals, family values  
 1 campaign finance reform  
 1 immigration, illegal immigration  
 5 other (*specify*)  
 15 don't know

5. Which of these statements is closest to your views about president Bill Clinton?

40% I like Bill Clinton and I like his policies  
 5 I like Bill Clinton but I dislike his policies  
 22 I dislike Bill Clinton but I like his policies  
 31 I dislike Bill Clinton and I dislike his policies  
 2 don't know

6. How much credit do you think the Clinton administration deserves for California's economic conditions today—a lot, some, very little, or none?

27% a lot  
 37 some  
 19 very little  
 15 none  
 2 don't know

7. If the November election for the U.S. Senate were held today, who would you vote for? (*rotate names, then ask "or someone else?"*)

33% Tom Campbell, Republican  
 52 Dianne Feinstein, Democrat  
 0 someone else (*specify*)  
 15 don't know

8. Proposition 38, the "school vouchers" initiative, will be on the November 2000 ballot. It authorizes annual payments from the state of at least \$4,000 per pupil as grants for new students at qualifying private and religious schools. It also allows the legislature to replace current constitutional funding priority and Proposition 98 guarantees with new minimum per pupil funding at no less than the national average. Estimates of fiscal effects range from \$150 million to over \$600 million in annual costs, and from \$500 million in net annual costs to \$2.5 billion in net annual savings in the long run. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on proposition 38?

45% yes  
 44 no  
 11 don't know

9. Let's say a presidential candidate supports the school vouchers initiative. Would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for that presidential candidate, or would it have no effect on your vote for president?

25% more likely  
 19 less likely  
 52 no effect  
 4 don't know

10. If the voucher initiative passes, do you think that five years from now the quality of public schools in your community will improve, stay about the same, or decline compared to the way they are today?

38% improve  
24 stay the same  
31 get worse  
7 don't know

11. If the voucher initiative does not pass, do you think that five years from now the quality of public schools in your community will improve, stay about the same, or decline compared to the way they are today?

20% improve  
49 stay the same  
24 get worse  
7 don't know

12. Proposition 39, the "school facilities, 55 percent local vote, bonds, taxes, accountability requirements" initiative, will be on the November 2000 ballot. It would authorize local school districts to issue bonds for construction, rehabilitation, or replacement of school facilities if approved by 55 percent of local voters. It authorizes raising property taxes higher than the existing 1 percent limit by 55 percent vote, rather than the two-thirds currently required, to pay the bonds. The fiscal impacts include increased debt costs to many school districts, depending on future voter approval of local school bonds. Statewide, costs could be in the hundreds of millions of dollars each year within a decade. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on proposition 39?

35% yes  
55 no  
10 don't know

13. California voters narrowly defeated Proposition 26 in the March 2000 primary, which would have allowed local school bonds to pass with a simple majority vote, rather than the two-thirds currently required. With Proposition 39 on the November ballot, voters are now being asked if they would be willing to allow local school bonds to pass with a 55 percent vote. Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of being asked to reconsider the issue of the two-thirds vote requirement for school bonds with Proposition 39?

45% favorable  
46 unfavorable  
9 don't know

14. Overall, how would you rate the quality of public schools in your neighborhood today? If you had to give your local public schools a grade, would it be A, B, C, D, or F?

10% A  
29 B  
30 C  
15 D  
8 F  
8 don't know

15. Do you think that the current level of state funding for your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?

10% more than enough  
23 just enough  
62 not enough  
5 don't know

I will read a list of some recent news stories covered by news organizations. As I read each one, tell me if you followed this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. (*rotate q. 16-21*)

16. News about candidates for the 2000 presidential election.

30% very closely  
42 fairly closely  
18 not too closely  
10 not at all closely

17. News about the investigation and resignation of State Insurance Commissioner Chuck Quackenbush.

24% very closely  
27 fairly closely  
24 not too closely  
25 not at all closely

18. News about the California Legislature passing the state budget and the Governor signing it.

13% very closely  
28 fairly closely  
30 not too closely  
29 not at all closely

19. News from Mexico about the election of Vicente Fox as president and the end of the PRI's 71-year rule.

18% very closely  
28 fairly closely  
25 not too closely  
29 not at all closely

20. News about the California blanket primary being ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court.

11% very closely  
19 fairly closely  
26 not too closely  
44 not at all closely

21. News about the Stanford 9 test scores for California's public schools.
- |     |                    |
|-----|--------------------|
| 21% | very closely       |
| 29  | fairly closely     |
| 23  | not too closely    |
| 27  | not at all closely |
22. Do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?
- |     |                 |
|-----|-----------------|
| 62% | right direction |
| 30  | wrong direction |
| 8   | don't know      |
23. Turning to economic conditions in California, do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?
- |     |            |
|-----|------------|
| 72% | good times |
| 21  | bad times  |
| 7   | don't know |
24. Recently, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against the California blanket primary, which was created by a voter initiative in 1996, on the grounds that it violates political parties' right of association. The court decision means that voters in the primaries can vote only for candidates of the party they registered for, and that independents cannot vote for any candidates who are running in the primaries. Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of the court's decision on the California blanket primary?
- |     |             |
|-----|-------------|
| 28% | favorable   |
| 64  | unfavorable |
| 8   | don't know  |
25. The blanket primary was in effect in the June 1998 primary and the March 2000 primary. In your opinion, was the blanket primary a good thing or a bad thing, or did it make no difference for California elections?
- |     |               |
|-----|---------------|
| 22% | good thing    |
| 22  | bad thing     |
| 45  | no difference |
| 11  | don't know    |
26. The Governor and members of the California Legislature are considering passing a bill that would permit independent voters to vote for party candidates in primary elections. Do you support or oppose this bill?
- |     |            |
|-----|------------|
| 71% | support    |
| 22  | oppose     |
| 7   | don't know |
27. On another topic, in 1996, voters passed Proposition 208, an initiative that imposed strict campaign donation limits. It is being challenged in the court by the two political parties and other opponents. Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of this court challenge to Proposition 208?
- |     |             |
|-----|-------------|
| 35% | favorable   |
| 53  | unfavorable |
| 12  | don't know  |
28. There are virtually no limits on campaign contributions in state and legislative elections in California. Do you think this is a good thing or a bad thing, or does it make no difference for making state laws and policies?
- |     |               |
|-----|---------------|
| 14% | good thing    |
| 56  | bad thing     |
| 27  | no difference |
| 3   | don't know    |
29. The Governor and California Legislature have placed Proposition 34 on the November ballot, which would limit individual's contributions to \$3,000 for legislative candidates, \$5,000 for statewide candidates, and \$20,000 for candidates running for governor. Some campaign finance reform groups have criticized Proposition 34 because, if it passes, the stricter limits on campaign donations that the voters approved with Proposition 208 would not take effect. Knowing this, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 34?
- |     |            |
|-----|------------|
| 37% | yes        |
| 50  | no         |
| 13  | don't know |
30. Would you favor or oppose having a system of public finance for state and legislative campaigns in California if it cost taxpayers a few dollars a year to fund?
- |     |            |
|-----|------------|
| 38% | favor      |
| 57  | oppose     |
| 5   | don't know |
31. Recently, Vicente Fox was elected president of Mexico, ending the PRI's 71-year rule in that country. Do you have a favorable or unfavorable view of Vicente Fox, or don't you know enough to have an opinion?
- |     |             |
|-----|-------------|
| 36% | favorable   |
| 4   | unfavorable |
| 61  | don't know  |
32. Does the recent change in political leadership in Mexico make you optimistic or pessimistic about the future of democracy and the economy in Mexico, or does it have no effect on your views about Mexico?
- |     |             |
|-----|-------------|
| 51% | optimistic  |
| 4   | pessimistic |
| 38  | no effect   |
| 7   | don't know  |

33. How important are political and economic developments within Mexico to what goes on in California—very important, somewhat important, or not important?

48% very important  
40 somewhat important  
11 not important  
1 don't know

34. What do you think is the most important issue in relations between California and Mexico today? (*rotate*)

52% immigration  
22 drugs  
14 trade  
6 pollution  
6 don't know

35. On another topic, do you think the Social Security system will have the money available to provide the benefits you expect for your retirement?

42% yes  
52 no  
6 don't know

36. Would you support or oppose a plan in which people who chose to do so could invest some of their Social Security contributions in the stock market?

64% support  
32 oppose  
4 don't know

37. Which should be a higher priority for the next president: cutting taxes or strengthening the Social Security system?

32% cutting taxes  
65 strengthening Social Security  
3 don't know

38. How do you rate the job performance of President Bill Clinton at this time—excellent, good, fair, or poor?

22% excellent  
39 good  
22 fair  
16 poor  
1 don't know

39. How do you rate the job performance of the U.S. Congress at this time—excellent, good, fair, or poor?

4% excellent  
34 good  
45 fair  
14 poor  
3 don't know

40. What about the representative to the U.S. House of Representatives from your congressional district—how do you rate his or her job performance at this time?

7% excellent  
39 good  
31 fair  
8 poor  
15 don't know

41. How do you rate the job performance of Governor Gray Davis at this time?

10% excellent  
41 good  
31 fair  
12 poor  
6 don't know

42. How do you rate the job performance of the California Legislature at this time?

2% excellent  
34 good  
43 fair  
10 poor  
11 don't know

43. On another topic, some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain you are registered to vote? (*if yes: Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or as an independent?*)

38% yes, Democrat (*skip to q. 45*)  
28 yes, Republican (*skip to q. 45*)  
4 yes, other party (*skip to q. 45*)  
12 yes, independent (*ask q. 44*)  
18 no, not registered (*skip to q. 45*)

44. (*Independents only*) Do you think of yourself as closer to the Democratic Party or the Republican Party?

35% Democratic  
31 Republican  
30 neither  
4 don't know

45. Would you consider yourself to be politically very liberal, somewhat liberal, middle-of-the-road, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?

11% very liberal  
20 somewhat liberal  
33 middle-of-the-road  
24 somewhat conservative  
10 very conservative  
2 don't know

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

18% great deal  
 47 fair amount  
 29 only a little  
 6 none  
 0 don't know

47. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, hardly ever, or never?

37% most of the time  
 50 some of the time  
 11 hardly ever  
 2 never  
 0 don't know

48. Where do you get most of your information about what's going on in politics today? From ... (rotate)

44% television  
 31 newspapers  
 10 radio  
 6 the Internet  
 6 talking to people  
 2 magazines  
 0 other  
 1 don't know

49. How often would you say you vote—always, nearly always, part of the time, seldom, or never?

53% always  
 19 nearly always  
 11 part of the time  
 5 seldom  
 11 never  
 1 other  
 0 don't know

50. On another topic, do you yourself ever use a computer at home, at work, or at school? (if yes: Do you do this often or only sometimes?)

60% yes, often (ask q. 51)  
 17 yes, sometimes (ask q. 51)  
 24 no (skip to q. 55)

51. Do you ever go on line to access the Internet or World Wide Web or to send or receive e-mail? (if yes: Do you do this often or only sometimes?)

50% yes, often (ask q. 52)  
 16 yes, sometimes (ask q. 52)  
 10 no (skip to q. 55)  
 24 don't know (skip to q. 55)

52. Do you ever receive e-mail messages from elected officials, political candidates, political parties, or political causes? (if yes: Does this happen to you often or only sometimes?)

2% yes, often  
 9 yes, sometimes  
 55 no  
 34 don't use the Internet

53. Do you ever send e-mail messages to elected officials, political candidates, political parties, or political causes? (if yes: Do you do this often, or only sometimes?)

2% yes, often  
 13 yes, sometimes  
 51 no  
 34 don't use the Internet

54. Do you ever go on line to visit the web sites of elected officials, political candidates, political parties, or political causes? (if yes: Do you do this often, or only sometimes?)

2% yes, often  
 18 yes, sometimes  
 46 no  
 34 don't use the Internet

55. Do you own any shares of individual stocks or mutual funds that include stocks, including money that is in retirement accounts?

55% yes  
 45 no (skip to q. 57)

56. Approximately how much money do you have invested in the stock market at this time?

14% under \$10,000  
 13 \$10,000 to \$49,999  
 7 \$50,000 to under \$100,000  
 10 \$100,000 or more  
 56 don't know / don't invest

[Questions 57–66: demographic questions]

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