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Californians & their government



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in collaboration with
The James Irvine Foundation



PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The PPIC Statewide Survey provides policymakers, the media, and the public with objective, advocacy-free information on the perceptions, opinions, and public policy preferences of California residents. This is the 128th PPIC Statewide Survey in a series that was inaugurated in April 1998 and has generated a database of responses from more than 270,000 Californians.

This is the 53rd survey in the *Californians and Their Government* series. The survey is conducted periodically to examine the social, economic, and political trends that influence public policy preferences and ballot choices. Supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation, the series seeks to inform decisionmakers, raise public awareness, and stimulate policy discussions and debate about important state and national issues.

This survey was conducted right after the Republican and the Democratic national conventions, with less than 60 days remaining until the presidential election. For California voters, the November 6 election will feature two tax measures to fund education (Propositions 30 and 38) that were placed on the ballot through the initiative process. The recently enacted state budget is tied to the vote on Proposition 30. If the measure fails, automatic cuts will be made to K–12 education to balance the budget. Voters will also decide on governance issues, including reforms to campaign finance, the state budget process, and redistricting.

This survey presents the responses of 2,003 adult residents throughout the state, interviewed in English or Spanish by landline or cell phone. It includes findings on these topics:

- The November election, including the preference of likely voters in the presidential election, the issue that voters would most like to hear presidential candidates talk about, and satisfaction with and attention paid to news about presidential candidates; preferred outcome in congressional elections; voting intentions on two measures for funding education (Proposition 30, which increases taxes to fund education, guarantees local public safety funding; and Proposition 38, which increases taxes for education and early childhood programs); and support for and importance of the outcome of Proposition 31 (state budget, state and local government) and Proposition 32 (prohibits political contributions by payroll deduction).
- State and national issues, including approval ratings of Governor Brown, the state legislature, and residents' own state legislators; approval ratings of President Obama and Congress, residents' own House representatives, and California's U.S. senators; views of the state budget, including preferred approaches for closing a possible state budget deficit; whether voters should be involved in making budget decisions; and support for raising personal income taxes, corporate taxes, the state sales tax, and income taxes on the wealthy; attitudes toward the citizens' initiative process, the death penalty, changes to the three strikes law in California, and restricting the ability of labor unions and corporations to contribute to political candidates.
- Time trends, national comparisons, and the extent to which Californians may differ in their perceptions, attitudes, and preferences regarding the 2012 elections and state and national issues, based on political party affiliation, likelihood of voting, region of residence, race/ethnicity, and other demographics.

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

NEWS RELEASE

EMBARGOED: Do not publish or broadcast until 9:00 p.m. PDT on Wednesday, September 19, 2012.

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

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

Half of Likely Voters Favor Proposition 30—Support Slightly Lower for Proposition 38

HALF SAY FIRST-DEGREE MURDER PENALTY SHOULD BE LIFE IN PRISON, FEWER CHOOSE DEATH PENALTY

SAN FRANCISCO, September 19, 2012—Half of California likely voters support Proposition 30, the measure Governor Jerry Brown and others put on the November ballot to raise taxes, primarily for education programs. Support is slightly lower for Proposition 38, the initiative by attorney Molly Munger to raise taxes for schools. These are among the key findings of a statewide survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), with support from The James Irvine Foundation.

When read the Proposition 30 ballot title and label, 52 percent of likely voters say they would vote for it, 40 percent would vote no, and 8 percent are undecided. The initiative would increase taxes on earnings over \$250,000 for seven years and the sales tax by ¼ cent for four years to fund schools and guarantee public safety realignment funding.

When likely voters are read the ballot title and label for Proposition 38, 45 percent say they would vote for it, 45 percent are opposed, and 11 percent are undecided. Proposition 38 would increase taxes on earnings for 12 years using a sliding scale, with revenues going to K–12 schools and early childhood programs and, for four years, to repaying state debt. Both ballot measures draw support from:

- **Democrats and independents.** Proposition 30 has overwhelming support among Democratic voters (73%), and Proposition 38 has solid support among Democrats (61%). A slim majority of independents favor both initiatives (53% for each). Strong majorities of Republicans oppose them (65% Proposition 30, 68% Proposition 38).
- **Women.** A majority of women support Proposition 30 (59% yes, 30% no) and favor Proposition 38 by 13 points (50% yes, 37% no). Men are more divided on Proposition 30 (45% yes, 50% no) and opposed to Proposition 38 (40% yes, 52% no).
- **Lower-income voters.** Those in households earning less than \$40,000 show a larger margin of support for Proposition 30 (58% yes, 36% no) than do those in higher-income groups. Support for Proposition 38 drops among those making \$80,000 or more (38%).
- **Latinos.** They are more likely than whites to support Proposition 30 (66% to 48%) and Proposition 38 (58% to 40%).
- **Voters under age 35.** They show much more support (72%) for Proposition 30 than voters age 35 to 54 (49%) or 55 and older (42%). They are also much more likely to support Proposition 38 (67%) than older voters (42% age 35–54, 32% age 55 and older).

“Turnout will be an important ingredient in determining the November outcome of the two tax measures since these initiatives have much stronger support among young, Latino, and women voters, and narrow majorities of independent voters are favoring both measures today,” says Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO.

What is the overlap in support between the two measures? Among those who would vote yes on Proposition 30, 71 percent would vote yes on Proposition 38. Among those who would vote no on Proposition 30, 80 percent would vote no on Proposition 38. In all, 37 percent would vote yes on both measures and 32 percent would vote no on both.

Asked how important the outcome of Proposition 30 is to them, 60 percent of likely voters say it is very important. Supporters are as inclined to say the outcome is very important (61%) as those who oppose it (63%). Half of likely voters (50%) say the outcome of Proposition 38 is very important to them, with those who would vote yes (55%) slightly more inclined to hold this view than those who would vote no (48%).

BROWN’S JOB APPROVAL AT 42 PERCENT AMONG LIKELY VOTERS

The recently enacted state budget is linked to the outcome of Proposition 30. If the measure fails, automatic cuts will be made to K–12 education to balance the budget. Opposition to the trigger cuts is high: 75 percent of likely voters are opposed to them, including 92 percent who say they will vote yes on Proposition 30 and 53 percent of those who would vote no. Asked how they prefer to deal with the budget gap, just 37 percent think it should be resolved mostly with spending cuts, while 41 percent prefer a mix of spending cuts and tax increases and 13 percent prefer mostly tax increases.

The governor himself has a job approval rating of 42 percent among likely voters, similar to his rating since January. Disapproval of Brown, however, is at a record-high 47 percent. The approval rating of the state legislature is much lower than the governor’s, at 22 percent. Asked about the job performance of their own state legislators in the assembly and state senate, 35 percent of likely voters approve.

Presented with four tax proposals, few likely voters favor raising state personal income taxes (28%), unless it is on the wealthy (59%). Both Proposition 30 and Proposition 38 would fund education with increases in income taxes. Few likely voters (33%) favor raising the state sales tax, as Proposition 30 would do temporarily. There is majority support among likely voters for raising the state taxes paid by California corporations (54%).

PROPOSITION 31 LAGGING—MANY UNDECIDED

The PPIC Survey also asked about two governance reform initiatives. Proposition 31 would establish a two-year state budget, set rules for offsetting new expenditures and budget cuts enacted by the governor, and allow local governments to alter the application of laws governing programs funded by the state. When read the ballot title and label, 25 percent of likely voters say they would vote yes, 42 percent would vote no, and 32 percent are undecided. The proposition does not have majority support in any party, demographic, or regional group. Many likely voters across groups do not know how they will vote on Proposition 31. Twenty-nine percent of likely voters say the outcome is very important to them.

VOTERS SPLIT ON PROPOSITION 32 BUT SLIGHTLY MORE LIKELY TO OPPOSE IT

Likely voters are divided on Proposition 32, with 42 percent saying they would vote yes, 49 percent would vote no, and 9 percent are undecided. The initiative would bar unions, corporations, and government contractors from using money from payroll deductions for political purposes. It also would prohibit union and corporate contributions to candidates and their committees and government contractor contributions to elected officials. Proposition 32 has the support of slim majorities of Republicans (53%) and independents (52%), while a solid majority of Democrats (61%) are opposed to it. Asked how important

the outcome of the measure is to them, 43 percent of likely voters say it is very important. This is a view held by about half of those who plan to vote yes (51%) and 40 percent of those who plan to vote no.

The survey also asked generally about the role of unions and corporations in campaigns. A slim majority of likely voters (54%) favor restricting the ability of unions to contribute to candidates (41% oppose). A solid majority (60%) favor placing restrictions on the ability of corporations to do so (37% oppose).

MORE PREFER LIFE TERM TO DEATH PENALTY—STRONG SUPPORT FOR CHANGING THREE STRIKES LAW

The survey did not include specific questions about Proposition 34, which would repeal the death penalty, or Proposition 36, which would revise the three strikes law, but did ask about some of the concepts behind them. Asked about the penalty for first-degree murder, 50 percent of likely voters say life imprisonment with absolutely no possibility of parole should be the penalty, while 42 percent say it should be death. Results were similar in September 2011 (50% life imprisonment, 45% death penalty). Among likely voters, most Democrats (66%) prefer life imprisonment and most Republicans (58%) prefer the death penalty, while independents are split (42% life imprisonment, 43% death penalty).

The three strikes law requires, among other things, a minimum sentence of 25 years to life for three-time offenders with multiple prior felonies. Survey respondents were asked if they favor or oppose changing the law to impose life sentences only if the third felony conviction is serious or violent. The results: 73 percent of likely voters are in favor, a view held across parties, demographic groups and regions.

OBAMA-BIDEN LEAD BY 14 POINTS

The Democratic presidential ticket of Barack Obama and Joe Biden leads the Republican ticket of Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan by 14 points (53% to 39%) among likely voters, with 8 percent saying they would either vote for someone else (2%) or are undecided (6%). In May and July, Obama led Romney by 11 points. Partisan likely voters are divided—88 percent of Democrats favor the Democratic ticket and 85 percent of Republicans favor the Republican one—while independents are more likely to favor Obama (51% Obama, 38% Romney, with 9% undecided and 2% planning to vote for someone else). Asked if they are satisfied with their choice of presidential candidates, 66 percent of likely voters say they are. Democrats (78%) are much more likely to be satisfied than Republicans (65%). Independents are divided (49% satisfied, 49% dissatisfied).

When asked to name one issue they would most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about between now and the election, 49 percent of likely voters say jobs and the economy. Far fewer mention health care, health costs, or Medicare (8%), or the federal budget, deficit, and taxes (7%). Most likely voters (60%) are dissatisfied with the amount of attention the candidates are spending on issues most important to them, and just 35 percent are satisfied.

“In the presidential election, the economy is the top issue for California voters, who still see bad times ahead for the state,” Baldassare says. “Voters across the political spectrum are dissatisfied with the attention that the candidates are paying to the issue that matters the most to them.”

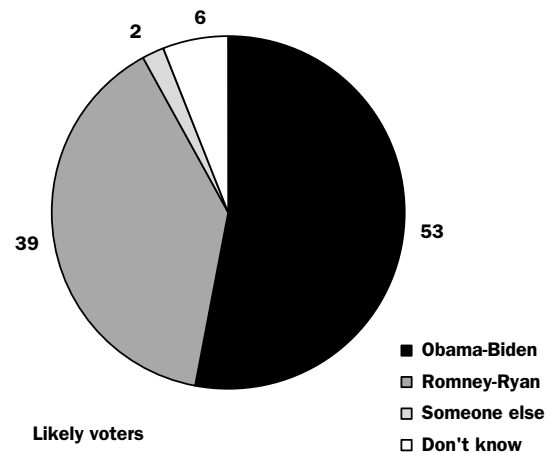
President Obama has the approval of just over half of likely voters (53%), similar to July and up slightly from September 2011 (47%). Congress has a far lower 17 percent job approval rating among California likely voters. However, 48 percent approve of the way their own representative in the U.S. House is handling his or her job. Looking to the outcome of this year’s congressional elections, more likely voters prefer that Congress be controlled by Democrats (52%) than Republicans (38%). Senator Dianne Feinstein, who is up for reelection in November, has a 50 percent job approval rating among likely voters—similar to her rating before her last reelection, in September 2006 (53%). Forty-three percent disapprove. Senator Barbara Boxer has the approval of 45 percent of likely voters, while 47 percent disapprove of her job performance.

NOVEMBER 2012 ELECTION

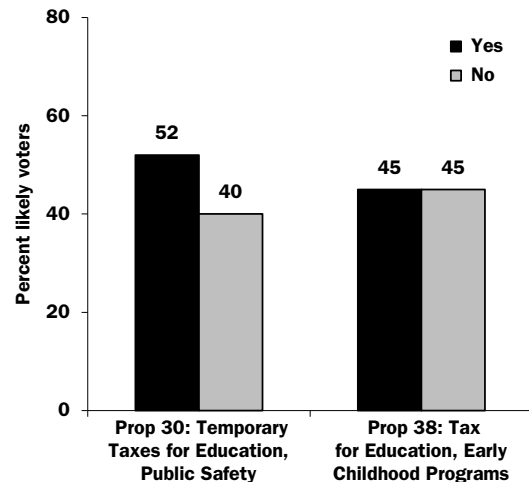
KEY FINDINGS

- Obama and Biden lead Romney and Ryan by 14 points in the presidential race. Sixty-six percent are satisfied with their choices of presidential candidates. *(page 7)*
- About half of likely voters prefer Congress to be controlled by Democrats, and 38 percent prefer Republican control. *(page 7)*
- Half of likely voters name jobs and the economy as the issue they most want to hear presidential candidates talk about; six in 10 are dissatisfied with candidates' attention to the issues most important to them. *(page 8)*
- Half of likely voters (52%) favor Proposition 30 (temporary taxes to fund education); support is slightly lower (45%) for Proposition 38 (tax for education, early childhood programs). Thirty-seven percent would vote yes on both Proposition 30 and Proposition 38. Three in four are opposed to automatic cuts to education that would occur if Proposition 30 fails. Six in 10 say the outcome of Proposition 30 is very important, while half say so of Proposition 38. *(pages 9, 10)*
- Twenty-five percent of likely voters would vote yes on Proposition 31 (changes to the state budget process and state and local government), 42 would vote no, and 32 percent are unsure. Twenty-nine percent say the outcome of the vote on Proposition 31 is very important. *(page 11)*
- Forty-two percent of likely voters would vote yes on Proposition 32 (prohibiting political contributions by payroll deduction). Half of those voting yes and four in 10 of those who would vote no say the outcome is very important to them. *(page 12)*

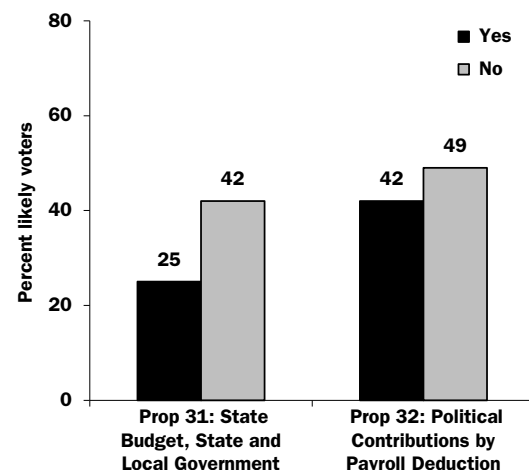
2012 Presidential Election



Vote on Tax Measures to Fund Education



Vote on Governance Reforms



PRESIDENTIAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS

Among likely voters, the Democratic ticket of Barack Obama and Joe Biden leads the Republican ticket of Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan by 14 points (53% to 39%) in the presidential race. Eight percent say they would either vote for someone else (2%) or are unsure (6%). In July and May, President Obama led Mitt Romney by 11 points. President Obama led the Republican candidate by 16 points in March and 12 points in December, in a hypothetical matchup. Eighty-eight percent of Democratic likely voters would vote for Obama and Biden, and 85 percent of Republicans would vote for Romney and Ryan. Among independent likely voters, 51 percent would vote for Obama and Biden, 38 percent would vote for Romney and Ryan, and 11 percent are either unsure (9%) or would vote for someone else (2%) if the presidential elections were held today. In a recent national poll among likely voters by NBC News/Wall Street Journal, 50 percent would vote for Obama and Biden and 45 percent for Romney and Ryan.

Latino likely voters (76%) overwhelmingly support Obama and Biden, while white likely voters are divided (46% Obama and Biden, 45% Romney and Ryan). Nearly six in 10 women would vote for Obama; men are divided (48% Obama, 44% Romney). Support for the Democratic ticket declines with age (68% age 18 to 34, 52% 35 to 54), with those 55 years and older very closely divided (45% Obama to 48% Romney).

With less than two months remaining before the election, 66 percent of likely voters are satisfied and 32 percent are not satisfied with their choices of presidential candidates. Satisfaction with presidential candidates has grown 17 points since December (49% December, 53% January, 53% March, 57% May, 66% today). Democrats (78%) are much more likely than Republicans (65%) to be satisfied with their choice of presidential candidate. Satisfaction among Republicans has grown by 19 points since May. Independents are divided (49% satisfied, 49% not satisfied).

“If the November 6th presidential election were being held today, would you vote for: the Democratic ticket of Barack Obama and Joe Biden or the Republican ticket of Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan?”

Likely voters only	All likely voters	Party			Gender	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Men	Women
Obama-Biden	53%	88%	9%	51%	48%	59%
Romney-Ryan	39	8	85	38	44	33
Someone else (volunteered)	2	–	2	2	4	1
Don't know	6	4	4	9	4	7

Likely voters prefer a Congress controlled by Democrats (52%) over a Congress controlled by Republicans (38%) as the outcome of this year’s congressional elections. Seven percent volunteer that they prefer neither party to control congress. Findings were similar in March (50% Democratic control to 35% Republican control), and likely voters were slightly more divided in May (47% to 40%). Eighty-six percent of Democrats and 88 percent of Republicans prefer their own party to control Congress. Independents prefer a Congress controlled by Democrats (54% to 28%). In an August NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll of registered voters nationwide, 42 percent preferred Republican control and 47 percent preferred Democratic control.

“What is your preference for the outcome of this year's congressional elections: a Congress controlled by Republicans or a Congress controlled by Democrats?”

Likely voters only	All likely voters	Party			Gender	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Men	Women
Controlled by Republicans	38%	7%	88%	28%	43%	33%
Controlled by Democrats	52	86	7	54	49	56
Neither (volunteered)	7	6	3	11	6	7
Don't know	3	1	1	8	2	3

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION ATTITUDES

When asked to name the one issue that they would most like the presidential candidates to talk about between now and the November 6 election, 49 percent of likely voters say jobs and the economy. Far fewer mention health care, health costs, and Medicare (8%), the federal budget, deficit, and taxes (7%), education (6%), or foreign policy, defense spending, and military (6%). Jobs and the economy was the issue that California likely voters most wanted to hear the presidential candidates talk about in the previous two presidential elections (30% in September 2004, 40% in September 2008). Republicans (58%) and independents (50%) are more likely to mention jobs and the economy than Democrats (44%). Likely voters who would vote for Romney (60%) are much more likely than those who would vote for Obama (43%) to want to hear about jobs and the economy.

“Which one issue would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about between now and the November 6th election?”

Top five issues mentioned Likely voters only	All likely voters	Party			Presidential election choice	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Obama–Biden	Romney–Ryan
Economy, jobs	49%	44%	58%	50%	43%	60%
Healthcare, health costs, Medicare	8	10	7	7	9	6
Federal budget, deficit, taxes	7	5	8	6	4	9
Education, schools, teachers	6	9	3	5	8	3
Foreign policy, defense spending, military	6	5	5	6	6	5

A slim majority of likely voters (53%) say they are following news about presidential candidates very closely, 37 percent say fairly closely, and 10 percent say not too (9%) or not at all (1%) closely. The share saying they are following news about candidates very closely has grown 13 points since July (40%). The share following news very closely was similar in September 2008 (52%).

When asked about satisfaction with the amount of attention that the candidates for president are devoting to the issues most important to them, six in 10 California likely voters say they are dissatisfied, 35 percent say satisfied, and 6 percent are unsure. Dissatisfaction is higher among independents (65%) and Republicans (62%) than among Democrats (54%). Those planning to vote for Romney (65%) are much more likely to say they are dissatisfied than those who would vote for Obama (53%).

Across regions, at least 55 percent of likely voters say they are dissatisfied with the amount of attention presidential candidates are giving to issues most important to them. Whites (64%) are more likely than Latinos (52%) to express dissatisfaction. Voters age 55 and older (61%) and those age 35 to 54 (66%) are more dissatisfied than those under 35 (49%). Six in 10 voters who are following news about presidential candidates very or fairly closely say they are dissatisfied. Sixty percent of likely voters who mention jobs and the economy as the issue they want candidates to talk about the most say they are dissatisfied with the amount of attention candidates are paying to the issues most important to them.

“Would you say you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the amount of attention that the candidates for president are spending on the issues most important to you?”

Likely voters only	All likely voters	Party			Presidential election choice	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Obama–Biden	Romney–Ryan
Satisfied	35%	42%	29%	31%	43%	27%
Dissatisfied	60	54	62	65	53	65
Don't know	6	4	9	4	4	8

PROPOSITION 30: TEMPORARY TAXES FOR EDUCATION, PUBLIC SAFETY FUNDING

Proposition 30 is an initiative that was placed on the November ballot by Governor Brown and others to increase taxes on earnings over \$250,000 for seven years and sales taxes by ¼ cent for four years to fund schools and guarantee public safety realignment funding. When read the Proposition 30 ballot title and label, 52 percent of likely voters say they would vote yes, 40 percent would vote no, and 8 percent are undecided. Today, Proposition 30 has overwhelming support among Democratic likely voters, while a slim majority of independents would vote yes and a strong majority of Republicans say they would vote no on Proposition 30. A majority of women support Proposition 30 (59% yes, 30% no), while men are divided (45% yes, 50% no). Similar to all likely voters, public school parents favor Proposition 30 by a 12-point margin (51% to 39%). Those in households earning less than \$40,000 support Proposition 30 by a wider margin than those earning more. Latinos show much more support than whites (66% to 48%), and voters under 35 (72%) are much more supportive than those 35 to 54 (49%) or 55 and older (42%). Those who approve of Governor Brown’s job performance are overwhelmingly in favor of Proposition 30 (79% yes), while those who disapprove of Governor’s Brown’s job performance are strongly opposed to it (68% no). Seventy-five percent of likely voters say they oppose the automatic spending cuts to K–12 public schools that would be implemented if Proposition 30 does not pass, including 92 percent of those who would vote yes and 53 percent of those who would vote no.

**“Proposition 30 is called the ‘Temporary Taxes to Fund Education. Guaranteed Local Public Safety Funding. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.’
...If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 30?!”***

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Yes	No	Don't know
All likely voters		52%	40%	8%
Public school parents		51	39	10
Party	Democrats	73	17	10
	Republicans	26	65	9
	Independents	53	44	2
Gender	Men	45	50	5
	Women	59	30	11
Household income	Under \$40,000	58	36	6
	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	50	41	9
	\$80,000 or more	53	40	7

*For complete text of proposition question, see p. 28.

Six in 10 likely voters say the outcome of Proposition 30 is very important to them. The perception varies slightly between Democratic and other likely voters and is similar among those who would vote yes and those who would vote no on Proposition 30.

**“How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 30—
is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?”**

<i>Likely voters only</i>	All likely voters	Party			Vote on Prop. 30	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very important	60%	62%	55%	55%	61%	63%
Somewhat important	28	29	26	33	32	24
Not too/not at all important	9	6	13	10	8	12
Don't know	3	4	5	1	–	1

PROPOSITION 38: TAX FOR EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Proposition 38 is an initiative placed on the November ballot by attorney Molly Munger that would increase taxes on earnings for 12 years, using a sliding scale, with revenues going to K–12 schools and early childhood programs and also, for four years, to repaying state debt. When read the Proposition 38 ballot title and label, 45 percent of likely voters say they would vote yes, 45 percent would vote no, and 11 percent are undecided. Proposition 38 has solid majority support among Democrats; a slim majority of independent voters support it and a strong majority of Republicans oppose it. Public school parents are no more likely than all likely voters to say they would vote yes on Proposition 38. While women favor Proposition 38 by a 13-point margin (50% yes, 37% no), men oppose it by a similar 12-point margin (52% no, 40% yes). Voters in households earning \$80,000 a year or more are less likely to support Proposition 38 than are lower-income voters. Latinos express much more support than whites (58% to 40%), and voters under 35 (67%) are much more supportive than those 35 to 54 (42%) or 55 and older (32%). What is the overlap in support between the two tax measures on the ballot to fund education? Among those who would vote yes on Proposition 30, 71 percent would vote yes on Proposition 38. Among those who would vote no on Proposition 30, 80 percent would vote no on Proposition 38. In all, 37 percent would vote yes on Propositions 30 and 38, and 32 percent would vote no on Propositions 30 and 38, while about three in 10 likely voters currently give a mix of yes, no, and don’t know responses.

“Proposition 38 is called the ‘Tax for Education and Early Childhood Programs. Initiative Statute.’... If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 38?”*

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Yes	No	Don’t know
All likely voters		45%	45%	11%
Public school parents		45	40	15
Party	Democrats	61	26	13
	Republicans	21	68	10
	Independents	53	37	10
Gender	Men	40	52	8
	Women	50	37	14
Household income	Under \$40,000	54	40	6
	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	49	39	12
	\$80,000 or more	38	49	13

*For complete text of proposition question, see p. 29.

Fifty percent of likely voters say the outcome of Proposition 38 is very important to them. This perception varies only slightly between major party voters and independent voters, while those who would vote yes are slightly more inclined than those who would vote no to say that the Proposition 38 outcome is very important to them.

How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 38— is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?*

<i>Likely voters only</i>	All likely voters	Party			Vote on Prop. 38	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very important	50%	51%	49%	45%	55%	48%
Somewhat important	37	35	36	46	41	38
Not too/not at all important	9	8	8	7	3	14
Don’t know	5	6	6	2	–	–

PROPOSITION 31: STATE BUDGET, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Proposition 31 is an initiative on the November ballot that would establish a two-year state budget, set rules for offsetting new expenditures and for governor-enacted budget cuts in fiscal emergencies, and allow local governments to alter the application of laws governing state-funded programs. When read the Proposition 31 ballot title and label, 25 percent of likely voters say they would vote yes, 42 percent would vote no, and 32 percent are undecided. Today, Proposition 31 does not have majority support in any party or ideological group or in any age, education, gender, income, racial/ethnic, or regional group. However, many likely voters across groups say they don't know how they will vote on Proposition 31. Only among independent voters is there a majority inclined to vote no (51%).

Today, 83 percent of likely voters say that the state budget situation is a big problem and 57 percent say that local government services have been affected a lot by recent state budget cuts. Among the likely voters who say that the state budget situation is a big problem, 25 percent would vote yes, 44 percent would vote no, and 31 percent are undecided on Proposition 31. Among those who say that state budget cuts have affected their local government services a lot, 26 percent would vote yes, 42 percent would vote no, and 32 percent are undecided on Proposition 31.

“Proposition 31 is called the ‘State Budget. State and Local Government. Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute.’...If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 31?”*

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Yes	No	Don't know
All likely voters		25%	42%	32%
Party	Democrats	30	40	30
	Republicans	23	41	36
	Independents	21	51	28
Ideology	Liberals	25	41	35
	Moderates	24	47	29
	Conservatives	27	42	31
Household income	Under \$40,000	31	43	26
	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	24	41	36
	\$80,000 or more	26	43	32

*For complete text of proposition question, see p. 28.

Twenty-nine percent of likely voters say the outcome of the Proposition 31 vote is very important to them. There is little variation in this perception across partisan groups, and one in three of both those who would vote yes and those who would vote no on Proposition 31 view the outcome as very important.

“How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 31— is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?”

<i>Likely voters only</i>	All likely voters	Party			Vote on Prop. 31	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very important	29%	29%	26%	29%	33%	33%
Somewhat important	37	40	37	33	49	42
Not too/not at all important	19	18	18	21	17	24
Don't know	15	12	19	16	1	1

PROPOSITION 32: POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS BY PAYROLL DEDUCTION

Proposition 32 is an initiative on the November ballot that would prohibit unions, corporations, and government contractors from using payroll-deducted funds for political purposes. Proposition 32 also prohibits union and corporate contributions to candidates and their committees and prohibits government contractor contributions to elected officers or their committees. When read the Proposition 32 ballot title and label, 42 percent of likely voters say they would vote yes, 49 percent would vote no, and 9 percent are undecided. Today, Proposition 32 has slim majorities of support among Republicans and independent voters, while a solid majority of Democrats are opposed to it. A majority of conservatives support Proposition 32 and a majority of liberals oppose it; middle-of-the-road voters are divided. A slim majority of likely voters in households with less than \$80,000 in annual income oppose the initiative, while those earning \$80,000 or more are divided. Latinos are strongly opposed (63% no, 28% yes) and whites are evenly divided on Proposition 32 (46% yes, 46% no). Men (42% yes, 52% no) and women (42% yes, 45% no) express similar levels of support for Proposition 32.

“Proposition 32 is called the ‘Political Contributions by Payroll Deduction. Contributions to Candidates. Initiative Statute.’...If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 32?”*

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Yes	No	Don't know
All likely voters		42%	49%	9%
Party	Democrats	28	61	11
	Republicans	53	39	9
	Independents	52	42	7
Ideology	Liberals	27	63	10
	Moderates	44	48	8
	Conservatives	56	37	8
Household income	Under \$40,000	39	53	8
	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	38	54	8
	\$80,000 or more	47	44	9

*For complete text of proposition question, see p. 29.

Forty-three percent of likely voters say the outcome of the Proposition 32 vote is very important to them. Half of Republicans, compared to about four in 10 Democrats and independent voters, say the outcome of the Proposition 32 vote is very important to them. About half of those who plan to vote yes, compared to four in 10 of those who plan to vote no, say the outcome of Proposition 32 is very important to them.

**How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 32—
is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?***

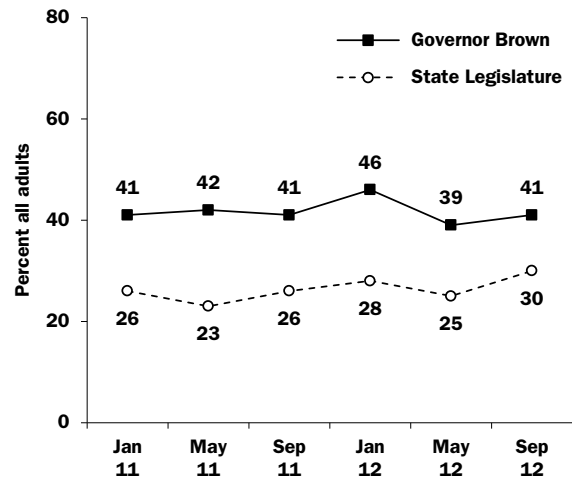
<i>Likely voters only</i>	All likely voters	Party			Vote on Prop. 32	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very important	43%	37%	50%	41%	51%	40%
Somewhat important	37	39	33	35	36	40
Not too/not at all important	16	18	12	21	12	19
Don't know	4	5	4	3	–	1

STATE AND NATIONAL ISSUES

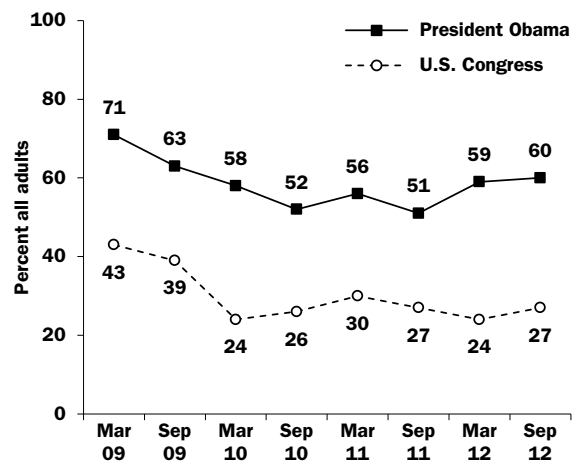
KEY FINDINGS

- Governor Brown's approval rating is at 41 percent among all adults; 30 percent approve of the state legislature. Thirty-six percent approve of their own legislators in the assembly and senate. (page 14)
- President Obama's approval rating is at 60 percent. Fifty-one percent approve of Senator Feinstein and 48 percent approve of Senator Boxer. The U.S Congress continues to receive low ratings. (pages 15, 16)
- Californians have a pessimistic outlook for the state: 60 percent say it is headed in the wrong direction and 69 percent say it is in a serious or moderate recession. (page 17)
- Seven in 10 Californians say the state budget situation is a big problem. Seventy-nine percent say voters should make some of the difficult budget decisions this year. (pages 18, 20)
- Californians oppose raising state personal income taxes and the state sales tax; they favor raising state income taxes on the wealthy and taxes on corporations. (page 19)
- Six in 10 adults are very (9%) or somewhat (51%) satisfied with the initiative process today while 56 percent say it is controlled a lot by special interests. (page 20)
- Fifty-five percent say life imprisonment should be the penalty for first-degree murder. Seven in 10 favor changing the three strikes law in California. (page 21)
- A slim majority favor restricting the ability of corporations to contribute to candidates, but Californians are divided about restricting contributions by labor unions. (page 22)

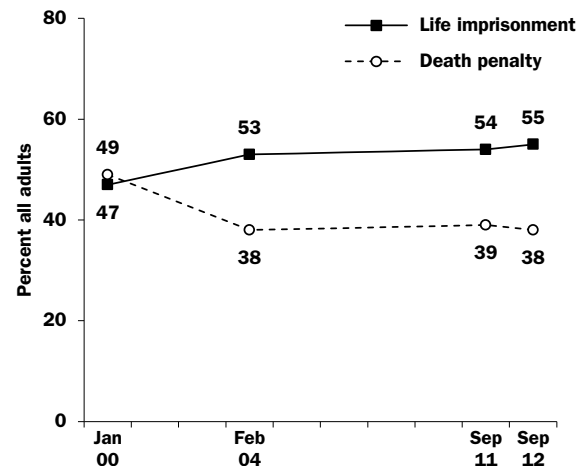
Approval Ratings of State Elected Officials



Approval Ratings of Federal Elected Officials



Preferred Penalty for First-degree Murder



STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS APPROVAL RATINGS

Forty-one percent of Californians approve of Governor Brown’s job performance, 36 percent disapprove, and 23 percent are unsure. Findings were nearly identical in July, our most recent survey, and in May, and have been similar since January. Likely voters are slightly more likely to disapprove (47%) than approve (42%). Disapproval among likely voters is at a record high (47%), steadily increasing from a low of 17 percent in February 2011, and was most recently at 42 percent in July 2012. Across parties, a majority of Democrats (59%) approve of the governor but an even larger majority of Republicans (70%) disapprove. Independents are divided (36% approve, 37% disapprove) with 27 percent unsure. Approval is higher in the San Francisco Bay Area (52%) than elsewhere (42% Central Valley, 39% Los Angeles, 34% Other Southern California region). It is much higher among college graduates than among those with less education.

The California Legislature continues to receive low job approval ratings among all adults (30% approve, 53% disapprove, 17% don’t know) and likely voters (22% approve, 68% disapprove, 10% don’t know). Approval among both groups was nearly identical in July and similar in May. Still, the last time approval reached 30 percent among all adults was March 2008, and the last time it reached 22 percent among likely voters was in October 2008. Across parties at least half disapprove, with Republicans (80%) the most likely to disapprove, followed by independents (61%) and Democrats (52%).

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

		All adults	Party			Likely voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
<i>Jerry Brown is handling his job as governor of California?</i>	Approve	41%	59%	18%	36%	42%
	Disapprove	36	26	70	37	47
	Don't know	23	15	13	27	11
<i>The California Legislature is handling its job?</i>	Approve	30	35	12	22	22
	Disapprove	53	52	80	61	68
	Don't know	17	13	8	17	10

When it comes to the job performance of their own state legislators, 36 percent of Californians approve, 42 percent disapprove, and 21 percent are unsure. Among likely voters, disapproval is higher (35% approve, 50% disapprove, 16% don’t know). In January (the last time this question was asked), findings among all adults and likely voters were similar to today, but last year at this time disapproval among both groups (48% all adults, 57% likely voters) was slightly higher than it is today. Across parties, Democrats (40%) are somewhat more likely than independents (33%) or Republicans (28%) to express approval. Approval is similar across regions (40% San Francisco Bay Area, 37% Central Valley, 36% Los Angeles, 35% Other Southern California region).

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	36%	40%	28%	33%	35%
Disapprove	42	40	56	51	50
Don't know	21	21	16	16	16

FEDERAL ELECTED OFFICIALS APPROVAL RATINGS

Less than two months before the November election, President Obama has the approval of 60 percent of all adults and just over half of likely voters (53%). Approval among all adults is similar to our findings in July, but has increased 9 points since its record low last September (51%). Today, Democrats (87%) overwhelmingly approve of the president, while 83 percent of Republicans disapprove. Six in 10 independents (58%) approve of the president. Majorities across regions approve of Obama’s job performance, but there are differences (69% San Francisco Bay Area, 66% Los Angeles, 54% Central Valley, 53% Other Southern California region). There are also differences in approval across racial/ethnic groups (76% Latinos, 61% Asians, 47% whites) and between men (56%) and women (65%). According to a recent CBS News/New York Times poll, adults nationwide are somewhat less likely than Californians to approve of President Obama (51% approve, 42% disapprove).

Congress continues to receive low marks, with only 27 percent of all adults approving of its job performance. Fewer likely voters approve of Congress (17%). Approval among all adults was the same in July and last September (27% each) and has not reached 30 percent since March 2011. Seven in 10 or more across parties disapprove, as do more than 60 percent across regions. Whites (80%) and Asians (75%) are far more disapproving than Latinos (44%), while men (69%) and women (65%) disapprove at similar levels. Those with incomes of \$40,000 or more and those with at least some college education are far more likely than others to disapprove of Congress. According to the CBS News/New York Times poll, adults nationwide are somewhat more likely than Californians to disapprove of the job performance of Congress (16% approve, 74% disapprove).

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

		All adults	Party			Likely voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
Barack Obama is handling his job as president of the United States?	Approve	60%	87%	14%	58%	53%
	Disapprove	37	12	83	40	46
	Don't know	2	1	3	2	1
The U.S. Congress is handling its job?	Approve	27	24	17	19	17
	Disapprove	67	70	78	75	78
	Don't know	7	5	5	5	5

Nearly half of all adults and likely voters (48% each) approve of their own legislators in the U.S. House of Representatives. Approval among adults was similar in January (46%) and last September (48%). Democrats (54%) are more likely than Republicans (44%) and independents (41%) to approve of their representatives, and approval is similar across regions (47% Central Valley, 47% Other Southern California region, 48% San Francisco Bay Area, 49% Los Angeles). Latinos (58%) are much more likely than whites (46%) and Asians (37%) to approve, and approval is similar among men (49%) and women (46%).

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	48%	54%	44%	41%	48%
Disapprove	33	31	39	38	36
Don't know	19	14	17	21	16

APPROVAL RATINGS OF CALIFORNIA’S U.S. SENATORS

Senator Dianne Feinstein faces reelection in November. Fifty-one percent of Californians approve of her job performance, 34 percent disapprove, and 16 percent are unsure. Her approval rating was similar in January (47%), and is the same as it was in September 2006 (51%) before her last reelection. The share of likely voters approving of her job performance (50%) is similar to that of all adults (51%), but likely voters are somewhat more disapproving (43%) than all adults are (34%).

Across parties, 73 percent of Democrats approve and 66 percent of Republicans disapprove of Feinstein’s job performance. Independents are divided (45% approve, 41% disapprove). Findings among Democrats and Republicans are similar to those in January. However, independents were somewhat less approving in January (36%) than they are today (45%). Across regions, approval is higher in the San Francisco Bay Area (57%) and Los Angeles (54%) than in the Other Southern California region (46%) and the Central Valley (44%). Latinos (60%) are more likely to approve than Asians (49%) or whites (46%).

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	51%	73%	24%	45%	50%
Disapprove	34	16	66	41	43
Don’t know	16	11	10	14	7

Forty-eight percent of all adults approve of Senator Barbara Boxer, 37 percent disapprove, and 15 percent are unsure. Ratings of her job performance today are similar to those in January (46% approve, 38% disapprove, 17% unsure). Disapproval among likely voters (47%) is higher than among adults overall (37%).

The share of Democrats who approve of Senator Boxer is 73 percent. The share of Republicans who disapprove is 79 percent. Independents are more likely to approve (48%) than disapprove (37%). Across regions, about six in 10 in the San Francisco Bay Area (63%) and half of those living in Los Angeles (51%) approve of Senator Boxer. Those living in the Other Southern California region are divided (40% approve, 42% disapprove), while Central Valley residents are somewhat more likely to disapprove (47%) than approve (40%). Among racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (58%) are much more likely to approve of Senator Boxer than are Asians (43%) or whites (43%).

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	48%	73%	13%	48%	45%
Disapprove	37	17	79	37	47
Don’t know	15	11	8	15	8

OVERALL MOOD

Today, 60 percent of all adults say that things in California are generally going in the wrong direction. Only 33 percent say things are going in the right direction. Likely voters are slightly more pessimistic, with 66 percent saying wrong direction. The share saying wrong direction was similar earlier this year (57% January, 56% March, 63% May, 60% today). Across parties, Republicans (83%) are far more likely than independents (62%) or Democrats (50%) to say wrong direction.

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Right direction	33%	44%	13%	31%	29%
Wrong direction	60	50	83	62	66
Don't know	7	6	4	7	5

When asked about the economic outlook for California, 57 percent of all adults say the state will have bad times financially in the next 12 months, while 33 percent say it will have good times. The share saying bad times was similar earlier this year (56% January, 56% March, 61% May, 57% today). Across parties, Republicans (76%) and independents (65%) are much more pessimistic than Democrats (48%). Across regions, pessimism is higher among residents in the Central Valley (64%), the Other Southern California region (62%), and Los Angeles (56%) than among residents of the San Francisco Bay Area (47%). Whites (63%) and Asians (56%) are more likely than Latinos (49%) to say the state will have bad times financially.

Eight in 10 residents say California is in a recession: 42 percent say the recession is serious, 27 percent say moderate, and 10 percent say mild. Only 18 percent say the state is not in a recession. Likely voters are slightly more likely to say the recession is serious. The belief that California is in a serious recession has declined somewhat since last September (50%). However, the share saying the recession is serious has remained similar throughout the year (43% January, 41% March, 41% May).

Across parties, 63 percent of Republicans say the recession is serious compared to 42 percent of independents and 37 percent of Democrats. About four in 10 across regions say California is in a serious recession (38% San Francisco Bay Area, 43% Central Valley, 44% Los Angeles, 44% Other Southern California region). Whites (50%) are more likely than Asians (39%) and Latinos (32%) to say California is in a serious recession.

“Would you say that California is in an economic recession, or not?” (if yes: “Do you think it is in a serious, a moderate, or a mild recession?”)

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Serious recession	42%	37%	63%	42%	48%
Moderate recession	27	28	22	32	27
Mild recession	10	12	6	10	9
Not in a recession	18	20	8	14	15
Don't know	3	3	1	2	1

STATE BUDGET SITUATION

Nearly all adults and likely voters say that the state’s budget situation—that is, the balance between government spending and revenues—is a problem for the people of California today (all adults: 69% big problem, 24% somewhat of a problem; likely voters: 83% big problem, 15% somewhat of a problem). Perceptions have been similar since January 2011. Solid majorities across parties, regions, and most demographic groups consider the situation a big problem.

Nearly six in 10 adults (59%) and likely voters (57%) say their local government services have been affected a lot by recent state budget cuts. About one in four in each group say these services have been affected somewhat, and fewer than one in 10 say services have not been affected. In previous surveys, at least six in 10 adults said local services had been affected a lot by state budget cuts (67% September 2011, 62% December 2011, 62% January 2012, 64% March 2012, 61% April 2012, 66% May 2012). Democrats (65%) are more likely than independents (55%) or Republicans (49%) to note serious effects. Across regions, Central Valley residents (64%) are the most likely to say services have been affected a lot (61% Los Angeles, 59% San Francisco Bay Area, 53% Other Southern California region).

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Affected a lot	59%	65%	49%	55%	57%
Affected somewhat	26	23	29	35	28
Not affected	7	6	14	4	8
Don’t know	7	6	9	5	6

The balanced budget enacted in July relies on voters passing Proposition 30 to avoid triggering automatic spending cuts, primarily to K–12 schools. If the ballot measure does not pass, just 37 percent of likely voters think the ensuing budget gap should be resolved with mostly spending cuts. Forty-one percent prefer a mix of spending cuts and tax increases and 13 percent prefer mostly tax increases. Findings are similar among all adults (33% spending cuts, 39% mix of cuts and taxes, 12% tax increases). Voters are divided along party lines, with 59 percent of Republicans preferring cuts and 52 percent of Democrats preferring a mix (18% of Democrats prefer mostly taxes). A plurality of independents (47%) prefer a mix.

“As you may know, the state government currently has an annual general fund budget of around \$91 billion and will face a multibillion dollar gap between spending and revenues if a ballot initiative to raise taxes does not pass in November. How would you prefer to deal with the state’s potential budget gap—mostly through spending cuts, mostly through tax increases, through a mix of spending cuts and tax increases, or do you think that it is okay for the state to borrow money and run a budget deficit?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
A mix of spending cuts and tax increases	39%	52%	29%	47%	41%
Mostly through spending cuts	33	18	59	32	37
Mostly through tax increases	12	18	2	13	13
Okay to borrow money and run a budget deficit	6	6	2	3	2
Other	3	1	2	2	2
Don’t know	7	5	6	4	4

RAISING REVENUES

When presented with several tax proposals, most Californians oppose an increase in state personal income taxes unless it is on the wealthy. And they oppose raising sales taxes but favor raising corporate taxes.

“For each of the following, please say if you favor or oppose the proposal.”

<i>All adults</i>	Raising state personal income taxes	Raising the top rate of the state income tax paid by the wealthiest Californians	Raising the state sales tax	Raising the state taxes paid by California corporations
Favor	24%	67%	30%	60%
Oppose	70	30	66	35
Don't know	5	3	4	5

Fewer than three in 10 (24% adults, 28% likely voters) favor raising personal income taxes, which is how Proposition 38 would raise revenues for K–12 schools and early childhood programs. Although Democrats are more likely than independents or Republicans to express support, fewer than half across parties are in favor. Across regions and demographic groups, fewer than 36 percent express support.

Raising income taxes on the wealthy is more popular: 67 percent of all adults and 59 percent of likely voters are in favor. Support among all adults was similar in May (69%) and slightly higher in January (74%). This idea divides Democrats (86% favor) and Republicans (66% oppose), while two in three independents (67%) express support. At least 59 percent across regions and demographic groups favor this idea. However, support declines as income levels rise. To raise money for schools and public safety, Proposition 30 would temporarily increase income taxes on earnings over \$250,000.

Only about one in three adults and likely voters favor raising the state sales tax. Support has been similar since January. Democrats (43%) are more likely than independents (36%) and Republicans (18%) to support raising the sales tax. Fewer than four in 10 across regions and demographic groups express support. Support is somewhat higher among those with incomes of \$40,000 or more than among lower-income residents. Temporarily raising the sales tax is the other revenue component of Proposition 30.

Raising corporate taxes is supported by 60 percent of adults and 54 percent of likely voters. Still, this tax increase divides partisans (78% of Democrats in favor, 68% of Republicans opposed). Most independents (61%) support it. Proposition 39, to fund clean energy projects, would seek a single sales factor for corporations that could lead to tax increases for many businesses.

<i>Percent in favor of tax increase</i>		Personal income taxes	Tax on the wealthy	Sales tax	Corporate tax
All adults		24%	67%	30%	60%
Likely voters		28	59	33	54
Party	Democrats	42	86	43	78
	Republicans	14	30	18	26
	Independents	24	67	36	61
Region	Central Valley	35	63	37	59
	San Francisco Bay Area	23	78	33	66
	Los Angeles	24	70	26	63
	Other Southern California	18	59	25	54
Household income	Under \$40,000	22	73	24	67
	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	23	67	33	59
	\$80,000 or more	31	60	36	52

INITIATIVE PROCESS

Californians are accustomed to going to the polls to vote on important propositions. This year there are 11 propositions on the ballot, including Proposition 30 which has important implications for the current state budget. When asked about their preference for who should make tough budget decisions this year, 79 percent of all adults say they prefer that California voters make some of them, while 16 percent prefer that the governor and legislature make all of them. This is the third time we have asked this question and each time more than three in four Californians have preferred that voters make some of these decisions (77% May 2011, 82% May 2012, 79% today). More than seven in 10 across parties and across regions (73% San Francisco Bay Area, 80% Los Angeles, 81% Other Southern California region, 85% Central Valley) prefer to rely on California voters. Seven in 10 or more across demographic groups want voters to play a role, although women are more likely than men to hold this view (84% to 74%).

“When it comes to the tough choices involved in the state budget this year, would you prefer that the governor and legislature make all of the decisions about spending and taxes; or that California voters make some of the decisions about spending and taxes at the ballot box?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Governor and legislature	16%	22%	10%	16%	18%
California voters	79	75	86	81	78
Other/Both (volunteered)	2	2	1	2	2
Don't know	3	2	2	2	2

Nine percent of all adults say they are very satisfied and 51 percent are somewhat satisfied with the way the initiative process is working in California; 33 percent are not satisfied. Likely voters hold similar opinions (12% very, 48% somewhat, 35% not satisfied). Findings were similar among all adults last September (12% very, 50% somewhat, 30% not satisfied) and were identical in October 2008 (9% very, 51% somewhat, 33% not satisfied). Majorities across parties are at least somewhat satisfied with the initiative process (56% Democrats, 61% Republicans, 63% independents). Across regions about six in 10 are satisfied. Asians (64%), Latinos (63%), whites (59%), men (58%), and women (62%) hold somewhat similar views.

While many Californians are satisfied with the initiative process, most say that it is controlled a lot (56%) or some (32%) by special interests. Findings were similar last September (54% a lot, 34% some). Likely voters (68%) are more likely than all adults (56%) to say a lot of control. Partisans hold similar opinions, with two in three Democrats (64%), Republicans (65%), and independents (64%) saying a lot. Los Angeles residents (60%) are the most likely to say a lot, followed by those in the Other Southern California region (55%), the Central Valley (54%), and the San Francisco Bay Area (53%). Whites (65%) and Asians (59%) are much more likely than Latinos (42%) to hold this view.

“Overall, how much would you say that the initiative process in California today is controlled by special interests—a lot, some, or not at all?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
A lot	56%	64%	65%	64%	68%
Some	32	28	28	31	27
Not at all	6	4	4	2	2
Don't know	6	4	3	3	3

DEATH PENALTY, THREE STRIKES

In this survey we did not ask specifically about Propositions 34 or 36, which are related to the death penalty and the three strikes law. However, we did ask about some concepts behind these propositions.

When asked about the penalty for first degree murder, 55 percent of all adults thought life imprisonment with absolutely no possibility of parole should be the penalty while 38 percent said it should be death. Findings were similar last September (54% life imprisonment, 39% death penalty) and in February 2004 (53% life imprisonment, 38% death penalty), while Californians were divided in January 2000 (47% life imprisonment, 49% death penalty). Partisan differences are evident, with 67 percent of Democrats preferring life in prison and 57 percent of Republicans preferring the death penalty. Independents are divided (45% life imprisonment, 43% death penalty). Regional differences are also evident, with residents in the Other Southern California region (49%) and the Central Valley (51%) less likely to prefer life imprisonment than those in the San Francisco Bay Area (58%) and Los Angeles (61%). Latinos (69%) and women (59%) are more likely than Asians (50%), whites (45%), and men (50%) to prefer life imprisonment. Majorities of Californians younger than 55 prefer life imprisonment, while older residents are divided (48% life imprisonment, 44% death penalty).

“Which of the following statements do you agree with more? The penalty for first-degree murder should be the death penalty; or the penalty for first degree murder should be life imprisonment with absolutely no possibility of parole.”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Death penalty	38%	28%	57%	43%	42%
Life imprisonment, no parole	55	67	33	45	50
Don't know	7	5	10	12	8

California’s “Three Strikes and You’re Out” law was passed by the legislature and signed into law by Governor Pete Wilson. It was approved as Proposition 184 by 72 percent of California voters in 1994. The law requires, among other things, a minimum sentence of 25 years to life for three-time felony offenders. In 2004, voters rejected an attempt to amend the three strikes law when they voted down Proposition 66 (53% no). Among other things, Proposition 66 would have required that the third strike be associated with a violent and/or serious felony.

When asked if they favor or oppose revising the three strikes law in California to impose life sentences on repeat offenders only if the third felony conviction is serious or violent, more than seven in 10 adults (72%), likely voters (73%), and partisans are in favor. More than two in three across demographic groups and regions (81% San Francisco Bay Area, 70% Other Southern California, 69% Central Valley, 68% Los Angeles) are in favor.

“Do you favor or oppose revising the three strikes law in California to impose life sentences on repeat offenders only if the third felony conviction is serious or violent?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	72%	74%	72%	76%	73%
Oppose	23	22	23	19	23
Don't know	5	4	5	5	4

POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

November’s ballot features Proposition 32, which would prohibit unions and corporations from using payroll deductions for political purposes and from making contributions to candidates. In general, how do Californians feel about the role that unions and corporations play in candidate campaigns?

Californians are divided about restricting the ability of labor unions to contribute to political candidates (48% favor, 44% oppose). We asked a similar question in the past: In May 1998, findings were identical (48% approve, 44% disapprove), while in August 2005 the margin of support was greater (51% approve, 39% disapprove). Today, support for limiting union contributions outweighs opposition among likely voters (54% favor, 41% oppose). Among the likely voters who favor this idea generally, 54 percent are voting yes on Proposition 32. Among those who oppose it, 64 percent are voting no.

Support is strikingly similar across party lines: 51 percent of Democrats, 53 percent of Republicans, and 54 percent of independents are in favor of restrictions on union contributions. Across regions, a majority in the Other Southern California region favor the idea (54% favor, 40% oppose), while residents elsewhere are divided (Central Valley: 47% favor, 45% oppose; Los Angeles: 46% favor, 45% oppose; San Francisco Bay Area: 43% favor, 49% oppose). Support increases as income levels rise and is higher among those with at least some college education than among those with less education.

“Overall, do you favor or oppose placing restrictions on the ability of labor unions to contribute to political candidates?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	48%	51%	53%	54%	54%
Oppose	44	46	40	41	41
Don’t know	7	4	7	5	5

A slim majority of Californians favor restricting the ability of corporations to contribute to political candidates (53% favor, 40% oppose). In May 1998, findings were nearly the same (55% approve, 39% disapprove), while the margin was again greater in August 2005 (57% approve, 34% disapprove). A solid majority of likely voters today (60%) express support for restricting contributions by corporations. The likely voters who favor this idea generally are divided on Proposition 32 (45% yes, 46% no), while those who oppose the idea are planning to vote no (39% yes, 54% no). Democrats (62%) are the most in favor of corporate restrictions (57% independents, 51% Republicans). At least half across regions express support. Support increases as education levels rise and is higher among those earning at least \$40,000 annually than it is among lower-income residents. Among those who favor union restrictions, 74 percent also favor corporate restrictions (23% oppose); among those who oppose union restrictions, 63 percent also oppose corporate restrictions (35% favor).

“Overall, do you favor or oppose placing restrictions on the ability of corporations to contribute to political candidates?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	53%	62%	51%	57%	60%
Oppose	40	36	45	38	37
Don’t know	6	2	4	5	3

REGIONAL MAP



METHODOLOGY

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

Findings in this report are based on a survey of 2,003 California adult residents, including 1,602 interviewed on landline telephones and 401 interviewed on cell phones. Interviews took an average of 19 minutes to complete. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights from September 9 to 16, 2012.

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

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

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

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

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

The sampling error, taking design effects from weighting into consideration, is ± 3.5 percent at the 95 percent confidence level for the total sample of 2,003 adults. This means that 95 times out of 100,

the results will be within 3.5 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for subgroups is larger: For the 1,339 registered voters, it is ± 3.9 percent; for the 995 likely voters, it is ± 4.4 percent. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

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

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

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

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

QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESULTS

CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

September 9–16, 2012

2,003 California Adult Residents:
English, Spanish

MARGIN OF ERROR $\pm 3.5\%$ AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE
PERCENTAGES MAY NOT ADD TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING

1. First, overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Jerry Brown is handling his job as governor of California?
41% approve
36% disapprove
23% don't know
2. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job?
30% approve
53% disapprove
17% don't know
3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the job that the state legislators representing your assembly and senate districts are doing at this time?
36% approve
42% disapprove
21% don't know
4. Do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?
33% right direction
60% wrong direction
7% don't know
5. Turning to economic conditions in California, do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?
33% good times
57% bad times
10% don't know
6. Would you say that California is in an economic recession, or not? (if yes: Do you think it is in a serious, a moderate, or a mild recession?)
42% yes, serious recession
27% yes, moderate recession
10% yes, mild recession
18% no
3% don't know
7. Next, some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain that you are registered to vote in California?
68% yes [ask q7a]
32% no [skip to q8b]
- 7a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or are you registered as a decline-to-state or independent voter?
43% Democrat [ask q8]
30% Republican [skip to q8a]
4% another party (specify) [skip to q9]
22% independent [skip to q8b]
8. Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or not a very strong Democrat?
65% strong
33% not very strong
3% don't know
[skip to q9]

8a. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

- 61% strong
- 35 not very strong
- 4 don't know

[skip to q9]

8b. **[independents and those not registered to vote]**

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

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

[questions 9–23 reported for likely voters only]

9. **[likely voters only]** Next, if the November 6th presidential election were being held today, would you vote for: **[rotate]** (1) the Democratic ticket of Barack Obama and Joe Biden **[or]** (2) the Republican ticket of Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan?

- 53% Barack Obama and Joe Biden
- 39 Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan
- 2 someone else (*specify*)
- 6 don't know

10. **[likely voters only]** Next, which one issue would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about between now and the November 6th election?

[code, don't read]

- 49% economy, jobs
- 8 health care, health costs, Obamacare, Medicare
- 7 federal budget, deficit, spending, taxes
- 6 education, schools, teachers
- 6 foreign policy, defense spending, military
- 4 immigration, illegal immigration
- 2 Afghanistan, war in Afghanistan
- 2 government in general, partisanship, ethics, corruption
- 2 government regulations
- 12 other
- 2 don't know

11. **[likely voters only]** Would you say you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the amount of attention that the candidates for president are spending on the issues most important to you?

- 35% satisfied
- 60 dissatisfied
- 6 don't know

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

- 66% satisfied
- 32 not satisfied
- 2 don't know

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

- 53% very closely
- 37 fairly closely
- 9 not too closely
- 1 not at all closely
- don't know

14. **[likely voters only]** What is your preference for the outcome of this year's congressional elections: **[rotate]** (1) a Congress controlled by Republicans **[or]** (2) a Congress controlled by Democrats?

- 38% controlled by Republicans
- 52 controlled by Democrats
- 7 neither (*volunteered*)
- 3 don't know

Next, we have a few questions to ask you about some of the propositions on the November ballot.

15. **[likely voters only]** Proposition 30 is called the “Temporary Taxes to Fund Education. Guaranteed Local Public Safety Funding. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.” It increases taxes on earnings over \$250,000 for seven years and sales taxes by a ¼ cent for four years, to fund schools. It guarantees public safety realignment funding. Fiscal Impact is increased state tax revenues through 2018–19, averaging about \$6 billion annually over the next few years, revenues available for funding state budget, and in 2012–13, planned spending reductions, primarily to education programs, would not occur. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 30?

52% yes
40 no
8 don't know

16. **[likely voters only]** How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 30—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

60% very important
28 somewhat important
6 not too important
3 not at all important
3 don't know

17. **[likely voters only]** If voters reject Proposition 30, automatic spending cuts would be made to K–12 public schools. Do you favor or oppose these automatic spending cuts to K–12 public schools?

20% favor
75 oppose
5 don't know

18. **[likely voters only]** Proposition 31 is called the “State Budget. State and Local Government. Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute.” It establishes a two-year state budget, sets rules for offsetting new expenditures, and Governor budget cuts in fiscal emergencies. Local governments can alter application of laws governing state-funded programs. Fiscal Impact is decreased state sales tax revenues of \$200 million annually, with corresponding increases of funding to local governments. Other, potentially more significant changes in state and local budgets, depending on future decisions by public officials. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 31?

25% yes
42 no
32 don't know

19. **[likely voters only]** How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 31—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

29% very important
37 somewhat important
15 not too important
4 not at all important
15 don't know

20. **[likely voters only]** Proposition 32 is called the “Political Contributions by Payroll Deduction. Contributions to Candidates. Initiative Statute.” It prohibits unions from using payroll-deducted funds for political purposes, and applies same use prohibition to payroll deductions, if any, by corporations or government contractors. It prohibits union and corporate contributions to candidates and their committees and prohibits government contractor contributions to elected officers or their committees. Fiscal Impact is increased costs to state and local government, potentially exceeding \$1 million annually, to implement and enforce the measure’s requirements. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 32?

- 42% yes
- 49 no
- 9 don’t know

21. **[likely voters only]** How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 32—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 43% very important
- 37 somewhat important
- 10 not too important
- 6 not at all important
- 4 don’t know

22. **[likely voters only]** Proposition 38 is called the “Tax for Education and Early Childhood Programs. Initiative Statute.” It Increases taxes on earnings using a sliding scale, for twelve years. Revenues go to K–12 schools and early childhood programs, and for four years to repaying state debt. Fiscal Impact is increased state tax revenues for 12 years—roughly \$10 billion annually in initial years, tending to grow over time. Funds used for schools, child care, and preschool, as well as providing savings on state debt payments. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 38?

- 45% yes
- 45 no
- 11 don’t know

23. **[likely voters only]** How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 38—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 50% very important
- 37 somewhat important
- 7 not too important
- 2 not at all important
- 5 don’t know

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

- 69% big problem
- 24 somewhat of a problem
- 2 not a problem
- 4 don’t know

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

- 59% affected a lot
- 26 affected somewhat
- 7 not affected
- 7 don’t know

26. As you may know, the state government currently has an annual general fund budget of around \$91 billion and will face a multibillion dollar gap between spending and revenues if a ballot initiative to raise taxes does not pass in November. How would you prefer to deal with the state's potential budget gap—mostly through spending cuts, mostly through tax increases, through a mix of spending cuts and tax increases, or do you think that it is okay for the state to borrow money and run a budget deficit?

- 33% mostly through spending cuts
- 12 mostly through tax increases
- 39 through a mix of spending cuts and tax increases
- 6 okay to borrow money and run a budget deficit
- 3 other (*specify*)
- 7 don't know

For each of the following, please say if you favor or oppose the proposal.

[rotate questions 27 to 30]

27. Do you favor or oppose raising state personal income taxes?

- 24% favor
- 70 oppose
- 5 don't know

28. Do you favor or oppose raising the top rate of the state income tax paid by the wealthiest Californians?

- 67% favor
- 30 oppose
- 3 don't know

29. Do you favor or oppose raising the state sales tax?

- 30% favor
- 66 oppose
- 4 don't know

30. Do you favor or oppose raising the state taxes paid by California corporations?

- 60% favor
- 35 oppose
- 5 don't know

31. When it comes to the tough choices involved in the state budget this year, would you prefer—**[rotate]** (1) that the governor and legislature make all of the decisions about spending and taxes; **[or]** (2) that California voters make some of the decisions about spending and taxes at the ballot box?

- 16% that the governor and legislature make all of the decisions
- 79 that California voters make some of the decisions
- 1 other answer (*specify*)
- 1 both (*volunteered*)
- 3 don't know

On another topic, California uses the direct initiative process, which enables voters to bypass the legislature and have issues put on the ballot—as state propositions—for voter approval or rejection.

32. Generally speaking, would you say you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with the way the initiative process is working in California today?

- 9% very satisfied
- 51 somewhat satisfied
- 33 not satisfied
- 7 don't know

33. Overall, how much would you say that the initiative process in California today is controlled by special interests—a lot, some, or not at all?

- 56% a lot
- 32 some
- 6 not at all
- 6 don't know

Changing topics,

34. Which of the following statements do you agree with more? **[rotate]** (1) The penalty for first-degree murder should be the death penalty; **[or]** (2) the penalty for first-degree murder should be life imprisonment with absolutely no possibility of parole.

- 38% death penalty
- 55 life imprisonment with no parole
- 7 don't know

35. Do you favor or oppose revising the three strikes law in California to impose life sentences on repeat offenders only if the third felony conviction is serious or violent?
- 72% favor
23 oppose
5 don't know

[rotate questions 36 and 37]

36. Overall, do you favor or oppose placing restrictions on the ability of labor unions to contribute to political candidates?
- 48% favor
44 oppose
7 don't know
37. Overall, do you favor or oppose placing restrictions on the ability of corporations to contribute to political candidates?
- 53% favor
40 oppose
6 don't know

On another topic,

38. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barack Obama is handling his job as president of the United States?
- 60% approve
37 disapprove
2 don't know

[rotate questions 39 and 40]

39. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Dianne Feinstein is handling her job as U.S. senator?
- 51% approve
34 disapprove
16 don't know
40. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barbara Boxer is handling her job as U.S. senator?
- 48% approve
37 disapprove
15 don't know

41. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job?
- 27% approve
67 disapprove
7 don't know

42. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way your own representative to the U.S. House of Representatives in Congress is handling his or her job?
- 48% approve
33 disapprove
19 don't know

[questions 43 to 45 not asked]

46. Next, would you consider yourself to be politically: **[read list, rotate order top to bottom]**
- 11% very liberal
22 somewhat liberal
29 middle-of-the-road
22 somewhat conservative
13 very conservative
3 don't know

47. Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in politics—a great deal, a fair amount, only a little, or none?
- 26% great deal
35 fair amount
30 only a little
8 none
– don't know

[d1-d19: demographic questions]

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

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Mark Baldassare is President and CEO of PPIC.

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