



**PPIC**  
**STATEWIDE**  
**SURVEY**

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 0 4

*Californians and  
Their Government*

.....

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Policy  
Institute of  
California***

The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) is a private operating foundation established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. The Institute is dedicated to improving public policy in California through independent, objective, nonpartisan research.

PPIC's research agenda focuses on three program areas: population, economy, and governance and public finance. Studies within these programs are examining the underlying forces shaping California's future, cutting across a wide range of public policy concerns, including education, health care, immigration, income distribution, welfare, urban growth, and state and local finance.

PPIC was created because three concerned citizens – William R. Hewlett, Roger W. Heyns, and Arjay Miller – recognized the need for linking objective research to the realities of California public policy. Their goal was to help the state's leaders better understand the intricacies and implications of contemporary issues and make informed public policy decisions when confronted with challenges in the future. PPIC does not take or support positions on any ballot measure or on any local, state, or federal legislation, nor does it endorse, support, or oppose any political parties or candidates for public office.

David W. Lyon is founding President and Chief Executive Officer of PPIC. Raymond L. Watson is Chairman of the Board of Directors.



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## Preface

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The PPIC Statewide Survey series provides policymakers, the media, and the general public with objective, advocacy-free information on the perceptions, opinions, and public policy preferences of California residents. Inaugurated in April 1998, the survey series has generated a database that includes the responses of more than 87,000 Californians.

The current survey is the sixteenth in our *Californians and Their Government* series, which is conducted on a periodic basis throughout the state's election cycles. The series is focusing on the social, economic, and political trends that underlie public policy preferences and ballot choices. The current survey looks in particular at California's upcoming primary, examining voter preferences on four propositions that would directly affect the state's fiscal policies and conditions and looking at Californians' current choices among candidates in the primary. We also look at residents' opinions of their state and federal elected officials and their level of trust in the federal government. In the context of the 2004 election, we take stock of Californians' political attitudes and examine the possibility of a widening "partisan divide" on national policy issues. This report presents the responses of 2,004 adult residents throughout the state on a wide range of issues:

- The March 2<sup>nd</sup> primary, including Proposition 55 (\$12.3 billion education bond), Proposition 56 (state budget and voting requirements initiative), Proposition 57 (\$15 billion economic recovery bond), and Proposition 58 (California balanced budget act). In addition, we consider the Democratic presidential primary and the Republican U.S. Senate primary in California.
- Political trends, including overall approval ratings of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and evaluations of his handling of the state budget and taxes; overall approval ratings of President George W. Bush and evaluations of his handling of the situation in Iraq; overall approval of the job performance of U.S. Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein; approval ratings of the U.S. Congress as a whole and ratings of the job performance of local representative to the U.S. House of Representatives; trust in the federal government.
- National policy issues, including attitudes toward abortion rights, environmental regulations, government poverty programs, and civil liberties in the context of homeland security, as well as public attitudes toward gay marriage, immigrants, and anti-terrorism policies. We examine differences between Californians and the nation as a whole, attitudinal changes over time among Californians, and partisan differences in public policy preferences.
- The extent to which Californians may differ with regard to political attitudes by party affiliation, demographics, race/ethnicity, and region of residence.

This is the 43<sup>rd</sup> PPIC Statewide Survey, which has included a number of special editions:

- The Central Valley (11/99, 3/01, 4/02, 4/03)
- San Diego County (7/02)
- Orange County (9/01, 12/02, 12/03)
- Los Angeles County (3/03)
- Population Growth (5/01)
- Land Use (11/01, 11/02)
- Environment (6/00, 6/02, 11/03)
- California State Budget (6/03, 1/04)

Copies of this report may be ordered by e-mail ([order@ppic.org](mailto:order@ppic.org)) or phone (415-291-4400). Copies of this and earlier reports are posted on the publications page of the PPIC web site ([www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org)). For questions about the survey, please contact [survey@ppic.org](mailto:survey@ppic.org).



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## Contents

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<b>Preface</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Press Release</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>March 2<sup>nd</sup> Primary Election</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Political Trends</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>National Policy Issues</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Survey Methodology</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Survey Questions and Results</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Survey Advisory Committee</b>	<b>27</b>



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## Press Release

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

### **MARCH 2<sup>nd</sup> MEASURES ON SHAKY GROUND** **Kerry Pulls Far Ahead in Presidential Primary** **Partisan Schism Growing in State**

SAN FRANCISCO, California, February 20, 2004 — When it comes to next month's primary election, "skeptical uncertainty" might best describe the mood of California voters. All four propositions on the March 2<sup>nd</sup> ballot face uncertain fates because many residents haven't decided how they will vote. And the number of undecided voters hasn't changed much since January, according to a new survey released by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC).

Among the measures, the \$15 billion economic recovery bond (Proposition 57) still has much less than majority support, while the California Balanced Budget Act (Proposition 58) has a bare majority of 52 percent among likely voters. Thus far, television ads supporting the economic recovery bond have had little effect on increasing support. Immediately before the ads began on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 37 percent were in favor and 45 percent opposed. Since then, 38 percent are in favor and 38 percent are opposed. If anything, the ads may have swung more into the undecided column, with 18 percent undecided before they ran and 24 percent after. Overall, little has changed since January, when 35 percent were in favor, 44 percent opposed, and 21 percent undecided. Although Republicans are more likely than Democrats (45% to 34%) to support the measure, equally large numbers of both also remain undecided (22% each).

Despite Governor Schwarzenegger's high approval ratings, his public support for the recovery bond doesn't seem to assure its passage at this time. Among the 61 percent of likely voters who approve of the way he's handling his job, 49 percent support the bond and 31 percent oppose it. Of the 65 percent of voters who know that he supports the bond, 44 percent support it, while 41 percent are opposed. Fiscal concerns may be overriding other considerations for voters. "People have real misgivings about doing anything that will put the state further into debt – including passing bonds, which has historically been the most palatable way of raising money," says PPIC Statewide Survey Director Mark Baldassare.

The other bond measure – a \$12.3 billion effort to raise money for public school facilities – is just under the majority line: 49 percent support it, 36 percent are opposed, and 15 percent are undecided. Fiscal concern also seems to be affecting voters' enthusiasm for school bonds, which have historically enjoyed high levels of support. Since 2002, the number saying they would support a bond for their local school district has dropped from 70 percent to 59 percent.

### **Reversal of Fortune in Presidential Preferences; Confidence in Federal Government Wavering**

Since the January survey, California's likely voters have catapulted John Kerry from fourth (6%) to first (56%) place among Democratic candidates, while moving Howard Dean from first (31%) to second (11%) place. (Edwards has 10 percent, followed by Clark with 4 percent, Kucinich with 4 percent, and Sharpton with 1 percent; 12 percent are undecided.) At this point, however, a Democrat nominee would get more votes (54%) than President George W. Bush (37%) if the election were held today, a significant shift from January when it was tied at 45 percent for a Democrat nominee or President Bush.

The president's approval ratings have also changed: 56 percent of likely voters now say they disapprove of the way he's handling his job, a 12 percent jump since January, and approval has dropped from 53 percent to 43 percent. Not surprisingly, Bush receives high marks from Republicans (81% approve), and low ones from Democrats (76% disapprove). His approval ratings are also somewhat higher among Latinos (55%) than whites (50%).

The federal government's fortunes have also taken a downturn. Today, 30 percent of Californians say they trust the U.S. government to do what is right just about always or most of the time, compared to 46 percent in January 2002 in the aftermath of September 11. With this drop, Washington's ratings are approaching the low level of trust likely voters have in the state government: In January 2004, only 27 percent said they trust Sacramento to do what is right just about always or most of the time. "Californians disaffection with state government has been growing steadily over the last several years," according to Baldassare, "and now the malaise seems to be spreading to what's going on in Washington as well."

### **Boxer Lead Growing in Senate Race; Jones Still GOP Favorite**

Among likely voters, Senator Barbara Boxer's lead has more than doubled since the January survey: At that time, likely voters gave her a 47 percent to 40 percent lead over a Republican challenger in November. It is now 53 percent to 36 percent. Among the Republican candidates, Bill Jones remains the frontrunner, with increased support since January (17% to 24%). Second-place Rosario Marin is the only other Republican candidate who has seen gains in the past month – increasing her support from 2 percent to 12 percent.

### **A People Divided: Partisan Rifts Becoming More Severe in California**

Among pundits, alarm has been growing that America is in the throes of partisan polarization. Evidently, California is experiencing some of its own. In the past two-to-four years, the gap has widened between Republicans and Democrats on issues of abortion, the environment, immigrants, gay and lesbian rights, poverty, and homeland security and civil liberties. "Many people have pointed to the redrawing of electoral districts as the reason partisanship has increased in the legislature, but we're finding that California's voters are themselves further apart on many issues than they were just a few years ago," says Baldassare. "If this trend continues, it could make California even more difficult to govern—through representative government or direct democracy."

On the issue of gay and lesbian rights – specifically the very topical issue of gay marriage – the partisan gap has grown. Four years ago, 49 percent of Democrats and 23 percent of Republicans favored allowing gay and lesbian couples to legally marry. Today, the gap has increased by 8 points (57% among Democrats; 23% among Republicans). Overall in California, the percentage of residents who favor gay marriage has risen 6 points, from 38 percent in 2000 to 44 percent in 2004.

One of the biggest changes is in attitudes toward homeland security and civil liberties. Since 2002, the partisan split has grown by 15 points. Democrats have become more concerned that government will enact anti-terrorism laws that excessively restrict civil liberties (55% to 64%), while Republicans are less concerned (40% to 34%). The partisan division over immigration has increased by 11 points. When asked in February 2000 whether immigrants are a benefit or a burden to the state, 59 percent of Democrats and 41 percent of Republicans said they were a benefit, compared to 61 percent and 32 percent, respectively, today.

The partisan gap over whether stricter environmental regulations are worth the cost has grown by 16 percentage points. And although a large majority of Californians (69%) believe that government should not interfere with a woman's access to abortion, the gap between Republicans and Democrats has grown

by 5 percentage points since 2000. Poverty might be seen as a less divisive issue than abortion, but, in fact, the partisan divide has grown by 14 percentage points over whether poor people have hard lives because government benefits don't go far enough to help them.

### More Key Findings

- ***Iraq Disapproval*** (page 8)  
Fifty percent of state residents, and 56 percent of likely voters, disapprove of the way President Bush is handling the situation in Iraq.
- ***Senators Remain Popular ...*** (page 9)  
Majorities of likely California voters approve of the way Senator Barbara Boxer (52%) and Senator Dianne Feinstein (57%) are doing their jobs.
- ***... But Trouble on the Hill*** (page 10)  
Three in 10 Californians rate the job performance of the U.S. Congress as good or excellent. Among likely voters, 71 percent rate Congress as doing only a fair or poor job.
- ***Special Interest Scrutiny*** (page 12)  
Most Californians (67%) think the federal government is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves; this is a 9 point increase from 2002 when 58 percent answered the same way.
- ***Death Penalty*** (page 25)  
Although a majority (57%) of Californians say they believe in capital punishment, there is growing support for life in prison with no possibility of parole for first-degree murder (47% to 53% from 2000 to 2004).

### 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. Findings of this survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,004 California adult residents interviewed between February 8 and February 16, 2004. Interviews were conducted in English or Spanish. The sampling error for the total sample is +/- 2%. The sampling error for subgroups is larger. For more information on methodology, see page 19.

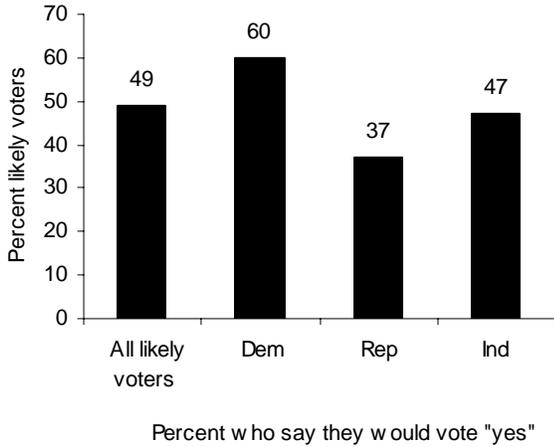
Mark Baldassare is research director at PPIC, where he holds the Arjay and Frances Fearing Miller Chair in Public Policy. He is founder of the PPIC Statewide Survey, which he has directed since 1998. His most recent book, *A California State of Mind: The Conflicted Voter in a Changing World*, is available at [www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org).

PPIC is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving public policy through objective, nonpartisan research on the economic, social, and political issues that affect Californians. The institute was established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. PPIC does not take or support positions on any ballot measure or on any local, state, or federal legislation, nor does it endorse, support, or oppose any political parties or candidates for public office.

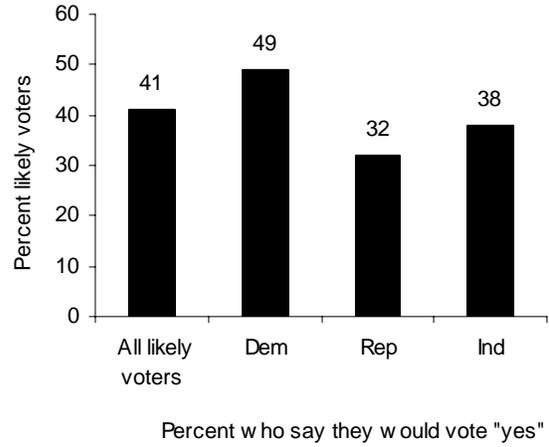
This report will appear on PPIC's website ([www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org)) on February 20.

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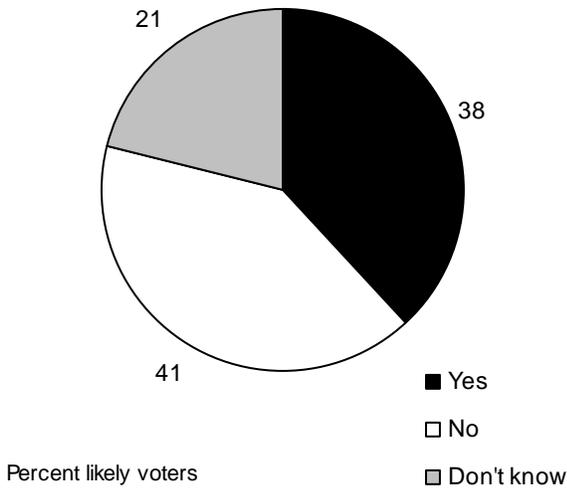
**Proposition 55:  
Public Education Facilities Bond Act**



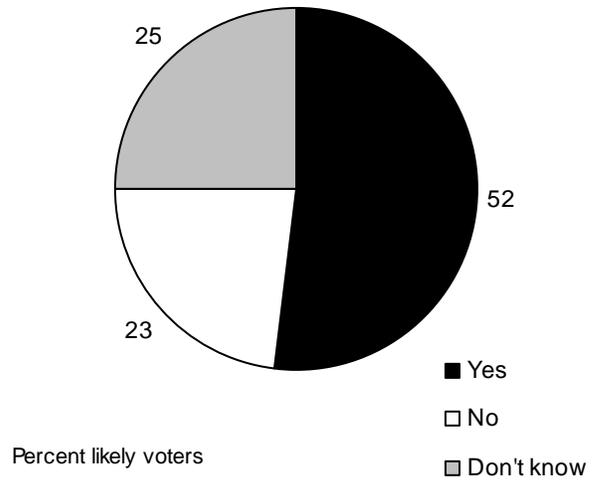
**Proposition 56:  
State Budget, Related Taxes,  
Reserve, Voting Requirements**



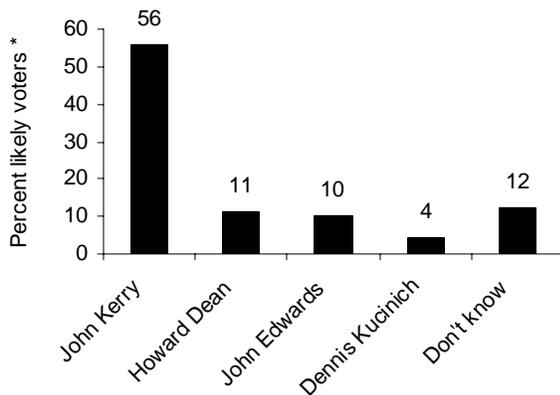
**Proposition 57:  
Economic Recovery Bond Act**



**Proposition 58:  
California Balanced Budget Act**

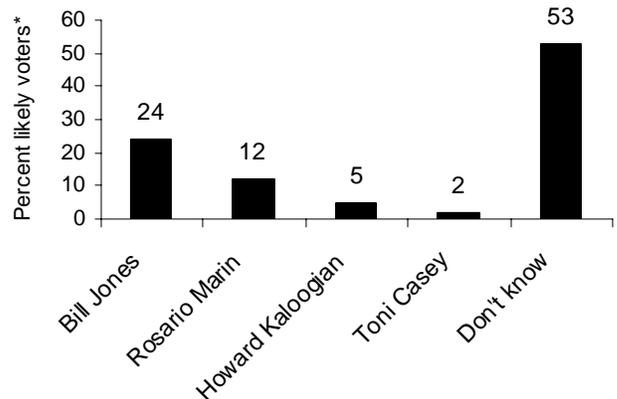


**Democratic Presidential Primary**



\*registered Democrats and independents w ho say they w ill select the Democratic ballot

**Republican U.S. Senate Primary**



\*registered Republicans and independents w ho say they w ill select the Republican ballot

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## March 2<sup>nd</sup> Primary Election<sup>‡</sup>

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### Proposition 55: The \$12.3 Billion Public Education Facilities Bond

There has been virtually no change in support for the \$12.3 billion public education facilities bond since our January survey. Currently, 49 percent of likely voters in the March 2<sup>nd</sup> primary would vote for Proposition 55, while 36 percent would vote against it and 15 percent are undecided.

Democrats strongly support the bond measure, while more Republicans are opposed than in favor of it. Although more people favor than oppose it in all regions of the state, support is highest in Los Angeles. Support is also higher among Latinos (59%) than whites (46%), among women than men (53% to 44%), and among those with public school children at home than those without school children at home (56% to 45%). Liberals strongly back the proposition (60% to 22%), while moderate voters more narrowly favor it (49% to 38%) and conservatives oppose it (49% to 36%).

Support for school bonds seems to have slipped generally. California voters say they would be more likely to vote for a local school bond measure (59%) than for Proposition 55 (49%). Nevertheless, support for local school bonds is down sharply from October 2002 when 70 percent of likely voters favored local school bonds. Still, among those who would vote yes on a local school bond, 71 percent also support the \$12.3 billion in state school bonds.

**“If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 55?”**

<i>Likely Voters</i>	Jan 04	Feb 04
<b>Yes</b>	50%	<b>49%</b>
<b>No</b>	38	<b>36</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	12	<b>15</b>

<i>Likely Voters</i>	<u>Party Registration</u>			<u>Region</u>				
	Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	Latinos
<b>Yes</b>	60%	37%	47%	50%	46%	53%	47%	59%
<b>No</b>	24	50	39	35	34	34	40	29
<b>Don't know</b>	16	13	14	15	20	13	13	12

**“Suppose your local school district had a bond measure on the ballot to pay for school construction projects. Would you vote yes or no?”**

<i>Likely Voters</i>	Oct 02	Feb 04
<b>Yes</b>	70%	<b>59%</b>
<b>No</b>	25	<b>31</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	5	<b>10</b>

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<sup>‡</sup> All data reported in this section are for likely voters.

### Proposition 56: State Budget, Related Taxes, and Reserve, Voting Requirements

After weeks of television advertisements on Proposition 56—the citizens’ initiative that would lower the vote required to pass a budget in the state legislature from a two-thirds to a 55 percent majority vote—there has been no change in the “yes” votes and an increase in the “no” votes. Forty-one percent of likely voters support the measure today, 40 percent are opposed, and 19 percent are undecided. In January, 41 percent said they would vote yes on Proposition 56, 35 percent said they would vote no, and 24 percent were undecided. Over time, the percentage of undecided voters has declined by 5 points.

Across the state’s major geographic regions, four in 10 likely voters support Proposition 56. Forty-nine percent of Democrats support the proposition, 51 percent of Republicans oppose it, and independents are evenly divided (38% yes; 41% no). In no voter group does support for Proposition 56 reach a majority. Liberals and moderates (both 46%) are more likely than conservatives (32%) to support the proposition.

Many voters are not convinced that the passage of Proposition 56 would make it easier for the legislature to pass a budget and budget-related tax bills. Among likely voters, 42 percent believe it would be easier; 16 percent believe it would be harder, and 26 percent believe it would make no difference. Among those who support the measure, 54 percent think it would be easier to pass a state budget.

**“If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 56?”**

<i>Likely Voters</i>	Jan 04	Feb 04
<b>Yes</b>	41%	<b>41%</b>
<b>No</b>	35	<b>40</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	24	<b>19</b>

<i>Likely Voters</i>	<u>Party Registration</u>			<u>Region</u>				
	Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	Latinos
<b>Yes</b>	49%	32%	38%	42%	42%	40%	41%	46%
<b>No</b>	31	51	41	37	37	41	45	37
<b>Don't know</b>	20	17	21	21	21	19	14	17

**“If Proposition 56 passes, do you think it will be easier or more difficult for the state legislature to pass budget and budget-related tax bills, or will it make no difference?”**

	<b>Likely Voters</b>
<b>Easier</b>	42%
<b>More difficult</b>	16
<b>No difference</b>	26
<b>Don't know</b>	16

**Proposition 57: The Economic Recovery Bond Act**

The \$15 billion economic recovery bond put on the ballot by Governor Schwarzenegger and the legislature currently receives a mixed response (38% yes; 41% no) among likely voters in the March primary. However, 21 percent of voters have still not made up their minds. In January, 35 percent said they would vote yes, 44 percent said no, and 21 percent were undecided on the measure. So far, there is little change in the percentage voting yes since the advertisements in favor of Propositions 57 and 58 started. Since those ads began airing, the no vote has declined and the percentage undecided has increased.

Although pluralities of Democratic and independent voters oppose the measure and a plurality of Republican voters favor it, high percentages in each group are undecided. Across regions, voter support is highest in Los Angeles, and opposition is highest in the San Francisco Bay Area. Support is higher among men than women (43% to 32%). Californians who approve of Schwarzenegger’s job performance support the bond (49% to 31%), while those who disapprove oppose it (65% to 18%).

The 65 percent of likely voters who know that Schwarzenegger supports Proposition 57 are divided on this measure (44% yes; 41% no). Thirty-two percent of likely voters think that passage of this measure is very important for the state’s current fiscal recovery; Proposition 57 leads by a larger margin among those who think it is very important (74% to 15%) than somewhat important (43% to 35%).

**“If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 57?”**

	All Likely Voters	Survey Date*	
		Before Ads	After Ads
Yes	38%	37%	38%
No	41	45	38
Don't know	21	18	24

\*The major advertisement campaign for Propositions 57 and 58 began on Tuesday February 10<sup>th</sup>. “Before Ads” includes responses from 360 likely voters; “After Ads” includes 653 likely voters.

Likely Voters	Party Registration			Region				Know Schwarzenegger supports 57
	Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Yes	34%	45%	32%	40%	34%	41%	38%	44%
No	44	33	47	36	48	36	40	41
Don't know	22	22	21	24	18	23	22	15

**“In terms of dealing with current state budget conditions, how important is it that the Economic Recovery Bond Act (Proposition 57) passes—is it ...”**

	Likely Voters
Very important	32%
Somewhat important	26
Not too important	12
Not at all important	13
Don't know	17

### Proposition 58: California Balanced Budget Act

Proposition 58, which would take effect only if Proposition 57 passes (and vice versa), is currently supported by a majority of voters and by a 29-point margin (52% to 23%). In our January survey, 57 percent said they would vote yes and 22 percent said they would vote no. At the same time, the proportion of voters undecided about Proposition 58 has risen slightly (21% to 25%). Once again, there is little change in support since the advertising in favor of Propositions 57 and 58 started on February 10<sup>th</sup>.

The California Balanced Budget Act has its strongest support among Republicans, but it also leads by large margins among Democrats and independent voters. This ballot measure has more support among conservatives (57%) than liberals (49%) and among whites (56%) than Latinos (42%), and it is favored more in the regions outside the San Francisco Bay Area.

Although only 43 percent of likely voters know that Schwarzenegger supports Proposition 58, those who do know support the measure by a 37-point margin (59% to 22%). In terms of dealing with future budget conditions, two-thirds believe it is very (40%) or somewhat (27%) important for Proposition 58 to pass. Proposition 58 enjoys very strong support among those who think this measure is very important (80% to 7%) or somewhat important (62% to 18%) in dealing with future state budgets.

**“If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 58?”**

	All Likely Voters	Survey Date*	
		Before Ads	After Ads
Yes	52%	52%	52%
No	23	24	23
Don't know	25	24	25

\*The major advertisement campaign for Propositions 57 and 58 began on Tuesday February 10<sup>th</sup>. “Before Ads” includes responses from 360 likely voters; “After Ads” includes 653 likely voters.

Likely Voters	Party Registration			Region				Percent who know Schwarzenegger supports Prop. 58
	Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Yes	45%	62%	51%	53%	43%	55%	57%	59%
No	28	16	25	23	26	23	20	22
Don't know	27	22	24	24	31	22	23	19

**“In terms of dealing with future state budget conditions, how important is it that the California Balanced Budget Act (Proposition 58) passes—is it ...”**

	Likely Voters
Very important	40%
Somewhat important	27
Not too important	10
Not at all important	8
Don't know	15

## U.S. Presidential Race

As the presidential primary campaign enters the final stretch, 56 percent of likely voters in the California Democratic primary favor John Kerry as the candidate to challenge President George W. Bush. Eleven percent support Howard Dean, 10 percent would vote for John Edwards, and 11 percent support other candidates, including Dennis Kucinich (4%), Wesley Clark (4%), and Al Sharpton (2%). Twelve percent are undecided. Kerry's lead among likely primary voters who are Democrats is similar to his lead among Democratic and independent likely voters combined. Since the January survey, Kerry's percentage among Democratic voters has risen dramatically (6% to 55%), while Dean has lost support (31% to 11%), and the number of undecided voters has shrunk (25% to 12%). Kerry is favored as the Democratic presidential nominee by wide margins among likely voters across the state's four major regions, and also among liberals (55%) and moderates (56%), and men (52%) and women (57%).

If the 2004 election were held today, all likely voters would support the Democratic nominee over President Bush by a 17-point margin (54% to 37%). In the January survey, the election would have been a dead heat (45% to 45%). President Bush maintains his strong support among Republicans, while non-GOP voters are more likely than they were a month ago to favor the Democratic nominee.

**"If the election were held today, would you vote for ..."**

	Likely Voters*	Democrats only
John Kerry	56%	55%
Howard Dean	11	11
John Edwards	10	10
Dennis Kucinich	4	4
Wesley Clark	4	4
Al Sharpton	1	2
Someone else	2	2
Don't know	12	12

\*Likely voters includes respondents who are registered as Democrats and those who are registered as "decline to state" and plan to select the Democratic ballot on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**"If the 2004 presidential election were being held today, would you vote for ..."**

	All Likely Voters	Party Registration			Region				Latinos
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Democratic nominee	54%	85%	11%	61%	36%	70%	57%	45%	63%
George W. Bush, Republican	37	9	79	28	58	23	35	44	30
Don't know / Other answer	9	6	10	11	6	7	8	11	7

## U.S. Senate Race

With little time remaining before the March 2<sup>nd</sup> primary, half of the likely voters in the GOP primary are still undecided about the candidate they would choose to run against U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer in the November election. Bill Jones currently leads (24%), followed by Rosario Marin (12%), Howard Kaloogian (5%), and Toni Casey (2%). Since the January survey, support among registered Republican voters has increased for both Jones (17% to 24%) and Marin (2% to 12%), while the percentage of undecided Republicans has declined (73% to 52%). Jones has his strongest showing in the Central Valley (37%) while Marin does best in Los Angeles (19%) and Other Southern California (17%). Men favor Jones over Marin (31% to 13%) while women are more evenly divided between Jones and Marin (16% to 12%).

If the November election were held today, California likely voters would favor Senator Boxer over the Republican nominee by a 17-point margin (53% to 36%), up from a 7-point margin in January (47% to 40%). Boxer has solid support from Democrats, Latinos, and San Francisco Bay Area voters. The Republican nominee has the strong support of GOP voters and leads in the Central Valley.

**“I’m going to read a list of people who are running in the Republican U.S. Senate primary on March 2nd. If the election were held today, would you vote for ...”**

	Likely Voters*	Republicans Only
Bill Jones	24%	24%
Rosario Marin	12	12
Howard Kaloogian	5	6
Toni Casey	2	2
Someone else	4	4
Don’t know	53	52

\*Likely voters includes respondents who are registered as Republicans and those who are registered as “decline to state” and plan to select the Republican ballot on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**“If the 2004 U.S. Senate election were being held today, would you vote for...?”**

	Likely Voters	Party Registration			Region				Latinos
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Barbara Boxer, Democrat	53%	85%	12%	53%	39%	62%	56%	43%	68%
Republican nominee	36	8	76	27	47	25	34	44	23
Don't know / Other answer	11	7	12	20	14	13	10	13	9

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## Political Trends

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### Governor's Ratings

Arnold Schwarzenegger's job performance ratings remain in positive territory. Today, 55 percent of Californians say they approve of the job that he is doing as governor, while 26 percent disapprove. In January, Governor Schwarzenegger's approval rating was at 59 percent, while his disapproval rating was at 22 percent. The view among likely voters is more positive, with 61 percent approving of the way the governor is handling his job; however negative ratings among this group have increased by 5 percentage points. The percentages of disapproving Democrats (+5 points), Republicans (+4 points), and independents (+6) have risen similarly, although Republicans remain much more positive about the governor's performance than both Democrats and independents.

Schwarzenegger's ratings are significantly higher among whites (64%) than among Latinos (38%). The governor's ratings also rise with education and income. He draws majority approval in all regions of the state, although support for the governor is higher in the Central Valley (61%) and Other Southern California (60%) than in the San Francisco Bay Area (52%) and Los Angeles (50%).

Half of Californians approve of Schwarzenegger's handling of the state budget and taxes, while one in three disapproves. In January 2004, 54 percent approved while 26 percent disapproved of the governor's performance on this issue. Although he is seen more positively on this issue among likely voters (55%), his negative ratings by this group have climbed 6 points in the past month. While the governor draws positive ratings on these issues from nearly eight in 10 Republicans, only 39 percent of Democrats agree. Disapproval of the way he has handled the state's fiscal affairs is up 5 points among Democrats, 5 points among Republicans, and 9 points among independents. Again, he draws more favor among whites (58%) than Latinos (38%). His ratings on the budget increase with age, education, and household income; they drop below a majority in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles.

**“Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling his job as governor of California?”**

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Approve</b>	55%	44%	82%	58%	61%
<b>Disapprove</b>	26	32	7	24	22
<b>Don't know</b>	19	24	11	18	17

**“Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Schwarzenegger is handling the issue of the state budget and taxes?”**

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Approve</b>	51%	39%	78%	49%	55%
<b>Disapprove</b>	31	43	11	33	31
<b>Don't know</b>	18	18	11	18	14

## President's Ratings

Approval of President Bush's performance has fallen below a majority. Today, only 49 percent of Californians like the way the president is handling his job, while a similar number (48%) disapproves. Bush's approval ratings dropped 5 points in the past month, while disapproval has climbed by 6 points. The president's ratings have fallen 31 points since their high mark in January 2002. Likely voters are even more critical, with 56 percent disapproving of the president's job performance and only 43 percent approving. Disapproval among likely voters has gained 12 points in the past month. While the president remains hugely popular among Republicans, disapproval has grown 8 points in this group, as it has among Democrats. Nationally, 50 percent of Americans approve of the president's performance, while 47 percent disapprove (based on a recent *Washington Post/ABC News* poll).

In contrast to the governor, Bush's ratings are slightly more positive among Latinos than whites (55% to 50%). Bush's negative ratings are much higher in the San Francisco Bay Area, where 61 percent disapprove of his job performance, than elsewhere in the state.

On the issue of Iraq, more Californians today disapprove (50%) than approve (46%) of the president's handling of the situation. On Iraq, Bush's approval ratings have declined by 4 points, while disapproval is up 12 points, since August 2003. Among likely voters, a solid majority (56%) disapprove of the president's policies on Iraq—up 12 points since August 2003. Republicans remain overwhelmingly positive and have not changed their views on this issue over time. However, disfavor is growing among Democrats (+13 points) and independents (+10 points). Nationally, 47 percent of Americans approve of the President's handling of Iraq, while 52 percent disapprove (based on a recent *Washington Post/ABC News* poll).

Interestingly, there are no significant differences by race/ethnicity, gender, age, or income, but disapproval of Bush's approach on Iraq climbs to a high of 56 percent among college graduates. Fewer than half in the San Francisco Bay Area or Los Angeles are positive about Bush's performance in this area, while a majority elsewhere approves of his handling of the situation in Iraq.

**“Do you approve or disapprove of the way that George W. Bush is handling his job as president of the United States?”**

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	49%	22%	81%	43%	43%
Disapprove	48	76	17	54	56
Don't know	3	2	2	3	1

**“Do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?”**

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	46%	20%	78%	42%	41%
Disapprove	50	77	19	54	56
Don't know	4	3	3	4	3

## U.S. Senators' Ratings

As U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer heads into her 2004 reelection race, her approval ratings stand at 48 percent, with 26 percent disapproving and 26 percent undecided. Among likely voters, Boxer's positive ratings are 52 percent, her negative ratings are 34 percent, and 14 percent are undecided.

The senator's approval ratings today are 7 points higher than they were in September 2003 (41%), the same as her ratings in October 2002 (48%), and somewhat lower than in February 2002 (52%). While her disapproval ratings have remained similar over time, the proportion of residents who are undecided has also fluctuated: February 2004 (26%), September 2003 (32%), October 2002 (27%), February 2002 (21%). Democrats strongly approve of Boxer's job performance (74%). Independents are also more inclined to be positive than negative (50% to 25%), while 60 percent of Republicans give the senator negative ratings. Her ratings are stronger among liberals (69%) than moderates (50%) or conservatives (27%).

The San Francisco Bay Area gives Boxer her strongest support (61%), and 51 percent of Los Angeles residents also give her positive ratings. While the senator's supporters outnumber her detractors in other regions of the state, her approval ratings drop to around 40 percent in those regions because one in three voters in the Central Valley and Other Southern California have no opinion.

**"Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barbara Boxer is handling her job as a U.S. Senator?"**

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	48%	74%	22%	50%	52%
Disapprove	26	10	60	25	34
Don't know	26	16	18	25	14

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein's approval ratings are at 50 percent, while 24 percent give her a negative performance evaluation and 26 percent have no opinion. Among likely voters, Feinstein's ratings rise to 57 percent. Her approval ratings today among all adults are unchanged since September 2003 (51%) and October 2002 (49%) and somewhat lower than in February 2002 (57%).

Seven in 10 Democrats give Feinstein good performance ratings, while 51 percent of independents and 34 percent of Republicans agree. As for ideological differences, liberals are more favorable toward the senator (64%) than are moderates (53%) or conservatives (36%).

Feinstein's highest approval ratings come from the following demographic groups: People age 55 and older (59%), college graduates (56%), people without children at home (53%), those with annual household incomes of \$80,000 or more (54%), residents who have been at their current address for five years or longer (52%), and homeowners (51%). There are no differences between men and women in support for Feinstein. Her image is overwhelmingly positive in the San Francisco Bay Area (62%), and a majority in Los Angeles (51%) also approve of her performance.

**"Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Dianne Feinstein is handling her job as a U.S. Senator?"**

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	50%	72%	34%	51%	57%
Disapprove	24	12	49	23	31
Don't know	26	16	17	26	12

## Congressional Ratings

The U.S. Congress continues to receive low ratings from Californians, with only one in three rating the performance of the legislative body as good (29%) or excellent (3%). These ratings are virtually unchanged from a year ago and represent a 27-point drop in favorability from their post-September 11<sup>th</sup> peak in December 2001. Among likely voters, 71 percent rate Congress as doing only a fair or poor job, and only 26 percent say the lawmakers are doing an excellent or good job.

Democrats (26%) and independents (27%) are less likely than Republicans (37%) to say that the U.S. Congress is doing an excellent or good job. Whites (27%) are less likely than Latinos (46%), and men (29%) are less likely than women (36%) to give positive grades. Residents in the San Francisco Bay Area (25%) are less inclined than residents of other regions to give excellent or good ratings to the U.S. Congress.

**“How do you rate the job performance of the U.S. Congress at this time ...”**

<u>All Adults</u>							
	Aug 00	Oct 00	Dec 01	Oct 02	Feb 03	Sep 03	Feb 04
<b>Excellent</b>	4%	5%	13%	4%	4%	3%	<b>3%</b>
<b>Good</b>	34	33	46	34	28	25	<b>29</b>
<b>Fair</b>	45	46	31	46	45	49	<b>45</b>
<b>Poor</b>	14	13	8	13	20	17	<b>17</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	3	3	2	3	3	6	<b>6</b>

Californians are more generous toward their own congressional representative than they are toward the U.S. Congress as a whole, with 42 percent saying their representative is doing an excellent (8%) or good (34%) job and 41 percent rating them as fair (33%) or poor (8%). The positive ratings have declined by 10 points since December 2001. Among likely voters, 46 percent say their representative is doing an excellent or good job, and 41 percent offer a fair or poor rating.

One of the few things Democrats and Republicans agree on in this state is the performance of the representative from their districts. Both Democrats (45%) and Republicans (47%) give positive marks to their congressional representatives. Independents are considerably less generous, with only 36 percent giving their representative excellent or good ratings. While Latinos are more positive than whites about the U.S. Congress, a similar percentage as whites give fair or poor ratings to their own representative (43% to 39%). Ratings are more positive among those age 55 and older (48%), those with incomes of \$80,000 or more (46%), homeowners (44%), and those who have lived in their current home for five years or longer (44%).

**“What about the representative to the U.S. House of Representatives from your congressional district: How do you rate his or her performance at this time ...”**

<u>All Adults</u>							
	Aug 00	Oct 00	Dec 01	Oct 02	Feb 03	Sep 03	Feb 04
<b>Excellent</b>	7%	8%	10%	6%	8%	7%	<b>8%</b>
<b>Good</b>	39	36	42	35	32	32	<b>34</b>
<b>Fair</b>	31	36	28	36	34	37	<b>33</b>
<b>Poor</b>	8	7	7	7	11	9	<b>8</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	15	13	13	16	15	15	<b>17</b>

## Trust in the Federal Government: Overall Leadership

Thirty percent of Californians today say they trust the U.S. government to do what is right just about always or most of the time. Confidence in the national government has dropped 16 percentage points since its high in January 2002 (46%) in the aftermath of September 11th. Among likely voters, 73 percent say they trust the national government only sometimes or never, and 25 percent say they trust the government just about always or most of the time. Nationally, 37 percent of Americans say they trust the government just about always (4%) or most of the time (33%), according to an October 2003 Gallup poll.

To place Californians' trust in the federal government in further perspective, it is important to keep in mind that trust in the state government is at an historic low for our survey series. Asked about the state government in our January 2004 survey, 27 percent of adults, and 26 percent of likely voters, said they trust the state government to do what is right just about always or most of the time.

Republicans are more trusting of the national government right now (43%) than are Democrats (17%) or independents (28%). The partisan divide on trust in government has increased dramatically compared to two years ago. In January 2002, there was a minimal difference between the percentages of Democrats and Republicans who said that the government in Washington could be trusted to do what is right just about always or most of the time (42% to 47%); today there is a 26 percentage point gap between Democrats and Republicans (17% to 43%).

Californians who describe their political ideology as conservative (39%) are more trusting of the federal government than are moderates (28%) or liberals (23%). San Francisco Bay Area residents (21%) have the least confidence in Washington to do what is right just about always or most of the time, and elsewhere in the state about one in three residents holds this positive view. Thirty-four percent of Latinos trust the federal government, as do 30 percent of whites. Distrust in the federal government tends to increase with age, education, and income.

**“How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right?”**

	Jan 02	Feb 04
<b>Just about always</b>	7%	5%
<b>Most of the time</b>	39	25
<b>Some of the time</b>	52	57
<b>Never/None of the time</b>	1	10
<b>Don't know</b>	1	3

<i>Percent who agree</i>		All Adults	Party Registration		Party Divide	Change in Party Divide
			Dem	Rep		
<i>Government in Washington can be trusted to do what is right just about always or most of the time</i>	January 2002	46%	42%	47%	5	<b>+21</b>
	February 2004	30	17	43	26	

### Trust in Federal Government: Efficiency and Responsiveness

More than six in 10 Californians think the federal government wastes a lot of the money it receives from taxes. The perception that a lot of federal tax money is wasted has risen 7 percentage points since January 2002, in the aftermath of September 11th. Among likely voters, 65 percent believe the federal government wastes a lot of money. Whites (63%) are more likely than Latinos (57%) to believe the government wastes a lot of money. Washington is seen as even more wasteful than Sacramento. Asked about the state government in the January survey, 56 percent said they believe it wastes a lot of money.

Compared to two years ago, the perception that the federal government wastes a lot of money is virtually unchanged among Republicans (60% in January 2002; 61% in February 2004) while it has increased by 7 points among Democrats (55% in January 2002; 62% in February 2004).

Most Californians (67%) think the federal government is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves. This belief has grown by 9 percentage points since January 2002. Among likely voters, an even more substantial 73 percent hold this view. A comparison with the January 2004 survey reveals that Californians are just as likely to think the national government is beholden to a few big interests as they are the state government (65%).

Democrats (80%) and independents (74%) are more likely than Republicans (54%) to think that the government in Washington is run by and for a few big interests looking out for themselves. Once again, the partisan divide on trust in government has increased since January 2002, when 64 percent of Democrats and 53 percent of Republicans said the government is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves.

**“Do you think that the people in the federal government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don’t waste very much of it?”**

	Jan 02	Feb 04
Waste a lot	54%	61%
Waste some	39	32
Don't waste much	5	5
Don't know	2	2

**“Would you say the federal government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?”**

	Jan 02	Feb 04
Few big interests	58%	67%
Benefit of all the people	34	25
Don't know	8	8

Percent who agree		All Adults	Party Registration		Party Divide	Change in Party Divide
			Dem	Rep		
<i>Government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves</i>	January 2002	58%	64%	53%	11	<b>+15</b>
	February 2004	67	80	54	26	

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## National Policy Issues

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### Gay and Lesbian Rights

Sixty-two percent of Californians think homosexuality is a way of life that society should accept, while 32 percent say society should discourage it. The share of Californians who say homosexuality should be accepted has increased 7 percentage points since May 1998; but, over the same period, the partisan divide over this issue has also increased. Today, there is a 28 point difference between Democrats (71%) and Republicans (43%) who say homosexuality should be accepted, up from a 24 point difference in May 1998 (64% Democrats; 40% Republicans).

Belief that society should accept homosexuality as a way of life is highest in the San Francisco Bay Area (73%), followed by Los Angeles (64%), Other Southern California (54%), and the Central Valley (52%). Majorities of both whites (63%) and Latinos (59%) hold this view. Across religious groups, 64 percent of Roman Catholics think society should accept homosexuality as a way of life, while Protestants are split on this issue (46% for acceptance; 47% against). Adult residents under age 35 (70%) are more likely than those age 55 and older (52%) to express acceptance.

Although a sizeable majority of Californians believe society should accept homosexuality, attitudes on gay and lesbian marriage are divided: Forty-four percent favor and 50 percent oppose allowing gay couples to be legally married. The national numbers are 59 percent opposed and 32 percent in favor (based on an October 2003 Pew Research Center survey).

In California, the percentage of state residents favoring gay marriage has risen 6 points since January 2000 (38% in favor). The partisan gap has also increased over that time period, from a 26 point difference between Democrats and Republicans in 2000 to a 34 point difference today. Across the state's regions, only in the San Francisco Bay Area are a majority of residents (58%) in favor of allowing same-sex couples to marry legally. While Roman Catholic residents are divided on this issue (43% favor, 49% oppose), two in three Protestants oppose gay and lesbian marriages (66%).

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

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Favor</b>	44%	57%	23%	54%	43%
<b>Oppose</b>	50	37	73	39	51
<b>Don't know</b>	6	6	4	7	6

Percent who favor		All Adults	Party Registration		Party Divide	Change in Party Divide
			Dem	Rep		
<i>Allowing gay and lesbian couples to be legally married</i>	January 2000	38%	49%	23%	26	<b>+8</b>
	February 2004	44	57	23	34	

## Abortion

Although a large majority of all Californians believe that government should not interfere with a woman’s access to abortion, the partisan divide on this issue has widened over the last four years. Today, 69 percent of Californians (and 74 percent of likely voters) think that the government should not interfere, but 26 percent (and 22 percent of likely voters) believe that the government should pass more laws to restrict the availability of abortion.

“Which statement comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right ...”

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>The government should not interfere with a woman’s access to abortion</b>	69%	82%	59%	77%	74%
<b>The government should pass more laws that restrict the availability of abortion</b>	26	16	35	18	22
<b>Don’t know</b>	5	2	6	5	4

Overall, the percentages of Californians on either side of this issue have changed little over the past four years. In January 2000, 71 percent felt that the government should not interfere with access to abortion. However, since 2000, the partisan divide on this question has become more pronounced. In 2000, 81 percent of Democrats and 63 percent of Republicans thought that the government should not interfere with a woman’s access to abortion, an 18 percentage point difference. Today, that gap has grown to 23 percentage points: Eighty-two percent of Democrats and 59 percent of Republicans believe that the government should not interfere. In January 2000, 70 percent of independents thought that government should not interfere, and 28 percent thought that government should pass more laws. In the current survey, 77 percent of independents think that government should not interfere, and only 18 percent are for passage of new laws.

Percent who agree		All Adults	Party Registration		Party Divide	Change in Party Divide
			Dem	Rep		
<b>Government should <i>not</i> interfere with a woman’s access to abortion</b>	January 2000	71%	81%	63%	18	<b>+5</b>
	February 2004	69	82	59	23	

As in 2000, today there is a wide ideological divide in the state over the issue of abortion: Eighty-two percent of liberals say that the government should not interfere with a woman’s access to abortion; only 15 percent say that the government should pass more laws restricting its availability. In contrast, although 52 percent of conservatives think the government should not restrict access, 42 percent think more laws limiting availability should be passed.

Latinos are more likely than whites (38% to 21%) to think that the government should pass new laws on this issue. Sixty-one percent of Catholics and 50 percent of those who call themselves “born-again” or evangelical Christians say that the government should *not* interfere with a woman’s access to abortion.

## Environment

Despite a consistent rate of support for environmental measures, the partisan divide over the environment has also grown. Sixty percent of Californians think that stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost, while 32 percent believe these laws cost too many jobs and hurt the economy. Although from May 1998 to the present, approximately 60 percent of state residents have consistently said these laws are worth the cost, the gap between Democrats and Republicans on this issue has increased significantly. Today, there is a 29 point gap between Democrats and Republicans (71% to 42%). This gap has grown by 16 percentage points since January 2000.

In the current survey, 50 percent of all conservatives say environmental laws cost too many jobs and hurt the economy, compared to 26 percent of moderates and 21 percent of liberals. Across the state, San Francisco Bay Area residents (67%) are the most likely and Central Valley residents are the least likely (55%) to say these laws are worth the cost. Sixty-nine percent of Californians under age 35 say environmental laws are worth the cost, compared to 48 percent of those age 55 and older.

**“Which statement comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right ...”**

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost	60%	71%	42%	62%	60%
Stricter environmental laws and regulations cost too many jobs and hurt the economy	32	23	47	27	32
Don't know	8	6	11	11	8

Percent who agree		All Adults	Party Registration		Party Divide	Change in Party Divide
			Dem	Rep		
Stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost	January 2000	64%	70%	57%	13	<b>+16</b>
	February 2004	60	71	42	29	

Sixty-two percent of Californians completely (23%) or mostly (39%) agree that people should be willing to pay higher prices to protect the environment. However, 35 percent either mostly (22%) or completely (13%) disagree. These numbers reflect almost exactly the views of Americans nationwide, according to an August 2003 Pew Research Center survey, in which 65 percent thought that people should be willing to pay more and 34 percent disagreed.

In California, 73 percent of Democrats, 64 percent of independents, and 51 percent of Republicans agree that it is worth paying higher prices to protect the environment. While majorities across all income and education groups say people should be willing to pay more, this opinion tends to increase with education and income, and whites (66%) are more likely than Latinos (55%) to hold this view.

## Immigrants

Fifty-six percent of California adults view immigrants today as a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills, while 35 percent see immigrants as a burden because they use public services. The state's likely voters are more evenly split on this issue: Forty-nine percent say immigrants are a benefit to the state, while 41 percent say they are a burden. Latinos (84%) and immigrants (82%) are much more likely than whites (45%) or U.S.-born residents (48%) to say immigrants benefit the state.

**"Which statement comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right ..."**

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Immigrants today are a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills	56%	61%	32%	59%	49%
Immigrants today are a burden to California because they use public services	35	29	57	33	41
Don't know	9	10	11	8	10

Since 2000, the large partisan divide on this question has increased. In February 2000, 59 percent of Democrats and 41 percent of Republicans thought immigrants were a benefit to the state, an 18 percentage point difference. Today, 61 percent of Democrats and 32 percent of Republicans think immigrants benefit California, a 29 point gap between the parties.

Percent who agree	All Adults	Party Registration		Party Divide	Change in Party Divide
		Dem	Rep		
<i>Immigrants today are a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills</i>	February 2000	54%	59%	41%	18
	February 2004	56	61	32	29
					<b>+11</b>

When asked their opinion of President Bush's proposal to allow undocumented foreigners to apply for temporary work status, 49 percent of Californians favor the proposal; 43 percent are opposed. In contrast, 42 percent of Americans favor the proposal and 55 percent oppose it, according to a January 2004 NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll. In California, likely voters are also less supportive of the proposal: Forty-two percent of likely voters favor the plan; 50 percent are opposed.

There is almost no partisan split on Bush's immigration proposal: Forty-six percent of independents, 42 percent of Republicans, and 45 percent of Democrats favor Bush's plan. There are only slight differences along ideological lines: Fifty-two percent of moderates, 47 percent of conservatives, and 51 percent of liberals support the temporary worker plan. Latinos (69%) and immigrants (66%) are much more likely than whites (43%) and U.S.-born residents (44%) to say they favor this plan.

## Poverty

Fifty-five percent of Californians think poor people have hard lives because government benefits do not go far enough to help them live decently. In contrast, 33 percent think poor people have it easy because they can get these benefits without giving anything in return. As on other issues, the overall perception of the condition of poor people has remained somewhat similar between 2000 and 2004, but the partisan divide has grown. Today, there is a 42 point difference between Democrats (71%) and Republicans (29%) who believe the poor have hard lives—an increase of 14 percentage points since 2000. A majority of Republicans (54%) think poor people have it easy. Liberals (69%) are much more likely than moderates (53%) or conservatives (43%) to say poor people have hard lives.

While majorities across state regions say poor people have hard lives because of inadequate government benefits, San Francisco Bay Area residents and Los Angeles residents (60% and 59%, respectively) are the most likely to hold this belief. Latinos are more likely than whites to say poor people do not get enough government benefits to help them live decently (65% to 51%).

“Which statement comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right ...”

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Poor people have hard lives because government benefits don't go far enough to help them live decently	55%	71%	29%	56%	52%
Poor people have it easy because they can get government benefits without anything in return	33	19	54	31	33
Don't know	12	10	17	13	15

Percent who agree		All Adults	Party Registration		Party Divide	Change in Party Divide
			Dem	Rep		
<i>Poor people have hard lives because government benefits don't go far enough to help them live decently</i>	February 2000	53%	64%	36%	28	<b>+14</b>
	February 2004	55	71	29	42	

Sixty-nine percent of Californians think that the government should take care of people who cannot take care of themselves, but 27 percent disagree. On this issue, opinion in California mirrors opinion in the nation as a whole: In August 2003, the Pew Research Center reported that 66 percent of Americans agree it is the government's responsibility and 31 percent disagree.

San Francisco Bay Area residents (76%) are most likely to say that it is the responsibility of government to take care of people who cannot care for themselves, followed by residents in Los Angeles (72%), the Central Valley (66%), and Other Southern California (63%).

## Homeland Security and Civil Liberties

When asked which view is closer to their own, 52 percent of Californians are more concerned that the government will pass new anti-terrorism laws that excessively restrict a person’s civil liberties, and 37 percent are more concerned that the government will fail to enact strong anti-terrorism laws. These percentages are similar to those in January 2002, when 51 percent of Californians were more concerned about restriction of civil liberties and 37 percent were more concerned that the government would fail to enact strong laws.

While the overall percentages have remained steady from 2002 to 2004, the partisan divide has grown significantly. In January 2002, 55 percent of Democrats and 40 percent of Republicans were more concerned that the government would enact laws that excessively restrict civil liberties, a 15 percentage point gap. Today, the percentage of Democrats with that concern has increased to 64 percent and the percentage of Republicans has decreased to 34 percent, creating a 30 point gap. In 2002, 54 percent of independents were more concerned about the government’s enacting excessive new anti-terrorism laws, compared to 61 percent of independents today.

“Which concerns you more right now, that ...”

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Government will enact new anti-terrorism laws that excessively restrict the average person's civil liberties	52%	64%	34%	61%	55%
Government will fail to enact strong anti-terrorism laws	37	27	55	30	35
Don't know	11	9	11	9	10

Percent concerned		All Adults	Party Registration		Party Divide	Change in Party Divide
			Dem	Rep		
Government will enact new anti-terrorism laws that excessively restrict the average person's civil liberties	January 2002	51%	55%	40%	15	<b>+15</b>
	February 2004	52	64	34	30	

In terms of how the U.S. should determine its policy for the war on terrorism, 47 percent of Californians think that national policy should be based mostly on the United States’ national interests; 46 percent think that it should strongly take into account the interests of U.S. allies. In August 2003, the Pew Research Center reported that a similar 48 percent of Americans said that U.S. policy in this area should be based mostly on U.S. national interests. In California, there has been little change on this question since February 2002, when 48 percent of the state’s residents said that policies for the war on terrorism should be based mostly on U.S. national interests. However, the partisan divide on this issue has increased by 9 points. In February 2002, 41 percent of Democrats and 59 percent of Republicans said that policy should be based mostly on the national interests of the United States (i.e., an 18-point party divide), while today 38 percent of Democrats and 65 percent of Republicans hold this view (i.e., a 27-point party divide).

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## Survey Methodology

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The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, research director at the Public Policy Institute of California, with assistance in research and writing from Jon Cohen, survey research manager, and Renatta DeFever and Eliana Kaimowitz, survey research associates.

The findings of this survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,004 California adult residents interviewed between February 8 and February 16, 2004. Interviewing took place on weekday nights and weekend days, using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers that ensured 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 ten 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 by using the “last birthday method” to avoid biases in age and gender. Each interview took an average of 19 minutes to complete. Interviewing was conducted in English or Spanish. Casa Hispana translated the survey into Spanish, and Schulman, Ronca & Bucuvalas, Inc. conducted the telephone interviewing.

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 the 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 2,004 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 1,499 registered voters is +/- 2.5 percent, and the sampling error for the 1,013 likely voters is +/- 3 percent. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

Throughout the report, we refer to four geographic regions. “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. “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 are the major population centers of the state, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population.

We present specific results for Latinos because they account for about 28 percent of the state’s adult population and constitute one of the fastest growing voter groups. The sample sizes for the African American and Asian subgroups are not large enough for separate statistical analysis. We do contrast the opinions of registered Democrats, Republicans, and independents. The “independents” category includes only those who are registered to vote as “decline to state.”

In some cases, we compare PPIC Statewide Survey responses to responses recorded in national surveys conducted by Gallup/CNN/*USA Today*, *Washington Post*/ABC News, the Pew Research Center, and NBC News/*Wall Street Journal*. We use earlier PPIC Statewide Surveys to analyze trends over time in California.



**PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT**  
**FEBRUARY 8—FEBRUARY 16, 2004**  
**2,004 CALIFORNIA ADULT RESIDENTS; ENGLISH AND SPANISH**  
**MARGIN OF ERROR +/- 2% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE**

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1. First, what is the most important issue facing people in California today? *[open-ended question]*

- 36% economy, jobs, unemployment
- 17 state budget, deficit, taxes
- 9 education, schools
- 6 health care, health costs, HMO reform
- 5 immigration, illegal immigration
- 3 crime, gangs
- 3 government regulations
- 3 housing
- 13 other *(specify)*
- 5 don't know

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

- 35% right direction
- 51 wrong direction
- 14 don't know

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

- 43% good times
- 44 bad times
- 13 don't know

4. How closely are you following news about the March 2<sup>nd</sup> primary election in California—very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?

- 21% very closely
- 36 fairly closely
- 25 not too closely
- 18 not at all closely

5. On another topic, some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain that you are registered to vote?

- 70% yes *[ask q. 5a]*
- 29 no *[skip to q. 21]*

5a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or as an independent?

- 44% Democrat *[ask q. 6b]*
- 34 Republican *[ask q. 6c]*
- 4 other party *(specify) [ask q. 9]*
- 18 independent *[ask q. 6a]*

6a. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?

- 23% Republican party *[ask q. 6a1]*
- 49 Democratic party *[ask q. 6a1]*
- 22 neither *(volunteered) [ask q. 6a1]*
- 6 don't know *[ask q. 6a1]*

6a1. California voters like yourself will be able to choose between voting in the Republican primary, the Democratic primary, or selecting a nonpartisan ballot on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. All three ballots include state proposition measures. Do you plan to vote in the Republican primary, the Democratic primary, or on the nonpartisan ballot?

- 28% Democratic primary *[ask q. 7, then q. 9]*
- 11 Republican primary *[skip to q. 8]*
- 39 nonpartisan ballot *[skip to q. 9]*
- 4 not planning to vote *(volunteered)[skip to q.9]*
- 18 don't know *[ask q. 9]*

6b. Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or not a very strong Democrat?

- 58% strong *[ask q. 7]*
- 39 not very strong *[ask q. 7]*
- 3 don't know *[ask q. 7]*

6c. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

- 58% strong *[skip to q. 8]*
- 39 not very strong *[skip to q. 8]*
- 3 don't know *[skip to q. 8]*

***[Responses recorded for question 7 are from likely voters registered as Democrats and from independents who say they will select the Democratic ballot on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.]***

7. Next, I'm going to read a list of people who are running in the Democratic presidential primary on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. If the election were held today, would you vote for ... *[read rotated list, then ask "or someone else?"]*

- 56% John Kerry
- 11 Howard Dean
- 10 John Edwards
- 4 Dennis Kucinich
- 4 Wesley Clark\*
- 1 Al Sharpton
- 2 someone else *(specify)*
- 12 don't know

***[Responses recorded for question 8 are from likely voters registered as Republicans and from independents who say they will select the Republican ballot.]***

8. Next, I'm going to read a list of people who are running in the Republican U.S. Senate primary on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. If the election were held today, would you vote for ... *[read rotated list, then ask "or someone else?"]*

- 24% Bill Jones
- 12 Rosario Marin
- 5 Howard Kaloogian
- 2 Toni Casey
- 4 someone else *(specify)*
- 53 don't know

***[Responses recorded for questions 9 through 20 are from likely voters only. All other responses are from all adults.]***

9. If the 2004 presidential election were being held today, would you vote for: *[rotate]* George W. Bush (the Republican) or for the Democratic nominee?

- 54% Democratic nominee
- 37 George W. Bush
- 9 don't know

10. If the 2004 U.S. Senate election were being held today, would you vote for: *[rotate]* Barbara Boxer (the Democrat) or the Republican nominee?

- 53% Barbara Boxer
- 36 Republican nominee
- 11 don't know

11. The March ballot also includes Proposition 55, the Kindergarten to University Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 2004. This 12.3 billion dollar bond issue will provide funding for necessary education facilities to relieve overcrowding and to repair older schools. The projected fiscal impact includes a state cost of about 24.7 billion dollars to pay off the costs of the bonds, with annual payments of about 823 million dollars. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 55?

- 49% yes
- 36 no
- 15 don't know

12. Suppose your local school district had a bond measure on the ballot to pay for school construction projects. Would you vote yes or no?

- 59% yes
- 31 no
- 10 don't know

13. Also on the March ballot is Proposition 56, the State Budget, Related Taxes, and Reserve, Voting Requirements and Penalties Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute. This measure permits the legislature to pass budget and budget-related tax and appropriation bills with a 55 percent vote. It also requires that the legislature and governor lose compensation for each day the budget is late. This measure will have varying fiscal impacts, including changes in spending and potentially significant increases in state tax revenues in some years. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 56?

- 41% yes
- 40 no
- 19 don't know

14. If Proposition 56 passes, do you think it will be easier or more difficult for the state legislature to pass budget and budget-related tax bills, or will it make no difference?

- 42% easier
- 16 more difficult
- 26 no difference
- 16 don't know

\* Wesley Clark dropped out of the race on February 11<sup>th</sup>; after that date, his name was no longer read in the rotated candidate list.

15. Proposition 57 on the March ballot is the Economic Recovery Bond Act. This is a one-time bond of up to 15 billion dollars to retire state deficit. The fiscal impact of this measure is a one-time increase, compared to a previously authorized bond, of up to 4 billion dollars to reduce the state's budget shortfall and annual debt-service savings over the next few years. These effects would be offset by higher annual debt-service costs in future years due to this bond's longer term and larger size. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 57?
- 38% yes  
41 no  
21 don't know
16. In terms of dealing with current state budget conditions, how important is it that the Economic Recovery Bond Act (Proposition 57) passes—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?
- 32% very important  
26 somewhat important  
12 not too important  
13 not at all important  
17 don't know
17. Do you happen to know whether Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger supports or opposes Proposition 57, The Economic Recovery Bond Act?
- 65% Schwarzenegger supports the measure  
2 Schwarzenegger opposes the measure  
33 don't know
18. Proposition 58, the California Balanced Budget Act, requires the passage of a balanced budget, addresses fiscal emergencies, and establishes a budget reserve. Fiscal effects are unknown and will vary by year, depending in part on actions of future legislatures. Reserve provisions may smooth state spending, with reductions during economic expansions and increases during downturns. The provisions requiring balanced budgets and limiting borrowing could result in more immediate actions to correct budgetary shortfalls. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 58?
- 52% yes  
23 no  
25 don't know
19. In terms of dealing with future state budget conditions, how important is it that the California Balanced Budget Act (Proposition 58) passes—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?
- 40% very important  
27 somewhat important  
10 not too important  
8 not at all important  
15 don't know
20. Do you happen to know whether Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger supports or opposes Proposition 58, The California Balanced Budget Act?
- 43% Schwarzenegger supports the measure  
3 Schwarzenegger opposes the measure  
54 don't know
21. On another topic, people have different ideas about the government in Washington. How much of the time do you think that you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right—just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?
- 5% just about always  
25 most of the time  
57 some of the time  
10 never / none of the time (*volunteered*)  
3 don't know
22. Do you think the people in (the federal) government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?
- 61% a lot  
32 some  
5 don't waste very much  
2 don't know
23. Would you say the (federal) government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of all of the people?
- 67% a few big interests  
25 benefit of all of the people  
8 don't know

For each of the following, please indicate which statement comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.

[rotate questions 24 to 29]

24. [rotate] The government should pass more laws that restrict the availability of abortion; *or* the government should not interfere with a woman's access to abortion.

69% government should not interfere  
26 government should pass more laws  
5 don't know

25. [rotate] The government goes too far in restricting the rights of citizens to own guns; *or* the government does not do enough to regulate access to guns.

62% government does not do enough  
30 government goes too far  
8 don't know

26. [rotate] Stricter environmental laws and regulations cost too many jobs and hurt the economy; *or* stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost.

60% worth the cost  
32 cost too many jobs and hurt the economy  
8 don't know

27. [rotate] Homosexuality is a way of life that should be accepted by society; *or* homosexuality is a way of life that should be discouraged by society.

62% should be accepted  
32 should be discouraged  
6 don't know

28. [rotate] Poor people have it easy because they can get government benefits without doing anything in return; *or* poor people have hard lives because government benefits don't go far enough to help them live decently.

55% poor people have hard lives  
33 poor people have it easy  
12 don't know

29. [rotate] Immigrants today are a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills; *or* immigrants today are a burden to California because they use public services.

56% immigrants are a benefit to California  
35 immigrants are a burden to California  
9 don't know

30. As you may know, President George W. Bush is proposing to allow foreigners who have jobs but are staying illegally in the United States to apply for legal, temporary-worker status. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

49% favor  
43 oppose  
8 don't know

Changing topics, do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

31. People should be willing to pay higher prices in order to protect the environment. (Do you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or completely disagree with this statement?)

23% completely agree  
39 mostly agree  
22 mostly disagree  
13 completely disagree  
3 don't know

32. It is the responsibility of government to take care of people who can't take care of themselves. (Do you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or completely disagree with this statement?)

30% completely agree  
39 mostly agree  
18 mostly disagree  
9 completely disagree  
4 don't know

33. And do you favor or oppose allowing gay and lesbian couples to be legally married?

44% favor  
50 oppose  
6 don't know

34. Generally speaking, do you think that the United States military is or is not as strong as it needs to be to ensure our national defense and protect our national interests around the world?

67% it is as strong as it needs to be  
28 it is *not* as strong as it needs to be  
5 don't know

35. Do you think the U.S. made the right decision or the wrong decision in using military force against Iraq?

48% right decision  
46 wrong decision  
6 don't know

36. Which concerns you more right now—that the government will fail to enact strong anti-terrorism laws, or that the government will enact new anti-terrorism laws that excessively restrict the average person’s civil liberties?

- 52% government will restrict civil liberties
- 37 government will fail to enact strong laws
- 11 don’t know

37. And how should the United States determine its policy with regard to the war on terrorism? Should it be based mostly on the national interests of the United States, or should it strongly take into account the interests of its allies?

- 47% based mostly on the national interests of the United States
- 46 strongly take into account interests of allies
- 7 don’t know

*[Questions 38 and 39 were asked of 1,003 California adults, February 11 to February 16.]*

38. On another topic, do you believe in capital punishment, that is the death penalty, or are you opposed to it?

- 57% believe in it
- 38 opposed to it
- 5 don’t know

39. And which of the following statements do you agree with more? *[rotate]* 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.

- 53% life imprisonment with no parole
- 38 death penalty
- 9 don’t know

40. Changing topics—overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling his job as governor of California?

- 55% approve
- 26 disapprove
- 19 don’t know

41. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Schwarzenegger is handling the issue of the state budget and taxes?

- 51% approve
- 31 disapprove
- 18 don’t know

42. Changing topics—overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that George W. Bush is handling his job as president of the United States?

- 49% approve
- 48 disapprove
- 3 don’t know

43. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?

- 46% approve
- 50 disapprove
- 4 don’t know

*[rotate questions 44 and 45]*

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

- 50% approve
- 24 disapprove
- 26 don’t know

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

- 48% approve
- 26 disapprove
- 26 don’t know

*[rotate questions 46 and 47]*

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

- 3% excellent
- 29 good
- 45 fair
- 17 poor
- 6 don’t know

47. Overall, at this time, how do you rate the job performance of the representative to the U.S. House of Representatives from your congressional district—excellent, good, fair, or poor?

- 8% excellent
- 34 good
- 33 fair
- 8 poor
- 17 don’t know

48. Are you or is anyone in your immediate family a member of a labor union? *(if yes: Is that person you or another person in your family?)*

- 9% yes, respondent
- 10 yes, another person in family
- 2 yes, both
- 77 no
- 2 don’t know

49. On another topic, would you consider yourself to be politically very liberal, somewhat liberal, middle-of-the-road, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?

- 11% very liberal
- 22 somewhat liberal
- 30 middle-of-the-road
- 24 somewhat conservative
- 10 very conservative
- 3 don't know

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

- 24% great deal
- 44 fair amount
- 25 only a little
- 7 none

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

- 51% always
- 19 nearly always
- 8 part of the time
- 5 seldom
- 17 never

52. Do you plan to vote in the primary election on March 2<sup>nd</sup>? (if yes: Will you vote at your local polling place or by absentee ballot?)

- 58% yes, local polling place
- 18 yes, absentee ballot
- 19 no, not planning to vote
- 5 don't know

63. What is your religious preference—Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Mormon, or an orthodox church such as the Greek or Russian Orthodox Church?

- 35% Protestant (*include*: Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Pentecostal, Jehovah's Witness, Church of Christ, etc.)
- 33 Roman Catholic
- 3 Jewish [*skip to q.64*]
- 2 Mormon (*include*: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints)
- 1 Orthodox Church (Greek or Russian)
- 1 Muslim / Islam [*skip to q.64*]
- 6 Other religion (*volunteered*) (*specify*)
- 19 No religion, not a believer, atheist, or agnostic (*volunteered*) [*skip to q.64*]

63a. Would you describe yourself as a "born again" or evangelical Christian, or not?

- 31% yes, would
- 66 no, would not
- 3 don't know

64. How important would you say religion is in your own life? Would you say it is very important, fairly important, or not important?

- 45% very important
- 31 fairly important
- 23 not important
- 1 don't know

[65: demographic question]

[53-62: demographic questions]

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