
Preface

California is now in the midst of historic changes that will profoundly affect the future of the state. To improve understanding of these changes and their effect on the political status quo, PPIC will conduct a series of large-scale public opinion surveys that will provide the public and policymakers with relevant—advocacy-free—information on the following:

- Californians' overall impressions and concerns about the economy, population growth, governance, and quality of life and about key issues such as education, welfare, and immigration.
- Differences in social and political attitudes among different demographic, age, and economic groups and across different regions of the state.
- The characteristics of groups that are shaping the state's elections and policy debates.
- The political attitudes underlying "voter distrust" of government and low voter turnout and how both affect the outcomes of elections and the success of ballot initiatives.

This is the first of the 1998 surveys.

Press Release

SIGNIFICANT CROSS-OVER VOTING LIKELY IN STATE'S FIRST OPEN PRIMARY, SURVEY SUGGESTS

Crime Still Tops List of Policy Problems in California, But Majority Believe State Headed in Right Direction

SAN FRANCISCO, California, April 15, 1998 — California's first open primary is attracting a significant amount of cross-over voting in the race for Governor, according to a statewide survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California.

The first in a series of large-scale surveys conducted by Mark Baldassare shows Al Checchi with 19% support, Jane Harman 18%, and Gray Davis 12% among likely voters. Republican Dan Lungren receives 23%. While Checchi and Harman draw nearly equal support from Democrats, Checchi is attracting considerably more support than Harman from the Republican ranks (17% to 7%), including Republican women, and other voters (including independents). Twenty-eight percent of Republicans and 42% of "other" voters say they are supporting a Democrat for Governor in the primary.

In the U.S. Senate race, a relatively small number of major party voters are crossing over. Among likely voters, Republican Darryl Issa holds a narrow lead over Matt Fong (14% to 9%) and Democrat Barbara Boxer receives 43%. Neither Issa nor Fong currently draws much support from outside the Republican party. Boxer makes minor inroads among Republicans, with 13% of both Republican men and women supporting her re-election, but she is the choice of 41% of "other" voters.

"The open primary may well herald an era of political change in California's statewide elections," said Mark Baldassare, director of the PPIC Statewide Survey. "And it may also change how candidates campaign for office — witness Checchi's early marketing and the lack, until recently, of a party affiliation in his ads."

Latinos Can't Be Labeled

Checchi's investment in Spanish-language advertising also appears to be paying off. He receives one third (34%) of Latino votes while Dan Lungren receives only one in 10 Latino votes. In the U.S. Senate race, Senator Barbara Boxer is heavily favored by Latinos (53%), with Darryl Issa and Matt Fong receiving little support (8% and 6%).

The growing participation of Latinos in the political process has sparked discussion about possible shifts in the political pendulum. But, politically, Latinos look very much like other California residents. Few place themselves at either end of the political spectrum: 8% describe themselves as "very liberal" and 13% as "very conservative." Overall, 27% say they are liberal, 36% moderate, and 35% are conservative.

Like many Californians, a majority of Latinos (57%) believe things in the state are headed in the right direction, and they are leading a surge in consumer confidence. Latinos are more likely than others to say they are better off today than they were last year (47%, as compared to 34% of others) and that they will be better off next year than they are now (52% to 42%).

The Conflicted California Voter

California voters are strongly in favor of Proposition 227, the bilingual education initiative, and the campaign reform initiative, Proposition 226. However, their responses to the two initiatives present some interesting paradoxes.

Among all voters, 76% support and 20% oppose Proposition 227. But despite this overwhelming support for eliminating bilingual education programs, 43% say they know “only a little” or “nothing” about current bilingual programs in public schools. And while passage of Proposition 227 would ultimately limit local control over bilingual programs, a majority (55%) say they would favor leaving decisions about bilingual education to local school districts. A majority of Latinos (57%) are in favor of Proposition 227 with 40% opposed.

Voters are similarly conflicted about their support of Proposition 226. Sixty-five percent support and only 27% oppose the initiative, which would require unions to obtain permission from their members before using union dues for political contributions and ban foreign contributions to state and local candidates. But surprisingly, voters are almost evenly divided about the concept of placing restrictions on the ability of labor unions to contribute to political candidates and initiatives, even though they strongly favor an initiative that would have this effect. In addition, 76% of voters say they would support a similar requirement that corporations obtain permission from their shareholders before using company funds for political contributions.

Concern With Crime Persists, Unrelated to Trends

Even though crime rates have fallen in most parts of the state, Californians still rank it as the most serious policy problem today (28%) with education a close second (20%). Only 5% of Californians now view the economy as the most serious policy problem, compared with 29% just four years ago. During the last Gubernatorial campaign in 1994, only 7% of Californians considered education to be the most serious policy problem.

Nearly one-third of Los Angeles Metro and Central Valley residents consider crime to be the top issue facing the state, while education tops the list for San Francisco Bay area residents (29%). These regional findings are two of the many that reflect the great diversity among California's regions on issues ranging from voting preferences to economic opportunity to attitudes about public services.

About the Survey

The purpose of the PPIC Statewide Survey is to develop an in-depth profile of the social, economic, and political forces at work in California elections and in shaping the state's public policies. The survey is intended to provide the public and policymakers with relevant information on the following: Californians' overall impressions of key policy issues and of quality of life; differences in social and political attitudes among demographic groups and across different regions of the state; the characteristics of groups that are shaping the state's elections and policy debates; and the political attitudes underlying “voter distrust” of government and low voter turnout. A series of surveys will be conducted and released during the 1998 election cycle.

The findings of the current survey are based on a telephone interview of 2,002 California adult residents surveyed from April 1 to April 8, 1998. Interviews were conducted in English or Spanish. The sampling error for the total sample is +/- 2%. The sampling error for the 1,623 voters is +/- 2.5%

and for the 993 likely voters +/- 3%. For additional information on survey methodology, see page 21 of the attached report.

Dr. Mark Baldassare is a senior fellow at PPIC. He is founder and director of the Orange County Annual Survey at UC Irvine. For over two decades, he has conducted surveys for major news organizations, including the Orange County Edition of the *Los Angeles Times*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Orange County Register*, KRON-TV, KCAL-TV, KQED Radio, and KFWB Radio.

PPIC is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to independent, nonpartisan research on economic, social, and political issues that affect the lives of Californians. The Institute was established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett.

This report is posted on PPIC's web site (www.ppic.org).

California Primary

Governor's Race

The first open primary for Governor is attracting a significant amount of cross-over voting, which may herald an era of political change in California's statewide elections.

Al Checchi and Jane Harman are drawing equal support in the race for the Democratic nomination for Governor. Among voters most likely to go to the polls in June, Checchi receives 19%, Harman 18%, and Gray Davis trails with 12%. Republican candidate Dan Lungren has 23 percent of the vote. Three percent are supporting other candidates and 25 percent of likely voters are undecided. Among all California voters, Checchi leads Harman by 6 points and Davis by 12 points, and the percentage of undecided voters is 30 percent. Checchi is favored over Harman by both women (24% to 18%) and men (20% to 12%). Lungren receives less support from women than men (16% to 21%). While Checchi and Harman are tied among Democrats, Checchi is more likely than Harman to attract support in the open primary from the Republican ranks, including Republican women (20% to 7%) and other voters. Checchi's investment in Spanish-language advertising may be having an effect — one third of Latino voters say they will support Checchi, and he enjoys a commanding lead over Harman among this group. Lungren receives only one in 10 Latino votes.

Checchi leads Harman and Davis in the LA Metro area and the Central Valley. Harman and Checchi are virtually tied in the San Francisco Bay area. Lungren's strongest support is found in the Central Valley.

"If the June Primary election for Governor were being held today, who would you vote for?"

	Likely Voters	All Voters
Al Checchi	19%	22%
Gray Davis	12	10
Jane Harman	18	16
Dan Lungren	23	19
Other	3	3
Don't know	25	30

(All Voters)	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>			<u>Ethnicity</u>	
	Dem	Rep	Other	LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Al Checchi	26%	17%	22%	24%	21%	23%	34%	20%
Gray Davis	15	4	7	9	13	7	9	10
Jane Harman	23	7	13	14	18	17	13	16
Dan Lungren	4	40	9	19	13	25	10	20
Other	4	2	9	3	5	2	3	3
Don't know	28	30	40	31	30	26	31	31

Television Advertising for the Governor's Race

Much has been made about the amount of money already spent on television advertising in the race for governor, and this advertising has captured voters' notice. Almost 80 percent of likely voters say they have seen candidates' television commercials in the past month. Checchi's ads have been most noticed: About half of the voters recall seeing his ads the most, while fewer than a quarter say they have seen Harman's ads the most.

Democrats, San Francisco Bay area voters, and Latino voters are more likely than other party, regional, and ethnic groups to say they have seen Checchi's ads the most. Republicans and Central Valley voters are more likely than other party and regional groups to recall seeing more Harman ads.

"In the past month, have you seen any television advertisements by the candidates for Governor?" (If yes, whose ads have you seen the most?)

	Likely Voters	All Voters
<u>YES</u>	79%	74%
Al Checchi	56	53
Gray Davis	1	1
Jane Harman	22	19
Dan Lungren	0	1
Other answer	0	0
<u>NO</u>	21	26

(All Voters)	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>			<u>Ethnicity</u>	
	Dem	Rep	Other	LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
<u>YES</u>	76%	73%	69%	75%	79%	73%	75%	74%
Al Checchi	58	49	51	53	63	49	61	52
Gray Davis	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
Jane Harman	17	22	17	20	14	23	12	20
Dan Lungren	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Other answer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>NO</u>	24	27	31	25	21	27	25	26

U.S. Senate Race

The first open primary for a U.S. Senate seat so far indicates that the Democratic incumbent has substantial support from independents, while the Republican challengers do not.

Darryl Issa leads Matt Fong narrowly in the race for the Republican nomination for U.S. Senate. Among likely voters, 14 percent favor Issa and 9 percent support Fong, while 5 percent support other candidates (including Frank Riggs, who exited the race on April 9th with 3 percent support). Four in 10 voters say they will cast their ballots for incumbent U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer. Three in 10 voters are still undecided about who they will support in June.

Similar results are found among all voters. Neither Issa nor Fong currently draws much support from voters outside of the Republican Party. Issa holds a six-point lead over Fong among Republicans and enjoys a solid lead among Republican women (22% to 13%).

Boxer is favored equally by women and men (43% and 39%). Sixty-five percent of Democrats say they will vote for Boxer in June, and 41 percent of voters who are outside the two major parties say they favor the Democratic incumbent. Boxer makes only minor inroads into the Republican party, with 13 percent of both Republican men and women supporting her reelection.

Latino voters overwhelmingly support Boxer and give limited but similar support to Fong and Issa.

Issa leads Fong in the Central Valley; they receive equal support in the LA Metro area; and both have little support in the San Francisco Bay area. Boxer's strongest support is in the San Francisco Bay area.

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

	Likely Voters	All Voters
Barbara Boxer	43%	41%
Matt Fong	9	8
Darryl Issa	14	12
Other	5	6
Don't know	29	33

(All Voters)	Party			Region			Ethnicity	
	Dem	Rep	Other	LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latinos	Others
Barbara Boxer	65%	13%	41%	40%	52%	37%	53%	39%
Matt Fong	3	16	5	10	4	10	6	9
Darryl Issa	4	22	7	12	4	17	8	13
Other	4	8	9	7	8	4	5	6
Don't know	24	41	38	31	32	32	28	33

Television Advertising for the U.S. Senate Race

In contrast to advertising for the Governor's race, advertising for the California Senate race is not capturing much notice. Only one in six likely voters recalls seeing television advertisements by the Senate candidates. Among all voters, those who recall ads say that they have seen Issa's ads the most. There are no party, regional, or ethnic-group differences. (It should be noted that, to date, Issa is the only Senate candidate who has advertised on television.)

"In the past month, have you seen any television advertisements by the candidates for the U.S. Senate?" (If yes, whose ads have you seen the most?)

	Likely Voters	All Voters
<u>YES</u>	17%	14%
Barbara Boxer	0	0
Matt Fong	1	1
Darryl Issa	15	12
Other answer	1	1
<u>NO</u>	83	86

Candidate Qualifications

California voters are almost equally divided when asked about which qualifications — business experience or government service — they value more in candidates for statewide office. Among all voters, 44 percent say they want someone with experience in elected office and 40 percent say they prefer someone with experience running a business.

Democrats favor experience in office (55% to 30%), while Republicans (50% to 35%) and other voters (44% to 33%) are looking for business experience. This may help to explain Checchi's support outside his party. Interestingly, women value experience in government office more than experience in business (47% to 37%).

"People have different ideas about the qualifications they want when they vote for candidates for statewide office. Which of these is most important to you?"

	Likely Voters	All Voters
Experience in elected office	43%	44%
Experience running a business	40	40
Neither	6	6
Both	7	6
Don't know	4	4

Campaign Spending

How do voters feel about candidates who fund their own campaigns? California voters appear to be largely indifferent about self-funding — about 60 percent say self-funding makes no difference, while a quarter are actually more likely to vote for candidates who are using mostly their own money. Only one in six is less inclined to vote for such candidates.

Attitudes toward the use of private funds in campaigning are the same for likely voters and all voters and across parties, regions of the state, and ethnic and racial groups.

"How do you feel about a candidate for statewide office who uses mostly his or her own money for political campaigning? Are you more inclined or less inclined to vote for such a candidate or does it make no difference to you"

	Likely Voters	All Voters
More inclined	25%	26%
Less inclined	17	14
No difference	58	60

Proposition 227: Bilingual Education

California voters' response to Proposition 227, the "English for the Children" initiative, presents some interesting paradoxes. Support for it among likely voters and all voters is overwhelming: 75 percent would vote yes if the election were held now, only 21 percent are opposed and 4 percent are undecided. Republicans favor it most strongly but there are no differences across the three major regions of the state. Although support is stronger among other groups, a majority of Latinos are also in favor of this initiative.

Despite this overwhelming support for eliminating bilingual programs, 43 percent of the voters say that they know "only a little" or "nothing" about the current bilingual education programs in public schools. Only 17 percent say they know "a great deal" about this subject and 40 percent say they know a "fair amount."

Another paradox is that although Proposition 227 would abolish the programs, a majority of the voters say they favor leaving the decisions about bilingual education programs up to the local school districts. Fifty-five percent say they approve of allowing local school districts to decide whether or not to keep their bilingual education programs, while 41 percent disapprove of this policy option. The loss of local autonomy over school decisions could be a factor in reducing the level of support for Proposition 227, especially since the state school board has decided to leave the decision about bilingual education up to local jurisdictions. The legislature is also considering a bill that would give local districts the power to choose whether or not they want to continue bilingual programs.

"If the election were being held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 227?"

	Likely Voters	All Voters
Yes	75%	76%
No	21	20
Don't know	4	4

(All Voters)	Party			Region			Ethnicity	
	Dem	Rep	Other	LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latinos	Others
Yes	69%	85%	71%	78%	71%	74%	57%	79%
No	26	12	23	19	23	21	40	16
Don't know	5	3	6	3	6	5	3	5

"How much do you know about current bilingual education programs in California's public schools?"

	Likely Voters	All Voters
Great deal	20%	17%
Fair amount	47	40
Little/nothing	33	43

Proposition 226: Campaign Reform

California voters reveal another interesting paradox when asked their position on Proposition 226, which would require that unions obtain permission from their members before using union dues for political contributions and ban foreign contributions to state and local candidates. Two in three likely voters say they support Proposition 226, and only one-quarter of likely voters are opposed to this ballot measure. There are no differences between likely voters and all voters. Support is less overwhelming but still strong among Democrats and Latinos. There are no significant differences across regions.

But surprisingly, voters are almost evenly divided about the concept of placing restrictions on the ability of labor unions to contribute to political candidates and ballot initiatives, even though they strongly favor an initiative that would have this effect. Fifty percent are in favor of restricting the influence of unions in political campaigns, while 43 percent are opposed. This could be a factor in reducing support for Proposition 226 as the June Primary draws near.

When asked if they would favor a similar requirement that corporations obtain permission from their shareholders before using company funds for political contributions, voters are clear. Seventy-six percent are in favor of this idea, while 21 percent are opposed.

"If the election were being held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 226?"

	Likely Voters	All Voters
Yes	67%	65%
No	25	27
Don't know	8	8

(All Voters)	Party			Region			Ethnicity	
	Dem	Rep	Other	LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latinos	Others
Yes	58%	71%	69%	65%	65%	60%	54%	68%
No	33	21	24	28	23	32	38	24
Don't know	9	8	7	7	12	8	8	8

"Do you approve or disapprove of requiring corporations to obtain permission from their stockholders before using corporate funds for political contributions?"

	Likely Voters	All Voters
Approve	77%	76%
Disapprove	20	21
Don't know	3	3

Media Watch

While paid advertisements may be sinking in, not many voters are following news coverage of the campaigns with great interest. Fewer than 10 percent of California voters say they are following news reports about the 1998 California elections "very closely." One-third are following the state election news "fairly closely," while 60 percent are paying little or no attention to news stories about statewide candidates and ballot initiatives. Even among likely voters, half say they are following the 1998 election news coverage either "not too closely" or "not at all closely."

Few California voters give news organizations high marks for their coverage of the 1998 California elections. Only one in four gives them excellent or good marks, almost half say they are doing only a fair job, and another quarter believe their coverage is poor.

Television is the major source for political news in California today. When asked where they get most of their information about politics, 40 percent said television, 35 percent newspapers, and 10 percent radio. Fewer than one in 10 said their primary source of political information was through talking to people (6%), magazines (4%), or the Internet (3%).

"How closely have you been following the news stories about the upcoming 1998 California elections?"

	Likely Voters	All Voters
Very closely	9%	6%
Fairly closely	43	32
Not too closely	39	44
Not at all closely	9	18

"How would you rate the job that news organizations are doing in terms of reporting about the upcoming 1998 California elections?"

	Likely Voters	All Voters
Excellent	3%	3%
Good	22	21
Fair	46	45
Poor	24	23
Don't know	5	8

California Policy Issues

Most Important Problem

Crime and education top the list of public policy concerns among Californians today. When asked to name the most serious problem facing the state, 28 percent cited crime, while 20 percent said education. No other policy issue broke out of single digits, including immigration (7%), the economy (5%), drugs, growth, and poverty (4% each), the state government (3%), taxes, and values (2% each). One in nine residents said they were not sure what the most serious problem was in California today.

The last time California voters went to the polls to vote for governor, they were equally divided between the economy and crime (29% each) when asked to name the biggest problem facing the state (March 1994 survey conducted by Mark Baldassare). Although crime remains a major concern four years later, a mere 5 percent of Californians now view the economy as a serious problem. Education, which is now a top concern, was considered the most serious policy problem by only 7 percent of Californians just four years ago.

Women are more likely than men to view crime as the state's most significant problem (32% to 25%). Nearly one-third of Los Angeles Metro and Central Valley residents named crime as the top issue facing the state, while about one in six mentioned education first. In contrast, San Francisco Bay area residents consider education to be the top policy issue, while crime ranks second (29% to 22%). Latino views about California policy problems are consistent with those of other state residents.

**"Thinking about public policy issues in California,
what do you think is the most serious problem today?"**

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Crime	28%	32%	22%	31%	32%	28%
Education	20	18	29	17	17	21
Immigration	7	8	6	2	3	8
Economy	5	5	4	6	8	4
Drugs	4	4	3	6	3	4
Growth	4	4	5	2	3	4
Poverty	4	4	4	6	5	4
State government	3	3	2	3	2	3
Taxes	2	1	3	3	2	2
Values	2	2	2	1	1	2
Other	10	9	10	12	11	10
Don't know	11	10	10	11	13	10

Mood of the State

Most Californians are feeling upbeat about life in California. Fifty-five percent say that things in the state are headed in the right direction, while 36 percent feel that the state is on the wrong track. Residents in the Los Angeles region have the most positive outlook, but a majority in every region of the state believe that California is headed in the right direction at this time. Latinos are as likely as other residents to express optimism.

Four years ago, opinions were almost the reverse of what they are today. Only 32 percent thought that the state was headed in the right direction, while 56 percent believed it was going the wrong way.

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

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Right direction	55%	58%	52%	53%	57%	55%
Wrong direction	36	34	37	40	34	36
Don't know	9	8	11	7	9	9

The Economy

Nearly 60 percent of California residents believe the state's economy is in excellent or good condition today. One-third say it is in fair shape, while only one in 10 considers it to be in poor condition. Positive economic sentiment is higher in the San Francisco Bay area (70%) than in the Los Angeles Metro area (55%) or the Central Valley (48%). About half of Latinos say the state's economy is excellent or good.

While the economy is looking good to most Californians, many are concerned about the possibly contagious effects of the Asian financial crisis. Fifty percent say that the Asian crisis will hurt the California economy in the next year or so, while 31 percent say it will not and 19 percent are unsure. Of the 50 percent who believe the Asian crisis will have a negative effect, only 14 percent expect it to hurt the California economy "a great deal."

"How would you rate the economy in California today?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Excellent	11%	9%	20%	7%	9%	11%
Good	46	46	50	41	38	49
Fair	33	36	23	38	42	31
Poor	10	9	7	14	11	9

Immigration

While only 7 percent of California residents rank immigration as the most pressing policy problem, the majority believe the immigrant population in the state is growing. Seventy-three percent say the overall immigrant population has risen over the past few years, with 47 percent maintaining it has grown "a lot." One in five thinks the immigrant population is stable, while few say that it is in decline.

People in all regions of the state perceive that California's immigrant population is growing. The perception is lower among Latinos (63%) than among other ethnic and racial groups (76%).

Californians are divided about the overall effect of immigration on the state. Forty-six percent see immigrants as a benefit to the California economy, while 42 percent believe they are a burden because they use public services. San Francisco Bay area residents are the most likely to view immigrants as a benefit to California. While two in three Latinos see immigrants as a benefit to the state, members of other ethnic and racial groups are more likely to see immigrants as a burden than a benefit.

"In the past few years, do you think the overall immigrant population in California has been increasing, decreasing, or staying about the same?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Increasing	73%	74%	71%	70%	63%	76%
Decreasing	2	2	1	4	3	2
Staying the same	21	22	22	22	32	18
Don't know	4	2	6	4	2	4

"Which of these two views is closest to yours: (a) Immigrants today are a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills; (b) Immigrants today are a burden to California because they use public services?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Benefit	46%	44%	53%	45%	66%	40%
Burden	42	45	33	42	25	47
Don't know	12	11	14	13	9	13

Education

Californians rank education as the second most serious policy problem facing the state, and their estimates of spending per pupil and student achievement are consistent with that concern. Ironically, many Californians are not aware of how far short the state actually falls on those measures.

About half say that we spend less than other states. However, 14 percent think that California spends more money per pupil than other states, and 28 percent think spending is at the national average. San Francisco Bay area residents are the most likely to recognize that California invests less money than other states in their public schools. Latinos are more likely than others to say our spending is average.

More than half say that California students have test scores below the national average. However, one in 10 believes that the scores are above and one-third say they are at the national average. More than half of the residents in the LA Metro area, San Francisco Bay area, and Central Valley rank the student test scores in California as below those achieved in other states. Again, Latinos are more likely than others to say that student test scores are at the national average.

There are no differences in perceptions between all adults and parents with children in public schools.

**"Where do you think California ranks in spending per pupil?
Compared to other states, is California's spending ..."**

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Near the top	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%
Above average	9	10	8	8	9	9
Average	28	30	20	32	36	26
Below average	27	24	31	29	27	27
Near the bottom	20	18	27	16	15	21
Don't know	11	13	10	10	8	12

**"Where do you think California ranks in student test scores?
Compared to other states, are California's student test scores..."**

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Near the top	2%	2%	1%	1%	4%	1%
Above average	8	9	7	5	9	8
Average	32	31	28	36	39	30
Below average	39	39	40	41	31	41
Near the bottom	14	15	17	12	12	15
Don't know	5	4	7	5	5	5

Political Trends

Trust in Federal, State, and Local Officials

Trust in government has become a major issue and the subject of a recent national poll. Most California residents continue to have a high level of trust and confidence in President Clinton, despite the ongoing investigations and allegations about his conduct in the Oval Office. Almost three-fourths say they have a "great deal" or a "fair amount" of trust and confidence in Clinton's ability to handle national problems, while a little over one-fourth have little or no confidence in his ability to handle such problems. There are no gender differences in attitude.

How much trust is there for different levels of government? The amount of trust expressed for the President (73%) exceeds that given to the U.S. Congress (64%). On the state level, Governor Wilson receives 53 percent and the California Legislature receives 62 percent. Locally, 62 percent say they trust their County Supervisors, and 66 percent trust their mayors and city council members to handle local problems.

Yet, it is important to note that few Californians say they have a "great deal" of trust and confidence in either their federal, state, or local officials. Only 30 percent have a "great deal" of confidence in the U.S. President; however, far fewer hold the Governor (11%) or state Legislature (4%) in high esteem.

"How much trust and confidence do you have at this time in..."

(All Adults)	President Clinton	U.S. Congress	Governor Wilson	California Legislature	County Supervisors	City Council
Great deal	30%	9%	11%	4%	8%	16%
Fair amount	43	55	42	58	54	50
Not very much	16	29	28	29	27	20
None at all	11	6	17	6	7	8
Don't know	0	1	2	3	4	6

"How much trust and confidence do you have at this time in President Bill Clinton, when it comes to handling national problems?"

	Men	Women
Great deal	28%	31%
Fair amount	44	42
Not very much	17	16
None at all	11	11

Distrust of the Federal Government

Californians are more negative than Americans as a whole about the federal government in Washington. One in four thinks you can trust the federal government "just about always" or "most of the time" while three in four say you can trust Washington to do what is right only sometimes or never. Californians are more likely than Americans as a whole to say you can never trust Washington to do what is right.

The distrust in the federal government is also evident in responses to a question about the level of government that is most trusted "to solve problems of concern to you." Residents are more likely to mention their city government or the state government than the federal government. Only one in five said they trust the federal government the most to solve their problems. To put this in perspective, Californians have as much confidence in Washington as they do in their county governments.

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

	<u>All Adults</u>		Difference
	U.S.*	California	
Just about always	5%	3%	-2
Most of the time	29	23	-6
Only sometimes	61	62	
Never	4	12	+8
Don't know	1	0	

*Source: National survey conducted by Pew Research Center in 1998

"What level of government do you trust the most to solve problems of concern to you?"

	All Adults
City	27%
State	26
Federal	20
County	18
None, Other	5
Don't know	4

Overall Trust in Elected Officials

When the focus moves from levels of government to elected officials per se, Californians do not have a high level of confidence in elected officials or the way that government leaders spend taxpayer money. About half think that most elected officials are trustworthy, while more than 40 percent believe they are usually not trustworthy. This is similar to the findings in recent national surveys.

In California, half believe that most elected officials care what people like them think, but nearly as many disagree. While Californians express a high degree of political alienation, it is below the amount reported in national surveys.

More than 60 percent of California residents agree with the statement that "when something is run by the government it is usually wasteful and inefficient." Only one-third disagree with this view. This perception is similar to what is reported in national surveys.

	<u>All Adults</u>		Difference
	U.S.*	California	
"Most elected officials are trustworthy."			
Agree	51%	55%	+4
Disagree	48	44	
Don't know	1	1	
"Most elected officials care what people like me think."			
Agree	41%	51%	+10
Disagree	57	48	
Don't know	2	1	
"When something is run by the government, it is usually wasteful and inefficient."			
Agree	64%	62%	+2
Disagree	34	37	
Don't know	2	1	

*Source: National surveys conducted by Pew Research Center in 1997 and 1998

Political Orientation

Californians tend to think they are politically close to the middle. Few place themselves at either end of the political spectrum. Twenty-eight percent say they are liberals, 36 percent moderates and 35 percent say they are conservatives. Only about 10 percent describe themselves as either "very" liberal or "very" conservative in their political thinking.

The San Francisco Bay area's residents are the most likely to call themselves liberal. Central Valley residents are more likely than others to say they are conservatives. The political orientation of the Los Angeles Metro area mirrors the political orientation of the state. There are no differences between the political orientation of Latinos and other residents. Thus, their growing participation in the voting process is not likely to result in an appreciable shift in the political pendulum.

"Would you consider yourself to be politically..."

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Very liberal	8%	9%	8%	4%	8%	8%
Somewhat liberal	20	20	26	18	19	20
Middle-of-the-road	36	35	37	37	36	37
Somewhat conservative	24	24	20	25	22	25
Very Conservative	11	11	7	14	13	9
Don't know	1	1	2	2	2	1

Political Interest

While Californians tend to be less politically alienated, they also show less interest in politics than their fellow Americans. Only 16 percent have a great deal of interest in politics. Thirty-seven percent have little or no interest. In contrast, 75 percent of Americans interviewed by the Pew Research Center in 1996 report a great deal (25%) or fair amount (50%) of interest in politics. There are no differences across regions. Latinos are more likely than others to have little or no interest in politics.

"Generally speaking, how much interest would say you have in politics?"

	All California Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Great deal	16%	16%	16%	16%	10%	17%
Fair amount	47	45	48	51	43	48
Only a little	31	32	30	29	36	30
None	6	7	6	4	11	5

Social and Economic Trends

Consumer Confidence

California residents are generally upbeat about their personal finances, and they are much more optimistic than they were four years ago. In March 1994, only 20 percent said they were better off than they were last year and only 32 percent expected to be better off in the next year. Now, 37 percent say they are better off than last year and 44 percent expect to be better off next year. However, half say their personal finances have not changed, 12 percent say they are worse off, and about half expect their financial circumstances to be the same next year.

Latinos are leading the surge in consumer confidence. They are more likely than others to say they are better off today than they were last year (47% to 34%) and that they will be better off next year than they are now (52% to 42%). There are no major differences in consumer confidence by region. As for gender differences, women are less likely than men to say their finances have improved (33% to 41%).

Despite their positive outlook, many California residents are finding that their household incomes are barely keeping up with their expenses. Fifty-three percent say they have just enough money and 13 percent say they do not have enough money to pay their bills. However, 33 percent say their household income is more than enough so that they can save money or buy extras.

"Would you say that you are financially better off or worse off or just about the same as you were a year ago?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Better	37%	38%	39%	35%	47%	34%
Worse	12	12	10	14	10	12
Same	51	50	51	51	43	54

"Do you think that a year from now you will be financially better off, worse off, or just about the same as now?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Better	44%	47%	41%	43%	52%	42%
Worse	6	5	6	6	4	6
Same	48	46	51	49	42	50
Don't know	2	2	2	2	2	2

Regional Economy

Consistent with consumer confidence, 75 percent of California residents express some satisfaction with the job market where they live. However, they are less satisfied with the availability of housing they can afford or the overall cost of living in their regions. Two-thirds are very or somewhat satisfied with the affordable housing that is available and the overall cost of living, while one-third are dissatisfied.

Satisfaction with the job market is highest in the San Francisco Bay area, but this region also has the most people who are dissatisfied with the availability of affordable housing and the overall cost of living. Conversely, the Central Valley has the most people who are not satisfied with the job market but also the most people who are very satisfied with the affordable housing that is available and the overall cost of living.

Latinos are similar to other California residents in their evaluations of job opportunities, availability of housing, and the overall cost of living in their region.

"In the region you live in, how do you feel about...?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Job opportunities						
Very satisfied	26%	22%	46%	18%	23%	26%
Somewhat satisfied	49	53	42	45	50	49
Not satisfied	25	25	12	37	27	25
Housing availability						
Very satisfied	22%	25%	10%	30%	17%	24%
Somewhat satisfied	43	46	31	50	49	41
Not satisfied	35	29	59	20	34	35
Cost of living						
Very satisfied	15%	15%	7%	24%	12%	15%
Somewhat satisfied	53	60	42	53	56	53
Not satisfied	32	25	51	23	32	32

Public Services

Attitudes toward public services vary in interesting ways among the state's residents. Despite the concern with crime as the number one policy problem in the state, 67 percent of Californians give positive ratings to police protection. The same percentage give high marks to public parks or beaches in their local areas. In contrast, fewer than half say that their local freeways and roads and public schools are either excellent or good. Parents of public school children are the exception on the latter point: 54 percent rate the local schools as excellent or good — this despite the fact that they were just as likely as all adults to rank California lower than the national average in per-pupil spending and student achievement.

Regional and ethnic variations are also interesting. Central Valley residents are less likely than residents of other regions to give excellent or good rankings to their police (61%) and parks (60%). San Francisco Bay area residents are less likely than Los Angeles Metro area or Central Valley residents to have positive evaluations of their local freeways and roads (38%) and public schools (39%). Latinos are less likely than others to say their police protection (58% to 70%) and parks (59% to 70%) are excellent or good, while their evaluations of local freeways and roads and the public schools are the same.

"How would you rate some of the public services you receive in your local area?"

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Police						
Excellent	21%	24%	20%	16%	19%	22%
Good	46	46	46	45	39	48
Fair	25	22	28	29	31	23
Poor	7	8	5	9	10	6
Don't know	1	0	1	1	1	1
Parks						
Excellent	24%	23%	28%	20%	22%	25%
Good	43	45	42	40	37	45
Fair	24	23	23	28	29	23
Poor	8	8	6	10	11	6
Don't know	1	1	1	2	1	1
Roads						
Excellent	9%	10%	5%	10%	12%	8%
Good	37	39	33	34	37	37
Fair	35	35	38	38	33	36
Poor	19	16	24	18	18	19
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0

	All Adults	Region			Ethnicity	
		LA Metro	SF Bay Area	Central Valley	Latino	Other
Schools						
Excellent	10%	11%	7%	11%	10%	10%
Good	34	34	32	35	36	34
Fair	32	31	33	34	35	31
Poor	15	15	19	13	16	15
Don't know	9	9	9	7	3	10

Survey Methodology

The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, senior fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California. The findings are based on a telephone survey of 2,002 California adult residents interviewed from April 1 to April 8, 1998. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights, using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers, ensuring that both listed and unlisted telephone numbers were called. All telephone exchanges in California were eligible for calling. Telephone numbers in the survey sample were called up to four times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing using the "last birthday method" to avoid biases in age and gender. Each interview took an average of 20 minutes to complete. Interviewing was conducted in English and Spanish, as needed.

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

The sampling error for the total sample of 2,002 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 1,623 voters is +/-2.5% and for the 993 likely voters is +/- 3.2%. Sampling error is just one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

Throughout the report, we refer to three geographic regions. "LA Metro" includes Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. "SF Bay Area" includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma counties. "Central Valley" includes Butte, Colusa, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba counties. These three regions were chosen for analysis because they account for approximately 85 percent of the state population; moreover, the growth of the Central Valley has given it increasing political significance.

We contrast the results for Latinos with results for "other" ethnic and racial groups. Latinos account for about 24 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. Most of the "other" responses are non-Hispanic whites. We also contrast the opinions of Democrats and Republicans with "other" registered voters. The "other" category includes nonaffiliated voters and members of other political parties.

In the section on political trends, the PPIC Statewide Survey responses are compared to responses in national surveys conducted in 1996, 1997, and 1998 by the Pew Research Center. In the section on social and economic trends, we compare the results of the PPIC Statewide Survey to the results in surveys of California voters conducted during the 1994 election cycle by Mark Baldassare for KCAL-TV News in Los Angeles.

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: THE CHANGING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE OF CALIFORNIA

APRIL 1-8, 1998

2,002 CALIFORNIA ADULT RESIDENTS; ENGLISH AND SPANISH

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

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

First, I have a few questions about the June 2nd Primary. California is holding an open primary this year. That means voters are now able to vote for anyone they choose, regardless of the candidate's party.

1. If the June Primary election for governor were being held today, who would you vote for? (rotate names, then ask "or someone else?")

22% Al Checchi
10 Gray Davis
16 Jane Harman
19 Dan Lungren
3 or someone else
30 don't know

2. In the past month, have you seen any television advertisements by the candidates for governor? (if yes, whose ads have you seen the most?)

53% yes, Al Checchi
1 yes, Gray Davis
19 yes, Jane Harman
1 yes, Dan Lungren
0 yes, other answer
26 no

3. Next, if the June primary election for the U.S. Senate were being held today, who would you vote for? (rotate names, then ask "or someone else?")

41% Barbara Boxer
8 Matt Fong
12 Darryl Issa
3 Frank Riggs
3 or someone else
33 don't know

4. In the past month, have you seen any television advertisements by the candidates for the U.S. Senate? (if yes, whose ads have you seen the most?)

0 yes, Barbara Boxer
1 yes, Matt Fong
12 yes, Daryl Issa
0 yes, Frank Riggs
1 yes, other answer
86 no

5. People have different ideas about the qualifications they want when they vote for candidates for statewide office, such as Governor or U.S. Senator. Which of these is most important to you? (rotate a and b) (a) that the candidate has experience in elected office. (b) that the candidate has experience running a business.

44% experience in elected office
40 experience running a business
6 neither
6 both
4 don't know, it depends

6. How do you feel about a candidate for statewide office using mostly his or her own money to pay for political campaigning? Are you more inclined or less inclined to vote for such a candidate or does this make no difference to you?

26% more inclined
14 less inclined
60 no difference

7. How do you feel about a candidate for statewide office who uses his or her private wealth to spend millions of dollars for political campaigning? Are you more inclined or less inclined to vote for such a candidate, or does this make no difference to you?

11% more inclined
33 less inclined
56 no difference

8. On another topic, Proposition 227, the "English for the Children" initiative on the June ballot, requires that all public school instruction be conducted in English. It provides short-term placement, usually for not more than one year, in English immersion programs for children not fluent in English. If the election were being held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 227?

76% yes
20 no
4 don't know

9. How much do you know about current bilingual education programs in California's public schools?
- 17% great deal
 - 40 fair amount
 - 34 only a little
 - 9 nothing
10. Do you approve or disapprove of allowing local school districts to decide whether or not to keep their bilingual education programs?
- 55% approve
 - 41 disapprove
 - 4 don't know
11. Proposition 226, the "Campaign Reform" initiative on the June ballot, requires public and private employers and labor organizations to obtain permission from employees and members before withholding pay or using union dues or fees for political contributions. It also prohibits contributions to state and local candidates by foreign residents, governments or entities. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 226?
- 65% yes
 - 27 no
 - 8 don't know
12. Do you approve or disapprove of placing restrictions on the ability of labor unions to contribute to political candidates and ballot initiatives?
- 50% approve
 - 43 disapprove
 - 7 don't know
13. Do you approve or disapprove of requiring corporations to obtain permission from their stockholders before using corporate funds for political contributions?
- 76% approve
 - 21 disapprove
 - 3 don't know
14. On another topic—so far, how closely have you been following the news stories about the upcoming 1998 California elections?
- 6% very closely
 - 32 fairly closely
 - 44 not too closely
 - 18 not at all closely
15. And how would you rate the job that news organizations are doing in reporting about the upcoming 1998 California elections?
- 3% excellent
 - 21 good
 - 45 fair
 - 23 poor
 - 8 don't know
16. Next, some questions about the state. Thinking about the public policy issues in California, what do you think is the most serious problem today? (code don't read)
- 28% crime, gangs
 - 20 schools, education
 - 7 immigration, illegal immigration
 - 5 jobs, economy
 - 4 drugs
 - 4 growth
 - 4 poverty
 - 3 state government
 - 2 taxes
 - 2 values
 - 10 other
 - 11 don't know
17. And do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?
- 55% right direction
 - 36 wrong direction
 - 9 don't know
18. How would you rate the economy in California today? Is it...
- 11% excellent
 - 46 good
 - 33 fair
 - 10 poor
19. Do you think the current financial situation in Asia will hurt the California economy in the next year or so? (if yes: do you think it will hurt the California economy a great deal or only somewhat?)
- 14% yes, great deal
 - 36 yes, somewhat
 - 31 no
 - 19 don't know

20. On another issue, in the past few years, do you think that the overall immigrant population in California has been increasing, decreasing or staying about the same?

- 73% increasing
- 2 decreasing
- 21 staying about the same
- 4 don't know

21. And which of these two views is closest to yours? (rotate *a* and *b*) (a) immigrants today are a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills. (b) immigrants today are a burden to California because they use public services.

- 46% immigrants are a benefit
- 42 immigrants are a burden
- 12 neither, don't know

22. Now, we have some questions about kindergarten through twelfth grade public schools in California. Where do you think California ranks in spending per pupil? Compared to other states, is California's spending...

- 5% near the top
- 9 above average
- 28 average
- 27 below average
- 20 near the bottom
- 11 don't know

23. And where do you think California ranks in student test scores? Compared to the other states, are California's student test scores...

- 2% near the top
- 8 above average
- 32 average
- 39 below average
- 14 near the bottom
- 5 don't know

24. On another topic, how much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right?

- 3% just about always
- 23 most of the time
- 62 only sometimes
- 12 never
- 0 don't know

25. How much trust and confidence do you have at this time in President Bill Clinton, when it comes to handling national problems?

- 30% a great deal
- 43 fair amount
- 16 not very much
- 11 none at all
- 0 don't know

26. And how much trust and confidence do you have at this time in the legislative branch of the federal government, including the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, when it comes to handling national problems?

- 9% a great deal
- 55 fair amount
- 29 not very much
- 6 none at all
- 1 don't know

27. How much trust and confidence do you have at this time in California Governor Pete Wilson, when it comes to handling state problems?

- 11% a great deal
- 42 fair amount
- 28 not very much
- 17 none at all
- 2 don't know

28. And how much trust and confidence do you have at this time in the California Legislature, including the State Senate and Assembly, when it comes to handling state problems?

- 4% a great deal
- 58 fair amount
- 29 not very much
- 6 none at all
- 3 don't know

29. How much trust and confidence do you have at this time in your County Board of Supervisors, when it comes to handling county problems?

- 8% a great deal
- 54 fair amount
- 27 not very much
- 7 none at all
- 4 don't know

30. How much trust and confidence do you have at this time in your mayor and city council, when it comes to handling city problems?

- 16% a great deal
- 50 fair amount
- 20 not very much
- 8 none at all
- 6 don't know

31. What level of government do you trust the most to solve problems of concern to you? (rotate)

- 20% federal government
- 26 state government
- 18 county government
- 27 city government
- 5 none
- 4 don't know

Now, I'm going to read you a few statements that will help us understand how people feel about a number of things. For each statement, please tell me if you completely agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or completely disagree. First,

32. Most elected officials are trustworthy. Do you...

- 55% agree
- 44 disagree
- 1 don't know

33. Most elected officials care what people like me think. Do you...

- 51% agree
- 48 disagree
- 1 don't know

34. When something is run by the government, it is usually wasteful and inefficient. Do you...

- 62% agree
- 37 disagree
- 1 don't know

35. On another topic, are you currently registered to vote as a Democrat, a Republican, another party or independent, or are you not registered to vote?

- 39% Democrat
- 33 Republican
- 12 independent or other party
- 16 not registered

36. Would you consider yourself to be politically:

- 8% very liberal
- 20 somewhat liberal
- 36 middle-of-the-road
- 24 somewhat conservative
- 11 very conservative
- 1 don't know

37. Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in politics?

- 16% a great deal
- 47 fair amount
- 31 only a little
- 6 none

38. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs...

- 36 most of the time
- 38 some of the time
- 19 only now and then
- 7 hardly, never

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

- 35% newspapers
- 40 television
- 10 radio
- 4 magazines
- 6 talking to people
- 3 the Internet or on-line services
- 2 other

40. How often would you say you vote?

- 48% always
- 25 nearly always
- 12 part of the time
- 5 seldom
- 10 never

41. On another topic, as far as your own situation, would you say you (and your family) are financially better off or worse off or just about the same as you were a year ago?

- 37% better off
- 12 worse off
- 51 same

42. Now, looking ahead, do you think that a year from now you (and your family) will be financially better off or worse off or just about the same as now?

- 44% better off
- 6 worse off
- 48 same
- 2 don't know

43. Thinking about your household income, would you say that it is more than enough so that you can save money or buy some extras, just enough to meet your bills and obligations, or is it not enough to meet your bills and obligations?

- 33% more than enough
- 53 just enough
- 13 not enough
- 1 don't know

44. Next, a few questions about your region.
How do you feel about the job opportunities
that are available in the region you live in?
Are you...

26% very satisfied
49 somewhat satisfied
25 not satisfied

45. And how do you feel about the availability of
housing that you can afford in the region
you live in? Are you...

22% very satisfied
43 somewhat satisfied
35 not satisfied

46. And how do you feel about the overall cost of
living in the region you live in? Are you...

15% very satisfied
53 somewhat satisfied
32 not satisfied

Now, I'd like to ask you how you would rate
some of the public services you receive in your
local area.

47. Police protection. Would you say this is...

21% excellent
46 good
25 fair
7 poor
1 don't know

48. Parks, beaches or other public recreational
facilities.

24% excellent
43 good
24 fair
8 poor
1 don't know

49. Local freeways, streets and roads.

9% excellent
37 good
35 fair
19 poor
0 don't know

50. How would you rate your local public
schools?

10 excellent
34 good
32 fair
15 poor
9 don't know

[51-60. demographic questions]