

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY

MAY 2009

Californians & their government

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in collaboration with
The James Irvine Foundation



PPIC

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

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ABOUT THE SURVEY

The PPIC Statewide Survey provides policymakers, the media, and the public with objective, advocacy-free information on the perceptions, opinions, and public policy preferences of California residents. Inaugurated in April 1998, this is the 98th PPIC Statewide Survey in a series that has generated a database that includes the responses of more than 208,000 Californians. This survey is the 36th in the *Californians and Their Government* series, which is conducted periodically to examine the social, economic, and political trends that influence public policy preferences and ballot choices. The series is supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation. This survey seeks to raise public awareness, inform decisionmakers about public opinions, and stimulate public discussion and debate about important state and national issues.

The context for the survey includes a May 19 statewide special election called by the governor and legislature as part of their 2009–2010 budget negotiations; a significant downturn in the state and national economies coupled with rising unemployment rates; and reduced consumer spending and housing price declines.

This report presents the responses of 2,005 California adult residents on these specific topics:

- Voter interest and attitudes toward the May 19 special election and the measures on the ballot; support for and perceived effectiveness of Proposition 1A (“Rainy Day” Budget Stabilization Fund Act) and Proposition 1F (Elected Officials’ Salaries Prevents Pay Increases During Budget Deficit Years Act); and support for and perceived importance of Proposition 1B (Education Funding Payment Plan Act), Proposition 1C (Lottery Modernization Act), Proposition 1D (Children’s Services Funding Act), and Proposition 1E (Mental Health Funding Temporary Reallocation Act).
- State and national issues, including perceptions of the most important issue facing California today; opinions about the general direction and economic outlook for the state and the country; personal concerns about housing costs and job loss and perceptions of the recession’s severity; approval ratings for Governor Schwarzenegger overall and on his handling of the state budget and taxes; approval ratings for the legislature’s overall job performance; perceptions of the seriousness of the state budget situation and the need for change in the budget process; preference for size of government; and Californians’ levels of trust in Sacramento and Washington. We also examine approval ratings for President Obama overall and for his handling of the federal budget and taxes; approval ratings for Congress overall; and perceptions about whether President Obama and Congress will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the coming year.
- Time trends and the extent to which Californians—based on their political party affiliation, region of residence, race/ethnicity, and other demographics—may differ with regard to perceptions, attitudes, and preferences involving state and national issues.

This report may be downloaded free of charge from our website (www.ppic.org). For questions about the survey, please contact survey@ppic.org. View our searchable PPIC Statewide Survey database online at <http://www.ppic.org/main/survAdvancedSearch.asp>.

NEWS RELEASE

EMBARGOED: Do not publish or broadcast until 10:00 p.m. PDT on Thursday, May 7, 2009.

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PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

Five Budget Measures Losing: Interest in May Election Ballot Increases and So Does Opposition

PESSIMISM ABOUT STATE CONTRASTS SHARPLY WITH NEW OPTIMISM ABOUT NATION

SAN FRANCISCO, California, May 7, 2009—Five of the six propositions on the May special election ballot are trailing among likely voters, according to a statewide survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) with funding from The James Irvine Foundation. Since March, interest in the election has increased and so has opposition to the five ballot measures. Today, likely voters who are following election news very closely are more inclined than others to say they'll vote no on the propositions.

Of the six measures placed on the May 19 ballot as part of the budget agreement between Governor Schwarzenegger and legislative leaders, only Proposition 1F has the support of a majority of likely voters. And support has slipped even for this measure, which would prevent pay increases for the state's elected officials in deficit years. Seventy-three percent would vote for it today, compared to 81 percent in March.

Proposition 1A—the measure that could limit future deficits and spending through increasing the size of the state's "rainy day" fund—has attracted the most interest from likely voters. But it is opposed by a majority of them (52% no, 35% yes, 13% don't know). Among those who are following election news very closely, opposition is stronger (65% no, 29% yes).

"The voters who are really tuned in are really turned off," says Mark Baldassare, PPIC president, CEO, and survey director. "They see the state's budget situation as a big problem, but so far, they don't like the solution."

The voters most likely to be following news of the special election very closely are older than age 55, men, and those who disapprove of the governor and legislature.

GRIM MOOD BRIGHTENS WHEN VOTERS LOOK TO WASHINGTON

For California residents and likely voters, dissatisfaction with the state of their state is not limited to the next election. They are pessimistic about the California economy, give the governor and legislature approval ratings that hover near record lows, and show less trust in state government than they have ever indicated in a PPIC Statewide Survey. Just 16 percent of likely voters say they can trust the government in Sacramento to do what is right just about always (2%) or most (14%) of the time. Among Californians overall, 23 percent hold this view (4% always, 19% most of the time).

This contrasts sharply with Californians' views of the country as a whole. For the first time since the PPIC Statewide Survey began asking the question in 2003, most Californians (57%) and likely voters (52%) say things in the United States are generally going in the right direction. Even in January, just as President

Obama was taking office, only about a third (32% Californians, 31% likely voters) said the country was headed in the right direction.

MOST SPECIAL ELECTION BALLOT MEASURES COME UP SHORT

When likely voters were read the ballot title and label of the ballot measures, these were their responses:

- **Proposition 1A** (52% no, 35% yes, 13% don't know): Democrats (47%) are much more likely than independents (32%) and more than twice as likely as Republicans (22%) to support the measure. Just 7 percent say Proposition 1A would be very effective in avoiding future budget deficits, and 32 percent say it would be somewhat effective. Latinos are more likely (45%) than whites (32%) to favor the measure.
- **Proposition 1B** (47% no, 40% yes, 13% don't know): More voters oppose than support this measure to require a future payment of \$9.3 billion to local school districts and community colleges. Those who are very closely following election news are opposed, 61 percent to 32 percent. A majority of Democrats (53%) would vote yes and a majority of Republicans (61%) would vote no. Support for the measure falls short of a majority in all of the state's major regions. Latinos offer more support (56%) than whites (34%).
- **Proposition 1C** (58% no, 32% yes, 10% don't know): A solid majority oppose this measure, which would modernize the lottery and allow the state to borrow \$5 billion from future profits to help balance the 2009–2010 budget. Opposition is even stronger among voters who are following election news closely (65% no, 29% yes). Majorities in all regions say they'll vote no, while whites (63%) are more likely than Latinos (42%) to say they will vote no.
- **Proposition 1D** (45% no, 43% yes, 12% don't know): Voters are divided on this measure that would temporarily transfer funds from early childhood education programs to help balance the state budget. A majority of Democrats (54%) support the measure, and a majority of Republicans (56%) oppose it. Opponents (49%) outnumber supporters (39%) among independents. A majority of those following election news very closely are opposed (57% no, 35% yes). Latinos (66%) are much more likely than whites (36%) to be in favor.
- **Proposition 1E** (48% no, 41% yes, 11% don't know): More voters oppose than support this measure to transfer money from mental health services to the general fund to help balance the state budget. Support falls short of a majority across major regions of the state. A majority of Latinos (63%) would vote yes, while most whites (54%) would vote no. Voters who are very closely following election news oppose Proposition 1E by a wider margin (61% no, 35% yes).
- **Proposition 1F** (73% yes, 24% no, 3% don't know): Although support for the measure has slipped, at least two in three voters across all the state's major regions and strong majorities across demographic groups say they would vote yes. Among those closely following the election, 62 percent would vote yes and 36 would vote no.

Three measures—Propositions 1C, 1D, and 1E—have direct impact on the 2009–2010 state budget. Less than half of voters see the outcome on these propositions as very important to them (1C 33%, 1D 41%, 1E 37%).

“Proposition 1C is the measure that matters most for next year's budget, and it's in the most trouble,” Baldassare notes.

VOTERS PAYING CLOSER ATTENTION TO ELECTION

Voters are divided over whether the governor and legislature should have called the special election, with half saying it is a good idea and 45 percent calling it a bad one. Democrats (54%) and those who approve of the governor (62%) are more likely to say the special election was a good idea.

Likely voters' interest in the May ballot has grown since March, with 28 percent today saying they are very closely following election news and 44 percent saying they are following it fairly closely. This is a significant increase from March (18% very closely, 37% fairly closely) and closer to the level of interest likely voters expressed in the last statewide special election, in November 2005 (31% very, 50% fairly). But it falls short of their interest in the 2003 governor's recall election (49% very, 43% fairly) or the November 2008 general election (54% very, 37% fairly).

Likely voters are most interested in Proposition 1A (29%), followed by 1B (18%), and 1F (18%), with fewer than one in 10 expressing interest in Propositions 1C (3%), 1D (7%), or 1E (5%).

LEADERS IN WASHINGTON RATE HIGHER THAN THOSE IN SACRAMENTO

Most likely voters see the state budget situation as a big problem (83%) and say major changes are needed in the budget process (85%). They continue to give those in charge of the state budget poor marks. The governor's approval rating (34%) is near his record low (33%) of March, and his ratings on handling the state budget and taxes sink to a new low of 28 percent among likely voters. The legislature gets an even poorer overall rating (12%) among likely voters, nearly matching its record low in March (11%).

Likely voters are much more upbeat about their leaders in Washington. Sixty-six percent approve of Obama's job performance and 60 percent approve of his handling of the federal budget and taxes. The approval ratings for Congress, while falling short of a majority, have reached the highest levels since PPIC began asking the question in 2005. Among likely voters, 39 percent approve and 53 percent disapprove. Californians overall are more approving: 47% approve, 43% disapprove.

MORE KEY FINDINGS

- **Fewer say state is in serious recession**—page 17

Most Californians (53%) say California is in a serious economic recession, but that percentage has declined 10 points from its peak two months ago (63%).

- **Worried about the mortgage, rent**—page 17

Six in 10 Californians are very concerned (39%) or somewhat concerned (22%) about falling behind on their mortgage or rent payments. Concern was similar in March (39% very, 23% somewhat). While nearly half say they are very (31%) or somewhat worried (16%) that they or someone in their families will lose a job in the next year, the share of Californians who are worried about this has declined 11 points since January (58% January, 47% today).

- **Most view Obama, Congress as a good team** —page 19

Seventy-four percent of Californians say the president and Congress will be able to work together and accomplish a lot this year.

- **Raise taxes or cut services?** —page 20

When it comes to the size of their state government Californians are slightly more likely to prefer paying higher taxes and getting more services (48%) over lower taxes and fewer services (43%). Likely voters, on the other hand, are more likely to prefer lower taxes and fewer services (49% vs. 42% higher taxes, more services).

ABOUT THE SURVEY

This is the 36th survey in the *Californians and Their Government* series and is supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation. It seeks to examine the social, economic, and political trends that influence public policy preferences and ballot choices. This is the 98th PPIC Statewide Survey in a series that has generated a database that includes the responses of more than 208,000 Californians. Findings are based on a telephone survey of 2,005 California adult residents interviewed from April 27–May 4, 2009, in English or Spanish. The sampling error for all adults is ± 2 percent. For the 1,080 likely voters, it is ± 3 percent. For more information on methodology, see page 23.

Mark Baldassare is president and CEO of 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.

PPIC is dedicated to informing and improving public policy in California through independent, objective, nonpartisan research on major economic, social, and political issues. The institute was established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. As a private operating foundation, 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.

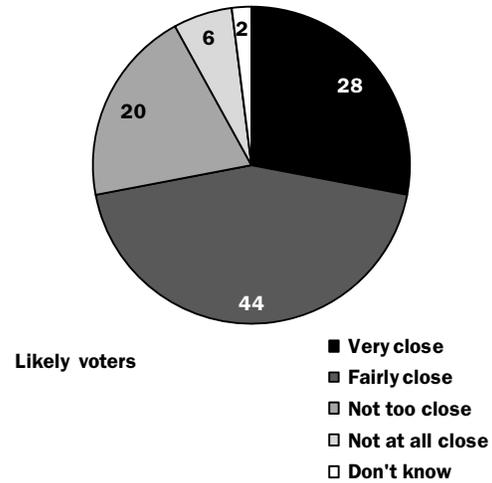
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MAY 19 SPECIAL ELECTION

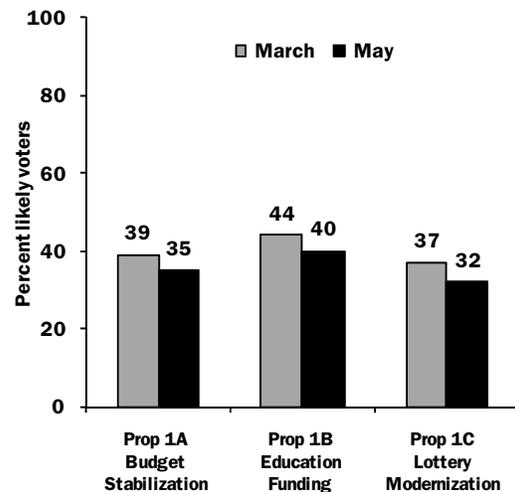
KEY FINDINGS

- Three in 10 likely voters are very closely following news about the special election, with Proposition 1A the ballot measure that receives the most interest from voters. Half of voters think calling the May 19 special election was a good idea. (page 8)
- Propositions 1A through 1E fail to reach majority support among likely voters; support for each of these five measures has fallen since March. (pages 9–13)
- Proposition 1F is the only measure on the ballot that receives majority support from likely voters (73% yes, 24% no); support for this ballot measure has also declined since March. (page 14)
- Half of likely voters oppose Proposition 1A, which attempts to stabilize the state budget (35% yes, 52% no), and more voters oppose than support Proposition 1B, which establishes an education payment funding plan (40% yes, 47% no). (pages 9, 10)
- Almost six in 10 likely voters oppose Proposition 1C, which would modernize the state lottery and allow for borrowing from future lottery profits (32% yes, 58% no). One in three say the outcome of the vote on 1C is very important to them. (page 11)
- Voters are divided on Proposition 1D, which temporarily provides flexibility in children’s services funding while helping balance the state budget (43% yes, 45% no). More oppose than support Proposition 1E, a measure that would temporarily reallocate mental health funding (41% yes, 48% no). About four in 10 likely voters say the outcome of each of these ballot measures is very important to them. (pages 12, 13)

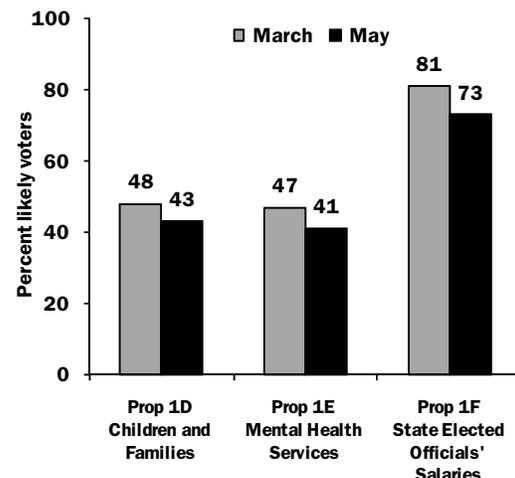
Attention to News About Special Election



Percent Voting Yes on Propositions 1A–1C



Percent Voting Yes on Propositions 1D–1F



VOTERS' INTERESTS

As the May 19 special election campaign winds down, an important indicator of voter participation points to rising interest in the election. Three out of 10 likely voters (28%) are very closely following news about the special election and another 44 percent say they are fairly closely following election news. Voter attention to special election news has increased considerably since March (18% very closely, 37% fairly closely); it is now closer to the degree of interest in the weeks before the November 2005 special election (31% very closely, 50% fairly closely), although it falls well short of interest preceding the October 2003 governor's recall election (49% very close, 43% fairly close) and the November 2008 general election (54% very closely, 37% fairly closely). Today, likely voters who are 55 and older, men, and those who disapprove of the governor and the legislature are the most likely to say they are very closely following news about the May 19 special election.

Three in 10 likely voters say they are most interested in Proposition 1A (29%), followed by Propositions 1B (18%) and Proposition 1F (18%), while fewer than one in 10 express the most interest in Propositions 1C (3%), 1D (7%), or 1E (5%). Among those who are very closely following election news, 39 percent say they are most interested in Proposition 1A, 18 percent in Proposition 1B, and 18 percent in Proposition 1F. Republicans are more interested in Proposition 1A and less interested in Proposition 1B than other voters. Democratic voters express less interest than others in Proposition 1F.

“The governor and legislature placed Propositions 1A through 1F on the May 19th special election ballot as part of the budget plan. Which one of these six propositions are you most interested in?”

	Likely Voters	Party			Approve of the Governor	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Approve	Disapprove
Proposition 1A	29%	27%	33%	25%	32%	26%
Proposition 1B	18	21	14	20	18	19
Proposition 1C	3	3	4	2	4	3
Proposition 1D	7	10	6	5	7	8
Proposition 1E	5	8	3	3	6	4
Proposition 1F	18	15	20	22	17	19
Other/Don't know	20	16	20	23	16	21

The May 19 special election will be the 14th statewide election since 2000. Voters are divided on whether the governor and legislature should have called a special election to address the state's budget situation; half say it was a good idea (50%), while 45 percent say it was a bad idea, with slightly more support for the special election evident among Democratic voters than among others. Those who approve of the governor are most likely to say calling the special election was a good idea. Those who are very closely following election news are more negative (43% good idea, 56% bad idea).

“Overall, do you think it was a good idea or a bad idea for the governor and legislature to call a statewide special election for May 19th to address the state's budget situation?”

	Likely Voters	Party			Approve of the Governor	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Approve	Disapprove
Good idea	50%	54%	49%	47%	62%	44%
Bad idea	45	42	48	48	36	51
Don't know	5	4	3	5	2	5

PROPOSITION 1A: STATE FINANCE

When read the ballot label and title, a majority of California's likely voters say they would oppose Proposition 1A (52% no, 35% yes), a measure that would change the budget process and could limit future deficits and spending by increasing the size of the state "rainy day" fund. Thirteen percent are undecided. Voter support was slightly higher in March (39% yes, 46% no, 15% don't know). Among those who are very closely following election news, opposition is even stronger (65% no, 29% yes).

Democratic likely voters (47%) are much more likely than independent voters (32%) and more than twice as likely as Republican voters (22%) to support this measure. Across the state's major regions, voters in the Other Southern California region (57%) are the most likely to oppose this measure. Latinos (39%) are far less likely to vote no than whites (56%). Opposition to Proposition 1A increases with age, income, and homeownership and is higher among those who disapprove of the governor (63%) and legislature (56%).

**"Proposition 1A is called the "Rainy Day" Budget Stabilization Fund Act.
If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 1A?"***

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Yes	No	Don't know
All Likely Voters		35%	52%	13%
Party	Democrat	47	38	15
	Republican	22	67	11
	Independent	32	53	15
Region	Central Valley	32	52	16
	San Francisco Bay Area	36	48	16
	Los Angeles	35	53	12
	Other Southern California	33	57	10
Race/Ethnicity	Latinos	45	39	16
	Whites	32	56	12

*For complete text of proposition, see p. 27.

Four in 10 likely voters say that Proposition 1A would be very (7%) or somewhat effective (32%) in helping California avoid future state budget deficits, while half believe it would be not too (21%) or not at all (30%) effective. The perception that Proposition 1A would be effective has declined somewhat since March (7% very, 38% somewhat). Democratic (49%) and independent (36%) likely voters today are more inclined than Republican likely voters (28%) to say this measure would be at least somewhat effective. Likely voters planning to vote yes are much more likely than those planning to vote no to say Proposition 1A would be effective (84% to 11%). The belief in its effectiveness declines with older age, higher income, and homeownership and is higher among Latinos (57%) than whites (33%).

"If Proposition 1A passes, how effective do you think it will be in helping California avoid future state budget deficits?"

<i>Likely voters only</i>	All Likely Voters	Party			Vote on Proposition 1A	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very effective	7%	9%	5%	7%	16%	2%
Somewhat effective	32	40	23	29	68	9
Not too effective	21	20	26	16	7	32
Not at all effective	30	18	39	37	3	53
Don't know	10	13	7	11	6	4

PROPOSITION 1B: EDUCATION FINANCE

When read the ballot label and title, more likely voters say they would oppose than would support Proposition 1B (47% no, 40% yes), a measure that requires future supplemental payments to local school districts and community colleges to address recent budget cuts, while 13 percent are undecided. Support for Proposition 1B was slightly higher in March (44% yes, 41% no, 15% undecided). Although a majority of Democrats (53%) would vote yes, a majority of Republicans (61%) would vote no, and independent likely voters are now leaning against Proposition 1B (50% no, 35% yes). Support for Proposition 1B falls short of a majority in all of the state’s major regions. Latinos (56%) offer much higher support than whites (34%) do; support declines with older age, higher income, and homeownership. Those who are very closely following election news oppose Proposition 1B by a wider margin (61% no, 32% yes).

“Proposition 1B is called the Education Funding Payment Plan Act. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 1B?”*

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Yes	No	Don't know
All Likely Voters		40%	47%	13%
Party	Democrat	53	32	15
	Republican	27	61	12
	Independent	35	50	15
Region	Central Valley	33	48	19
	San Francisco Bay Area	41	44	15
	Los Angeles	45	44	11
	Other Southern California	36	52	12
Race/Ethnicity	Latinos	56	31	13
	Whites	34	52	14

*For complete text of proposition, see p. 27.

Most likely voters continue to view the outcome of the vote on Proposition 1B as very (46%) or somewhat important (32%) to them. In March, a similar proportion, eight in 10, said this election outcome is very (47%) or somewhat important (33%) to them. Democratic likely voters (47%), Republicans (44%), and independents (46%) are similar today in viewing this outcome as very important to them. Southern Californians are more likely than those in the Central Valley and San Francisco Bay Area to view the outcome as very important. Although perceptions of the importance of the outcome do not vary much by age or income, Latinos (58%) are much more likely than whites (42%) to view the outcome as very important. Likely voters who say they would vote yes (60%) are much more likely than those who would vote no (39%) to view the outcome of this vote as very important.

“How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 1B?”

<i>Likely voters only</i>	All Likely Voters	Party			Vote on Proposition 1B	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very important	46%	47%	44%	46%	60%	39%
Somewhat important	32	34	34	29	34	33
Not too important	8	8	8	9	4	12
Not at all important	7	4	9	8	1	12
Don't know	7	7	5	8	1	4

PROPOSITION 1C: CALIFORNIA STATE LOTTERY

When read the ballot label and title, a majority of California's likely voters say they would oppose Proposition 1C (58% no, 32% yes), a measure that would modernize the lottery and allow for \$5 billion of borrowing from future lottery profits to help balance next year's state budget. Ten percent are undecided. Support for Proposition 1C has declined since March (37% yes, 50% no, 13% don't know). Across political groups, Democrats (42%) are more likely than independents (28%) and Republicans (24%) to say they would vote yes. Among those who are very closely following special election news, opponents outnumber supporters of Proposition 1C by an even wider margin (65% no, 29% yes).

Majorities of likely voters in all regions would vote no on Proposition 1C, and whites (63%) are more likely than Latinos (42%) to say they will vote no. Opposition to Proposition 1C is higher among those with higher incomes, at least some college education, among those who are 35 and older, and homeowners. About six in 10 who disapprove of the governor (63%) and the legislature (61%) say they will vote no on Proposition 1C.

“Proposition 1C is called the Lottery Modernization Act. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 1C?”*

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Yes	No	Don't know
All Likely Voters		32%	58%	10%
Party	Democrat	42	46	12
	Republican	24	67	9
	Independent	28	66	6
Region	Central Valley	30	54	16
	San Francisco Bay Area	28	62	10
	Los Angeles	35	58	7
	Other Southern California	33	59	8
Race/Ethnicity	Latinos	52	42	6
	Whites	27	63	10

*For complete text of proposition, see p. 27.

Nearly three in four likely voters continue to say the outcome of the vote on Proposition 1C is very (33%) or somewhat important (40%) to them. In March, likely voters' views of the outcome of the vote on Proposition 1C were very similar (31% very important, 41% somewhat important). Fewer than four in 10 across parties and regions say the outcome is very important to them. Latinos (43%) are more likely than whites (31%) to say the outcome is very important. Likely voters who would vote yes on Proposition 1C (34%) are similar to those who would vote no (35%) in saying the outcome is very important.

“How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 1C?”

<i>Likely voters only</i>	All Likely Voters	Party			Vote on Proposition 1C	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very important	33%	31%	36%	32%	34%	35%
Somewhat important	40	43	38	39	50	36
Not too important	14	14	12	16	11	17
Not at all important	7	6	9	7	3	10
Don't know	6	6	5	6	2	2

PROPOSITION 1D: CALIFORNIA CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ACT

When read the ballot label and title, about as many likely voters say they would oppose as would support Proposition 1D (45% no, 43% yes, 12% undecided). This measure would temporarily provide greater flexibility in funding to preserve health and human services for young children, while helping to balance the state budget during the current economic downturn. Nearly half of likely voters said they would vote yes on Proposition 1D in March (48% yes, 36% no, 16% don't know). There is a partisan divide today, with a majority of Democrats (54%) supporting this measure, while opponents outnumber supporters among independents (49% to 39%) and Republicans (56% to 33%). Those who are very closely following special election news oppose Proposition 1D by a wider margin (57% no, 35% yes).

Across regions, Proposition 1D support is higher in Los Angeles than elsewhere. Latino likely voters (66%) are far more inclined than whites (36%) to say they would vote yes on Proposition 1D. Support declines with older age, college education, higher income, and homeownership. Half of likely voters who disapprove of the governor (52%) and the legislature (49%) say they would vote no.

“Proposition 1D is called the Children’s Services Funding Act. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 1D?”*

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Yes	No	Don't know
All Likely Voters		43%	45%	12%
Party	Democrat	54	34	12
	Republican	33	56	11
	Independent	39	49	12
Region	Central Valley	39	50	11
	San Francisco Bay Area	41	44	15
	Los Angeles	47	41	12
	Other Southern California	42	49	9
Race/Ethnicity	Latinos	66	24	10
	Whites	36	52	12

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

Eight in 10 likely voters view the outcome of Proposition 1D as very (41%) or somewhat important (37%), very similar to our March findings (40% very, 39% somewhat important). Democrats (43%), independents (41%), and Republicans (39%) view importance similarly, while Southern Californians are more likely than San Francisco Bay Area voters to view the Proposition 1D outcome as very important. Latinos (61%) are more likely than whites (37%) to say Proposition 1D is very important. Likely voters who would vote yes (48%) are more likely than those who would vote no (39%) to view the outcome as very important.

“How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 1D?”

<i>Likely voters only</i>	All Likely Voters	Party			Vote on Proposition 1D	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very important	41%	43%	39%	41%	48%	39%
Somewhat important	37	39	38	37	44	34
Not too important	10	9	12	10	6	15
Not at all important	6	3	7	8	1	11
Don't know	6	6	4	4	1	1

PROPOSITION 1E: MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT

When read the ballot label and title, more likely voters say they would oppose than would support Proposition 1E (48% no, 41% yes), a measure that would help balance the state budget by amending the Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63 of 2004) to transfer funds from mental health services to the general fund. Nearly half of likely voters said they would support Proposition 1E in March (47% yes, 37% no, 16% don't know). Today, more Democrats would vote yes (48%) than no (39%), while 56 percent of Republicans and 51 percent of independents say they would vote no. Likely voters who are very closely following special election news oppose Proposition 1E by a wider margin (61% no, 35% yes).

Support for Proposition 1E falls short of a majority across the major regions of the state. A majority of Latinos (63%) would vote yes on Proposition 1E, while a majority of whites (54%) would vote no. Support for Proposition 1E is lower among older, college-educated, and higher-income voters and homeowners. Half of likely voters who disapprove of the governor (52%) and legislature (50%) would vote no.

“Proposition 1E is called the Mental Health Funding Temporary Reallocation Act. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 1E?”*

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Yes	No	Don't know
All Likely Voters		41%	48%	11%
Party	Democrat	48	39	13
	Republican	35	56	9
	Independent	39	51	10
Region	Central Valley	40	48	12
	San Francisco Bay Area	41	45	14
	Los Angeles	44	46	10
	Other Southern California	39	52	9
Race/Ethnicity	Latinos	63	30	7
	Whites	34	54	12

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

Three in four likely voters say the outcome of Proposition 1E is very (37%) or somewhat important (39%) to them, similar to March's results (30% very, 44% somewhat). Today, Democrats (39%) are slightly more likely than Republicans (34%) to say the outcome is very important. Los Angeles (43%), Central Valley (38%), and Other Southern California voters (38%) are more likely than San Francisco Bay Area voters (29%) to say the outcome is very important. Latinos (48%) are more likely than whites (33%) to view Proposition 1E as very important. About four in 10 of those who would vote yes (41%) or no (37%) on Proposition 1E say the outcome of Proposition 1E is very important.

“How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 1E?”

<i>Likely voters only</i>	All Likely Voters	Party			Vote on Proposition 1E	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very important	37%	39%	34%	37%	41%	37%
Somewhat important	39	41	39	38	48	33
Not too important	13	10	17	12	10	18
Not at all important	5	4	5	8	1	10
Don't know	6	6	5	5	–	2

PROPOSITION 1F: STATE OFFICER SALARY INCREASES

When read the ballot label and title, a majority of California’s likely voters say they would support Proposition 1F (73% yes, 24% no), which would prevent pay increases for state elected officials during budget deficit years, with only 3 percent undecided. Likely voters overwhelmingly supported this ballot measure in March (81% yes, 13% no, 6% don’t know), but support has slipped since then, by 8 points. Independents (75%), Democrats (74%) and Republicans (71%) all register support for Proposition 1F. Across the state’s major regions, at least two in three say they would vote yes on Proposition 1F. Across demographic groups, strong majorities say they would vote yes on Proposition 1F and whites (72%) and Latinos (72%) are equally likely to say they would vote yes. Among those who are very closely following election news, 62 percent would vote yes and 36 percent would vote no, while 2 percent are undecided.

“Proposition 1F is called the Elected Officials’ Salaries, Prevents Pay Increases During Budget Deficit Years Act. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 1F?”*

<i>Likely voters only</i>		Yes	No	Don’t know
All Likely Voters		73%	24%	3%
Party	Democrat	74	22	4
	Republican	71	26	3
	Independent	75	22	3
Region	Central Valley	75	20	5
	San Francisco Bay Area	78	17	5
	Los Angeles	66	31	3
	Other Southern California	71	26	3
Race/Ethnicity	Latinos	72	24	4
	Whites	72	24	4

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

When asked how effective Proposition 1F would be in helping California avoid future state budget deficits, 54 percent of likely voters say it would be very (22%) or somewhat effective (32%). In March, two in three likely voters said it would be very (28%) or somewhat effective (39%). The belief that Proposition 1F will not be effective has grown among all political groups and regions. The proportion saying it will be very effective if it passes declines among higher-income and college-educated voters and is lower among voters older than 34. Among those planning to vote yes on Proposition 1F, 68 percent think it will be at least somewhat effective, while 75 percent of the those planning to vote no think it will be not too or not at all effective if it passes.

“If Proposition 1F passes, how effective do you think it will be in helping California avoid future state budget deficits?”

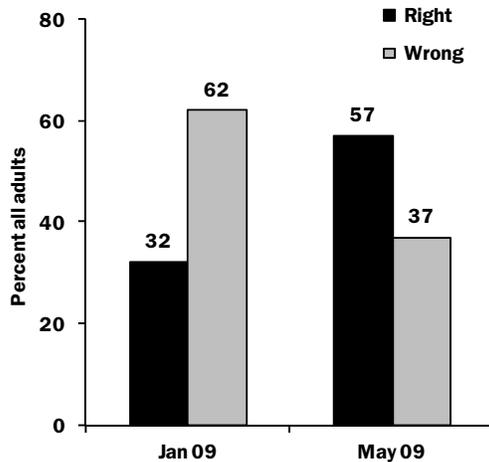
<i>Likely voters only</i>	All Likely Voters	Party			Vote on Proposition 1F	
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Yes	No
Very effective	22%	23%	20%	25%	28%	8%
Somewhat effective	32	35	35	23	40	14
Not too effective	22	22	22	26	22	23
Not at all effective	20	16	21	22	9	52
Don’t know	4	4	2	4	1	3

STATE AND NATIONAL ISSUES

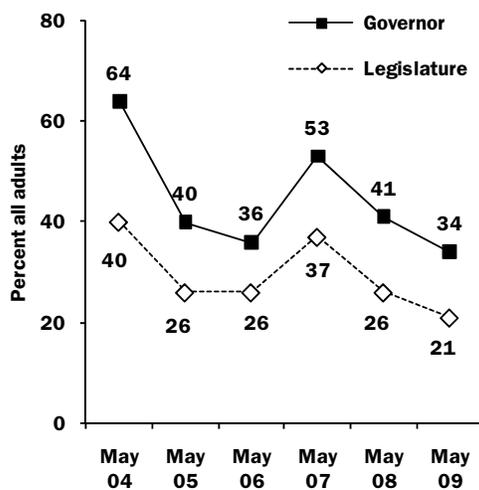
KEY FINDINGS

- Nearly seven in 10 Californians (68%) believe their state is headed in the wrong direction. In sharp contrast, a majority of Californians (57%) believe the nation is now headed in the right direction—a sharp turnaround since January. *(page 16)*
- Californians say the economy (54%) is the most important state issue, followed by the state budget (14%). A majority of residents (53%) say the state is in a serious recession, but this is 10 points lower than the record high who said so in March. *(page 17)*
- Job approval ratings of the governor and legislature have been declining for two years and are now near their all-time lows. In contrast, 72 percent of Californians approve of the way President Obama is handling his responsibilities, and 47 percent also approve of Congress. *(pages 18, 19)*
- Most Californians view the state budget situation as a big problem and say major changes are needed in the state's budget process. Voters are divided across party lines on tax and spending preferences. *(page 20)*
- Trust in state government has fallen to its lowest level in PPIC Statewide Surveys. Strong majorities of adults and likely voters say state government is run by a few big interests and that a lot of the taxpayers' money is wasted. *(page 21)*
- Although trust in the federal government has increased since October, a majority of Californians continue to believe that it is run by a few big interests and that it wastes a lot of taxpayer money. *(page 21)*

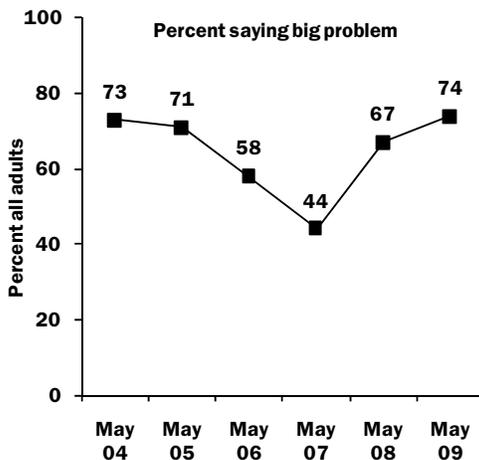
Direction of the United States



Approval Ratings of State Elected Officials



Perceptions of California's Budget Situation



OVERALL MOOD

Californians continue to be very unhappy about the direction in which their state is headed: 68 percent of adults and 76 percent of likely voters say things in California are generally going in the wrong direction. Strong majorities across parties agree with this pessimistic point of view (78% of Republicans, 71% of independents, and 67% of Democrats). These attitudes contrast sharply with views about the direction of the nation. Since we first began asking about the country’s direction in a PPIC Statewide Survey in 2003, this is the first time a majority of Californians (57%) and likely voters (52%) have said things in the nation are generally going in the right direction. In January, as President Obama was taking office, only three in 10 residents (32%) and likely voters (31%) said the country was headed in the right direction. Optimism is also growing nationwide, although adults nationally (41%) are less likely than Californians (57%) to say the country is going in the right direction, according to a recent CBS News/*New York Times* poll.

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

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Right direction	24%	25%	14%	20%	17%
Wrong direction	68	67	78	71	76
Don't know	8	8	8	9	7

Jobs and the economy continue to trump other issues among Californians’ concerns. In an open-ended question, 54 percent point to the economy as the most important issue facing the state (14% mention the state budget, 7% education and schools, 4% health care, and 4% immigration). The economy has topped the list of concerns among Californians since January 2008, with a solid majority pointing to this issue in February (63%), March (58%), and April (59%) 2009.

Californians do not expect a quick economic recovery in the state. Most adults (67%) and likely voters (75%) believe California will experience bad times financially during the next 12 months. At least two-thirds of residents have expressed this view since January 2008, and today strong majorities across parties and regions of the state agree. Across racial/ethnic groups, at least half expect a poorly performing economy, but Latinos (51%) are far less pessimistic than whites (76%). Pessimism increases with older age, higher education, and higher income levels and is much higher among homeowners (71%) than renters (60%). Despite optimism about the general direction of the United States, most Californians (61%) and likely voters (70%) also believe the nation’s economy will fare poorly over the next 12 months.

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

	All Adults	Region				Likely Voters
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Good times	25%	20%	25%	29%	25%	19%
Bad times	67	75	67	61	68	75
Don't know	8	5	8	10	7	6

ECONOMIC SITUATION

Pessimism about the state's financial situation over the next year is reflected in the widespread belief among Californians (90%) that the state is in an economic recession, with a majority of adults (53%) and likely voters (60%) categorizing it as a serious recession. The percentage of residents saying the state is in a serious recession climbed sharply and steadily between March 2008 and March 2009 (from 26% to 63%), but has now declined 10 points from its high in March.

Majorities across political parties believe that California is in a serious recession (60% of Democrats, 54% of Republicans, 54% of independents). Across regions, San Francisco Bay Area residents (57%) are the most likely to describe the recession as serious, followed by residents in Los Angeles (55%), the Other Southern California region (52%), and the Central Valley (50%). Whites are much more likely than Latinos (58% to 46%) to say the state is in a serious recession. The percentage of residents who believe California is in a serious recession increases with age, education, and income.

“Would you say that California is in an economic recession, or not?”

	All Adults	Region				Likely Voters
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Yes, serious recession	53%	50%	57%	55%	52%	60%
Yes, moderate recession	32	33	33	30	32	31
Yes, mild recession	5	5	3	6	7	4
No	7	9	5	7	6	3
Don't know	3	3	2	2	3	2

Nearly half of Californians say they are very concerned (31%) or somewhat concerned (16%) that they or someone in their family will lose their job in the next year, while another 8 percent volunteer that someone in their family has already experienced job loss. The percentage of adults who are very or somewhat worried about job loss has declined by 11 points since the beginning of the year (58% in January, 47% today). Lower-income residents (41%), adults without any college education (40%), Latinos (45%), and renters (38%) are the most likely to say they are very worried about job loss for themselves or their family.

“Are you concerned that you or someone in your family will lose their job in the next year, or not?”

	All Adults	Household Income			Likely Voters
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	
Yes, very concerned	31%	41%	30%	22%	26%
Yes, somewhat	16	15	21	15	16
No	43	31	40	58	49
Have lost job already (vol.)	8	11	9	5	9
Don't know	2	2	-	-	-

Six in 10 Californians are also very concerned (39%) or somewhat concerned (22%) about falling behind in their mortgage or rent payments. Residents in the Other Southern California region (44%) and Los Angeles (42%) are more likely to be very concerned than residents in the Central Valley (37%) and San Francisco Bay Area (31%). Latinos (61%) are far more likely than whites (25%) to be very concerned. The level of concern drops sharply as age, education, and income increase. Renters (54%) are nearly twice as likely as homeowners (28%) to be very concerned about falling behind on their housing payments.

STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS

The persistently negative views that residents express about the direction of the state and its economic outlook continue to be reflected in their assessment of elected officials.

Governor Schwarzenegger’s overall job approval ratings (34%) are near his record low of 32 percent recorded in April and March of this year. Fifty-three percent of Californians disapprove of the way he is handling his job. The governor’s approval rating has been below 50 percent since January 2008. Today’s rating is similar to the record-low rating of 32 percent that he first received in December 2005 (right after the unpopular 2005 special election). Today, majorities of likely voters (56%) and voters across party lines disapprove of the governor’s job performance; this is the third consecutive month that a majority of Republicans have expressed disapproval of his job performance (53% in March, 54% in April, 52% today). Across regions, residents in the San Francisco Bay Area (43%) are the most approving of the governor, while residents in Los Angeles (29%) are the least approving. Job approval ratings for the governor increase somewhat with higher education and income.

When it comes to the governor’s handling of the state budget and taxes, his ratings have fallen to a new low. Twenty-seven percent of Californians approve of the way he is handling budgetary issues (62% disapprove). Approval is similarly low among likely voters, and across parties, at least six in 10 disapprove of the governor’s handling of fiscal issues. Majorities of residents across regions and demographic groups express disapproval of the governor’s performance in the state’s fiscal affairs.

“Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling ...”

		All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
<i>... his job as governor of California?</i>	Approve	34%	33%	38%	35%	34%
	Disapprove	53	54	52	58	56
	Don't know	13	13	10	7	10
<i>... the state budget and taxes?</i>	Approve	27	28	29	28	28
	Disapprove	62	63	63	65	64
	Don't know	11	9	8	7	8

The California Legislature receives even lower overall approval ratings than the governor. Only 21 percent of Californians say they approve of the legislature’s job performance, and 65 percent express disapproval. These ratings nearly match the legislature’s record low approval ratings in March (18% approve, 68% disapprove). Today, strong majorities of likely voters and voters across party lines express disapproval of the legislature’s performance, with at most one in five expressing approval. The lowest approval ratings come from Republicans (10%). Across racial/ethnic groups, whites (76%) are far more likely than Latinos (45%) to disapprove of the legislature. Disapproval rises sharply age, education, and income increase.

“Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	21%	20%	10%	17%	12%
Disapprove	65	67	81	72	80
Don't know	14	13	9	11	8

FEDERAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

President Obama and the U.S. Congress receive much higher approval ratings from Californians. Seven in 10 (72%) approve of the president's job performance. The president has received an approval rating of at least 70 percent on each of the four occasions we have asked this question. The approval ratings of Californians are similar to those of adults nationwide (69% approve, 26% disapprove) based on a recent ABC News/*Washington Post* poll. In California, 91 percent of Democrats and a strong majority of independents (66%) approve of the way the president is handling his job, while half of Republicans (50%) disapprove. At least six in 10 residents in every region of the state express approval, although Latinos (90%) are far more likely than whites (62%) to express approval.

When it comes to the federal budget and taxes, 65 percent of Californians approve of the way the president is handling these issues and 26 percent disapprove. Californians are much more likely than adults nationwide to approve of the president's handling of budgetary issues: According to the ABC News/*Washington Post* poll, 51 percent approve of the president's handling of the federal budget deficit and 56 percent approve of his handling of taxes. In California, a large majority of Democrats (85%) approve of the president's handling of budgetary issues, followed by a smaller majority of independents (59%) and a minority of Republicans (31%). Disapproval rates rise with increasing age and income.

"Do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Obama is handling ..."

		All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
... his job as president of the United States?	Approve	72%	91%	38%	66%	66%
	Disapprove	20	5	50	25	26
	Don't know	8	4	12	9	8
... the federal budget and taxes?	Approve	65	85	31	59	60
	Disapprove	26	8	58	33	33
	Don't know	9	7	11	8	7

Approval ratings for the U.S. Congress continue to improve, reaching their highest levels since we began asking this question in 2005, although still falling short of a majority (47% approve, 43% disapprove). Californians' ratings of Congress have doubled since October 2008 (23% approve, 71% disapprove). However, likely voters are more likely to express disapproval, and we find considerable differences across parties, with a majority of Democrats (61%) expressing approval and a majority of independents (56%) and Republicans (72%) expressing disapproval. Latinos (66%) are much more likely than whites (35%) to approve of Congress. Californians are much more approving of Congress than adults nationwide (28% approve, 55% disapprove), according to a recent CBS News/*New York Times* poll.

Californians have high expectations for President Obama and the U.S. Congress. Seventy-four percent of residents throughout the state, including majorities across regions, parties, and demographic groups, think the president and Congress will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year.

"Do you approve or disapprove of the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job?"

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Approve	47%	61%	22%	36%	39%
Disapprove	43	29	72	56	53
Don't know	10	10	6	8	8

STATE BUDGET SITUATION

With the May special election approaching quickly, nearly all Californians believe the state’s budget situation is a problem (74% say a big problem, 22% say somewhat of a problem). Among likely voters, 83 percent say it is a big problem, 16 percent say it is somewhat of a problem. Since March 2008, at least two in three Californians have been saying that the budget situation is a big problem. And it’s considered to be a big problem today by more than seven in 10 Californians across parties (76% Democrats, 77% independents, 83% Republicans) and across regions (71% Central Valley, 74% Other Southern California region, 75% Los Angeles, 76% San Francisco Bay Area). Belief that the budget process is a big problem increases with age, education, and income.

Today, Californians believe overwhelmingly that the state budget process needs major changes (all residents: 78%; likely voters: 85%). The percentage calling for major changes in the state’s budget process has increased 13 points in the past year (from 65% in May 2008 to 78% today). This call for reform is expressed by a strong majority of voters across parties (79% independents, 81% Democrats, 85% Republicans) and across regions as well. Among those who consider California’s budget situation a big problem, 88 percent believe that the process needs major changes.

“Do you think the state budget process in California, in terms of both revenues and spending, is in need of major changes, minor changes, or do you think it is fine the way it is?”

	All Adults	Region				Likely Voters
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern	
Major changes	78%	77%	81%	79%	77%	85%
Minor changes	16	16	14	14	18	13
Fine the way it is	3	4	1	3	2	1
Don't know	3	3	4	4	3	1

Elected leaders and California voters face tough decisions when it comes to raising taxes or cutting services to balance the state’s budget this year. Looking at the size of government in general, residents and likely voters are fairly divided about whether they would prefer to pay higher taxes and have a state government that provides more services or pay lower taxes and have a state government that provides fewer services. Overall, residents are slightly more likely to prefer higher taxes and more services (48%) than lower taxes and fewer services (43%), while likely voters are somewhat more likely to prefer lower taxes and fewer services (49%) rather than higher taxes and more services (42%). There has seldom been a consensus since we began asking this question in February 2003. We have never had a majority of residents prefer the lower taxes/fewer services option. However, when the state was experiencing a better economy in 2006, a majority of residents said they would prefer higher taxes and more services. Today, residents are divided sharply along party lines. Across racial/ethnic groups, whites prefer lower taxes/fewer services (51%), while Latinos prefer higher taxes/more services (60%).

**“Which of the following statements do you agree with more?
I’d rather pay higher taxes and have a state government that provides more services, or
I’d rather pay lower taxes and have a state government that provides fewer services.”**

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Higher taxes and more services	48%	62%	24%	43%	42%
Lower taxes and fewer services	43	28	70	46	49
Don't know	9	10	6	11	9

TRUST IN GOVERNMENT

Californians' negativity about their state elected officials and their dismal outlook with regard to the direction of the state and economy is evident in their low levels of trust in state government. Only 23 percent of residents say they can trust the government in Sacramento to do what is right just about always (4%) or most of the time (19%); 65 percent say they trust the government only some of the time, and 9 percent volunteer that they never trust the state government. Likely voters (2% always, 14% most of the time) are even less trusting than residents. These are the lowest levels of trust in state government among adults and likely voters ever recorded by our survey. Today strong majorities across regional, political, and demographic groups say that they trust the politicians in Sacramento only some of the time. Californians' trust in the federal government is still low (6% just about always, 30% most of the time, 56% only some of the time, 6% never), but it is higher than their trust in the state government, and is up 14 points since October 2008 (from 22% to 36%, just about always/most of the time).

Californians also believe that interest groups have a great deal of influence in state government: 68 percent of residents and 76 percent of likely voters say the state is pretty much run by a few big interests, while far fewer (23% of all adults, 16% of likely voters) say it is run for the benefit of all of the people. Solid majorities across political, regional, and demographic groups say the state is run by a few big interests. Californians also believe the federal government is run by special interests (59%) rather than for the benefit of the people (34%), but this percentage has dropped 15 points since October 2008 (from 74% to 59%).

“Would you say the state 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?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
A few big interests	68%	69%	77%	77%	76%
Benefit of all of the people	23	22	16	17	16
Don't know	9	9	7	6	8

Californians' distrust of state government extends to its fiscal efficiency as well. Strong majorities of adults (63%) and likely voters (71%) think the people in state government waste a lot of taxpayer money. This perception among adults has increased 10 points since September 2007 (53%). Solid majorities across parties believe that a lot of money is wasted, and majorities across regional and demographic groups agree. Whites (66%), Latinos (61%), and women and men (63% each) think a lot of money is wasted, and the prevalence of this opinion increases with age. A majority of Californians (57%) also believe the federal government wastes a lot of taxpayer money, but this perception has dropped 17 points since last October (from 74% to 57% today).

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

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
A lot	63%	59%	77%	72%	71%
Some	30	34	20	25	25
Don't waste very much	5	5	2	2	4
Don't know	2	2	1	1	–

REGIONAL MAP



METHODOLOGY

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

The findings in this report are based on a telephone survey of 2,005 California adult residents interviewed from April 27–May 4, 2009. 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 numbers were called. All landline telephone exchanges in California were eligible. Telephone numbers in the survey sample were called as many as six times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (age 18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing using the “last birthday method” to avoid biases in age and gender. Each interview took an average of 16 minutes to complete. Interviewing was conducted in English or Spanish. Accent on Languages, Inc. translated the survey into Spanish with assistance from Renatta DeFever. Abt SRBI Inc. conducted the telephone interviewing.

We used recent U.S. Census and state data 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 2,005 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: For the 1,515 registered voters, it is ± 2.5 percent; for the 1,080 likely voters, it 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.

We present results for four geographic regions, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population. “Central Valley” includes Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. “San Francisco Bay Area” includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. “Los Angeles” refers to Los Angeles County, and “Other Southern California” includes Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties. Residents from other geographic areas are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, and likely voters, but sample sizes for these less populated areas are not large enough to report separately. We present specific results for Latinos because they account for about 30 percent of the state’s adult population and constitute one of the fastest growing voter groups. Sample sizes for African Americans and Asian Americans are not large enough for separate analysis. We compare the opinions of registered Democrats, Republicans, and independents (those who are registered as “decline to state”). We also include the responses of “likely voters”— those who are most likely to vote in the state’s elections based on their past voting, current interest, and voting intentions. We compare current PPIC Statewide Survey results to those in our earlier surveys and to those in national surveys by ABC News/*Washington Post* and CBS News/*New York Times*.

QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESULTS

CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

April 27–May 4, 2009

2,005 California Adult Residents:
English, Spanish

MARGIN OF ERROR $\pm 2\%$ AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE

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

[code, don't read]
54% jobs, economy
14 state budget, deficit, taxes
7 education, schools
4 health care, health costs
4 immigration, illegal immigration
2 housing costs, housing crisis
12 other
3 don't know
2. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling his job as governor of California?

34% approve
53 disapprove
13 don't know
3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Schwarzenegger is handling the issue of the state budget and taxes?

27% approve
62 disapprove
11 don't know
4. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job?

21% approve
65 disapprove
14 don't know
5. Do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

24% right direction
68 wrong direction
8 don't know
6. Turning to economic conditions in California, do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?

25% good times
67 bad times
8 don't know
7. Would you say that California is in an economic recession, or not? (*if yes: Do you think it is in a serious, a moderate, or a mild recession?*)

53% yes, serious recession
32 yes, moderate recession
5 yes, mild recession
7 no
3 don't know
8. And, are you concerned that you or someone in your family will lose their job in the next year, or not? (*if yes: Are you very concerned or somewhat concerned?*)

31% yes, very concerned
16 yes, somewhat
43 no
8 have lost job already (*volunteered*)
2 don't know

9. How concerned are you, if at all, about not having enough money to pay your rent or mortgage—very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned about this?

- 39% very concerned
- 22 somewhat concerned
- 14 not too concerned
- 25 not at all concerned

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

- 74% big problem
- 22 somewhat of a problem
- 2 not a problem
- 2 don't know

11. Overall, do you think the state budget process in California, in terms of both revenues and spending, is in need of major changes, minor changes, or do you think it is fine the way it is?

- 78% major changes
- 16 minor changes
- 3 fine the way it is
- 3 don't know

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

- 76% yes [ask q12a]
- 24 no [skip to q13e]

12a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or as an independent?

- 45% Democrat [ask q13]
- 33 Republican [skip to q13a]
- 1 another party (specify) [skip to q14]
- 21 independent [skip to q13e]

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

- 66% strong
- 31 not very strong
- 3 don't know

[skip to q14]

13a. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

- 54% strong
- 43 not very strong
- 3 don't know

[skip to q14]

13e. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?

- 23% Republican Party
- 46 Democratic Party
- 24 neither (volunteered)
- 7 don't know

[delayed skip: if q12=no, skip to q29]

[responses recorded for questions 14 to 28 are for likely voters only]

Next, the governor and legislature recently called a statewide special election in May for voters to consider ballot measures that address the state's budget situation.

14. How closely are you following news about the May 19th statewide special election?

- 28% very closely
- 44 fairly closely
- 20 not too closely
- 6 not at all closely
- 2 don't know

Next, we have a few questions to ask you about Propositions 1A through 1F on the May 19th special election ballot.

15. Proposition 1A is called the "Rainy Day" Budget Stabilization Fund Act. It changes the budget process. It could limit future deficits and spending by increasing the size of the state "rainy day" fund and requiring above-average revenues to be deposited into it, for use during economic downturns and other purposes. Fiscal impacts include: higher state tax revenues of roughly \$16 billion from 2010–11 through 2012–13, and, over time, increased amounts of money in state rainy day reserve and potentially less ups and downs in state spending. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 1A?

35% yes
52 no
13 don't know

16. If Proposition 1A passes, how effective do you think it will be in helping California avoid future state budget deficits?

7% very effective
32 somewhat effective
21 not too effective
30 not at all effective
10 don't know

17. Proposition 1B is called the Education Funding Payment Plan Act. It requires supplemental payments to local school districts and community colleges to address recent budget cuts. Fiscal impacts include potential state savings of up to several billion dollars in 2009–10 and 2010–11 and potential state costs of billions of dollars annually thereafter. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 1B?

40% yes
47 no
13 don't know

18. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 1B?

46% very important
32 somewhat important
8 not too important
7 not at all important
7 don't know

19. Proposition 1C is called the Lottery Modernization Act. It allows the state lottery to be modernized to improve its performance with increased payouts, improved marketing, and effective management. It requires the state to maintain ownership of the lottery and authorizes additional accountability measures. It protects funding levels for schools currently provided by lottery revenues. Increased lottery revenues will be used to address current budget deficit and reduce the need for additional tax increases and cuts to state programs. Fiscal impacts include allowing \$5 billion of borrowing from future lottery profits to help balance the 2009–10 state budget; debt-service payments on this borrowing and higher payments to education would likely make it more difficult to balance future state budgets. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 1C?

32% yes
58 no
10 don't know

20. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 1C?

33% very important
40 somewhat important
14 not too important
7 not at all important
6 don't know

21. Proposition 1D is called the Children’s Services Funding Act. It temporarily provides greater flexibility in funding to preserve health and human services for young children while helping balance the state budget in a difficult economy. Fiscal impacts include State General Fund savings of up to \$608 million in 2009–10 and \$268 million annually from 2010–11 through 2013–14, and corresponding reductions in funding for early childhood development programs provided by the California Children and Families Program. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 1D?

43% yes
45 no
12 don’t know

22. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 1D?

41% very important
37 somewhat important
10 not too important
6 not at all important
6 don’t know

23. Proposition 1E is called the Mental Health Funding. Temporary Reallocation Act. It helps balance state budget by amending the Mental Health Services Act (which was Proposition 63 of 2004) to transfer funds, for two years, to pay for mental health services provided through the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment Program for children and young adults. Fiscal Impacts include State General Fund savings of about \$230 million annually for two years (2009–10 and 2010–11) and corresponding reduction in funding available for Mental Health Services Act programs. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 1E?

41% yes
48 no
11 don’t know

24. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 1E?

37% very important
39 somewhat important
13 not too important
5 not at all important
6 don’t know

25. Proposition 1F is called the Elected Officials’ Salaries. Prevents Pay Increases During Budget Deficit Years Act. It encourages balanced state budgets by preventing elected members of the Legislature and statewide constitutional officers, including the governor, from receiving pay raises in years when the state is running a deficit. It directs the director of finance to determine whether a given year is a deficit year and it prevents the Citizens Compensation Commission from increasing elected officials’ salaries in years when the state Special Fund for Economic Uncertainties is in the negative by an amount equal to or greater than one percent of the General Fund. Fiscal impacts include minor state savings related to elected state official’s salaries in some cases when the state is expected to end the year with a budget deficit. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 1F?

73% yes
24 no
3 don’t know

26. If Proposition 1F passes, how effective do you think it will be in helping California avoid future state budget deficits?

22% very effective
32 somewhat effective
22 not too effective
20 not at all effective
4 don’t know

27. The governor and legislature placed Propositions 1A through 1F on the May 19th special election ballot as part of the budget plan. Which one of these six propositions are you most interested in?
- [code, don't read]**
- 29% Proposition 1A
 - 18 Proposition 1B
 - 3 Proposition 1C
 - 7 Proposition 1D
 - 5 Proposition 1E
 - 18 Proposition 1F
 - 8 none of them (*volunteered*)
 - 5 all equally (*volunteered*)
 - 7 don't know
28. Overall, do you think it was a good idea or a bad idea for the governor and legislature to call a statewide special election for May 19th to address the state's budget situation?
- 50% good idea
 - 45 bad idea
 - 5 don't know
29. Changing topics, in general, which of the following statements do you agree with more—I'd rather pay higher taxes and have a state government that provides more services, or I'd rather pay lower taxes and have a state government that provides fewer services?
- 48% higher taxes and more services
 - 43 lower taxes and fewer services
 - 9 don't know
30. How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Sacramento to do what is right—just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?
- 4% just about always
 - 19 most of the time
 - 65 only some of the time
 - 9 none of the time (*volunteered*)
 - 3 don't know
31. Would you say the state 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?
- 68% a few big interests
 - 23 benefit of all of the people
 - 9 don't know
32. Do you think the people in state government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?
- 63% a lot
 - 30 some
 - 5 don't waste very much
 - 2 don't know
33. Changing topics, overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barack Obama is handling his job as president of the United States?
- 72% approve
 - 20 disapprove
 - 8 don't know
34. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Obama is handling the federal budget and taxes?
- 65% approve
 - 26 disapprove
 - 9 don't know
35. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job?
- 47% approve
 - 43 disapprove
 - 10 don't know
36. Do you think that President Obama and the U.S. Congress will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year, or not?
- 74% yes, will be able to work together
 - 19 no, will not be able to work together
 - 7 don't know

37. Do you think things in the United States are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

- 57% right direction
- 37 wrong direction
- 6 don't know

38. Turning to economic conditions, do you think that during the next 12 months the United States will have good times financially or bad times?

- 33% good times
- 61 bad times
- 6 don't know

39. On another topic, people have different ideas about the government in Washington. How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington today to do what is right—just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

- 6% just about always
- 30 most of the time
- 56 only some of the time
- 6 none of the time (*volunteered*)
- 2 don't know

40. 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?

- 59% a few big interests
- 34 benefit of all of the people
- 7 don't know

41. 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?

- 57% a lot
- 35 some
- 6 don't waste very much
- 2 don't know

42. Next, would you consider yourself to be politically:

[read list, rotate order top to bottom]

- 8% very liberal
- 19 somewhat liberal
- 31 middle-of-the-road
- 23 somewhat conservative
- 15 very conservative
- 4 don't know

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

- 28% great deal
- 42 fair amount
- 24 only a little
- 6 none

[d1-d15: demographic questions]

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