

JUNE 2008

**■ VOTER TURNOUT IN JUNE 3<sup>RD</sup> PRIMARY AT ALL-TIME LOW – DESPITE RECORD-HIGH REGISTRATION.**

At the close of registration for the June 3<sup>rd</sup> primary, 16.1 million Californians (70% of eligible voters) were registered to vote, setting a new record high. At the same time, voter turnout hit an all-time low. As of this writing, the June primary turnout (22.4%) declined dramatically from the February 5<sup>th</sup> presidential primary turnout (57.7%), despite a surge in voter registration between February and June of 400,000 new registered voters. The June 3<sup>rd</sup> primary included elections for local, state, and national offices and two statewide ballot initiatives on eminent domain, while the February 5<sup>th</sup> primary included voting for each party's presidential nominee and statewide ballot measures on legislative term limits and Indian gaming compacts. This was the first split primary season in California since 1940.

**■ INCUMBENTS HOLD STRONG IN ASSEMBLY, SENATE, CONGRESS.**

After the June primary, all of the Assembly incumbents held on to their chance to compete in the November election. Only one state Senator, Carole Migden (D), lost the opportunity for a re-election bid. Migden was defeated by San Francisco Assemblyman Mark Leno (43.8% to 28%), while a third candidate, Joe Nation, received 28.2% of the vote. All of the 53 seats that California holds in the U.S. House of Representatives are up for election. Fifty-two of these seats are held by incumbents, none of whom were defeated in the primary. Tom McClintock, termed out in the state Senate, won the Republican primary in Congressional District 4 and will compete in November to fill the one open House seat, which was vacated by Republican John Doolittle.

**■ PROPOSITION 98 EMINENT DOMAIN INITIATIVE VOTED DOWN.**

Proposition 98, the Eminent Domain Limits on Government Authority Initiative Constitutional Amendment, was voted down by a wide margin (61% no, 39% yes). Of the 58 counties in California, 38 rejected the initiative. Most of the counties that approved Proposition 98 were in the northern and inland regions of the state, while the urban coastal regions in the San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego Counties rejected the measure.

**■ PROPOSITION 99 EMINENT DOMAIN INITIATIVE APPROVED.**

A competing eminent domain initiative passed by a wide margin. Proposition 99, the Eminent Domain Limits on Government Acquisition of Owner-Occupied Residence Initiative Constitutional Amendment was approved by a comfortable margin (62.5% yes, 37.5% no). Every county in California approved the initiative except Colusa County (51.5% no, 48.5% yes).

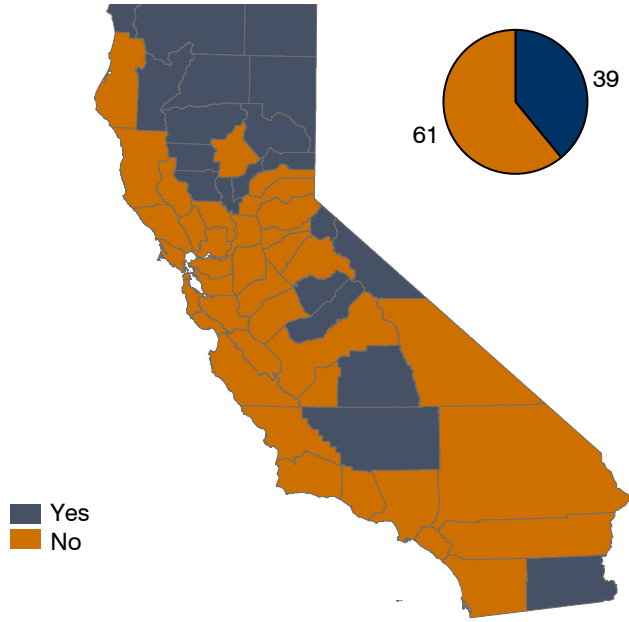
**■ LOOKING AHEAD: HIGH VOTER TURNOUT EXPECTED IN NOVEMBER 2008 GENERAL ELECTION.**

The November general election includes the presidential election, several state propositions, and 153 state and federal legislative elections. In the May PPIC Statewide Survey, Senator Barack Obama held a double-digit lead over Senator John McCain. An initiative that would ban gay marriages is likely to attract a great deal of attention. California has had little party turnover in legislative races over the past decade because of the way legislative districts are drawn, favoring the incumbents when it comes to open seats in the State Assembly, State Senate, and California Congressional Delegation. Will this trend hold?

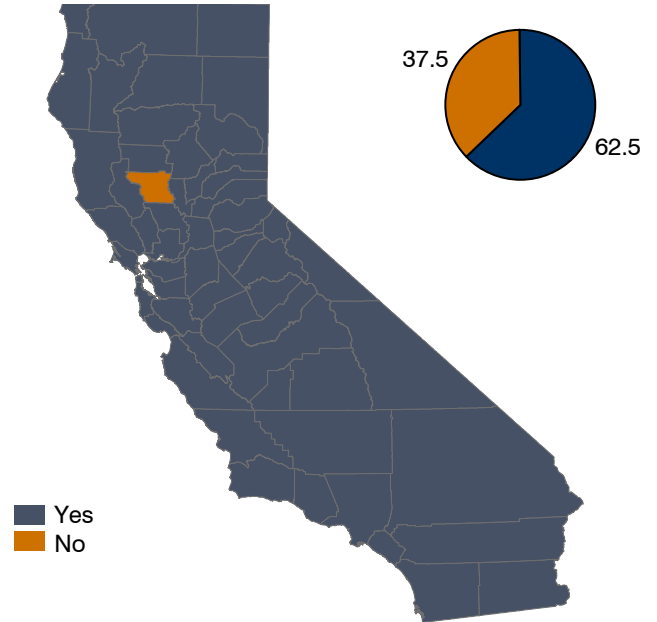


# June Statewide Direct Primary

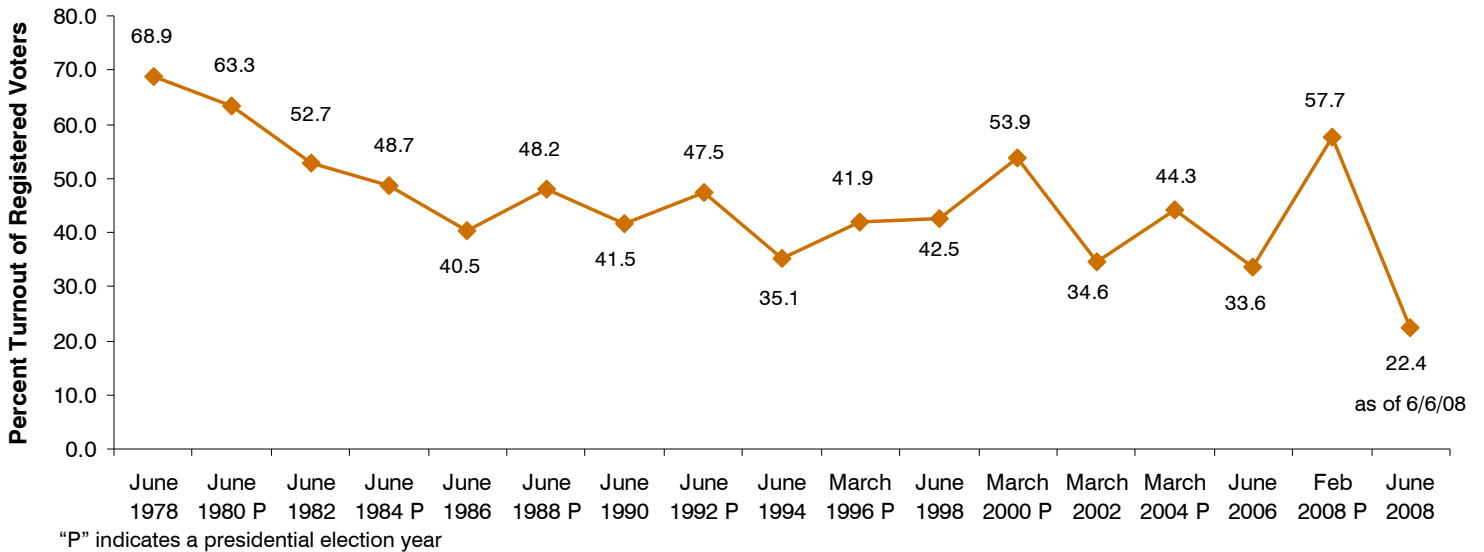
**Proposition 98 (fails)**



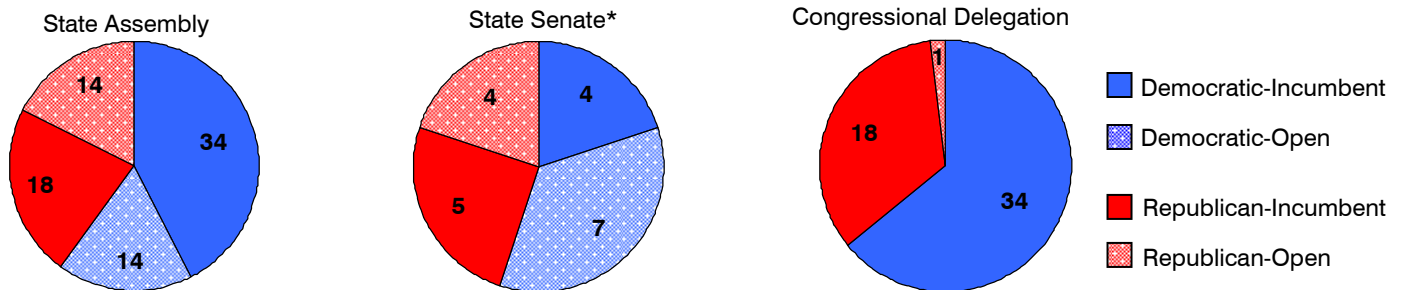
**Proposition 99 (passes)**



**Statewide Primary Turnout 1978-2008**



## Looking Ahead to November: Seats Up for Election



\*20 Seats in Senate not up for election in November: 14D, 6R

Sources: California Secretary of State. [PPIC Statewide Survey, May, 2008](#). Contact: [surveys@ppic.org](mailto:surveys@ppic.org)