

**PPIC Statewide Survey:
Californians and Their Government**

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**Public
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Institute
of
California**

Preface

The PPIC Statewide Survey consists of an ongoing series of surveys designed to provide policymakers, the media, and the general public with objective, advocacy-free information on the perceptions, opinions and public policy preferences of residents throughout the state of California. Begun in April 1998, the surveys have generated a database that includes the responses of over 44,000 Californians. This report presents the results of the twenty-second PPIC Statewide Survey. The surveys have included a number of special editions focusing on particular regions and themes:

- The Central Valley (November 1999, March 2001)
- San Diego County (July 2000)
- Orange County (September 2001)
- The Environment (June 2000)
- Population Growth (May 2001)
- Land Use (November 2001)

The current survey is the fifth in a new series that will be conducted on a periodic basis throughout the 2002 election cycle. The series will focus on the social, economic, and political trends and public policy preferences underlying ballot choices in statewide races and citizens' initiatives. This report presents the responses of 2,000 adult residents throughout the state on a wide range of issues:

- The California election in 2002, including the Republican gubernatorial primary in March, potential match-ups of major party candidates in the gubernatorial election in November, the current image of the governor, and support for a state proposition on the March ballot that calls for a reform of the state's legislative term limits law.
- California policy issues, including perceptions of the state's most important problem, trends over time in perceptions of problems and improvements within the state's public schools, public support for student testing and increasing teachers' salaries, state spending priorities in light of the budget deficit, and the perceived seriousness of the state's electricity problems and the issue of terrorism and homeland security.
- Political trends, including overall approval ratings of the president and governor, specific ratings of the president's and governor's handling of terrorism and security issues, and approval ratings of elected officials in the U.S. Congress and the state legislature.
- Social and economic trends, such as perceptions of the state of the state, the state's economy, consumer confidence, the personal and financial effects of the September 11th terror attacks, and attention to state and national political news.
- How growing regions and groups – such as the Central Valley, Latinos, and independent voters – affect overall statewide trends in ballot choices and policy preferences.

Copies of earlier survey reports or additional copies of this report may be ordered by e-mail (order@ppic.org) or phone (415-291-4400). The reports are also posted on the publications page of the PPIC web site (www.ppic.org).

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Press Release

ECONOMY, ELECTRICITY, EDUCATION LOOM LARGE IN 2002 RACES Riordan Leads Democrat Davis, Other Republican Gubernatorial Contenders; State Still Feeling Social, Financial Effects of Terrorist Attacks

SAN FRANCISCO, California, December 13, 2001 — California's three E's – the economy, electricity, and education – are dominating the minds of state residents as they head into the 2002 elections, while the aftermath of September 11 continues to transform their lives, according to a new survey by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC). The result is an interesting recipe for a campaign year: economic uncertainty – usually a worry for incumbents – mixed with patriotic support for elected representatives.

Today, Californians name the economy (15%), the electricity crisis (14%), and education (12%) as the most important issues facing the state. Terrorism and security issues are mentioned by 6 percent of residents, falling from 14 percent in October. Fifty-six percent of residents now say they expect the state to face bad times financially in the next year, and only 21 percent say they are financially better off today than they were one year ago, compared to 42 percent in a September 2000 survey. San Francisco Bay area residents are the most likely to say they are financially worse off (31%), while Central Valley residents are the least likely to say they are worse off (18%), a reversal of last year's findings. And while there has been little increase overall since 1998 in the number of Californians who say they are concerned that someone in their family will lose their job in the next year, Latinos (50%) are twice as likely today as non-Hispanic whites (25%) to be concerned about job losses.

Despite their economic woes, Californians remain optimistic: As in national surveys conducted after September 11, residents are more likely now (58%) than they were this summer (44%) to say that the state is headed in the right direction. Further, 41 percent believe they will be better off financially a year from now, compared to just 9 percent who expect to be worse off. Such optimism continues to benefit elected officials: Support for President George W. Bush remains extremely high in California, with 79 percent saying they approve of the way he is performing his duties overall and 85 percent saying they support his handling of terrorism and security issues. Fifty-nine percent of Californians also rate the job performance of the U.S. Congress as excellent (13%) or good (46%), compared to 38 percent just one year ago; and 52 percent give their own representative an excellent or good rating.

Support for Governor Gray Davis also remains higher than it was in the months before September 11, with 51 percent of residents saying they approve of the way he is handling his job and 66 percent supporting his handling of terrorism and security issues. Interestingly, the state legislature has not seen a similar boost in ratings: 53 percent of Californians approve of the job the legislature is doing at this time, down from 56 percent in September 2000. And 61 percent say they approve of their local state legislators' performance.

Close Races for Governor, Term Limits Initiative

Three months before the March 5th primary, former Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan holds a sizable lead over his two opponents for the Republican nomination for governor. Among likely GOP primary voters, 37 percent are inclined to vote for Riordan, 13 percent for Secretary of State Bill Jones, and 5 percent for businessman William Simon. However, the outcome of the primary race is far from settled: 45 percent of GOP primary voters say they are undecided. Independent voters – who under new open primary rules can choose from Republican or Democratic ballots – are more likely to say they will vote in the Republican primary rather than in the Democratic primary.

The ratings boost Davis has received since September 11 has failed to give him an edge over Republican gubernatorial challenger Richard Riordan: In potential match-ups, Riordan holds a slight lead over Davis among likely voters (44% to 40%), with GOP voters more loyal to Riordan (76%) than Democrats are to Davis (64%). There are also interesting trends in the state's Democratic strongholds: Davis has a 20-point lead in the San Francisco Bay area, while the two candidates are virtually tied in Los Angeles County. Davis currently leads in potential contests with Jones (45% to 35%) and Simon (46% to 31%).

“Davis falls short of majority support for his reelection bid in part because voters appear to have a split image of the governor, liking him but not his policies,” says PPIC Statewide Survey Director Mark Baldassare. Indeed, more than half of likely voters (58%) say they like Davis as a person, but almost as many (55%) do not like his policies. In all, only one in three voters say they like Davis and like his policies, while nearly an equal number say they dislike both Davis and his policies.

Voters are evenly divided on a state ballot measure that would allow voters to permit their incumbent state legislator to serve a maximum of four years beyond the term limits that are currently allowed: 46 of likely voters would vote yes and 45 percent would vote no. Democrats (52%) are more likely to support the measure and Republicans (53%) are more likely to oppose it. While the number of Californians who describe current term limits as a “good thing” for California has fallen over time – from 65 percent in 1998 to 49 percent today – only 17 percent of voters say that term limits have been a “bad thing” for the state.

Electricity, Education Still on Public's Radar

Although predicted disruptions in the state's electricity supply never materialized, nearly half of all Californians (48%) still consider electricity a “big” problem today, and 33 percent describe the issue as “somewhat” of a problem. However, the number of Californians who say electricity is a big problem is far lower today than it was in May (82%). About two in three Californians express at least some concern that the state's electricity problems will harm the economy in the next few years, while one in three residents has “a great deal” of concern about economic consequences. But again, the number of residents who express a great deal of concern has fallen sharply since May (62%). And most likely voters (58%) give Governor Davis at least some credit for the fact that California dodged power outages this summer.

While the public's top issue has shifted over the years – from schools to electricity to terrorism and the economy – concern about the quality of K-12 education has remained remarkably consistent. Eight in 10 Californians continue to say that the quality of public schools is at least somewhat of a problem, and about half see the issue as a “big” problem today. Although state government has made improving public education a top priority, Californians are only slightly more likely to believe that the quality of K-12 education has improved rather than worsened in recent years (28% to 24%), and many believe there has been no change whatsoever (40%). However, parents of public school children are more likely than others to say that the quality of education in the public schools has improved in recent years (41% to 23%).

Despite recent criticism that K-12 students are now subjected to too much standardized testing, Californians are overwhelmingly in favor of testing for students. Two in three residents say that elementary and middle school students receive either the right amount (33%) or not enough (33%) standardized testing, while 22 percent say there is too much testing at these levels. Only 16 percent of residents think there is too much testing in high schools, while seven in ten think the amount is just right (32%) or not enough (39%). Interestingly, Latinos are more likely than non-Hispanic whites to think there is not enough testing at all K-12 levels.

September 11: Social and Financial Aftershocks

The September 11 tragedies have affected some Californians – especially Latinos – socially, psychologically, and financially. Many residents continue to view terrorism and security concerns in California as a “big”

problem (31%) or “somewhat” of a problem (42%), and more than one in three residents say they are at least somewhat worried about the possibility that they or someone in their family will be the victim of a terrorist attack. While seven in 10 Californians report feeling more patriotic because of the September 11 tragedies, a majority of Californians today say they have not felt more anxious or depressed (58%), have not spent more time with family and friends (60%), and have not attended religious services more often (74%).

Many Californians have answered the national call to give and spend. Fifty-eight percent of residents say they have donated money or volunteered time to charities in the wake of September 11, while 42 percent say they have responded to media campaigns encouraging patriotic spending. One in three Californians say they have noticed a slowdown in economic activity at their business or workplace, while 23 percent say they have postponed or cancelled long-distance travel plans.

Latinos appear to have felt the effects of terrorism more intensely than non-Hispanic whites. They are far more likely to describe terrorism and security as a big problem (42% to 28%) and to worry about being personally affected by a terrorist attack (58% to 30%). Latinos are also more likely than non-Hispanic whites to report anxiety and depression, increased socializing, and increased spiritual or religious feelings after September 11. And they are more likely to have shopped in an effort to support the economy, experienced a work slowdown, and changed travel plans.

Other Key Findings

- ***State Budget Priorities*** (page 10)

When asked to rate the importance of major categories of state spending, given the projected deficit, Californians give a high priority to three out of the four categories mentioned, including spending for education (76%), public health and welfare (53%), and higher education (50%). Spending for corrections (including prisons) is viewed as a low priority (45%) by state residents.

- ***Immigration Attitudes Post 9/11*** (page 19)

More Californians today believe that immigrants are a benefit (54%) rather than a burden (36%) to the state, similar to one year ago. However, more Californians also believe that legal immigration should be reduced (48%), rather than maintained (34%) or increased (15%).

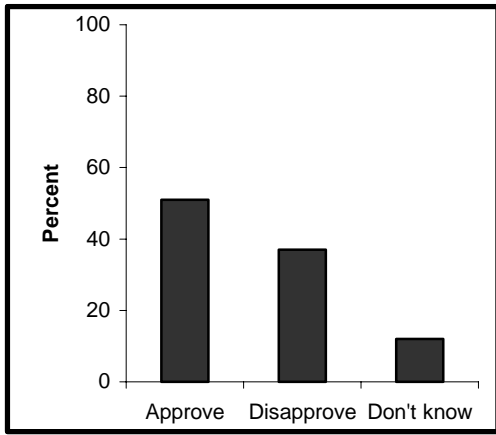
About the Survey

The purpose of the PPIC Statewide Survey is to develop an in-depth profile of the social, economic, and political forces affecting California elections and public policy preferences. PPIC will conduct large-scale public opinion surveys on a regular basis leading up to the November 2002 election. Findings of the current survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,000 California adult residents interviewed from November 26 to December 4, 2001. Interviews were conducted in English or Spanish. The sampling error for the total sample is +/- 2%. The sampling error for the 1503 registered voters is +/- 2.5% and for the 953 likely voters is +/- 3.5%. For more information on survey methodology, see page 21.

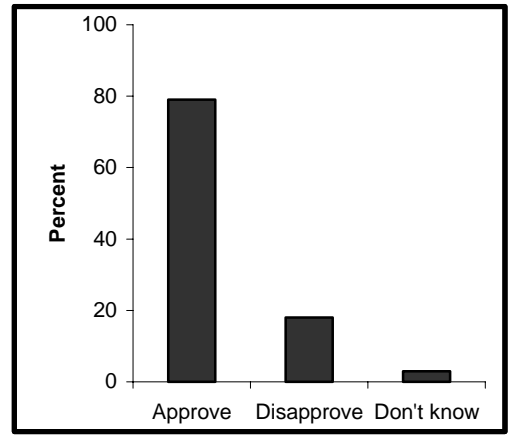
Dr. Mark Baldassare is a senior fellow and program director at PPIC, where he holds the Arjay and Frances Fearing Miller Chair in Public Policy. He is founder and director of the PPIC Statewide Survey, which he has conducted since 1998. Dr. Baldassare is the author of numerous books, including *California in the New Millennium: The Changing Social and Political Landscape* (University of California Press, 2000).

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

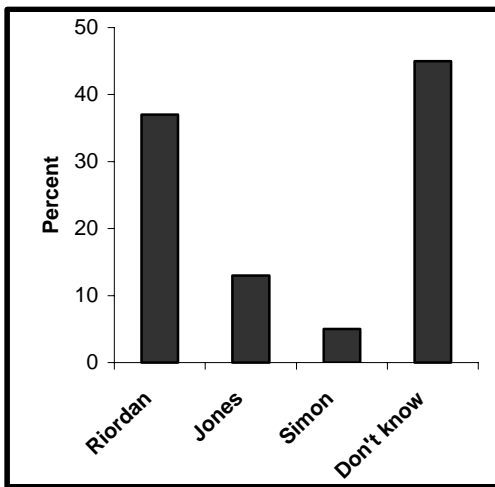
This report will appear on PPIC's website (www.ppic.org) on December 13.



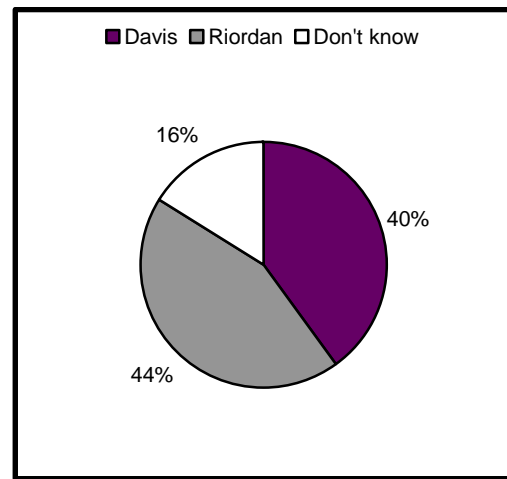
Approval Rating of Governor Davis



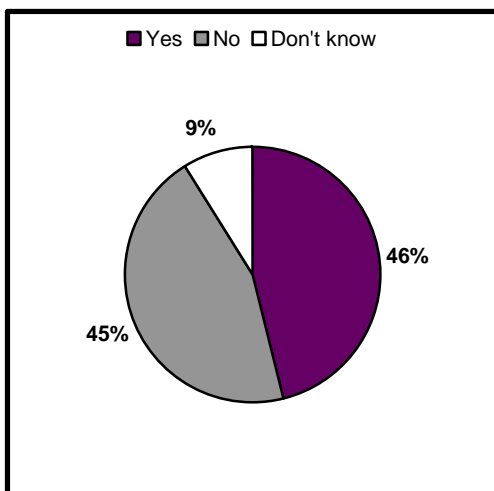
Approval Rating of President Bush



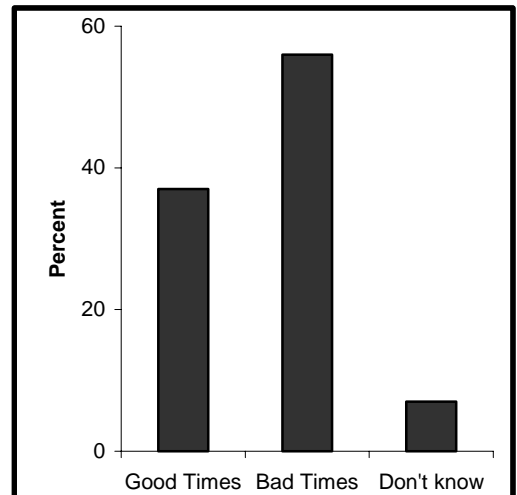
If the Republican primary election for governor were held today and these were the candidates, who would you vote for?



If these were the candidates in the November 2002 governor's election, would you vote for ...?



If an election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 45, which eases the restrictions on term limits?



Do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?

California 2002 Election

Republican Primary for Governor

Three months before the March 5th primary, Richard Riordan holds a sizable lead over the other two contenders for the Republican gubernatorial nomination. Among those likely to vote in the GOP primary, 37 percent opt for Riordan, 13 percent for Bill Jones, and 5 percent for William Simon. Although Riordan now has a 24-point lead over his closest rival in the primary, the outcome is far from settled: 45 percent of likely voters in the GOP primary currently plan to vote for someone other than the three major candidates or are undecided.

Among likely voters in the GOP primary, Riordan has more support among men than women (45% to 26%), largely because women are more likely than men to be undecided (45% to 29%). Riordan's support also increases with the age and income of likely voters. He has a substantial lead over the other two candidates in every region except the Central Valley, where he trails Jones (23% to 27%). His strength is greatest in Los Angeles County (52%) and the rest of Southern California (41%).

The new "open" primary rules allow independent (i.e., decline to state) voters to choose between Republican and Democratic ballots in the primary. At this stage, nearly all of Riordan's support comes from Republican voters in the GOP primary, since most of those planning to vote in the GOP primary are Republicans (93%). Only one in four independent voters say they will vote in the GOP primary, while two in three are currently uncommitted. The fact that independents account for one in seven registered voters in the state adds a wildcard to the GOP gubernatorial primary race.

"If the Republican primary election for governor were held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for?"

	GOP Primary (Likely Voters)
Richard Riordan	37%
Bill Jones	13
William Simon	5
Other/Don't know	45

"Do you plan to vote in the Republican primary, the Democratic primary, or neither?"

	Independents (Likely Voters)
Republican	23%
Democrat	11
Neither	40
Don't know	26

Leading Candidates in Governor's Race

Governor Davis is currently in a tight contest with Riordan for the 2002 governor's race. When asked about potential matchups, 40 percent support Davis and 44 percent support Riordan, while 16 percent are undecided among likely voters. The governor leads a hypothetical contest with Jones by a 10-point margin and one with Simon by a 15-point margin, with about one in five voters undecided in each case.

In a Davis-Riordan match-up, GOP voters are currently more loyal to Riordan (76%) than Democrats are to Davis (64%). Although independents are divided between the two, 30 percent of that group are undecided. There are interesting trends in the state's Democratic strongholds: Davis has a 20-point lead over Riordan in the San Francisco Bay area, while the two are virtually tied in Los Angeles. Riordan has a large lead over Davis in the Central Valley and the rest of Southern California.

Among Latino voters, Davis draws a majority in all three potential match-ups, although 35 percent of Latinos currently support Riordan. Non-Hispanic whites strongly back Riordan over Davis (48% to 35%), are evenly divided in a Davis-Jones contest (40% each), and give Davis a slight edge over Simon (40% to 36%). Despite the recent "gender gap" in California—women giving stronger support to Democratic candidates in state races—women show only a slight preference for Davis over Riordan (44% to 39%). However, they strongly support Davis over Jones (47% to 30%) and Davis over Simon (49% to 27%). Men strongly favor Riordan over Davis (50% to 34%), while slightly favoring Davis in contests with Jones (42% to 38%) and Simon (42% to 35%).

"If these were the candidates in the November 2002 governor's election, would you vote for ..."

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Likely Voters	Likely Voters	Likely Voters
Gray Davis	40%	Gray Davis	46%
Richard Riordan	44	Bill Jones	31
Other/Don't know	16	Other/Don't know	23

	Likely Voters								
	Party			Region				Latino	
	Dem	Rep	Other Voters	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California		
(1)	Gray Davis	64%	11%	35%	37%	49%	43%	30%	57%
	Richard Riordan	23	76	35	49	29	46	54	35
	Other/Don't know	13	13	30	14	22	11	16	8
(2)	Gray Davis	73%	14%	39%	39%	49%	55%	36%	66%
	Bill Jones	10	71	24	47	25	26	45	23
	Other/Don't know	17	15	37	14	26	19	19	11
(3)	Gray Davis	73%	15%	40%	39%	50%	56%	38%	70%
	William E. Simon	8	65	22	44	25	21	40	18
	Other/Don't know	19	20	38	17	25	23	22	12

Image of Governor Davis

One reason why Governor Davis falls short of majority support for reelection may be the voters' split image of their governor: 58 percent say they like him, but 55 percent don't like his policies. In all, only 33 percent of voters say they like him and like his policies. A nearly equal number say they dislike both.

There are strong partisan differences: Most Democrats like Davis (75%) and like his policies (59%), while most Republicans dislike Davis (56%) and dislike his policies (79%). Independent voters are more ambivalent, with about half saying they like Davis (54%) but dislike his policies (55%).

Most voters (58%) give Davis at least some credit for the fact that California averted a serious electricity crisis. However, only 25 percent give the Governor a lot of credit for his efforts and 40 percent give him little or no credit for averting rolling blackouts and power outages. Again, there are strong partisan differences: 71 percent of Democrats and 53 percent of independent voters give Davis at least some credit for the lack of summer problems, while 53 percent of Republicans give him little or none.

"Which of these statements is closest to your view of Governor Gray Davis?"

	<u>Likely Voters</u>				
	<u>All Likely Voters</u>	<u>Party</u>			<u>Latino</u>
		<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Other</u>	
I like Davis and I like his policies	33%	52%	11%	29%	47%
I like Davis but I dislike his policies	25	23	28	25	29
I dislike Davis but I like his policies	7	7	5	11	6
I dislike Davis and I dislike his policies	30	13	51	30	16
Don't know	5	5	5	5	2

"How much credit do you think that Governor Gray Davis deserves for the fact that California did not have major problems with rolling blackouts and power outages this summer— a lot, only some, very little, or none?"

	<u>Likely Voters</u>				
	<u>All Likely Voters</u>	<u>Party</u>			<u>Latino</u>
		<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Other</u>	
A lot	25%	33%	17%	21%	26%
Some	33	38	29	32	42
Very little	21	16	25	24	17
None	19	10	28	21	14
Don't know	2	3	1	2	1

Legislative Term Limits Initiative

Voters are evenly divided on Proposition 45, which would allow voters to permit their incumbent legislator to serve a maximum of four years beyond the legislative term limits currently in effect: 46 percent would vote yes and 45 percent would vote no (note: the ballot label was still subject to change when this survey was conducted, so the wording of the proposition could change).

Democrats favor and Republicans oppose Proposition 45 by a similar margin, while independent voters are more likely to vote no than yes (49% to 42%). The initiative has the greatest support in Los Angeles, but a plurality of San Francisco Bay area voters and a majority of Central Valley voters oppose Proposition 45. A slim majority of Latinos support this measure, while non-Hispanic whites are divided (45% to 47%).

There is no apparent groundswell of support for reforming the term limits law: Only 17 percent of voters believe the term-limit restrictions have been a “bad thing” for California, while 49 percent think term limits have been a good thing. Nevertheless, enthusiasm for term limits appears to have declined over time: In a PPIC Statewide Survey in October 1998, 65 percent described term limits as a good thing, compared with the 49 percent today.

"Proposition 45 on the March 2002 Ballot, the 'Legislative Term Limits, Local Voter Petitions' initiative, allows registered voters in assembly or state senate districts to submit petition signatures to permit their incumbent state legislator to run for re-election and serve an additional four-years maximum, if a majority of voters approves. If an election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 45?"

Likely Voters	
Yes	46%
No	45
Don't know	9

	Likely Voters							
	Party			Region				Latino
	Dem	Rep	Other Voters	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Yes	52%	39%	42%	41%	39%	49%	46%	52%
No	38	53	49	53	49	42	45	36
Don't know	10	8	9	6	12	9	9	12

"The California legislature has operated under term limits since 1990. Overall, do you think that term limits have been a good thing or a bad thing for California, or do they make no difference?"

Likely Voters	
Good thing	49%
Bad thing	17
No difference	30
Don't know	4

California Policy Issues

Most Important Problem

What is the most important issue facing the state today? Californians are about equally likely to cite jobs and the economy (15%), electricity problems (14%), and the public schools (12%). No other single issue is mentioned by more than one in 10 residents. The percentage mentioning these three issues has changed little since the PPIC Statewide Survey in October 2001. However, the percentage citing terrorism and security as the biggest issue has declined by 8 points (14% to 6%), after a month of warnings of possible terrorist attacks but no incidents in the state. The San Francisco Bay area now leads all other major regions in identifying jobs and the economy as the top state issue. Latinos are more likely than non-Hispanic whites to list jobs and the economy (19% to 12%) and terrorism and security issues (15% to 3%) as the most important issue facing California today.

"Thinking about the state as a whole, what do you think is the most important issue facing California today?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Jobs, the economy, unemployment	15%	11%	21%	15%	13%	19%
Electricity cost, supply, demand	14	16	14	11	15	12
Schools, education	12	12	16	13	11	9
Terrorism, security, bioterrorism, anthrax	6	5	3	9	6	15
Growth, population, overpopulation	6	6	7	6	6	2
Immigration, illegal immigration	4	4	2	6	5	5
Crime, gangs	4	3	2	5	3	5
Environment, pollution	4	4	3	5	3	1
Poverty, the poor, the homeless, welfare	3	2	4	2	2	2
Traffic and transportation	3	3	4	3	4	1
Housing costs, housing availability	3	1	7	2	2	2
State government, governor, legislature	3	4	2	2	4	1
Taxes, cutting taxes	2	3	1	1	3	1
State budget, state deficit	2	3	1	2	2	1
Water	2	4	1	1	2	1
Health care, HMO reform	1	1	1	1	2	1
Drugs	1	0	0	1	1	1
Race relations, racial and ethnic issues	1	1	1	2	1	2
Development, sprawl, land use issues	1	0	1	1	0	0
Other	5	6	3	5	7	5
Don't know	8	11	6	7	8	14

Terrorism and Security Issues

Although concern over terrorism and security has declined, many people do see it as a problem in California and cause for worry about their personal safety.

Three in four residents describe terrorism and security as at least somewhat of a problem, and one in three call it a “big problem.” Terrorism and security are more likely to be rated as a big problem by people in Southern California than by residents of the Central Valley and the San Francisco Bay area, more by Latinos than by non-Hispanic whites (42% to 28%), and more by women than by men. Concerns about this issue tend to decline with age and higher levels of education and annual household income.

More than one in three Californians say they are at least somewhat worried about the possibility that they or family members might be the victims of terrorist attacks; 11 percent are “very worried.” Nearly two in three Californians are either not too worried or not at all worried about a terrorist attack directly affecting them or their family. In a national survey by the Gallup Organization in late November, a similar 35 percent of Americans described themselves as very or somewhat worried, while 64 percent said they were not too worried or not at all worried about this possibility.

Los Angeles residents are more likely than people in other regions, Latinos (58%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (30%), and women are more likely than men to say that they are either very or somewhat worried about being personally affected by a terrorist attack. Younger, lower income, and less educated residents are also more worried than others about becoming victims of terrorism.

"How much of a problem is terrorism and security in California today?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Big problem	31%	27%	29%	35%	34%	42%
Somewhat of a problem	42	45	45	41	39	37
Not much of a problem	24	26	23	23	25	19
Don't know	3	2	3	1	2	2

"How worried are you that you or someone in your family will be the victim of a terrorist attack?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Very worried	11%	11%	11%	13%	11%	32%
Somewhat worried	26	27	24	29	25	26
Not too worried	35	32	39	34	33	27
Not at all worried	27	30	25	24	30	14
Don't know	1	0	1	0	1	1

Electricity

Although the state did not suffer long-term disruptions of electricity supply, nearly half of Californians (48%) still consider electricity a “big problem” today. Given that one in seven residents rate electricity as the most important problem facing the state, this issue is evidently still very much on the public’s mind. Nevertheless, the percentage ranking electricity as the most important problem has declined dramatically since January (74%), May (82%), and July (78%) of this year.

About two in three Californians express at least some concern that the state’s electricity problems will harm the economy in the next few years, while one in three residents has a great deal of concern. Once again, however, the proportion worrying a great deal about this issue is down sharply from January (56%), May (62%), and July (51%).

Los Angeles residents – many of whom are served by municipal utilities – are less likely than others to see electricity as a big problem or to worry about negative effects on the state’s economy. There are no differences in responses to either question between Latinos and non-Hispanic whites or Democrats and Republicans, nor are there variations across age, education, gender, or income groups.

"How much of a problem is the cost, supply, and demand for electricity in California today?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Big problem	48%	47%	53%	43%	51%	47%
Somewhat of a problem	33	34	27	36	33	37
Not much of a problem	18	18	18	20	15	15
Don't know	1	1	2	1	1	1

"In the next few years, do you think the issue of the cost, supply, and demand for electricity will hurt the California economy or not?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Yes, a great deal	35%	33%	34%	32%	42%	35%
Yes, somewhat	30	34	30	27	28	32
Yes, don't know how much	5	4	6	5	5	6
No	26	25	25	32	21	23
Don't know	4	4	5	4	4	4

Public Schools

While the public’s definition of the state’s most important problems has shifted in the past few years—from public schools to electricity and then to the economy—concern about the quality of education in kindergarten through 12th grade public schools has remained remarkably consistent. Eight in 10 Californians continue to say that the quality of public schools is at least somewhat of a problem, and about half see this issue as a big problem today.

In assessing schools’ progress to date, Californians are only slightly more likely to think that the quality of K-12 education has improved rather than gotten worse in recent years (28% to 24%), and most (40%) believe it has remained about the same over the past two years. These results are very similar to the findings we reported in January and July 2001. Compared to January 2000, however, Californians today are more likely to say their schools have improved (22% to 28%) or stayed the same (34% to 40%) in recent years and are much less likely to say they have gotten worse (39% to 24%).

We repeated questions from earlier surveys to see if there has been any change in support for some key education policy proposals. Most Californians (66%) continue to favor increasing teachers’ pay based on merit to attract and retain teachers, and 55 percent favor giving more resources to school districts with lower test scores than to other school districts. While public support for both these policies is still strong, it has declined: In January 1999, 84 percent favored higher salaries to attract and retain teachers; and in February 2000, 70 percent favored giving more funding to school districts with lower test scores.

Parents of public school children are less likely than other adults to rate the quality of education in K-12 public schools as a big problem (44% to 52%), and they are more likely than others to say that the quality of education in the public schools has improved in recent years (41% to 23%). However, they are no different from others in their support for raising teachers’ salaries or providing more funding to local school districts with lower student test scores.

	<u>All Adults</u>				
	May 98	Jan 00	Jan 01	Jul 01	Dec 01
<i>How much of a problem is the quality of education in K-12 public schools in California today?</i>					
Big problem	46%	53%	52%	49%	51%
Somewhat of a problem	33	30	32	30	32
Not much of a problem	14	13	10	12	13
Don't know	7	4	6	9	4
<i>In the past two years, do you think the quality of education in California's K-12 public schools has improved, gotten worse, or stayed the same?</i>					
Improved	–	22%	31%	25%	28%
Gotten worse	–	39	22	24	24
Stayed the same	–	34	39	40	40
Don't know	–	5	8	11	8

Public School Reforms: Standardized Testing

As part of a package of education reforms, the state has instituted a variety of student achievement tests. Lately, some critics have claimed that students are now being subjected to too much testing. However, we find that Californians are overwhelmingly in favor of standardized testing for students in the state’s elementary, middle, and high schools.

Most people think that elementary and middle school students receive either the right amount (33%) or not enough (33%) standardized testing; only 22 percent think there is too much student testing at this level. As for high school, only 16 percent of residents think there is too much standardized testing; seven in 10 think the amount is just right (32%) or not enough (39%).

A national survey conducted by Belden Russonello & Stewart in July 2000 also found strong support for standardized tests in elementary and middle schools (12% too much, 50% right amount, 21% not enough) and in high schools (9% too much, 44% right amount, 32% not enough). Compared to the nation, Californians are more likely to say there is both too much and too little standardized testing at all grade levels.

Parents of public school children are more likely than other adults to say students receive the right amount of standardized testing in elementary and middle schools (41% to 31%) and high schools (38% to 31%). However, parents of public school children are also more likely than others to think that there is too much testing in elementary and middle schools (27% to 20%) and slightly more likely than others to think there is too much testing in high schools (18% to 14%).

Latinos express solid support for student testing. They are more likely than non-Hispanic whites to say elementary and middle schools receive the right amount of standardized testing (38% to 32%), and similar numbers in both groups say students receive the right amount of testing in high schools (34% to 33%). Only 14 percent of Latinos think there is too much testing in elementary and middle schools, compared to 25 percent of non-Hispanic whites. Relatively few Latinos or non-Hispanic whites say that high school students receive too much standardized testing (12% to 17%).

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<i>Do you think the amount of standardized testing of elementary and middle school students in your community is too much, the right amount, or not enough?</i>						
Too much	22%	23%	23%	20%	21%	14%
Right amount	33	37	31	32	33	38
Not enough	33	31	32	34	35	40
Don't know	12	9	14	14	11	8
<i>Do you think the amount of standardized testing of high school students in your community is too much, the right amount, or not enough?</i>						
Too much	16%	14%	17%	16%	16%	12%
Right amount	32	38	34	29	30	34
Not enough	39	38	35	42	40	45
Don't know	13	10	14	13	14	9

State Budget Priorities

When asked to rate the importance of major categories of state spending, given the large budget deficit expected next year, Californians give a high priority to three of the four categories mentioned. Most (76%) say spending for K-12 public schools should be a high priority; 53 percent also assign a high priority to public health and welfare programs and 50 percent to public colleges and universities. Latinos are more likely than non-Hispanic whites to say that K-12 education (81% to 74%), higher education (64% to 44%), and public health and welfare (56% to 51%) should be high priorities for the state. Democrats are more likely than Republicans to describe these three categories as high priorities for state spending. Only corrections and prisons are seen as a low priority issue (45%) – fewer than one in four Californians consider this a high priority for state funds.

While most Californians consider education a high priority for state funding, the number giving it this rating has dropped since a 1998 PPIC Statewide Survey. Seventy-six percent of residents today rate K-12 education as a high priority, compared to 85 percent in 1998; 50 percent rate colleges and universities as a high priority, down from 58 percent in 1998. Levels of support are down slightly for health and welfare (56% to 53%) and corrections (26% to 22%).

"On another topic, the state faces up to a 14 billion dollar deficit next year. On a scale of 1 to 5 – with 1 being a very low priority and 5 being a very high priority – what priorities should be given to each of these four major categories of public spending in the state budget?" (below: 1,2 = low; 3 = medium; 4,5 = high)

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Spending for K-12 public schools?						
Low	9%	11%	7%	7%	12%	6%
Medium	13	14	11	14	12	11
High	76	74	80	76	74	81
Don't know	2	1	2	3	2	2
Spending for public health and welfare?						
Low	18%	23%	15%	17%	20%	19%
Medium	27	28	27	27	27	23
High	53	48	58	55	52	56
Don't know	2	1	0	1	1	2
Spending for public colleges and universities?						
Low	19%	18%	18%	17%	21%	12%
Medium	30	34	30	29	31	21
High	50	46	52	53	47	64
Don't know	1	2	0	1	1	3
Spending for corrections, such as prisons?						
Low	45%	41%	52%	43%	42%	40%
Medium	31	29	29	33	31	31
High	22	27	18	21	25	25
Don't know	2	3	1	3	2	4

Political Trends

Governor's Ratings

A slight majority of Californians (51%) express approval of the overall job that Governor Davis is doing in office. Californians have not changed their opinion of the governor's performance much since the last PPIC Statewide Survey in October, when 54 percent approved of his overall job performance.

Democrats (63%) are much more likely than Republicans (29%), and Latinos (63%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (45%), to approve of the job that Davis is doing. Half of the voters outside of the major parties say that the governor is doing a good job overall in office.

Support for the way that Governor Davis is handling the issue of terrorism and security is much stronger: 66 percent approve of his response and 20 percent disapprove. In October, a similar 62 percent said they approved of the governor's handling of terrorism and security. Three in four Democrats, a slim majority of Republicans, and two in three other voters approve of the governor's handling of this issue. Latinos (72%) are more approving than non-Hispanic whites (62%).

Forty-nine percent of registered voters approve of Davis' job performance overall, while 42 percent disapprove. Approval is lower among likely voters: 46 percent of likely voters approve of the governor's overall performance and 48 percent disapprove.

	All Adults	Party Registration			Not Registered to Vote	Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters		
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Gray Davis is handling his job as governor of California?</i>						
Approve	51%	63%	29%	52%	60%	63%
Disapprove	37	28	62	37	20	22
Don't know	12	9	9	11	20	15
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Davis is handling the issue of terrorism and security in California?</i>						
Approve	66%	75%	52%	64%	69%	72%
Disapprove	20	15	31	19	13	16
Don't know	14	10	17	17	18	12

President's Ratings

Overall support for President George W. Bush is very high in California today: 79 percent approve of the job he is doing in office, while only 18 percent disapprove. This level of support for the president has remained essentially the same since the October survey, when 80 percent approved of his job performance. In a national survey by the *Washington Post* and ABC News in late November, 89 percent of Americans approved of the president's performance in office.

Although Republicans, at 95 percent, are by far the most supportive, even an impressive seven in ten Democrats and independent voters approve of the job that the president is doing.

Bush has even higher ratings from the California public on his handling of terrorism and security, with an 85 percent approval rating. Support for his handling of this issue is consistently high across all partisan categories and demographic groups. There is no difference between Latinos and non-Hispanic whites on either overall approval of the president's performance or specific approval of the way he is handling the issue of terrorism and security.

Those who rate terrorism and security as a big problem in California are somewhat more approving than those who do not; however, even among those who are not as concerned about the threat of terrorism, the president has a strong overall approval rating (77%), and an equally impressive rating for his handling of terrorism and security (83%).

	All Adults	<u>Party Registration</u>				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that George W. Bush is handling his job as president?</i>						
Approve	79%	70%	95%	71%	81%	81%
Disapprove	18	27	4	24	16	16
Don't know	3	3	1	5	3	3
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Bush is handling the issue of terrorism and security?</i>						
Approve	85%	81%	95%	79%	83%	85%
Disapprove	13	17	4	19	14	12
Don't know	2	2	1	2	3	3

U.S. Congress' Ratings

The higher job performance ratings that the president has received seem to have extended to the U.S. Congress as well. When asked to rate congressional job performance, 59 percent of Californians said the legislative body is doing an excellent or good job. Only 38 percent were of this same mind 14 months ago, just prior to the 2000 election, and the number has never risen above 40 percent in any of the prior PPIC Statewide Surveys.

Similarly, individual representatives to the U.S. Congress have reaped the benefits of this surge in public support: 52 percent of California residents give their own representative an excellent or good rating, compared to 44 percent in October 2000 and 46 percent in August 2000.

These ratings represent an important change from last year's surveys: In the past, individual representatives have received higher ratings than Congress as a whole, while today the legislative body as a whole receives higher ratings than individual representatives.

Republicans (65%) are more likely than Democrats (57%) to say Congress as a whole is doing an excellent or good job, while independents (49%) seem the least impressed. This difference is consistent with past Statewide Surveys, although the overall level of support is higher today. However, in another break with earlier results, Republicans (60%) are the most content with their own representative, while Democrats (53%) and independents (50%) are less so. In August and October of 2000, it was Democrats who were slightly more likely to approve of their own representative.

Latinos are as likely as non-Hispanic whites to feel Congress is doing an excellent or good job, but marginally less likely to feel the same about the performance of their own representative (47% to 55%). Likely voters give ratings similar to those of Californians in general.

"How do you rate the job performance of the U.S. Congress at this time – excellent, good, fair, or poor?"

All Adults							
	Oct 98	Dec 98	Sep 99	Dec 99	Aug 00	Oct 00	Dec 01
Excellent	5%	4%	2%	5%	4%	5%	13%
Good	34	29	24	30	34	33	46
Fair	40	42	48	44	45	46	31
Poor	19	22	21	18	14	13	8
Don't know	2	3	5	3	3	3	2

**"What about the representative to the U.S. House of Representatives from your congressional district:
How do you rate his or her performance at this time – excellent, good, fair, or poor?"**

All Adults			
	Aug 00	Oct 00	Dec 01
Excellent	7%	8%	10%
Good	39	36	42
Fair	31	36	28
Poor	8	7	7
Don't know	15	13	13

State Legislature's Ratings

The state legislature has not experienced the boost in approval ratings accorded to the Congress, president, and governor: Approval of the state legislature now stands at 53 percent, compared to 56 percent in September 2000 and 58 percent in January 2001.

Democrats (61%) are the most likely to approve of the Democrat-controlled legislature, while Republicans are the least likely (42%); ratings of independent voters (55%) lie between the major parties. Latinos (62%) are more satisfied than are non-Hispanic whites (51%) with the performance of the legislature.

Since January, the approval rating of the state legislature has fallen by 5 points overall, and it has fallen fairly consistently across all partisan categories: It is down five points among Democrats, six points among Republicans, and four points among independent voters.

Californians are more approving of their individual members of the legislature: Sixty-one percent approve and 23 percent disapprove of the legislators who represent their assembly and state senate districts. This is in contrast to attitudes toward the U.S. Congress today, where people are more approving of the institution as a whole than of their individual representatives. However, the higher approval for one's own state legislators matches the general pattern of U.S. Congress ratings prior to September 11th, when individual representatives had higher ratings than Congress as a whole.

There are some partisan differences in attitudes toward individual state legislators, but they are weaker than those for the legislature as a whole: Democrats (68%) are still the most positive, but well over a majority of Republicans (55%) and independent voters (59%) also express approval of their district legislators. Latino ratings of individual legislative representatives are higher than those of non-Hispanic whites, but not by much (67% to 61%).

Although likely voters are less approving than all Californians of the legislature as a whole, the difference is not large (50% to 53%) and does not extend to opinions about individual legislators.

	All Adults	Party Registration				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the job the California legislature is doing at this time?</i>						
Approve	53%	61%	42%	55%	56%	62%
Disapprove	29	25	44	28	18	19
Don't know	18	14	14	17	26	19
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the job that the state legislators representing your assembly and state senate districts are doing at this time?</i>						
Approve	61%	68%	55%	59%	60%	67%
Disapprove	23	19	34	26	13	17
Don't know	16	13	11	15	27	16

Social and Economic Trends

Overall Mood

Although Californians are more likely to expect that bad rather than good economic times lie ahead, they are more likely to think that the state is going in the right direction rather than the wrong direction. This is the same unusual finding first reported in our PPIC Statewide Survey in October, and it is similar to trends that have been in evidence in national surveys since September 11th.

Fifty-six percent of Californians say they expect bad financial times in the next 12 months, representing no significant change since October. A greater percentage of San Francisco Bay Area residents (62%) express this sentiment, but at least half of the residents in all regions expect bad times. Women (63%) are more worried than men (50%) about the state's economy, and pessimism increases with education; no differences were seen across race, age, or income groups.

Fifty-eight percent of California residents believe the state is headed in the right direction, compared to 60 percent in the October survey. Los Angeles residents (64%) are more likely than others to express this positive outlook. The gap between Latinos and non-Hispanic whites concerning the direction of the state is impressive: 68 percent of Latinos believe that California is heading in the right direction, compared to 54 percent of non-Hispanic whites. There are few other demographic differences, although pessimism about California's future increases slightly with education and age.

"Do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?"

<u>All Adults</u>									
	Sep 99	Dec 99	Feb 00	Aug 00	Jan 01	May 01	Jul 01	Oct 01	Dec 01
Good times	72%	76%	78%	72%	51%	38%	41%	32%	37%
Bad times	23	19	15	21	38	56	50	59	56
Don't know	5	5	7	7	11	6	9	9	7

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

<u>All Adults</u>										
	Dec 98	Sep 99	Dec 99	Feb 00	Aug 00	Jan 01	May 01	Jul 01	Oct 01	Dec 01
Right direction	63%	61%	62%	65%	62%	62%	44%	44%	60%	58%
Wrong direction	28	34	31	27	30	29	48	47	29	33
Don't know	9	5	7	8	8	9	8	9	11	9

Consumer Confidence

Compared to a year ago, a higher percentage of Californians now report being financially worse off (26%) than better off (21%). The current survey findings represent a sharp drop in this measure of consumer confidence over time. Californians today are much less likely to say they are financially better off than they said in September 2000 (42%), September 1999 (36%), and September 1998 (33%).

San Francisco Bay area residents are the most likely to say they are financially worse off (31%); Central Valley residents are the least likely to feel this way (18%). A year ago, Central Valley residents were the most likely to say they were financially worse off, and San Francisco Bay area residents the least likely to feel this way. Latinos are as likely as non-Hispanic whites (21% to 22%) to say they are financially better off today. Consumer confidence among Latinos has dropped sharply since January 2001, when this group was more likely than non-Hispanic whites to say they were financially better off (46% to 35%). Although the financial situation among all income groups has deteriorated since January, lower-income Californians have lost ground disproportionately.

One in three residents are concerned about themselves or family members losing their jobs in the next year. Interestingly, there has been only a small increase in that percentage since May 1998. San Francisco Bay area residents (21%) are the most likely to say they are very concerned about job loss; Central Valley residents are the least likely (10%). Latinos (50%) are twice as likely as non-Hispanic whites (25%) to be concerned about job losses; the percentage of respondents concerned with job loss decreases with higher income and education levels.

On the other hand, optimism about the future has not changed: 41 percent of Californians believe that they will be financially better off a year from now, which is similar to results in September 2000 and January 2001. Latinos are more optimistic than non-Hispanic whites about their financial situation in the future (49% to 39%).

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

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Better off	21%	22%	16%	19%	25%	21%
Worse off	26	18	31	26	25	25
Same	53	60	53	55	50	54

"Are you concerned that you or someone in your family will lose their job in the next year or not?" (if yes: very or somewhat concerned?)

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Very concerned	16%	10%	21%	17%	16%	30%
Somewhat concerned	15	13	16	16	13	20
No	68	76	62	66	69	49
Don't know	1	1	1	1	2	1

September 11: Social and Psychological Effects

The terrorism attacks on September 11th have had one significant effect on most Californians' lives: Seven in 10 residents report feeling more patriotic, and nearly half say they have felt a lot more patriotic. The overwhelming trend of increased patriotism is found across regions and within every major demographic, socioeconomic, and racial and ethnic group. However, Republicans (80%) are more likely than Democrats (69%) or independent voters (58%) to report having more patriotic feelings.

While some observers have discussed the possibilities of major changes in lifestyle and attitudes as a result of September 11th, a majority of Californians today say they have not felt more anxious or depressed (58%), nor have they spent more time with family, friends, and neighbors (60%) as a result of the terrorism attacks. Moreover, three in four residents say they have not felt more religious or spiritual, nor have they attended religious services more often since this tragic event. Latinos seem to be more moved by the events of September 11th than non-Hispanic whites: They are more likely to report increased anxiety and depression (50% to 36%), social interaction (58% to 34%), and spiritual and religious feelings (42% to 21%).

Women are more likely than men to say they have felt a change in their lives. Younger adults, lower income, and less educated residents are also more likely to report social, psychological, and spiritual changes

"We are interested in how the terrorism attacks on America are affecting people's feelings and everyday lives. In the past few weeks, have you _____ because of the terrorism attacks?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<i>Felt more patriotic or done things such as displaying the U.S. flag</i>						
Yes, a lot	46%	48%	40%	44%	50%	45%
Yes, a little	25	24	24	25	27	27
No	29	28	36	31	23	28
<i>Felt more anxious or depressed</i>						
Yes, a lot	18%	19%	15%	21%	14%	24%
Yes, a little	24	21	31	24	20	26
No	58	60	54	55	66	50
<i>Felt more social, or spent more time with family, neighbors, and friends</i>						
Yes, a lot	23%	21%	22%	24%	22%	36%
Yes, a little	17	16	19	17	16	21
No	60	63	59	59	62	43
<i>Felt more spiritual or religious or attended religious services more often</i>						
Yes, a lot	14%	15%	13%	14%	15%	22%
Yes, a little	12	12	13	14	11	20
No	74	73	74	72	74	58

September 11: Financial Effects

In California, “when the going gets tough, the tough go shopping.” Four in 10 residents report that they have been responsive to the post-September 11th media campaigns encouraging people to support the American economy by shopping. Moreover, almost six out of ten Californians have given either time or money to charitable groups specifically because of the terrorism attacks.

Lower percentages report any major effects of the terrorism attacks on their workplace or their travel plans. One in three residents report a slowdown at work, and one in four say they have cancelled or postponed travel plans as a result of the terrorism attacks. How does this view fit with the reports of major reductions in business activity and travel since September 11th? Some observers suggest that the recent economic slowdown is the result of a recession already in progress rather than a consequence of the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Latinos are more likely than non-Hispanic whites to have experienced a work slowdown, to change travel plans, and to shop in an effort to support the American economy. Charitable donations and volunteering tends to increase with income and education level. Shopping to support the economy is more common among younger residents. Those who say they have felt more patriotic since September 11th have also been more likely to shop in an effort to support the American economy.

"We are also interested in how the terrorism attacks on America are affecting people's financial conditions and decisions. In the past few weeks, _____ because of the terrorism attacks?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<i>Have you gone shopping in an effort to support the American economy</i>						
Yes, a lot	19%	16%	16%	18%	22%	21%
Yes, a little	23	25	21	24	22	28
No	58	59	63	58	56	51
<i>Have you donated money or volunteered time to charities</i>						
Yes, a lot	15%	13%	13%	16%	16%	12%
Yes, a little	43	47	40	44	42	42
No	42	40	47	40	42	46
<i>Has your business or workplace had a slowdown in economic activity</i>						
Yes, a lot	18%	13%	20%	22%	17%	25%
Yes, a little	15	12	19	17	15	19
No, Don't work	67	75	61	61	68	56
<i>Have you postponed or cancelled long-distance travel plans</i>						
Yes, a lot	12%	11%	9%	14%	11%	15%
Yes, a little	11	8	12	12	10	16
No	77	81	79	74	79	69

September 11: Effects on Immigration Attitudes

Most Californians want immigration levels to be reduced; only one-third want the present level to continue. Nonetheless, Californians are more positive than the rest of the nation toward immigration, as we see when we compare the results of this Statewide Survey with those of a national poll conducted in October 2001: 15 percent of Californians (compared to 8 percent of Americans) believe that immigration levels should be increased; 48 percent of Californians (compared to 58 percent of Americans) believe that immigration levels should be reduced. In California, Latinos are much less likely than non-Hispanic whites to want present immigration levels lowered (30% to 57%). Unfortunately, there are no statewide trends available that would allow us to compare answers to this question before and after September 11th.

Californians' attitudes about immigrants have not changed since September 11th. As in February 2000, more than half of the state's residents today see immigrants as a benefit to California's economy, while about one in three see them as a fiscal burden for the state government. Today, three out of four Latinos believe that immigrants are a benefit to California, while non-Hispanic whites are split equally on the question of whether immigrants represent more of a benefit to the economy (46%) or a burden to public services (44%). More Democrats (59%) and independents (55%) than Republicans (40%) think immigrants are a benefit to the state. A larger percentage of residents in the San Francisco Bay area (64%) than in Los Angeles (53%), other parts of Southern California (52%), or the Central Valley (52%) believe that immigrants are a benefit to California.

"In your view, should legal immigration into the United States be kept at its present level, increased, or decreased?"

	<u>All Adults</u>	
	U.S.*	California
Present level	30%	34%
Increased	8	15
Decreased	58	48
Don't know	4	3

* Source: CNN/USA Today/Gallup Poll, October 2001

"Which of these two views is closest to yours?"

	<u>All Adults</u>		
	April 98	Feb 00	Dec 01
Immigrants today are a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills	46%	54%	54%
Immigrants today are a burden to California because they use public services	42	34	36
Don't know	12	12	10

News Attentiveness

Californians have been paying close attention to the aftermath of the September 11th attacks. A remarkable 91 percent have followed the news fairly closely or very closely. More Californians are following this story now than followed the electricity crisis throughout 2001. There are no differences in attentiveness across regions, racial or ethnic groups, or by any other demographic characteristic.

A lower percentage of Californians has followed economic news, but the percentage who say they have followed it fairly or very closely (65%) is higher than in July (59%). In the San Francisco Bay area, which has been hard hit by the collapse of the high-tech sector, news about the economy has received closer attention (72%) than in any other area of the state. Latinos (50%) are much less likely than non-Hispanic whites (71%) to have followed economic news. Wealthier, better educated, and older Californians have followed the stock market and economy much more closely than others.

Most Californians have not paid close attention to news about the California budget. Despite the tremendous budget shortfall expected, only 44 percent of Californians say they have followed the story fairly or very closely. There are no differences across regions of the state.

"Tell me if you followed these news stories very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely ..."

	All Adults	Region					Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California		
<i>News about the terrorism attacks on the United States</i>							
Very closely	63%	65%	58%	67%	63%	60%	
Fairly closely	28	30	34	24	27	27	
Not too closely	7	4	7	7	7	10	
Not at all closely	2	1	1	2	3	3	
<i>News about the stock market and U.S. economy</i>							
Very closely	30%	26%	34%	26%	33%	24%	
Fairly closely	35	34	38	38	32	26	
Not too closely	21	21	17	22	23	29	
Not at all closely	14	19	11	14	12	21	
<i>News about the California state budget</i>							
Very closely	13%	15%	11%	14%	13%	19%	
Fairly closely	31	29	34	31	29	29	
Not too closely	34	34	34	35	32	36	
Not at all closely	22	22	21	20	26	16	

Survey Methodology

The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, a senior fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California, with research assistance from Lisa Cole and Eric McGhee. The findings of this survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,000 California adult residents interviewed from November 26 to December 4, 2001. 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 five 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 by 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 or Spanish. Maria Tello translated the survey into Spanish.

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

The sampling error for the total sample of 2,000 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 1,503 registered voters is +/- 2.5%, for the 953 likely voters is +/-3.5%, and for the 377 GOP primary likely voters is +/- 5%. 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 four geographic regions. “Central Valley” includes Butte, Colusa, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. “SF Bay Area” includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. “Los Angeles” refers to Los Angeles County, and “Other Southern California” includes the mostly suburban regions of Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties. These four regions were chosen for analysis because they are the major population centers of the state, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population; moreover, the growth of the Central Valley and “Other Southern California” regions have given them increasing political significance. We present specific results for Latinos because they 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. We contrast the opinions of Democrats and Republicans with “other” or “independent” registered voters. This third category includes those who are registered to vote as “decline to state” as well as a fewer number who say they are members of other political parties.

In some cases, we compare PPIC Statewide Survey responses to responses recorded in national surveys conducted by CNN/USA Today/Gallup in October 2001, Belden Russonello & Stewart in July 2000, the *Washington Post*/ABC News Poll in November 2001, and The Gallup Organization in November 2001. We used 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001 PPIC Statewide Surveys to analyze trends over time in California.

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT
NOVEMBER 26 – DECEMBER 4, 2001
2,000 CALIFORNIA ADULT RESIDENTS; ENGLISH AND SPANISH
MARGIN OF ERROR +/- 2% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE

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

58% right direction
33 wrong direction
9 don't know

2. Thinking about the state as a whole, what do you think is the most important issue facing California today? (*code, don't read*)

15% jobs, the economy, unemployment
14 electricity cost, supply, demand
12 education
6 terrorism, security, bioterrorism, anthrax
6 growth, population, overpopulation
4 immigration, illegal immigration
4 crime, gangs
4 environment, pollution
3 poverty, the poor, the homeless, welfare
3 traffic and transportation
3 housing costs, housing availability
3 state government, governor, legislature
2 taxes, cutting taxes
2 state budget, state deficit
2 water
1 health care, HMO reform
1 drugs
1 race relations, racial and ethnic issues
1 development, sprawl, land use issues
5 other (*specify*)
8 don't know

3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Gray Davis is handling his job as governor of California?

51% approve
37 disapprove
12 don't know

4. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Davis is handling the issue of terrorism and security in California?

66% approve
20 disapprove
14 don't know

5. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the job the California legislature is doing at this time?

53% approve
29 disapprove
18 don't know

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

61% approve
23 disapprove
16 don't know

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

37% good times
56 bad times
7 don't know

On another topic, the state faces up to a 14 billion dollar deficit next year. On a scale of 1 to 5—with 1 being a very low priority and 5 being a very high priority—what priorities should be given to each of these four major categories of public spending in the state budget? (*rotate q. 8 to 11*)

8. How about spending for kindergarten through 12th grade public schools?

9% low
13 medium
76 high
2 don't know

9. How about spending for public health and welfare?

18% low
27 medium
53 high
2 don't know

10. How about spending for public colleges and universities?

19% low
30 medium
50 high
1 don't know

11. How about spending for corrections, such as prisons?

45% low
31 medium
22 high
2 don't know

12. On another topic, how much of a problem is the quality of education in kindergarten through 12th grade public schools in California today? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?

51% big problem
32 somewhat of a problem
13 not much of a problem
4 don't know

13. In the past two years, do you think the quality of education in California's kindergarten through 12th grade public schools has improved, gotten worse, or stayed the same?

28% improved
24 gotten worse
40 stayed the same
8 don't know

14. Do you think the amount of standardized testing of elementary and middle school students in your community is too much, the right amount, or not enough?

22% too much
33 right amount
33 not enough
12 don't know

15. Do you think the amount of standardized testing of high school students in your community is too much, the right amount, or not enough?

16% too much
32 right amount
39 not enough
13 don't know

How do you feel about the following proposals that have been made to improve K-12 public schools in California?

16. Do you favor or oppose increasing teachers' pay based on merit—such as how well their students perform on tests—to attract and retain more and better teachers?

66% favor
30 oppose
4 don't know

17. Do you favor or oppose giving school districts with the lowest student test scores in the state more resources than other school districts?

55% favor
40 oppose
5 don't know

18. On another topic, how much of a problem is the cost, supply, and demand for electricity in California today? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?

48% big problem
33 somewhat of a problem
18 not much of a problem
1 don't know

19. In the next few years, do you think the issue of the cost, supply, and demand for electricity will hurt the California economy or not? (*If yes: Do you think it will hurt the California economy a great deal or only somewhat?*)

35% yes, a great deal
30 yes, only somewhat
5 yes, don't know
26 no
4 don't know

20. On another topic, overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

79% approve
18 disapprove
3 don't know

21. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Bush is handling the issue of terrorism and security?

85% approve
13 disapprove
2 don't know

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

13% excellent
46 good
31 fair
8 poor
2 don't know

23. What about the representative to the U.S. House of Representatives from your congressional district—how do you rate his or her performance at this time—excellent, good, fair, or poor?

10% excellent
42 good
28 fair
7 poor
13 don't know

24. On another topic, how much of a problem is terrorism and security in California today? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?

- 31% big problem
- 42 somewhat of a problem
- 24 not much of a problem
- 3 don't know

25. How worried are you that you or someone in your family will be the victim of a terrorist attack—very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried?

- 11% very worried
- 26 somewhat worried
- 35 not too worried
- 27 not at all worried
- 1 don't know

We are interested in how the terrorism attacks on America are affecting people's feelings and everyday lives. In the past few weeks ... (rotate q. 26 to 29)

26. Have you felt more anxious or depressed because of the terrorism attacks? (if yes: Is that a lot or a little?)

- 18% yes, a lot
- 24 yes, a little
- 58 no

27. Have you felt more spiritual or religious or attended religious services more often because of the terrorism attacks? (if yes: Is that a lot or a little?)

- 14% yes, a lot
- 12 yes, a little
- 74 no

28. Have you felt more social or spent more time with family, neighbors, and friends because of the terrorism attacks? (if yes: Is that a lot or a little?)

- 23% yes, a lot
- 17 yes, a little
- 60 no

29. Have you felt more patriotic or done things such as display the U.S. flag because of the terrorism attacks? (if yes: Is that a lot or a little?)

- 46% yes, a lot
- 25 yes, a little
- 29 no

We are also interested in how the terrorism attacks on America are affecting people's financial conditions and decisions. In the past few weeks ... (rotate q. 30 to 33)

30. Have you donated money or volunteered time to charities because of the terrorism attacks? (if yes: Have you donated or volunteered a lot or a little?)

- 15% yes, a lot
- 43 yes, a little
- 42 no

31. Has your business or workplace had a slowdown in economic activity because of the terrorism attacks? (if yes: Has business slowed down a lot or a little?)

- 18% yes, a lot
- 15 yes, a little
- 53 no
- 14 don't work/don't know

32. Have you postponed or cancelled long-distance travel plans because of the terrorism attacks? (if yes: Have your travel plans changed a lot or a little?)

- 12% yes, a lot
- 11 yes, a little
- 77 no

33. Have you gone shopping or spent money in other ways in an effort to support the American economy because of the terrorism attacks? (if yes: Have you spent a lot or a little money for this reason?)

- 19% yes, a lot
- 23 yes, a little
- 58 no

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

- 21% better off
- 26 worse off
- 53 same

35. 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?

- 41% better off
- 9 worse off
- 47 same
- 3 don't know

36. 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?)

- 16% yes, very concerned
- 15 yes, somewhat concerned
- 68 no
- 1 don't know

37. On another topic, in your view, should legal immigration into the United States be kept at its present level, increased, or decreased?

- 34% present level
- 15 increased
- 48 decreased
- 3 don't know

38. 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.

54% benefit
36 burden
10 neither, don't know

I will read a list of some recent news stories covered by news organizations. As I read each one, tell me if you followed this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. (*rotate q. 39 to 41*)

39. News about the terrorism attacks on the United States.

63% very closely
28 fairly closely
7 not too closely
2 not at all closely

40. News about the California state budget.

13% very closely
31 fairly closely
34 not too closely
22 not at all closely

41. News about the stock market and U.S. economy.

30% very closely
35 fairly closely
21 not too closely
14 not at all closely

42. On another topic, some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain you are registered to vote? (*if yes: Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or as an independent?*)

36% yes, Democrat (*skip to q. 45*)
27 yes, Republican (*skip to q. 44*)
4 yes, another party (*skip to q. 45*)
12 yes, independent (*ask q. 43*)
21 no, not registered (*skip to q. 45*)

[Responses recorded for questions 43-52 are from likely voters only. All other responses are from all adults.]

43. (*Independents only*) California voters like yourself will be able to choose between voting in the Republican primary and the Democratic primary in March 2002. Do you plan to vote in the Republican primary, the Democratic primary, or neither?

23% Republican primary
11 Democratic primary
40 neither
26 don't know

44. (*GOP primary voters only*) If the Republican primary election for governor were held today and these were the candidates, who would you vote for? (*rotate names, then ask "or someone else?"*)

37% Richard Riordan
13 Bill Jones
5 William E. Simon
45 other, don't know

If these were the candidates in the November 2002 governor's election ... (*rotate q. 45-47*)

45. Would you vote for ... (*rotate names*)

45% Gray Davis, a Democrat
35 Bill Jones, a Republican
20 other, don't know

46. Would you vote for ... (*rotate names*)

40% Gray Davis, a Democrat
44 Richard Riordan, a Republican
16 other, don't know

47. Would you vote for ... (*rotate names*)

46% Gray Davis, a Democrat
31 William E. Simon, a Republican
23 other, don't know

48. Which of these statements is closest to your view of Governor Gray Davis?

33% I like Davis and I like his policies
25 I like Davis but I dislike his policies
7 I dislike Davis but I like his policies
30 I dislike Davis and I dislike his policies
5 don't know

49. How much credit do you think that Governor Gray Davis deserves for the fact that California did not have major problems with rolling blackouts and power outages this summer—a lot, only some, very little, or none?

25% a lot
33 some
21 very little
19 none
2 don't know

50. Proposition 45 on the March 2002 ballot, the “Legislative Term Limits, Local Voter Petitions” initiative, allows registered voters in assembly or state senate districts to submit petition signatures to permit their incumbent state legislator to run for re-election and serve an additional four years maximum, if a majority of voters approves. This option would only be permitted once per legislator, petitions would be filed before the end of the legislator’s final term, and petition signatures would be subject to specified requirements. This measure would result in unknown, probably minor, costs to local and state government. If an election were held today, would you vote yes or no on proposition 45?

46% yes
 45 no
 9 don’t know

51. The “Legislative Term Limits, Local Voters Petition” initiative would change the legislative term limits that became state law when voters passed a citizens’ initiative. Knowing this, would you vote yes or no on this state proposition?

43% yes
 45 no
 12 don’t know

52. The California legislature has operated under term limits since 1990. Overall, do you think that term limits have been a good thing or a bad thing for California or do they make no difference?

49% good thing
 17 bad thing
 30 no difference
 4 don’t know

53. Would you consider yourself to be politically very liberal, somewhat liberal, middle-of-the-road, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?

9% very liberal
 22 somewhat liberal
 33 middle-of-the-road
 26 somewhat conservative
 10 very conservative

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

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

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

49% always
 24 nearly always
 10 part of the time
 5 seldom
 12 never

[56-64: demographic questions]

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY

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