PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and the Environment

August 1, 2019

Mark Baldassare, Dean Bonner, Alyssa Dykman, Rachel Ward

Supported with funding from the Arjay and Frances F. Miller Foundation, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Dirk and Charlene Kabcenell Foundation, and the Flora Family Foundation
Outline

- PPIC Statewide Surveys
- Public perceptions
- Policy preferences
- Conclusions
PPIC Statewide Survey mission

- Provide timely, relevant, nonpartisan data on political, social, and economic opinions
- Inform and improve state policymaking, raise awareness, encourage discussion
- Provide a voice for all Californians in important state policy debates
  - 350,000+ Californians interviewed since 1998
  - 170+ general, issue, and regional surveys
Californians and the Environment

- Conducted with funding from the Arjay and Frances F. Miller Foundation, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Dirk and Charlene Kabcenell Foundation, and the Flora Family Foundation

- Telephone interviews, July 14–23, 2019
  - 70% cell phone, 30% landline
  - 1,706 adults, ± 3.4% margin of error
  - 1,085 likely voters, ± 4.4% margin of error

- Views on wildfires, water supply, air pollution, and coastal issues

- Policy preferences on climate change and energy policy and the 2020 election
Outline

- PPIC Statewide Surveys
- Public perceptions
- Policy preferences
- Conclusions
Approval of state and federal elected officials

Governor Newsom: Overall approval 45%, Environmental issues 45%
California Legislature: Overall approval 42%, Environmental issues 45%
President Trump: Overall approval 32%, Environmental issues 26%
US Congress: Overall approval 25%, Environmental issues 25%

PPIC 25 YEARS
Which of the following statements reflects your view of when the effects of global warming will begin to happen?

*Gallup polls 2005–2019
How serious of a threat is global warming to the economy and quality of life for California’s future?

- All adults: 57%
- Likely voters: 56%
- African Americans: 73%
- Asian Americans: 53%
- Latinos: 66%
- Whites: 51%
Thinking about the possible impacts of global warming in California, how concerned are you about...?

Concern about effects of global warming

- Rising sea levels: 29% somewhat concerned, 42% very concerned
- Heat waves that are more severe: 28% somewhat concerned, 49% very concerned
- Wildfires that are more severe: 15% somewhat concerned, 71% very concerned
Global warming contributing to recent wildfires

Do you think that global warming has contributed to California’s recent wildfires or not?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All adults</th>
<th>Dem</th>
<th>Rep</th>
<th>Ind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% yes, has contributed
Recently, the California legislature passed and Governor Newsom signed into law a bill that will create a $21 billion wildfire insurance fund to pay for future wildfires, which will be paid for evenly by ratepayers and utility investors. Do you favor or oppose this spending plan?
Would you say that the supply of water is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem in your part of California?
Disparities in pollution of drinking water

Do you think that the pollution of drinking water is a more serious health threat in lower-income areas than other areas in your part of California, or not?

- Under $40,000: 65%
- $40,000 to under $80,000: 63%
- $80,000 or more: 51%
- African Americans: 82%
- Asian Americans: 59%
- Latinos: 70%
- Whites: 48%
Support for clean drinking water fund

The state budget recently passed by the legislature and signed by the governor allocates $130 million of the state’s Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund from the cap-and-trade program to support a clean drinking water fund. Do you favor or oppose this spending plan?
Seriousness of air pollution

Would you say that air pollution is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem in your part of California?

![Bar chart showing percentages of respondents in different regions of California regarding the seriousness of air pollution.]

- **All adults**: 35% somewhat of a problem, 27% big problem
- **Central Valley**: 33% somewhat of a problem, 36% big problem
- **Inland Empire**: 32% somewhat of a problem, 33% big problem
- **Los Angeles**: 33% somewhat of a problem, 43% big problem
- **Orange/San Diego**: 34% somewhat of a problem, 11% big problem
- **San Francisco Bay Area**: 42% somewhat of a problem, 14% big problem
Air pollution as a health threat

How serious a health threat is air pollution in your region to you and your immediate family – do you think it is a very serious, somewhat serious, or not too serious of a health threat?

![Bar chart showing the percentage of people in different regions who think air pollution is a very serious or somewhat serious health threat.](chart)

- All adults: 30% (22% very serious, 30% somewhat serious)
- Central Valley: 33% (30% very serious, 22% somewhat serious)
- Inland Empire: 38% (22% very serious, 34% somewhat serious)
- Los Angeles: 29% (34% very serious, 25% somewhat serious)
- Orange/San Diego: 12% (13% very serious, 25% somewhat serious)
- San Francisco Bay Area: 33% (13% very serious, 33% somewhat serious)
Next, I am going to list some specific problems that some people say affect our ocean and marine life in California today. After each, please tell me whether you think it is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem in the part of the California coast that is closest to you.
Outline

- PPIC Statewide Surveys
- Public perceptions
- Policy preferences
- Conclusions
State leadership on climate change

- Favor California making its own policies
- Say it is very important that California act as a world leader

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Favor California</th>
<th>Say it is very important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To address global warming, do you favor or oppose the state law that requires California to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by the year 2030?

Support for SB 32’s emission-reduction goal

- **All adults**: 67%
- **African Americans**: 70%
- **Asian Americans**: 77%
- **Latinos**: 74%
- **Whites**: 61%
Support for renewable energy

- Support 100 percent renewable goal
- Would be willing to pay more for renewables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Support 100%</th>
<th>Pay More for Renewables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely voters</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Next, officials in the state and federal government are discussing ways to address global warming. Please tell me if you favor or oppose the following plans to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- Encouraging local government to change land use and transportation planning
  - Favor: 74% adults
  - Oppose: 23% adults

- Requiring all automakers to further reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases from new cars
  - Favor: 75% adults
  - Oppose: 21% adults
Impact of state climate polices on jobs and gas prices

Impact on jobs

- More jobs: 48%
- Fewer jobs: 19%
- Wouldn't affect the number of jobs: 21%
- Don't know: 12%

Impact on gas prices

- Increase gas prices: 58%
- Decrease gas prices: 15%
- Wouldn't affect gas prices: 17%
- Don't know: 9%
In the system called “cap and trade,” the California state government issues permits limiting the amount of greenhouse gases companies can put out. Do you favor or oppose the cap-and-trade system?
Support for more oil drilling off the coast

How about allowing more oil drilling off the California coast?
Support for energy development off the California coast

- 28% of all adults support more oil drilling.
- 30% of likely voters support more oil drilling.
- 15% of Democrats support more oil drilling.
- 57% of Republicans support wind power and wave energy projects.
- 26% of Independents support wind power and wave energy projects.
In thinking about the presidential election in 2020, how important to you are the candidates’ positions on the environment in determining your vote?
Importance of candidates’ positions on the Green New Deal

In thinking about the California Democratic presidential primary in March 2020, how important to you are the candidates’ positions on the policy proposed by some members of Congress called the Green New Deal?

Dem or Dem-leaning independent likely voters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinos</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other racial/ethnic groups</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 44</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 and older</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preferred candidate for 2020 Democratic primary

- Kamala Harris: 19%
- Elizabeth Warren: 15%
- Bernie Sanders: 12%
- Joe Biden: 11%
- Pete Buttigieg: 5%
- Don't know: 25%

% Dem or Dem-leaning independent likely voters
Outline

- PPIC Statewide Surveys
- Public perceptions
- Policy preferences
- Conclusions
Conclusions

- A record-high share of Californians are very concerned about more-severe wildfires as an impact of global warming; majorities across regions favor the new wildfire insurance fund.

- Majorities view pollution of drinking water as a more serious problem in low-income communities and support the creation of the clean drinking water fund.

- Many Californians value ocean and beach conditions and say plastics and marine debris are a big problem along the coast.

- There are wide partisan differences on climate change and what the state should do about it.

- Most Democratic and Democratic-leaning likely voters say candidates’ environmental positions are important; Harris, Warren, Sanders, and Biden are frontrunners in the Democratic primary.
These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

Alyssa Dykman (dykman@ppic.org; 415-291-4475)

Thank you for your interest in this work.