PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and Their Government

March 28, 2019

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Supported with funding from the James Irvine Foundation and the PPIC Donor Circle

PPIC PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA 25 YEARS

Outline

- PPIC Statewide Surveys
- State issues
- National issues
- 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 Their Government

- General series funded by the James Irvine Foundation and the PPIC Donor Circle
- Telephone interviews, March 10–19, 2019
  - 70% cell phone, 30% landline
  - 1,706 adults, ± 3.4% margin of error
  - 1,112 likely voters, ± 4.3% margin of error
- Views on state elected officials, pension benefits, poverty and income inequality, housing affordability, and wildfires
- Opinions on federal elected officials and policy preferences for federal taxes, immigration, and health care

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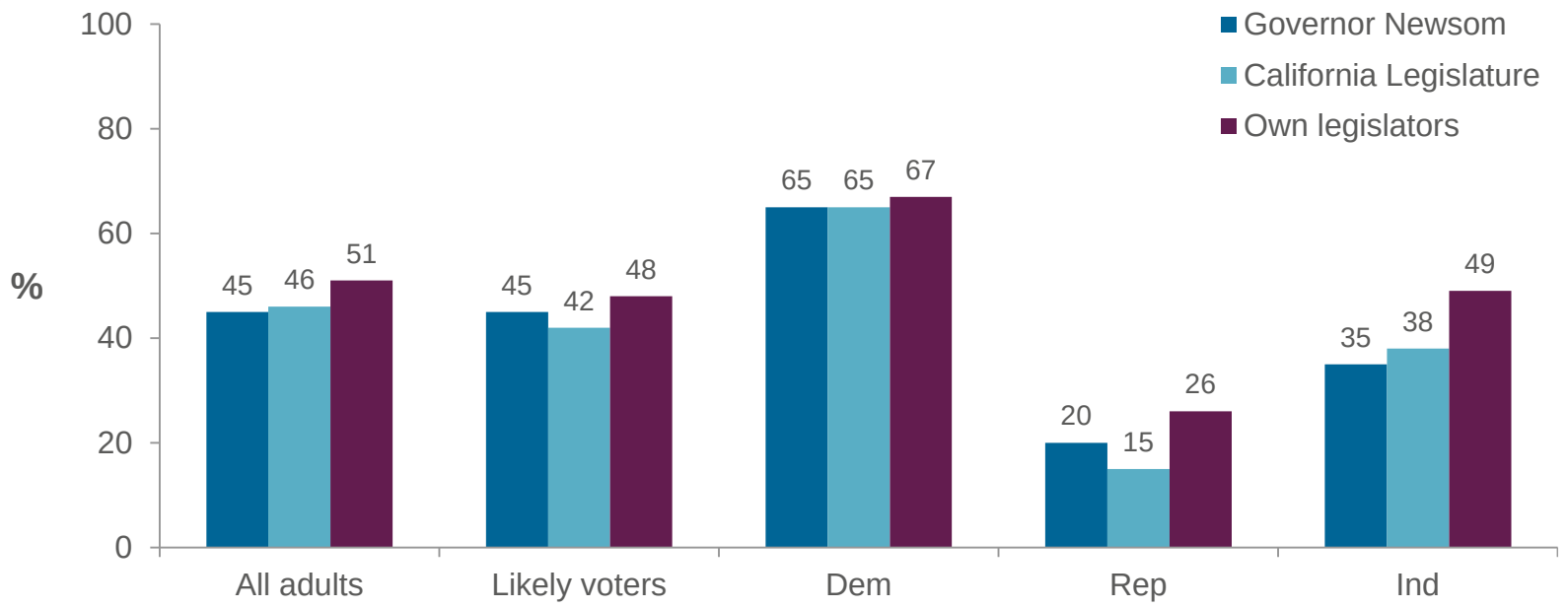
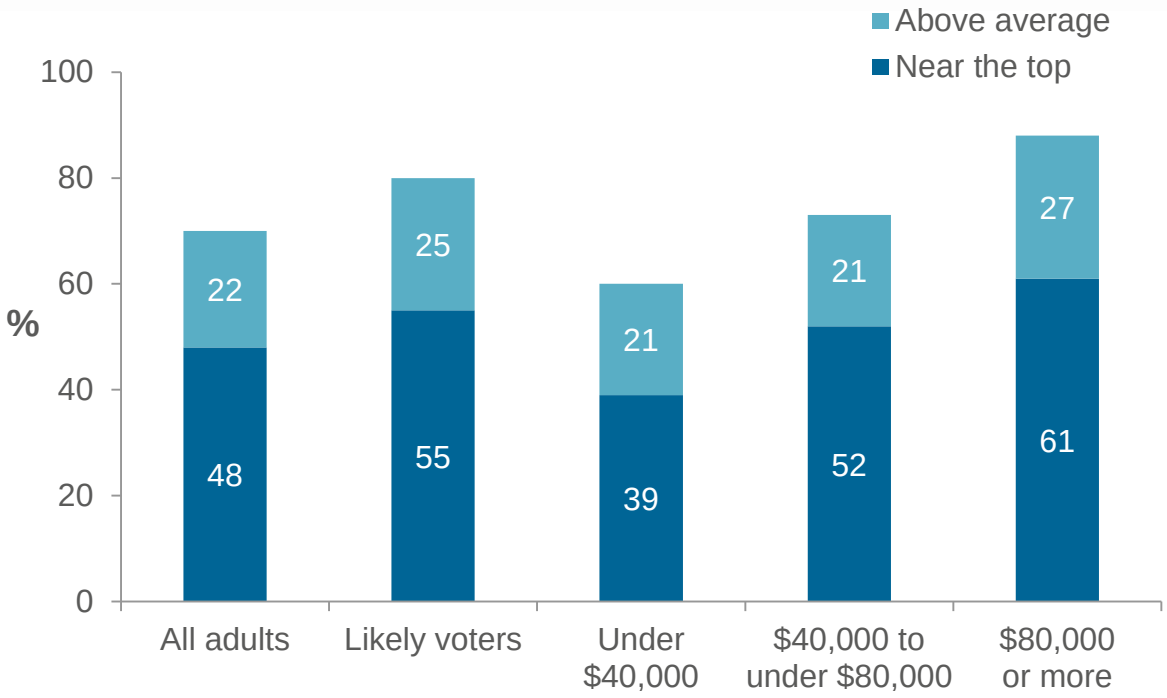
Approval ratings of state elected officials



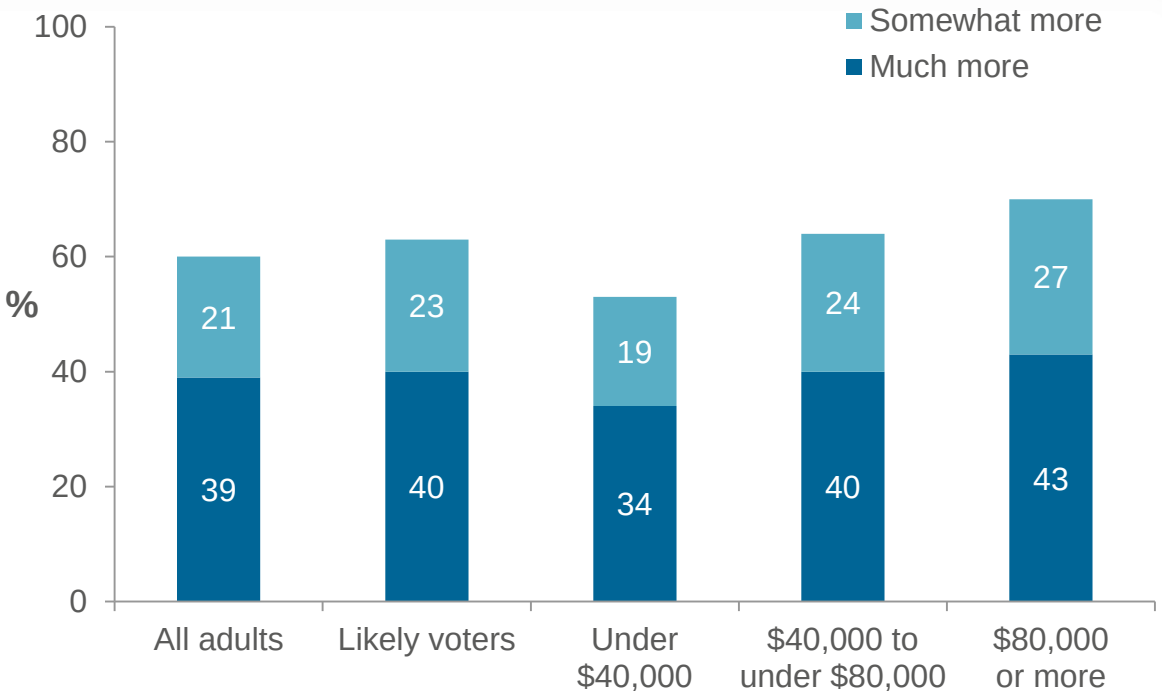
California's tax burden compared to other states

Where do you think California currently ranks in state and local tax burden per capita? Compared to other states, is California's tax burden per capita near the top, above average, below average, or near the bottom?



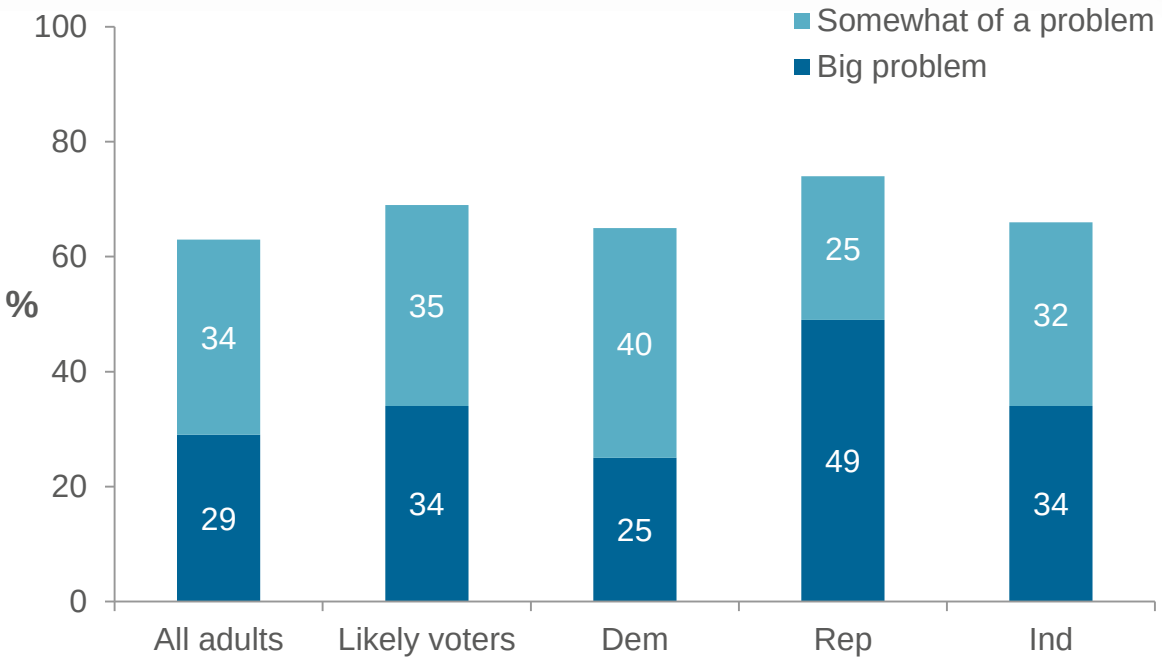
Personal tax burden

When you combine all of the taxes you pay to state and local governments, do you feel that you pay much more than you should, somewhat more than you should, about the right amount, or less than you should?



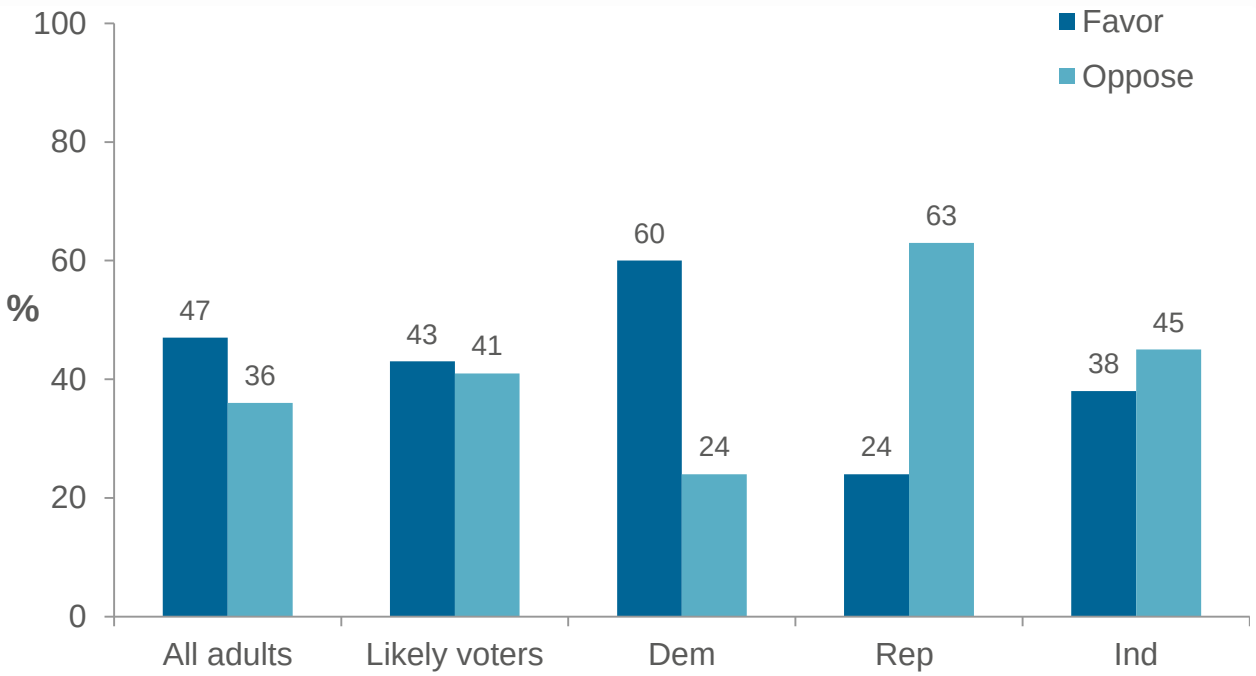
Public employee retirement benefits

At this time, how much of a problem for state and local government budgets is the amount of money that is being spent on their public employee pension or retirement systems? Is this a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem in California today?



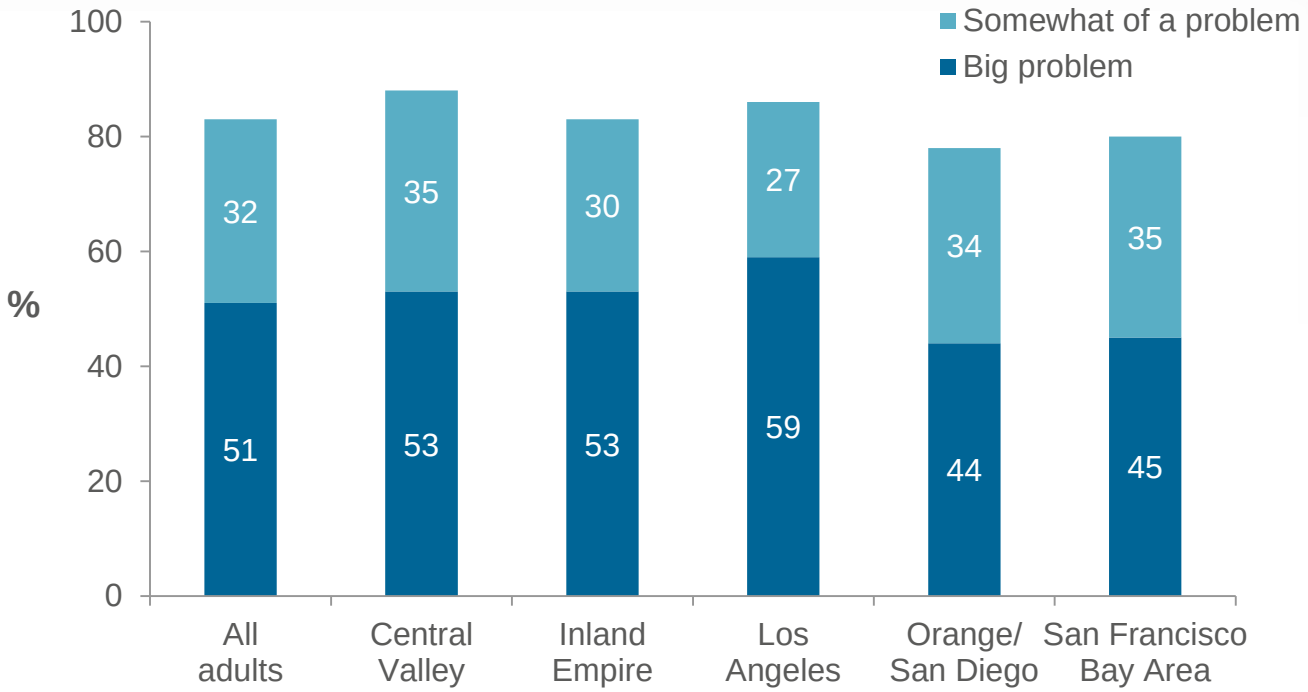
Proposal to pay down unfunded liabilities

Governor Newsom's state budget proposes allocating $5.3 billion in additional one-time spending to pay down unfunded liabilities in the state and local public employee pension systems. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



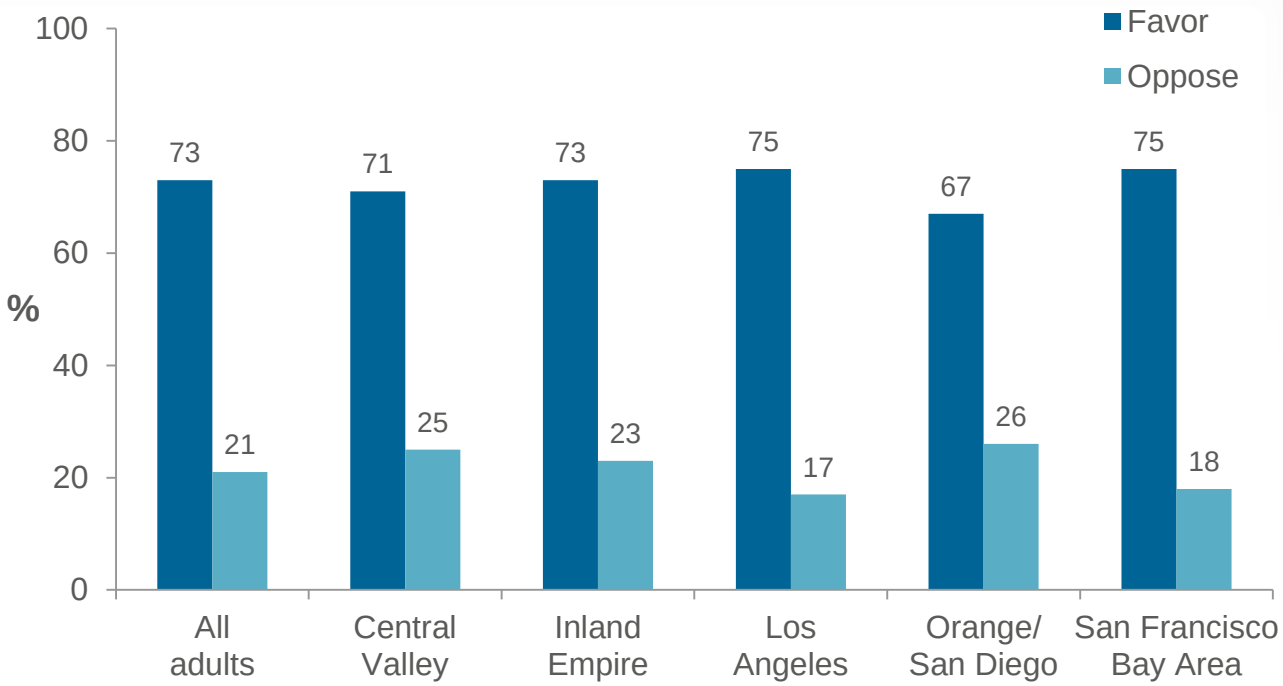
Poverty

How much of a problem is poverty in your part of California? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?



Earned income tax credit (EITC) proposal

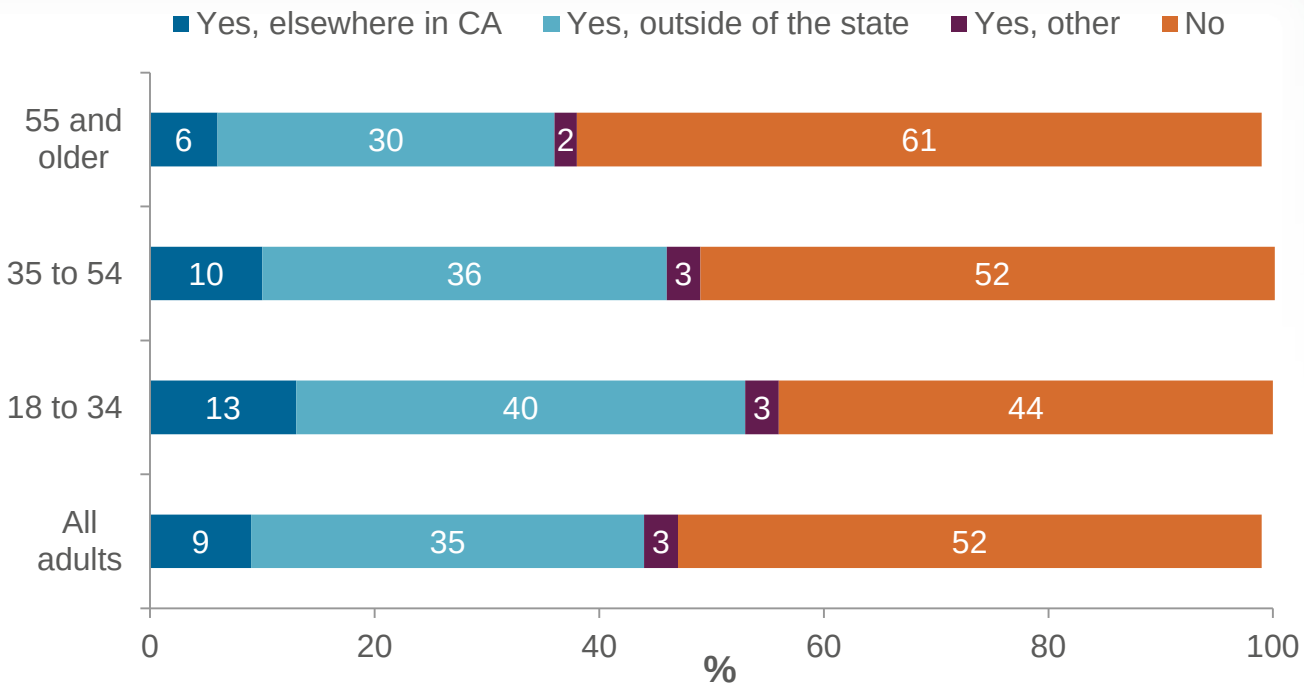
Governor Newsom's budget proposal allocates about $1 billion to the state's earned income tax credit to expand eligibility and payments for low-income working individuals and families. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



Housing costs and moving

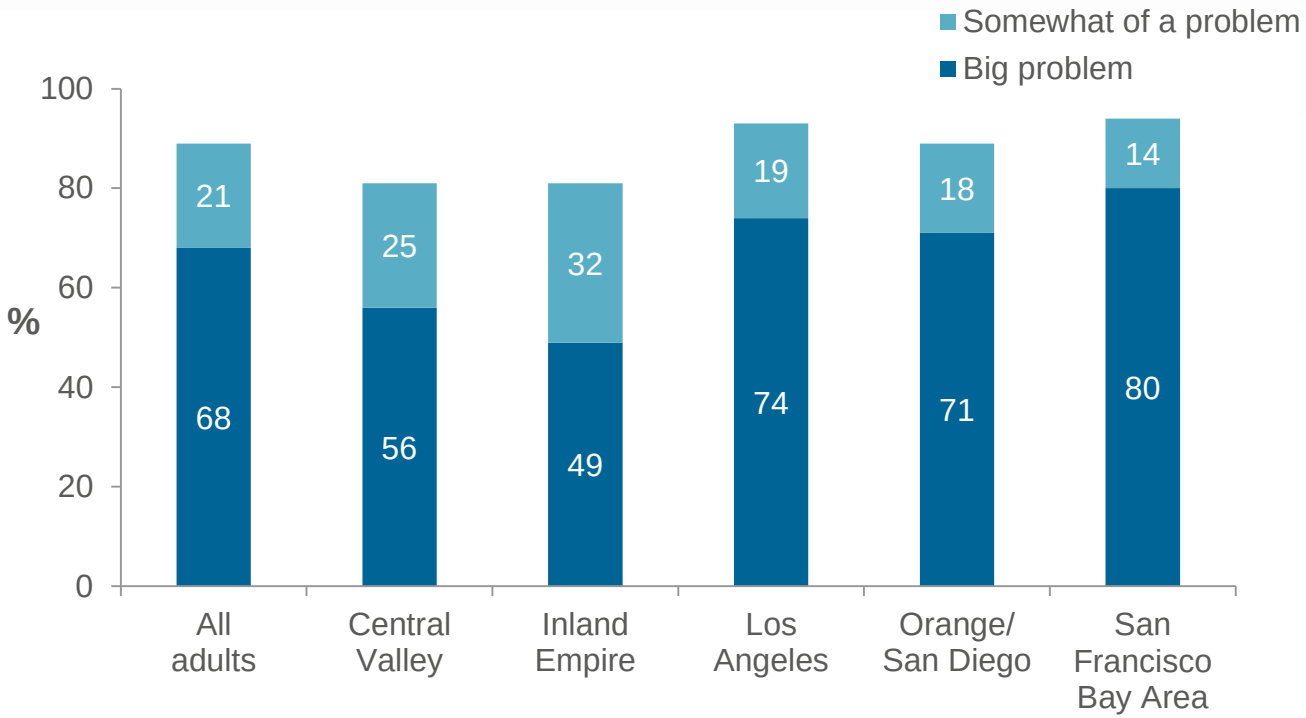
Does the cost of your housing make you and your family seriously consider moving away from the part of California you live in now?

Does it make you consider moving elsewhere in California, or outside of the state?



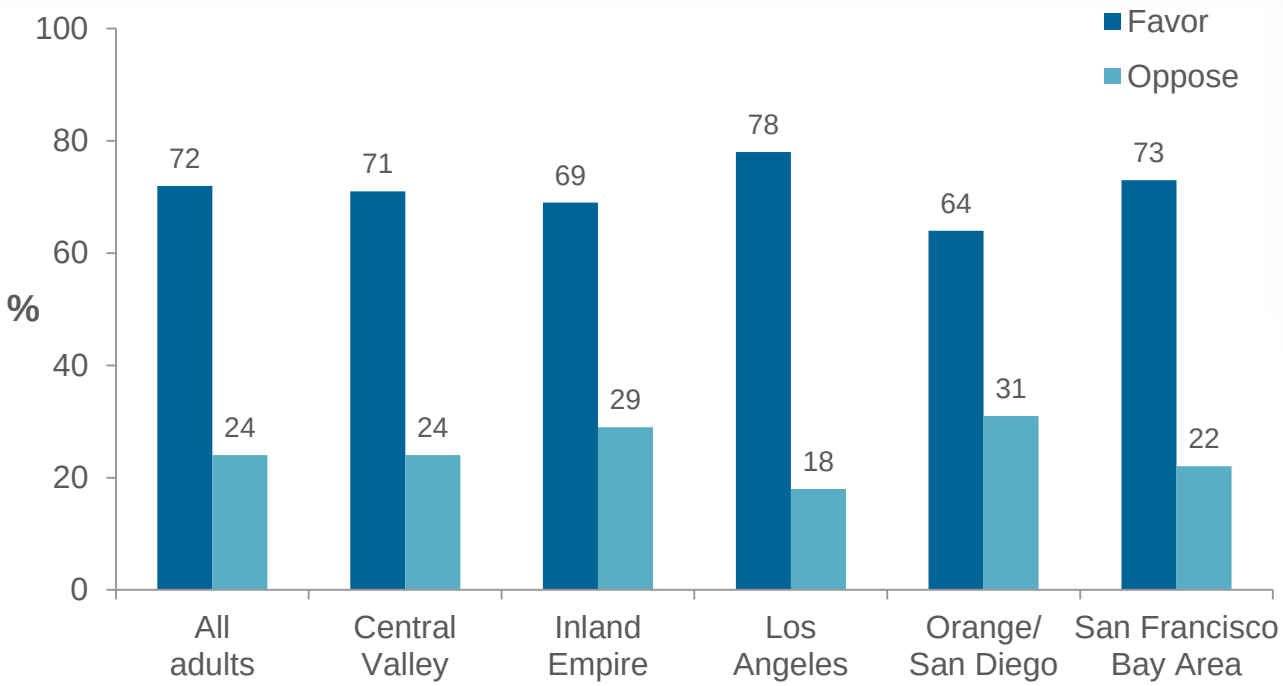
Housing affordability

How much of a problem is housing affordability in your part of California? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem?



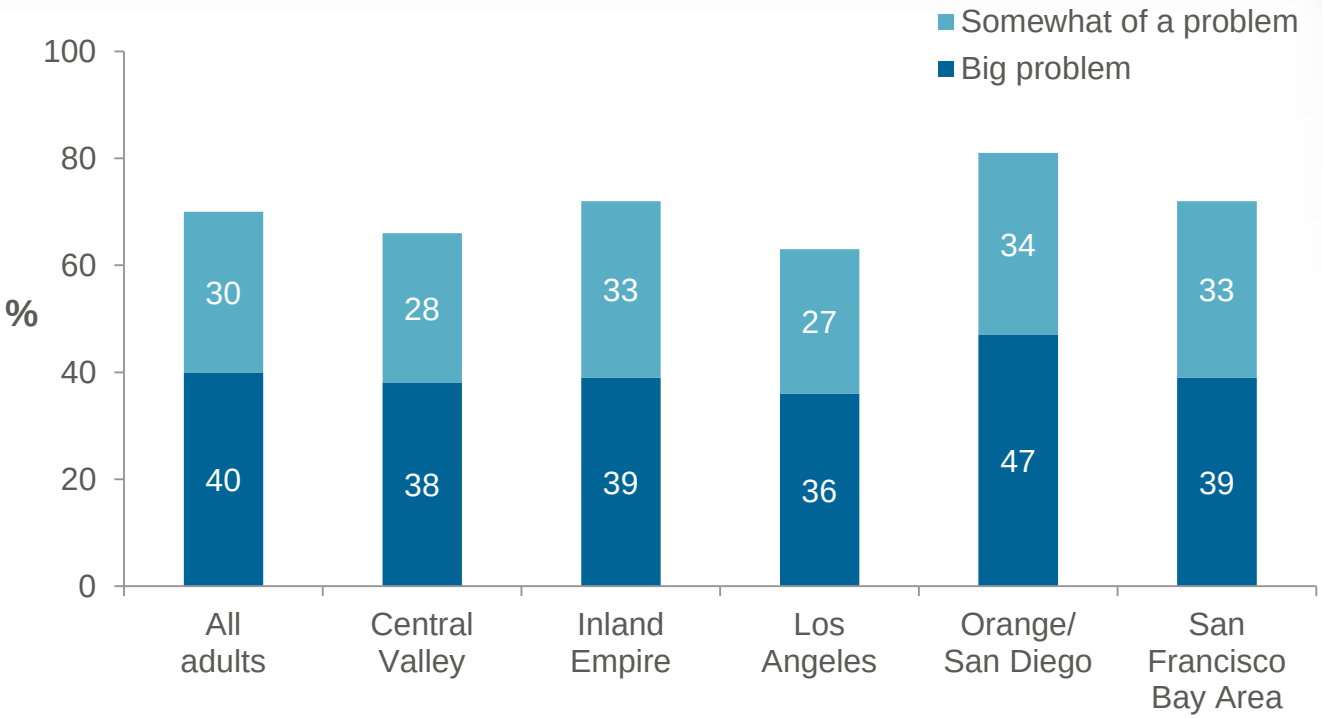
Proposal to increase housing production

Governor Newsom's budget proposal allocates $1.8 billion in one-time spending to increase housing production, including an expansion of state tax credits to develop low- and moderate-income housing. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



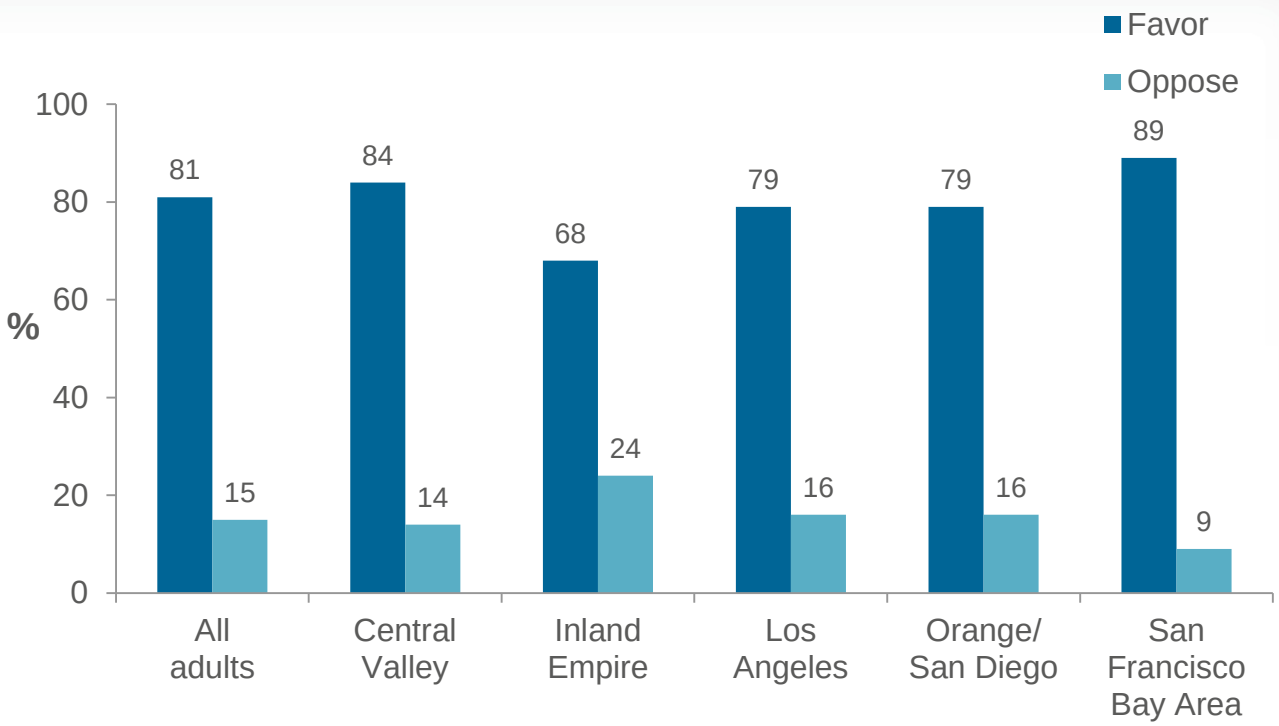
Wildfires

How much of a problem is the threat of wildfires in your part of California? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem?



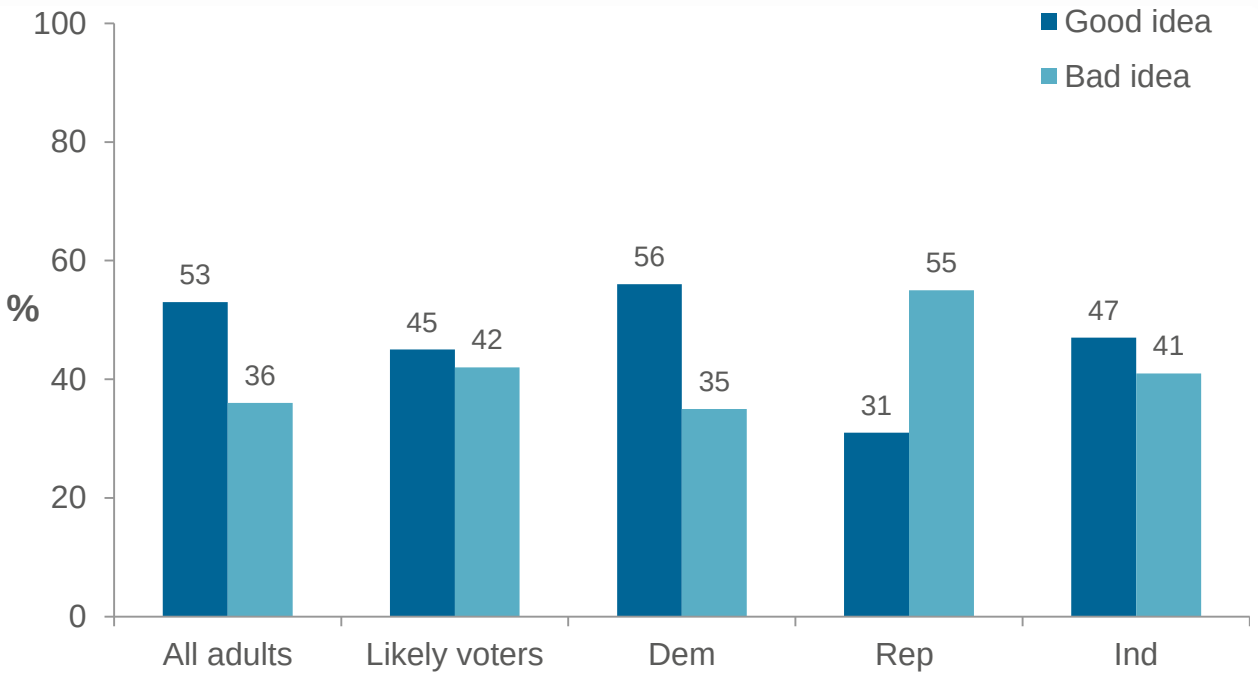
Proposal for one-time spending to combat wildfires

Governor Newsom's budget proposal allocates $415 million in one-time spending for wildfire preparedness, response, and recovery and forest management. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



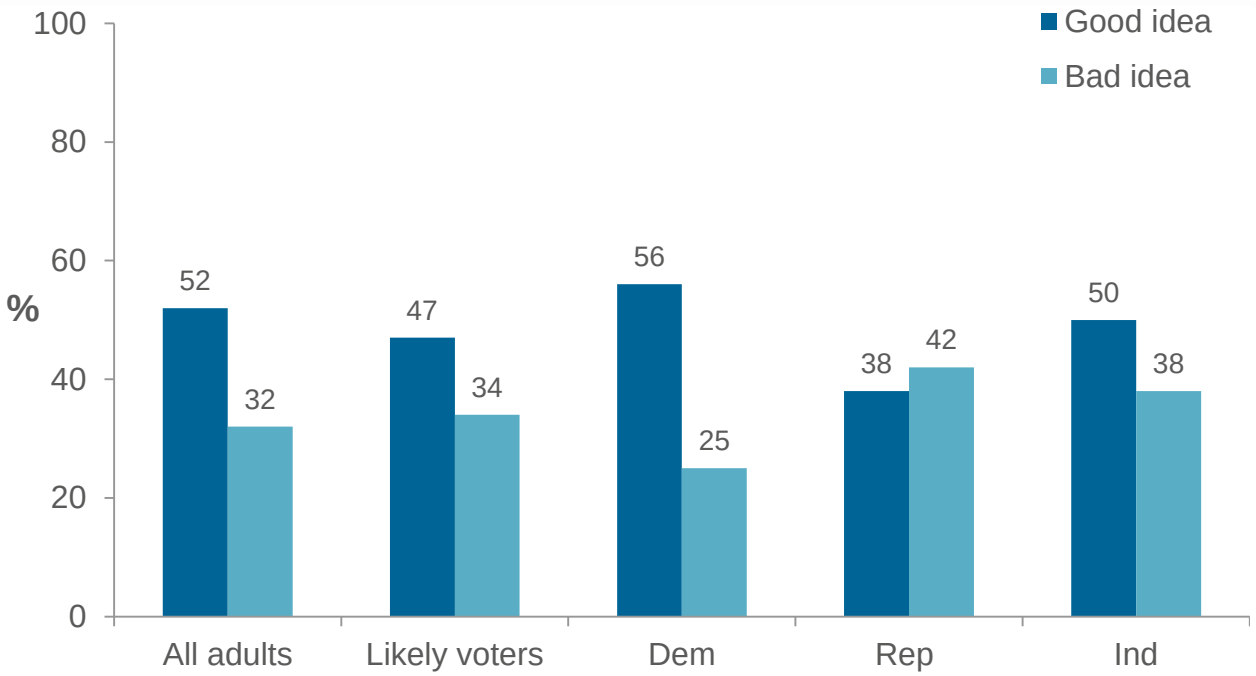
Scaling back the high-speed rail

Governor Newsom proposes to scale back the high-speed rail project and complete the construction underway for a high-speed rail from Bakersfield to Merced…. Do you think that Governor Newsom's proposal is a good idea or a bad idea?



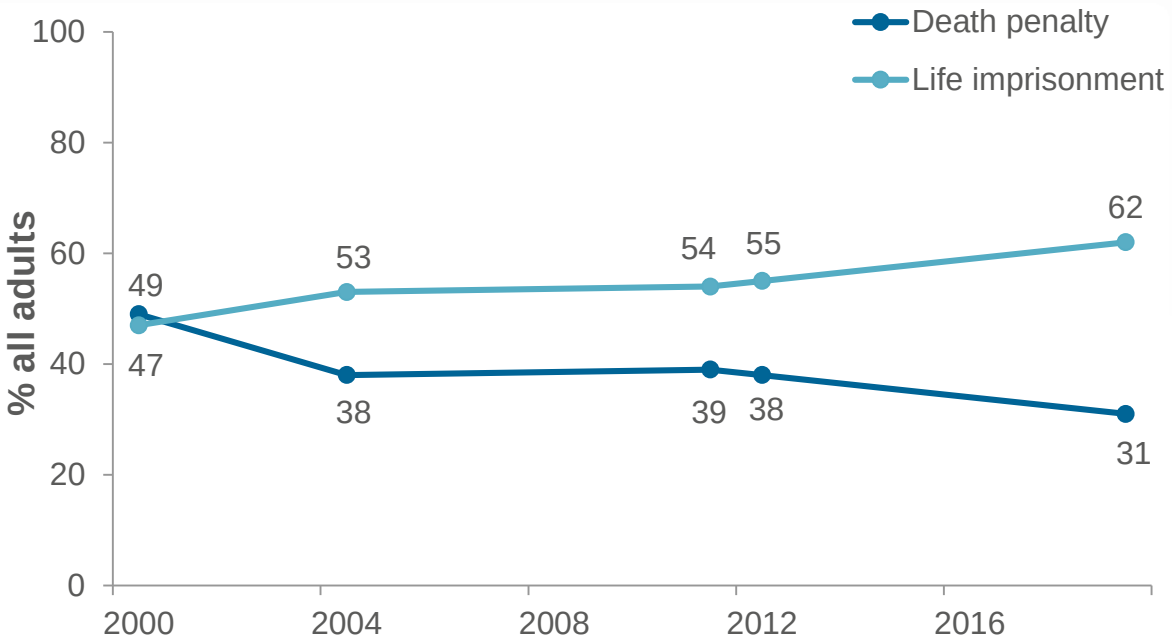
Scaling back the Delta tunnels

Governor Newsom proposes to scale back the Delta project and build one tunnel. Do you think that Governor Newsom's proposal is a good idea or a bad idea?



Death penalty versus life imprisonment

Which of the following statements do you agree with more? The penalty for first-degree murder should be the death penalty; or the penalty for first-degree murder should be life imprisonment with absolutely no possibility of parole.



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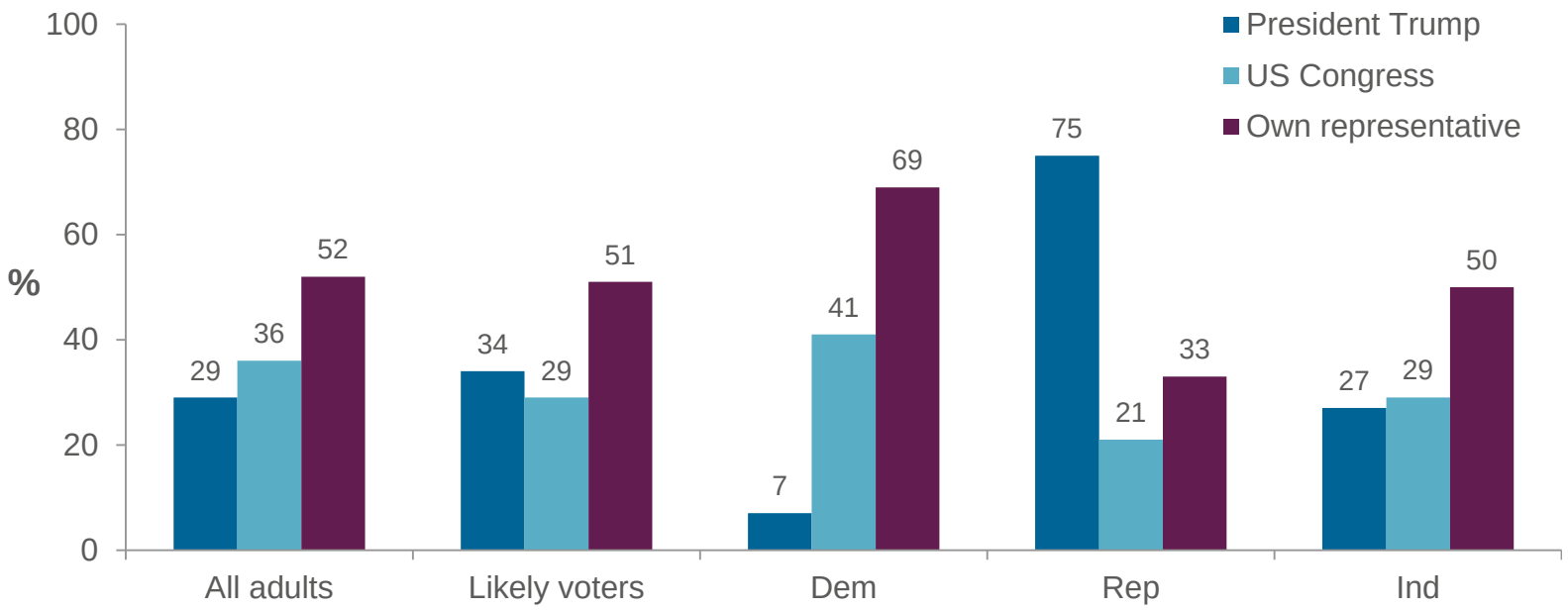
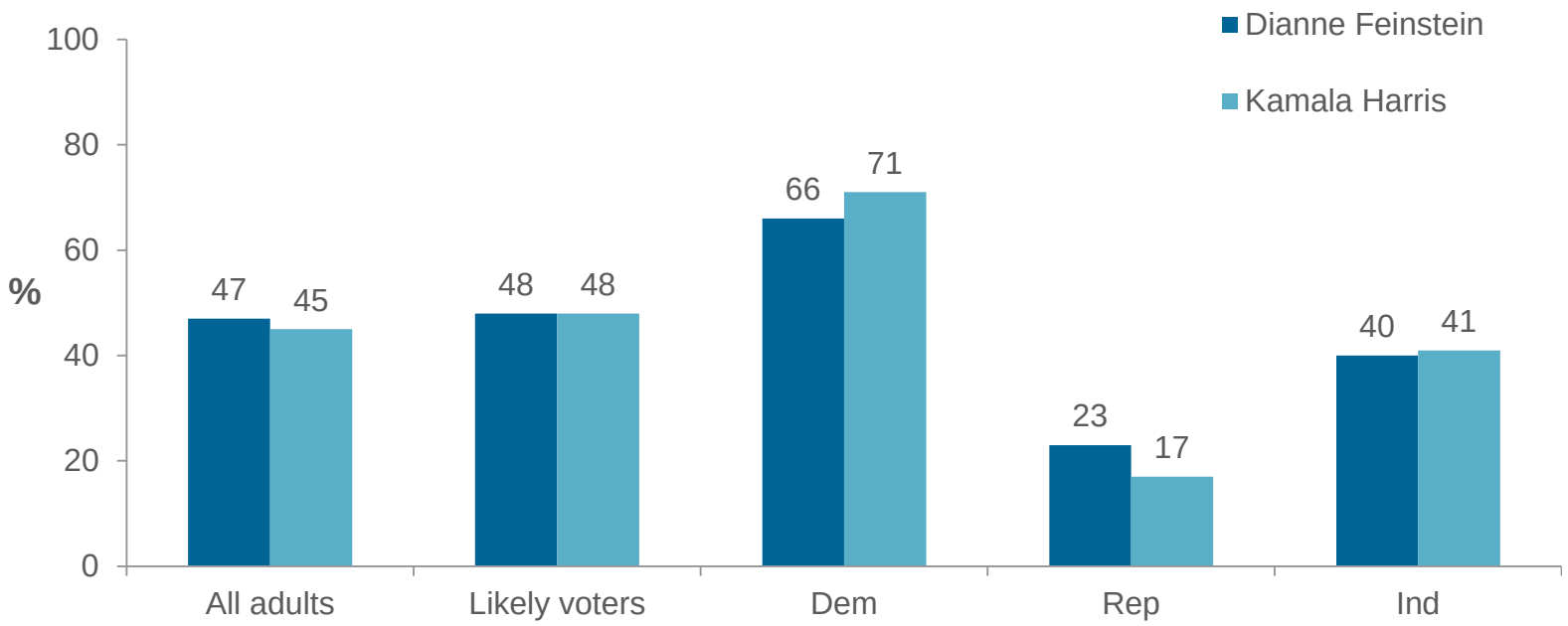
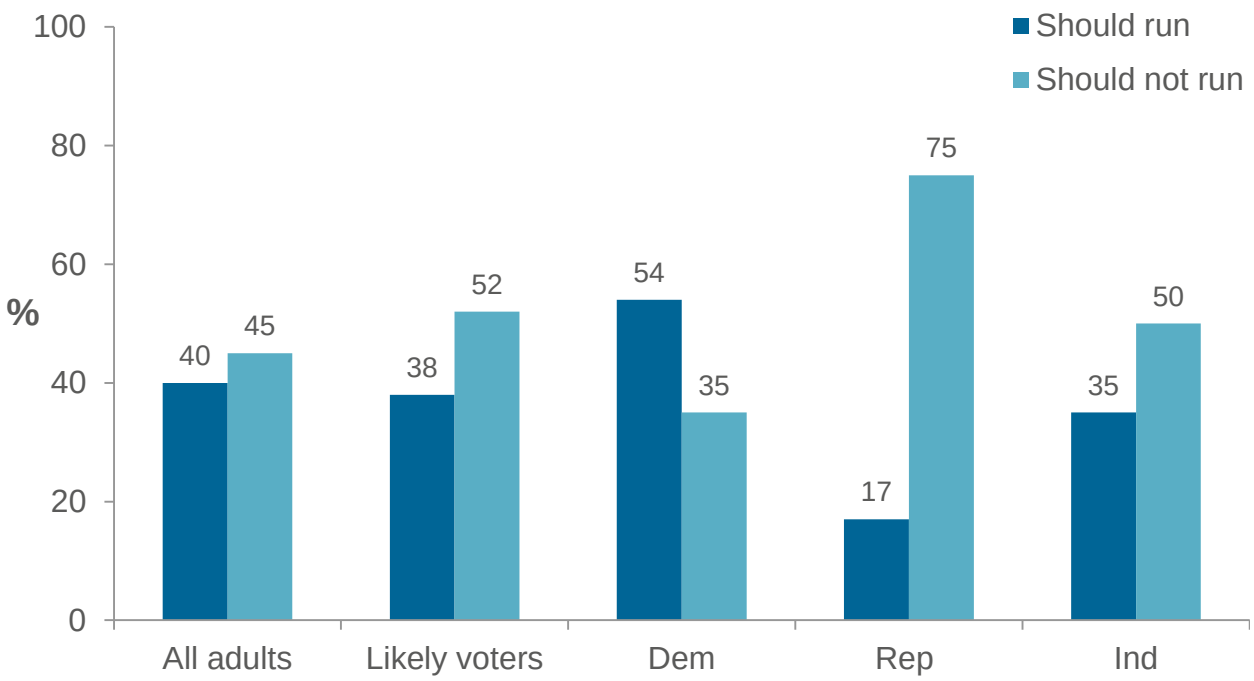


Approval of US senators



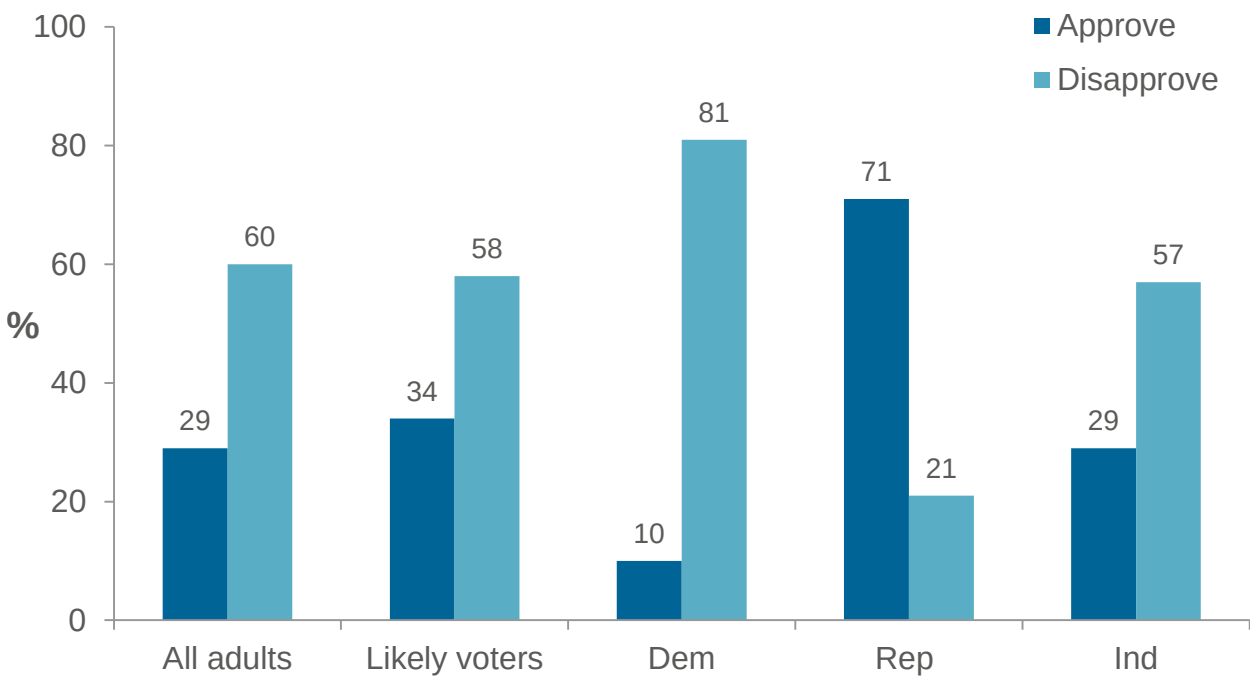
Harris running for president in 2020

Do you think Kamala Harris should run for US President in 2020, or not?



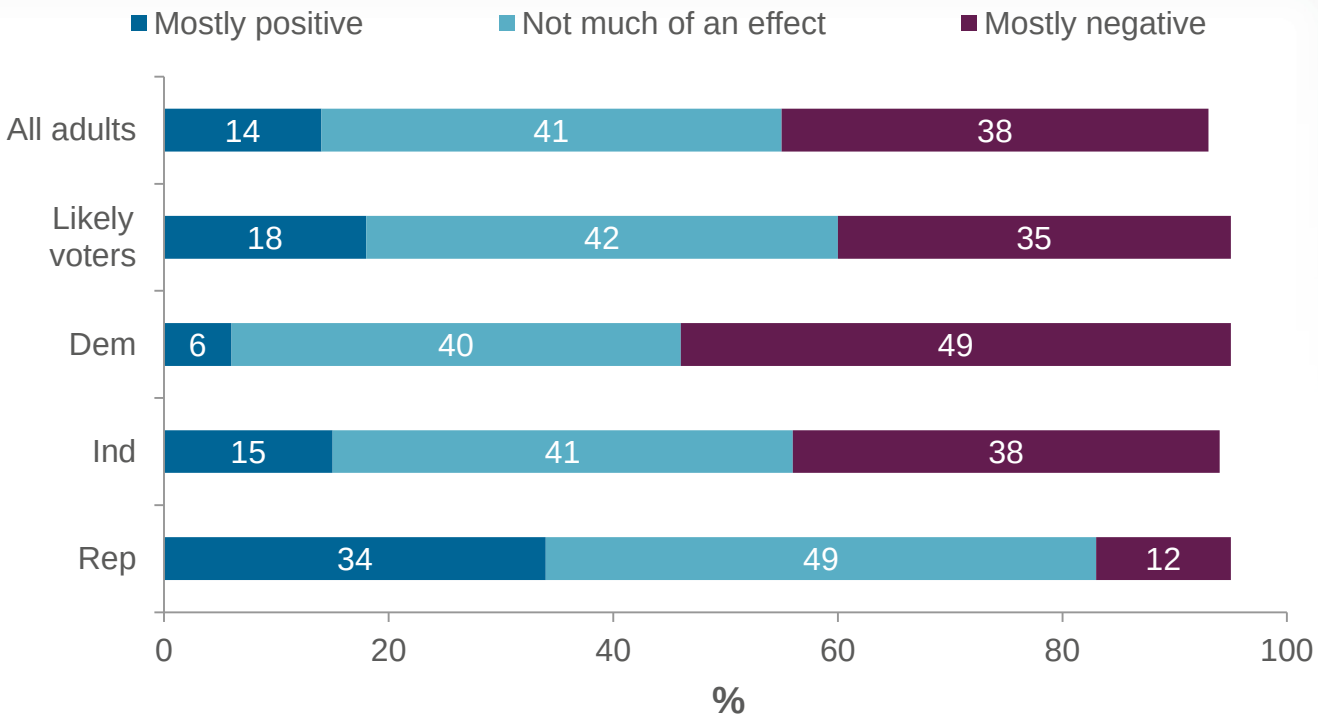
Tax law passed by President Trump and Congress

Do you approve or disapprove of the tax law passed by Donald Trump and Congress in 2017 that went into effect in 2018?



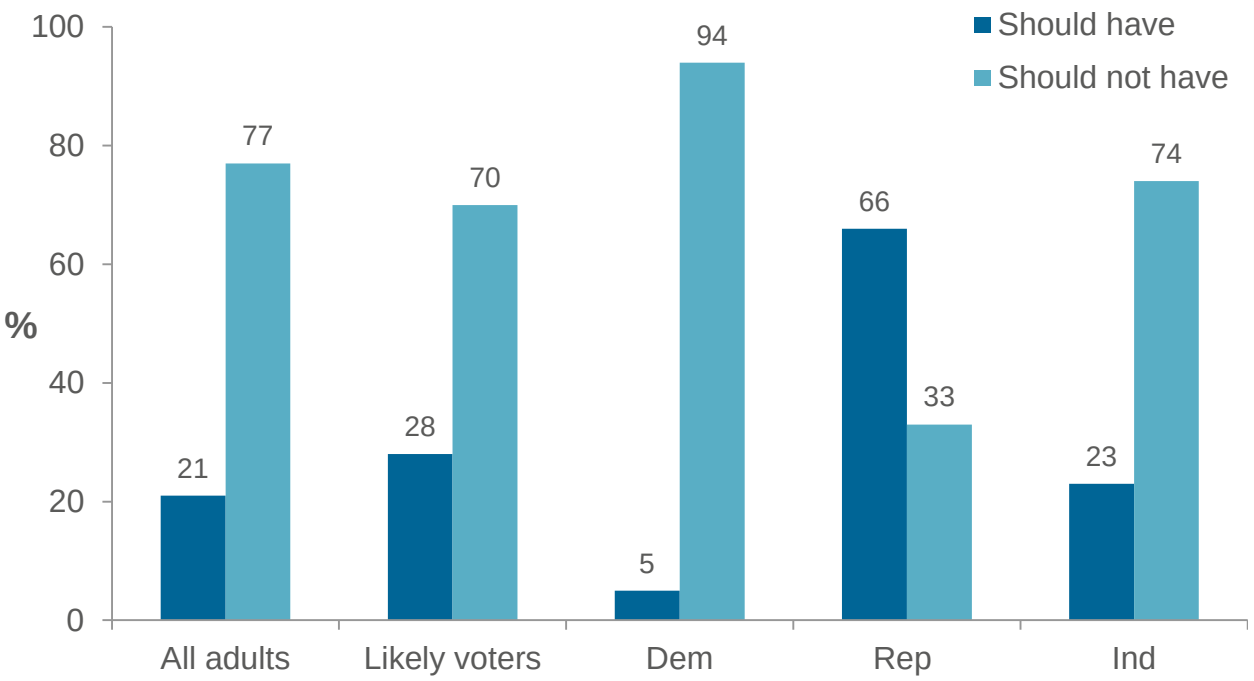
Impact of new tax law

So far, do you think the overall effect of this 2017 tax law on you and your family is mostly positive, mostly negative, or it does not affect you much either way?



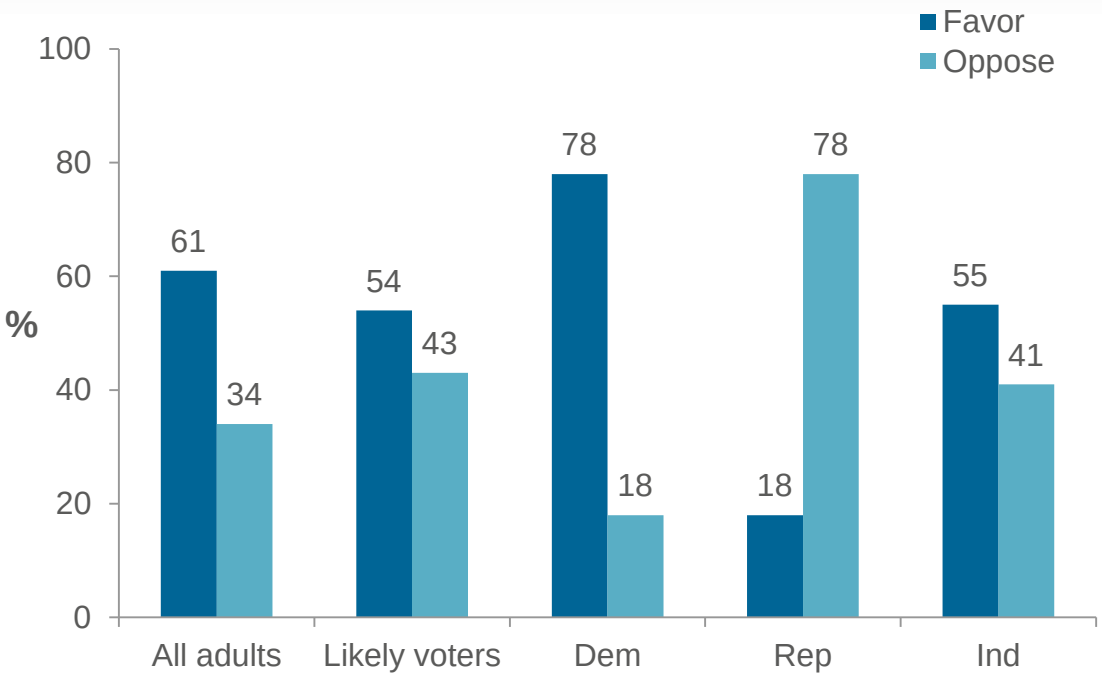
Declaring a national emergency along the border

Do you think that Donald Trump should or should not have declared a national emergency in order to build a wall along the border with Mexico?

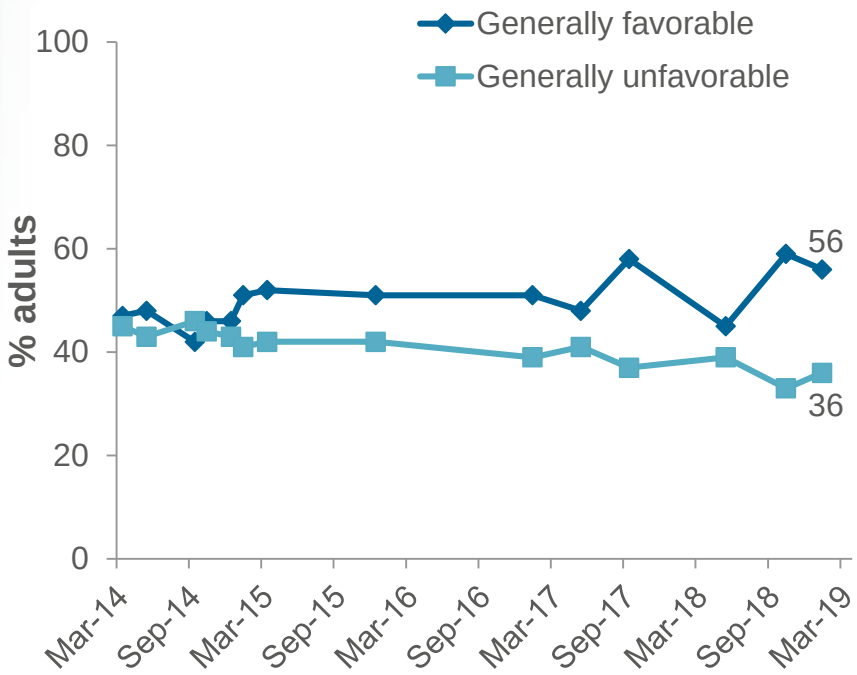


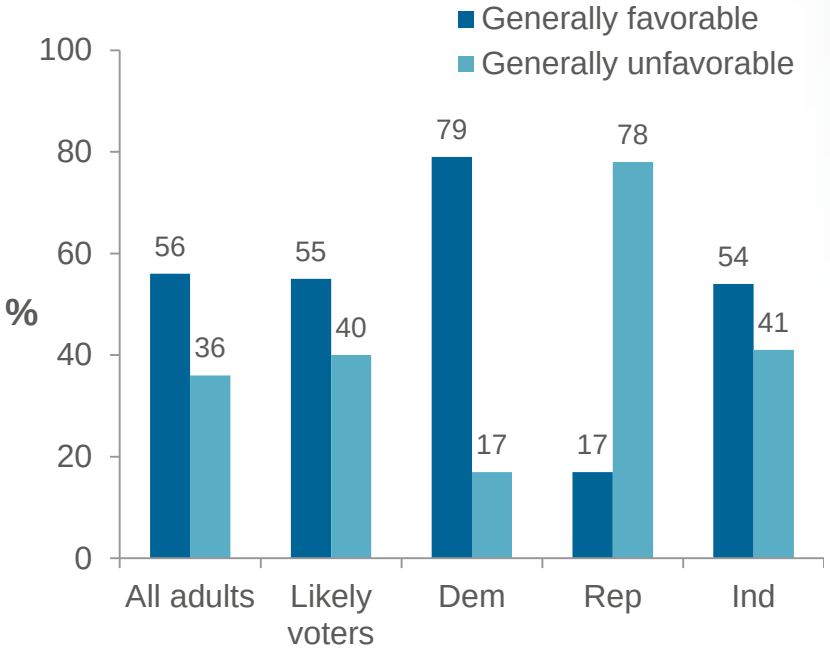
State and local action to protect undocumented immigrants

Do you favor or oppose the California state and local governments making their own policies and taking actions, separate from the federal government, to protect the legal rights of undocumented immigrants in California?



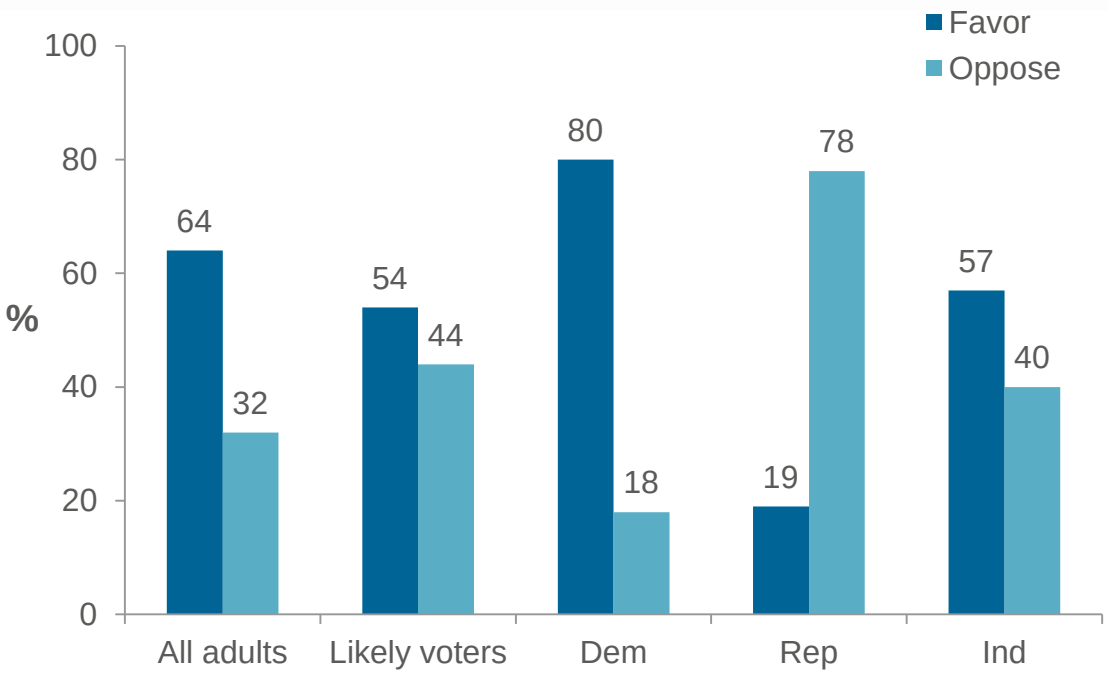
Affordable Care Act





Proposal to expand Medi-Cal coverage

Governor Newsom's budget proposal allocates $196 million dollars to expand Medi-Cal coverage to low-income young adults ages 19 through 25 regardless of immigration status. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



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Conclusions

- A plurality of Californians approve of Governor Newsom and the state legislature; a slim majority approve of their own state legislators.
- Californians are divided on additional spending to pay down unfunded pension liabilities but support proposals to expand the state's earned income tax credit, spur housing production, and combat wildfires.
- Slim majorities support Newsom's plans to scale back the high-speed rail and Delta tunnels.
- Majorities disapprove of President Trump and Congress, while a slim majority approve of their own representatives in Congress.
- Strong majorities of Californians do not agree with President Trump's decision to declare an emergency along the US border; solid majorities support state and local action to protect the rights of undocumented immigrants.

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Notes on the use of these slides

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:

Dean Bonner (bonner@ppic.org; 415-291-4497)

Thank you for your interest in this work.