



# Californians & Their Government

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PUBLIC POLICY  
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

**25 YEARS**

The PPIC Statewide Survey provides a voice for the public and likely voters—informing policymakers, encouraging discussion, and raising awareness on critical issues of the day.

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## News Release

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### PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

## Opposed to Trump, Split on What They Prefer in a Candidate

### DEMOCRATS, INDEPENDENTS WEIGH ELECTABILITY AGAINST VIEWS ON THE ISSUES

SAN FRANCISCO, June 5, 2019—Less than a year before California's presidential primary, Democratic likely voters and those who lean Democratic are divided on a key question: Is it more important to nominate the candidate whose views align with their own or the one who seems most likely to defeat President Trump? Older voters are more likely to say that the ability to defeat Trump is more important, while younger voters are more likely to think it is more important to nominate a candidate with views similar to theirs. These are among the key findings of a statewide survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC).

Among likely voters who identify themselves as registered Democrats or as independents who lean Democratic, 48 percent say it is more important to choose the candidate most likely to beat Trump, while slightly fewer—42 percent—say it is more important to choose the nominee whose views align with theirs.

Among those age 18 to 44, about half (51%) choose a candidate with similar views (43% able to defeat Trump). Among those age 45 and over, 52 percent prioritize the candidate's ability to defeat Trump (37% candidate whose views align with theirs).

Overall, two-thirds of California's likely voters (65%) say they will definitely or probably choose a candidate other than Trump. This view is held overwhelmingly by Democrats (93%) and by a strong majority of independents (66%). But an overwhelming majority of Republican likely voters (82%) say they would definitely or probably vote to reelect Trump if the election were held today. Similarly, there is a partisan divide among likely voters on approval of Trump: 84% of Republicans approve of how Trump is handling his job as president, compared to far fewer independents (43%) and Democrats (8%).

"With the 2020 presidential primary looming large in California, Republicans overwhelmingly want to reelect Trump, while most Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents are divided about what they are looking for in a candidate to defeat Trump," said Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO.

Asked to choose the attributes that are most important in a presidential candidate, half of likely voters (52%) prefer experience and a proven record, while 39 percent opt for new ideas and a different approach. Democrats who are likely voters are divided on this question, with 49 percent saying experience and 42 percent saying new ideas, while majorities of Republican (60%) and independent (53%) likely voters prefer experience.

## Californians Divided on Impeachment, Largely Along Party Lines

Roughly two months after special counsel Robert Mueller concluded his investigation into possible Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election, most Californians (57% adults, 58% likely voters)

say the investigation did not clear Trump of all wrongdoing. (The survey was conducted before Mueller's public remarks about the investigation on May 29.) There is a strong partisan divide. An overwhelming majority of Democrats (84%) and a majority of independents (55%) say the report did not clear Trump, but 77 percent of Republicans say it cleared him of all wrongdoing. Nationally, a recent ABC News/Washington Post poll showed that 53 percent of adults believe the Mueller investigation did not clear Trump.

While Democrats nationwide appear to be divided on impeachment, a strong majority of Democrats in California (66%) say Congress should begin proceedings against the president, while just 39 percent of independents and 9 percent of Republicans say so.

Overall, Californians are more likely than the nation as a whole to say impeachment proceedings should begin. According to a recent ABC News/Washington Post poll, 37 percent of adults nationwide think Congress should seek impeachment, compared with 49 percent in California.

"Most Californians believe that the Mueller investigation did not clear Trump of wrongdoing, but they are more divided on impeaching the president," Baldassare said.

Californians are split on whether Russian interference undermined the legitimacy of the 2016 presidential election: 42 percent (44% of likely voters) believe it did, while 47 percent (50% of likely voters) say it did not rise to that level. Looking ahead, however, most Californians (54% adults, 56% likely voters) do think that possible interference by Russia and other countries threatens the legitimacy of the 2020 presidential election.

## Census Seen as Important—Most Have Concerns about Confidentiality

California will have a lot at stake in the 2020 US Census—the count will affect political representation and federal funds. Californians recognize the importance of this census, with three-quarters (75%) saying it is very important to participate.

The Trump administration wants to add a question about citizenship status to the 2020 Census. Opponents argue that such a question would depress the count among immigrants who might be fearful about revealing their status. The US Supreme Court is expected to rule this month on the issue. Relatedly, 63 percent of Californians are concerned that the Census Bureau will not keep 2020 Census answers confidential. This concern is highest among Latinos (74%) and African Americans (70%), followed by Asian Americans (64%) and whites (52%). US-born Californians (58%) are less likely than foreign-born residents (71%) to be concerned that the Census Bureau will not keep answers confidential.

"While three in four Californians say that participating in the 2020 US Census is very important, many have concerns that their answers will not be kept confidential," Baldassare said.

## Majority Concerned about Effect of Wildfire Costs on Utility Rates

The bankruptcy of PG&E in the wake of the Camp Fire has been among the most contentious and consequential issues facing California's new governor. Amid great uncertainty about the impact of the bankruptcy, an overwhelming majority of Californians (78%) say they are concerned about rising electricity bills because of utilities' responsibilities for wildfire damage costs.

Californians hold mixed views on Governor Newsom's handling of the PG&E bankruptcy and utilities' responsibilities for wildfire costs. Only 32 percent of adults and 28 percent of likely voters approve; 30 percent of adults and 35 percent of likely voters disapprove, while the largest shares (38% adults, 37% likely voters) say they don't know.

"Three in four Californians are concerned that their electricity bills could increase as a result of wildfire damages, while just one in three approve of Governor Newsom's handling of the PG&E bankruptcy and utilities' responsibilities for wildfire damages so far," Baldassare said.

In contrast, larger shares approve of the governor's handling of wildfire prevention and response (44% adults, 41% likely voters) and of the job the governor is doing overall (45% adults, 47% likely voters).

## Overwhelming Majority Favor Requiring Vaccinations

As the US confronts its worst measles outbreak in more than 20 years, the California Legislature is considering a bill (Senate Bill 276) that would tighten the state's already strict school immunization law. SB 276 would create a standardized form for parents seeking to medically exempt their children from vaccination and would require state review and tracking of exemption requests.

An overwhelming majority of adults (73%) think that parents should be required to vaccinate their children. Asked about child vaccines to prevent measles, mumps, and rubella, 62 percent of adults say these vaccines are very safe, and another 27 percent say they are somewhat safe. An overwhelming majority (79%) are concerned that the recent outbreak of measles will become more widespread (43% very concerned, 36% somewhat concerned).

"Many Californians are concerned that the recent outbreak of measles could spread and believe that vaccinations for the disease are very safe and should be required," Baldassare said.

## Worried about Housing, Most Favor New Rules for Local Governments

As state leaders consider a number of proposals to promote housing affordability, 52 percent of adults and 45 percent of likely voters say their housing costs cause a financial strain. Across regions, Orange/San Diego has the highest share of adults saying this (58%), followed by the Inland Empire (55%), the San Francisco Bay Area (54%), Los Angeles (51%), and the Central Valley (43%). The cost of housing is far more likely to place a strain on renters (67%) than on homeowners (36%).

Solid majorities support two state policy proposals intended to create more affordable housing: 62 percent favor requiring local governments to change zoning for new development from single-family to multi-family housing near transit and job centers, and 61 percent favor requiring localities to approve a certain amount of housing before receiving state transportation funding. However, fewer than half (47%) favor reducing state regulation of development through changes to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Homeowners are less likely than renters to support changing zoning laws (51% to 72%), tying transportation funds to new housing (50% to 71%), and changing CEQA (40% to 54%).

Solid majorities of Californians (63% adults, 66% likely voters) believe that homelessness is a big problem in their part of California, including majorities across political parties (70% Democrats, 66% independents, 58% Republicans), regions, and demographic groups.

Governor Newsom's revised budget proposal, released in mid-May, includes a mix of spending that totals \$1 billion to address homelessness. After being read a summary, an overwhelming majority of adults (74%) and a strong majority of likely voters (68%) favor this spending.

"Californians across party lines view homelessness where they live as a big problem," Baldassare said. "The governor's plan to spend a billion dollars on this issue has strong support."

## Views of Local Police Vary across Racial/Ethnic Groups

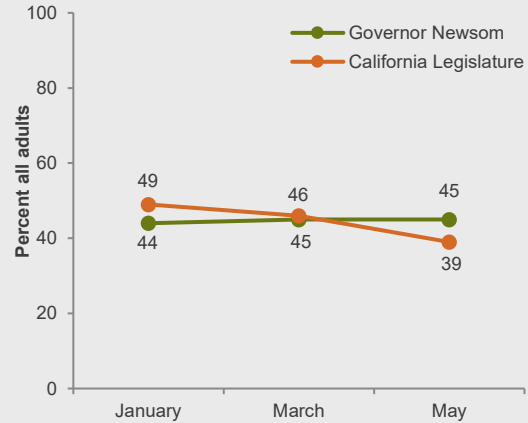
Overall, nearly two-thirds of Californians say local police are doing an excellent (25%) or good (40%) job of controlling crime in their community. However, African Americans are less likely to give local police good marks (15% excellent, 22% good) than are Latinos (22% excellent, 38% good), Asian Americans (28% excellent, 42% good), and whites (27% excellent, 44% good). Also, while 65 percent of adults say local police treat all racial and ethnic groups fairly almost always or most of the time (or volunteer always), African Americans (32%) are far less likely than Latinos (61%), whites (69%), and Asian Americans (72%) to hold this view.

# State Issues

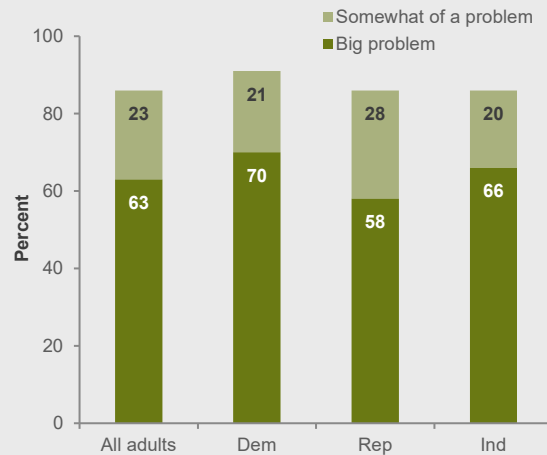
## Key Findings

- Forty-five percent of adults approve of Governor Newsom's job performance, and views of his handling of wildfire prevention and response are similar. Thirty-nine percent approve of the legislature. *(page 7)*
- A third of adults approve of the way that Governor Newsom is handling the PG&E bankruptcy and utilities' responsibilities for wildfire damage costs. About eight in ten Californians are concerned about rising electricity bills because of utilities' responsibilities for wildfire costs. *(page 8)*
- Forty-four percent of Californians say the state will have good economic times over the next 12 months, and four in ten rate their own finances as excellent or good. *(page 9)*
- Fifty-two percent of adults say the cost of their housing causes personal financial strain. Six in ten favor proposals to change zoning laws to allow more multi-family housing and to require local governments to approve new housing before they receive transportation funds. *(page 10)*
- Sixty-two percent of Californians favor the governor's budget plan and 74 percent favor his \$1 billion proposal to address homelessness. Six in ten Californians say that homelessness is a big problem in their part of the state. *(page 11)*
- Three in four adults think vaccines should be required for diseases like measles, and six in ten think that these vaccines are very safe. Eight in ten are concerned that the recent outbreak of measles will become more widespread. *(page 12)*
- One in four think violence and street crime are a big problem. Perceptions of police are generally positive but vary widely across racial/ethnic groups. *(page 13)*

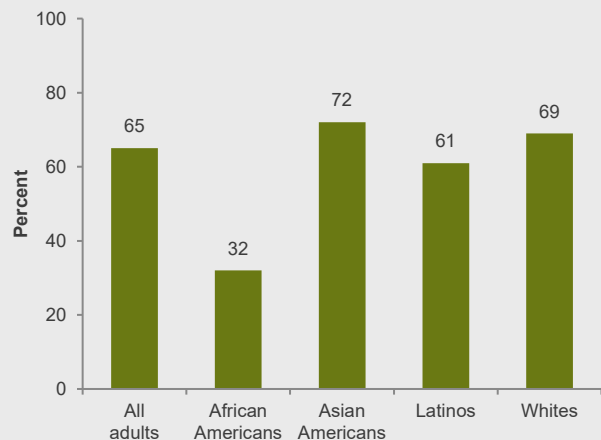
Approval ratings for the governor and legislature



Seriousness of the homelessness problem



Perception that police treat all racial/ethnic groups fairly at least most of the time



## Approval Ratings of State Elected Officials

The approval ratings of Governor Newsom have been remarkably stable so far in his first year in office. Governor Newsom has an approval rating of 45 percent among adults and 47 percent among likely voters. The governor's approval rating was similar in January (44% adults, 43% likely voters) and in March (45% adults, 45% likely voters). Today, his approval rating is 67 percent among Democrats, 13 percent among independents, and 13 percent among Republicans. Majorities in the San Francisco Bay Area (52%) and fewer in other regions (47% Los Angeles, 47% Orange/San Diego, 41% Central Valley, 37% Inland Empire) approve of the governor. Majorities of Latinos (54%) approve, compared to lower shares of other racial/ethnic groups (48% African Americans, 45% Asian Americans, 40% whites).

By comparison, 39 percent of adults and 34 percent of likely voters approve of the way that the state legislature is handling its job. The state legislature's approval ratings were higher in January (49% adults, 46% likely voters) and in March (46% adults, 42% likely voters). Today, 54 percent of Democrats say they approve, compared to 32 percent of independents and 11 percent of Republicans. About four in ten in the San Francisco Bay Area (44%), Orange/San Diego (42%), and Los Angeles (41%) say they approve of the legislature; fewer approve in the Inland Empire (35%) and Central Valley (32%). Across racial/ethnic groups, half of Latinos (51%) approve, compared with fewer Asian Americans (46%), African Americans (36%), and whites (28%).

### “Overall, do you approve or disapprove of...?”

		All adults	Party			Likely voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
the way that Gavin Newsom is handling his job as governor of California	Approve	45%	67%	13%	40%	47%
	Disapprove	29	12	74	35	37
	Don't know	26	21	13	25	16
the way that the California Legislature is handling its job	Approve	39	54	11	32	34
	Disapprove	44	28	84	55	53
	Don't know	17	19	6	14	13

The tragic Camp Fire took place a few days after the November 6 election, and the issue of wildfires has been front and center in Governor Newsom's first year in office. His strike team recently issued a report on this topic. Forty-four percent of adults and 41 percent of likely voters say they approve of the way that Governor Newsom is handling the issue of wildfire prevention and response in California. This is similar to his overall job approval (45% adults, 47% likely voters). Majorities of Democrats (56%) and fewer independents (41%) and Republicans (25%) express approval on this issue. Majorities of African Americans (57%) and Latinos (52%) say they approve, compared to fewer Asian Americans (40%) and whites (39%). Across regions, approval on this issue ranges from 46 percent in Los Angeles to 39 percent in the Central Valley.

### “Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Newsom is handling the issue of wildfire prevention and response in California?”

	All adults	Region					Likely voters
		Central Valley	Inland Empire	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	San Francisco Bay Area	
Approve	44%	39%	45%	46%	45%	44%	41%
Disapprove	24	36	21	19	25	22	27
Don't know	32	25	34	35	30	34	32



## Wildfires and Utilities

In late January, PG&E filed for bankruptcy protection in the wake of the Camp Fire. This has been one of the most controversial and consequential issues facing the new governor. How does the California public view the way that Governor Newsom is handling the PG&E bankruptcy and utilities' responsibilities for wildfire damage costs? Thirty-two percent of adults and 28 percent of likely voters say they approve of the governor's handling of this issue. This issue generates disapproval ratings that are similar to the governor's overall disapproval, but it generates more "don't knows" among Californians.

About one in three residents across regions approve of the governor's handling of the PG&E bankruptcy and utilities' responsibilities for wildfire damages; disapproval is highest in the Central Valley (43%). Approval of the governor's handling of this issue is at 40 percent or lower across age, education, gender, income, and racial/ethnic groups, as well as among renters and homeowners. Forty percent of Democrats and 30 percent of independents approve of the governor's handling of this issue, while just 14 percent of Republicans approve and 53 percent disapprove of his handling of the PG&E bankruptcy and its costs. One in three or more across parties and demographic groups are unsure.

### **"Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Newsom is handling the PG&E bankruptcy and utilities' responsibilities for wildfire damage costs?"**

	All adults	Region					Likely voters
		Central Valley	Inland Empire	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	San Francisco Bay Area	
Approve	32%	35%	33%	32%	34%	32%	28%
Disapprove	30	43	27	24	29	27	35
Don't know	38	23	40	44	38	41	37

At a time of great uncertainty over how much ratepayers will have to pay in the wake of the PG&E bankruptcy, about eight in ten Californians say they are very concerned (41%) or somewhat concerned (37%) about their electricity bills rising because of utilities' responsibilities for wildfire damage costs. Findings are similar among likely voters (45% very concerned, 36% somewhat concerned). At least four in ten across parties say they are very concerned about rising electricity bills (49% Republicans, 45% independents, 40% Democrats). Across racial/ethnic groups, African Americans (54%) are the most likely to say they are very concerned (45% whites, 38% Latinos, 31% Asian Americans). Across regions, Central Valley residents (47%) are the most likely and Los Angeles residents (35%) are the least likely to say they are very concerned.

### **"How concerned are you about rising electricity bills because of utilities' responsibilities for wildfire damage costs? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?"**

	All adults	Region					Likely voters
		Central Valley	Inland Empire	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	San Francisco Bay Area	
Very concerned	41%	47%	45%	35%	37%	40%	45%
Somewhat concerned	37	36	33	37	39	39	36
Not too concerned	13	7	14	18	12	12	12
Not at all concerned	8	9	7	7	10	8	5
Don't know	1	—	—	3	1	1	2



## Economy and Personal Finances

Californians' outlook on the economy is mixed, with 44 percent of adults saying we will have good times financially in California in the next 12 months and 47 percent saying we will have bad times. Likely voters hold similar views (42% good times, 48% bad times). Californians had similar perceptions in January (49% adults, 45% likely voters). Today, a majority of Democrats (51%) and fewer independents (38%) and Republicans (29%) expect good times. The shares expecting good times are similar across racial/ethnic groups (47% Asian Americans, 47% Latinos, 45% African Americans, 43% whites). About half in the San Francisco Bay Area (49%) are optimistic, while fewer hold this view in other regions (46% Los Angeles, 44% Orange/San Diego, 40% Central Valley, 39% Inland Empire). Men (50%) are much more likely than women (38%) to say California will have good times over the next 12 months.

When asked to rate their personal financial situation, 43 percent of adults and 53 percent of likely voters say they are in excellent or good shape. In our May 2017 survey, similar proportions of adults (40%) and likely voters (51%) rated their personal finances as excellent or good. Today, there are large differences in the shares saying excellent or good across income groups (21% under \$40,000; 41% \$40,000 to \$80,000; 75% \$80,000 or more) and racial/ethnic groups (22% African Americans, 28% Latinos, 51% whites, 62% Asian Americans). Majorities in the San Francisco Bay Area (54%) say that their personal financial situation is excellent or good, while fewer hold this view in other regions (42% Los Angeles, 41% Central Valley, 39% Orange/San Diego, 34% Inland Empire). Homeowners (58%) are much more likely than renters (29%) to rate their personal financial situation as excellent or good.

**“How would you rate your own personal financial situation? Would you say you are in excellent shape, good shape, only fair shape, or poor shape financially?”**

	All adults	Household income			Race/Ethnicity			
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites
Excellent	8%	1%	6%	20%	1%	15%	2%	11%
Good	35	20	35	55	21	47	26	40
Fair	38	46	47	21	45	32	51	31
Poor	18	33	12	5	32	7	20	18
Don't know	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	—

As the legislature considers a number of state bills to address housing affordability, 52 percent of adults and 45 percent of likely voters say that their housing costs are a financial strain. In our May 2017 survey, 47 percent of adults and 38 percent of likely voters held this perspective. Today, the perception of financial strain varies across income groups (66% under \$40,000; 51% \$40,000 to \$80,000; 37% \$80,000 or more) and racial/ethnic groups (63% Latinos, 58% African Americans, 47% Asian Americans, 43% whites). Central Valley residents (43%) are less likely than those living in other regions (58% Orange/San Diego, 55% Inland Empire, 54% San Francisco Bay Area, 51% Los Angeles) to hold this view. The cost of housing is more likely to place a financial strain on those with children in the home (61%) than on those without children (47%), and renters (67%) are more likely than homeowners (36%) to say housing costs are a strain.

**“Does the cost of your housing place a financial strain on you and your family today?”**

	All adults	Household income			Race/Ethnicity			
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites
Yes	52%	66%	51%	37%	58%	47%	63%	43%
No	47	33	48	62	40	53	35	56
Don't know	1	1	1	1	2	—	2	1

## Housing Policy

Housing has emerged as an issue of great importance, as high costs and limited supply cause problems for many Californians. In addition to half of Californians saying the cost of housing places a financial strain on them and their family, our March survey report found that 68 percent of Californians say housing affordability is a big problem in their part of the state. What do Californians think about policy proposals aimed at increasing the supply of affordable housing? Just under half of Californians (47%) favor reducing state regulations by changing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); 24 percent are unsure. Six in ten Californians (61%) support requiring local governments to approve new housing before receiving transportation funding. A similar share (62%) favor requiring local governments to change zoning for new development from single to multi-family housing near transit or job centers.

**“Next, do you favor or oppose these state government proposals to provide more affordable housing in your part of California? How about...?”**

<i>All adults</i>	Reducing state regulations by changing CEQA	Requiring local governments to approve new housing before receiving transportation funding	Requiring local governments to change zoning for new development from single to multi-family housing near transit/job centers
Favor	47%	61%	62%
Oppose	30	31	30
Don't know	24	8	8

Republicans and independents are more likely to be in favor of changing CEQA than Democrats. Across regions, Inland Empire and Central Valley residents are more likely than those in other regions to express support. In contrast, Republicans are less likely than Democrats to favor tying transportation funds to new housing and to favor changing zoning for new development near transit or job centers. Majorities across regions as well as age and education groups favor tying transportation funds to new housing. Majorities across regions and demographic groups favor changing zoning laws. Homeowners are less likely than renters to favor CEQA changes (40% to 54%), tying transportation funds to new housing (50% to 71%), and changing zoning laws (51% to 72%). Support for all three proposals is higher among Latinos and African Americans than among Asian Americans and whites.

**“Next, do you favor or oppose these state government proposals to provide more affordable housing in your part of California? How about...?”**

% Favor		Reducing state regulations by changing CEQA	Requiring local governments to approve new housing before receiving transportation funding	Requiring local governments to change zoning for new development from single to multi-family housing near transit/job centers
All adults		47%	61%	62%
Party	Democrats	38	63	74
	Republicans	49	48	36
	Independents	50	53	57
Region	Central Valley	53	56	62
	Inland Empire	59	66	61
	Los Angeles	46	65	60
	Orange/San Diego	40	55	65
	San Francisco Bay Area	40	61	64

## State Budget and Homelessness

Earlier this month, Governor Newsom released a revision of his proposed budget that predicted a \$21.5 billion surplus. Nevertheless, 45 percent of Californians consider the state budget situation a big problem. In January, just after the release of his first budget as governor, 40 percent said the budget situation was a big problem. Today, Republicans (77%) are far more likely than independents (56%) and twice as likely as Democrats (33%) to say the budget situation is a big problem.

Governor Newsom’s budget increases spending on K–14 education, higher education, and health and human services. It also proposes \$4 billion to eliminate budgetary debts and reverse past deferrals and \$1.8 billion in additional funds to bring the rainy day fund to \$16.5 billion. After being read a brief description, 62 percent of Californians and 56 percent of likely voters are in favor. Majorities of Democrats and independents express support, compared to just 26 percent of Republicans. Majorities across regions and demographic groups favor the budget plan.

**“In general, do you favor or oppose the governor’s budget plan?”\***

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	62%	77%	26%	57%	56%
Oppose	29	13	67	37	36
Don't know/have not heard anything about the budget	9	10	7	6	8

\*For complete question text, see p. 24.

Governor Newsom’s budget plan includes \$1 billion to address homelessness, an issue that more than six in ten Californians (63%) and two in three likely voters (66%) see as a big problem. Majorities across parties (70% Democrats, 66% independents, 58% Republicans), regions, and demographic groups call homelessness a big problem in their part of California. Women (70%) are much more likely than men (56%) to call it a big problem. African Americans (78%) are much more likely to hold this view than Latinos (63%), whites (63%), and Asian Americans (52%).

Governor Newsom’s proposal to address homelessness includes \$650 million in one-time spending to local governments for homelessness emergency aid, \$150 million for mental health programs, and \$120 million for programs that coordinate housing and health and social services. After being read a brief description, three in four Californians and two in three likely voters favor the proposal. Democrats (87%) are far more likely than independents (67%) and twice as likely as Republicans (44%) to favor the proposal. Across regions, at least seven in ten are in favor. Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (87%) are the most likely and whites (66%) are the least likely to be in favor. Women (81%) are much more likely than men (67%) to be in favor. At least two in three across age, education, and income groups favor Governor Newsom’s proposal to address homelessness.

**“In his revised budget plan, Governor Newsom proposes \$1 billion to address homelessness. The plan allocates \$650 million in one-time spending to local governments for homeless emergency aid, \$150 million for mental health programs, and \$120 million for programs which coordinate housing and health and social services. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	74%	87%	44%	67%	68%
Oppose	23	11	52	28	28
Don't know	3	2	4	5	4

## Measles Outbreak and Vaccines

The United States is currently experiencing its worst measles outbreak in more than 20 years, with more than 981 people diagnosed with the disease this year—including 47 cases in California. The California Legislature is debating Senate Bill (SB) 276, which would further tighten California’s already strict school immunization law, SB 277 (passed in 2015). The 2015 law allows for exemptions from required shots if a doctor says there is a medical reason. Under the new law, the California Department of Public Health would decide whether the underlying condition cited by a doctor in a medical exemption meets guidelines set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Most Californians (73%) think parents should be required to vaccinate their children for diseases like measles, mumps, and rubella. More than seven in ten partisans think parents should be required to vaccinate. About seven in ten men and women and those with and without children in the household hold this view, as do majorities across regions and demographic groups. About three in four Asian Americans, whites, and Latinos—compared to 53 percent of African Americans—think vaccination should be required. Adults nationwide in an NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll hold similar opinions (72% should be required).

**“Changing topics, do you think parents should be required to vaccinate their children for diseases like measles, mumps, and rubella, or do you think parents should be able to decide whether or not to vaccinate their children?”**

	All adults	Age			Race/Ethnicity			
		18 to 34	35 to 54	55 and older	African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites
Should be required	73%	64%	73%	80%	53%	74%	73%	74%
Should be able to decide	26	36	24	18	47	24	26	24
Don't know	2	—	3	2	—	2	—	2

Nine in ten Californians say that the vaccines given to children for diseases like measles, mumps, and rubella are very safe (62%) or somewhat safe (27%). The perception that vaccines are very safe is held by strong majorities across parties and by majorities across regions. Whites (69%) and Asian Americans (68%) are more likely than Latinos (54%) and African Americans (41%) to say vaccines are very safe. The belief that vaccines are very safe increases with rising age and income. Californians held similar views in May 2015 (57% very safe, 30% somewhat safe).

Eight in ten Californians are very or somewhat concerned that the recent outbreak of measles will become more widespread. The share who are very concerned is higher among Californians 35 and older than among those age 18 to 34, and women (48%) are more likely than men (38%) to say this. San Francisco Bay Area residents (34%) are the least likely to be very concerned across regions, and independents (39%) are slightly less likely than Democrats and Republicans (47% each) to hold this view.

**“How concerned are you that the recent outbreak of measles will become more widespread—very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?”**

	All adults	Age			Race/Ethnicity			
		18 to 34	35 to 54	55 and older	African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites
Very concerned	43%	34%	47%	48%	46%	39%	45%	42%
Somewhat concerned	36	42	30	37	33	39	39	34
Not too concerned	13	17	12	10	11	15	11	15
Not at all concerned	7	7	9	4	10	6	5	7
Don't know	1	1	1	1	—	1	—	2

## Crime, Police, and Race

Californians are as likely to say that violence and street crime are a big problem in their community today (27%) as they were in March 2017 (25%). Similar shares of adults across political parties hold the view that violence and street crime are a big problem (24% Democrats, 23% Republicans, 22% independents). Across regions, residents of Orange/San Diego are less likely to feel that it is a big problem than are residents elsewhere. African Americans and Latinos (38% each) are much more likely to say it is a big problem than are whites (20%) and Asian Americans (16%). Twenty-three percent of those age 18 to 34 think violence and street crime are a big problem, compared to 30 percent of 35 to 54 year olds and 27 percent of those 55 and older. The shares holding this view decrease as education and income levels rise.

**“How much of a problem are violence and street crime in your local community today—a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?”**

	All adults	Region					Likely voters
		Central Valley	Inland Empire	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	San Francisco Bay Area	
Big problem	27%	30%	30%	31%	16%	27%	23%
Somewhat of a problem	36	40	40	35	32	33	40
Not much of a problem	37	29	29	32	51	41	37
Don't know	1	1	—	1	2	—	—

Two in three adults say their local police are doing an excellent (25%) or good (40%) job controlling crime in their community. The share saying excellent job was slightly larger in March 2017 (30%). Republicans (76%) are more likely than independents (67%) and Democrats (62%) to say that local police are doing an excellent or good job. Across regions, Orange/San Diego residents (79%) are much more likely to say this than residents elsewhere (64% Central Valley, 63% San Francisco Bay Area, 61% Los Angeles, 53% Inland Empire). African Americans (37%) are far less likely than Latinos (60%), Asian Americans (70%), and whites (71%) to say that police are doing an excellent or good job. College graduates (72%) are somewhat more likely to hold this view than those with some college education (64%) or a high school degree only (60%). Younger Californians (58% 18 to 34) are slightly less likely than older Californians (65% 35 to 54, 71% 55 and older) to say local police are doing an excellent or good job; those who earn under \$40,000 (55%) are less likely to say this than those who earn \$40,000 to \$80,000 (69%) or \$80,000 or more (71%).

**“How would you rate the job your local police are doing in controlling crime in your community: excellent, good, fair, or poor?”**

	All adults	Party			Race/Ethnicity			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites
Excellent	25%	21%	38%	24%	15%	28%	22%	27%
Good	40	41	38	43	22	42	38	44
Fair	27	27	18	25	32	27	34	20
Poor	8	10	5	7	31	3	6	8
Don't know	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	1

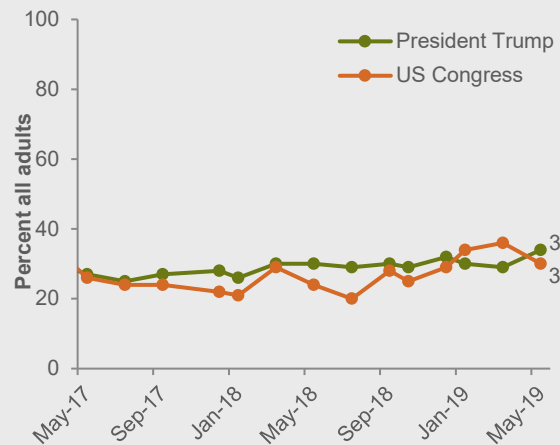
Two in three adults say local police treat all racial and ethnic groups fairly almost always (30%), most of the time (31%), or volunteer that they always treat them fairly (4%). Republicans (82%) are more likely than independents (69%) and Democrats (54%) to hold this view. Regionally, residents in Orange/San Diego (72%), the Central Valley (70%), and the San Francisco Bay Area (68%) are the most likely to say that racial and ethnic groups are treated fairly at least most of the time. African Americans (32%) are far less likely to say this than Latinos (61%), whites (69%), and Asian Americans (72%).

# National Issues

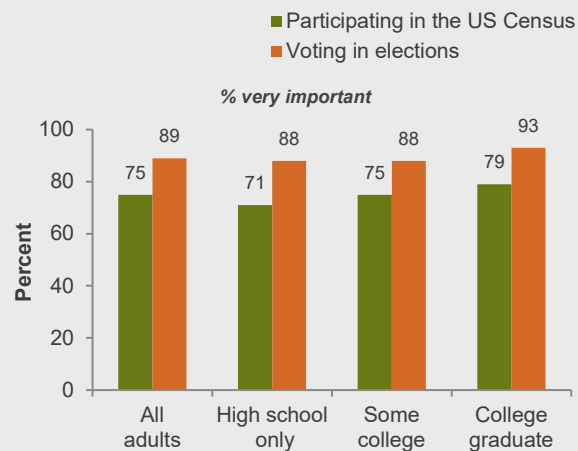
## Key Findings

- One in three Californians approve of President Trump, and a similar share (30%) approve of the US Congress. *(page 15)*
- A majority of Californians (57%) think the Mueller investigation did not clear Trump of all wrongdoing. But Californians are divided on whether Congress should begin impeachment proceedings. *(page 16)*
- Forty-two percent think that interference by Russia undermined the legitimacy of the 2016 presidential election, while a majority (54%) say possible interference by Russia and other countries threatens the legitimacy of the 2020 presidential election. *(page 17)*
- Nine in ten Californians say voting in elections in 2020 is very important, while three in four Californians say participating in the 2020 Census is very important. Six in ten Californians express concern that the Census Bureau will not keep answers to the 2020 Census confidential. *(page 18)*
- When it comes to what is important in a presidential candidate, likely voters prefer experience and a proven record (52%) over new ideas and a different approach (39%). One in four California likely voters (24%) say they will definitely vote to reelect Donald Trump, while just over half (57%) say they will definitely vote for someone else. *(page 19)*
- Likely voters in the Democratic presidential primary (those who are either registered Democrats or independents who lean Democratic) are divided when asked if it is more important for Democrats to nominate the candidate who seems most likely to defeat Donald Trump (48%) or the candidate whose positions on the issues come closest to their own (42%). *(page 19)*

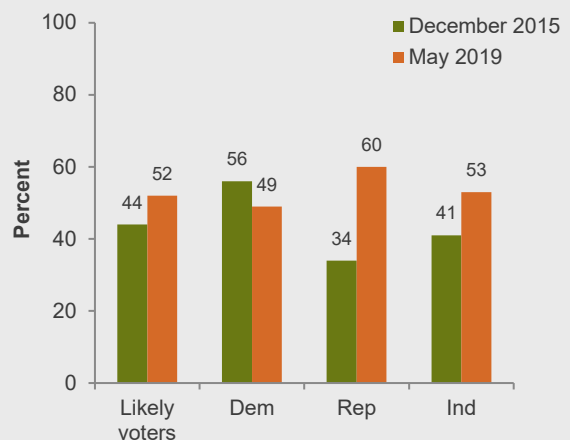
Approval ratings of federal elected officials



Perceived importance of US Census and voting in 2020



Belief that experience and a proven record are more important in a presidential candidate than new ideas and a different approach



## Approval of Federal Elected Officials

A majority of Californians continue to be critical of President Trump. Thirty-four percent of adults and 38 percent of likely voters approve of the president. Findings were similar in March (29% adults, 34% likely voters). An overwhelming majority of Republicans (86%) approve, compared to about four in ten independents and fewer than one in ten Democrats. Regionally, approval is highest in the Central Valley (44%) and Inland Empire (43%), and lowest in Los Angeles (27%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (27%). Across racial/ethnic groups, whites (46%) are much more likely than Asian Americans (27%), Latinos (23%), and African Americans (13%) to approve of the president's performance. Those age 55 and older (44%) are much more likely to approve than those age 18 to 34 (28%) and 35 to 54 (30%), and homeowners (44%) are much more likely to approve than renters (28%). Men (39%) are somewhat more likely to approve of Trump than women (30%). Those earning more than \$40,000 (39% \$40,000 to \$80,000; 35% \$80,000 or more) are somewhat more likely than those earning less than \$40,000 (29%) to approve. Californians' approval of Trump is lower than the national average; in a recent Gallup poll, 42 percent of adults nationwide approved, while 52 percent disapproved.

### **“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Donald Trump is handling his job as president?”**

		Approve	Disapprove	Don't know
All adults		34%	61%	4%
Likely voters		38	60	2
Party	Democrats	8	90	2
	Republicans	86	14	—
	Independents	38	57	5
Region	Central Valley	44	52	3
	Inland Empire	43	57	1
	Los Angeles	27	67	6
	Orange/San Diego	38	56	6
	San Francisco Bay Area	27	68	4

Five months after Democrats took control of the House of Representatives, 30 percent of adults and 22 percent of likely voters approve of the way Congress is handling its job, down slightly from March (36% adults, 29% likely voters). Democrats (27%) and independents (25%) are somewhat more likely than Republicans (18%) to approve. Across regions, fewer than four in ten approve of Congress's performance. Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (44%) are more likely to approve than Asian Americans (29%), African Americans (24%), and whites (23%). Approval declines as income rises. Californians' approval of Congress is higher than the national average; in a recent Gallup poll, 20 percent of adults nationwide approved, while 75 percent disapproved.

### **“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way the US Congress is handling its job?”**

		Approve	Disapprove	Don't know
All adults		30%	63%	7%
Likely voters		22	73	5
Party	Democrats	27	68	5
	Republicans	18	77	5
	Independents	25	69	6
Region	Central Valley	28	66	6
	Inland Empire	27	69	3
	Los Angeles	30	62	8
	Orange/San Diego	36	57	8
	San Francisco Bay Area	30	66	5



## Mueller Investigation and Impeachment

In March 2019, special counsel Robert Mueller concluded his investigation of possible Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election. Our survey was conducted prior to Mueller's first public remarks about the investigation on May 29. Nearly six in ten Californians (57%) and likely voters (58%) believe that the investigation did not clear Trump of all wrongdoing. Around one in ten adults (13%) are unsure whether the investigation cleared Trump or not. An overwhelming majority of Democrats (84%) say Trump was not cleared, while far fewer independents (55%) and Republicans (15%) hold this view. Regionally, residents in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles (63% each) are the most likely to say that Trump was not cleared of all wrongdoing (55% Orange/San Diego, 52% Inland Empire, 46% Central Valley). Across racial/ethnic groups, African Americans (73%), Asian Americans (65%), and Latinos (60%) are more likely than whites (50%) to hold this view. Half of Californians 55 and older (51%) think the investigation did not clear Trump of all wrongdoing, compared to six in ten younger Californians (61% 18 to 34, 59% 35 to 54). In a recent ABC News/Washington Post poll, 31 percent of adults nationwide said the investigation cleared Trump, and 53 percent said it did not.

**“As you may know, Special Counsel Robert Mueller has completed his investigation of possible collusion between Trump’s 2016 presidential campaign and Russia. From what you have heard or read about it, do you think the Mueller investigation cleared Trump of all wrongdoing, or did it not clear him of all wrongdoing?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Cleared Trump of all wrongdoing	30%	10%	77%	32%	36%
Did not clear Trump of all wrongdoing	57	84	15	55	58
Don't know	13	7	8	14	7

Californians are divided on whether Congress should begin impeachment proceedings: 49 percent of adults and 42 percent of likely voters say that Congress should begin impeachment proceedings that could lead to the president being removed from office. A majority of Democrats (66%) hold this view, compared to far fewer independents (39%) and Republicans (9%). About half in Los Angeles (53%) and Orange/San Diego (50%) say Congress should begin proceedings, while residents elsewhere are divided. Across racial/ethnic groups, a majority of African Americans (69%) and Latinos (68%) say that Congress should start proceedings, compared to fewer than half of Asian Americans (45%) and whites (35%). Women (54%) are somewhat more likely than men (43%) to say Congress should begin impeachment proceedings. Older Californians (35% 55 and older) are much less likely to think Congress should begin proceedings than younger Californians (56% 18 to 34, 55% 35 to 54). The shares holding this view decline with rising income (60% under \$40,000; 47% \$40,000 to \$80,000; 41% \$80,000 or more). Renters (58%) are far more likely than homeowners (38%) to say Congress should begin impeachment proceedings. Californians are more likely to feel that impeachment proceedings should begin than adults nationwide. A recent ABC News/Washington Post poll found that 37 percent of adults nationwide thought Congress should begin impeachment proceedings, while 56 percent did not.

**“Based on what you know, do you think Congress should or should not begin impeachment proceedings that could lead to Trump being removed from office?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Should begin impeachment proceedings	49%	66%	9%	39%	42%
Should not begin impeachment proceedings	45	30	90	53	54
Don't know	6	4	1	8	4

## Legitimacy of Presidential Elections

Californians are divided on whether the Russian government's interference in the 2016 presidential election undermined the legitimacy of the election: 42 percent think it did, while 47 percent think it did not rise to that level. Similar shares of likely voters hold this view (44% undermined legitimacy, 50% did not rise to that level). There is a wide partisan divide: 65 percent of Democrats think Russian interference undermined the legitimacy of the election, compared to 11 percent of Republicans. About four in ten independents (37%) say the same. Across regions, about four in ten in the Central Valley (37%), Inland Empire (39%), Los Angeles (43%), and Orange/San Diego (43%) say Russian interference undermined the legitimacy of the election, while just under half of residents in the San Francisco Bay Area (48%) hold this view. Across racial/ethnic groups, Asian Americans (51%) are the most likely to think Russian interference undermined the legitimacy of the election, compared to fewer Latinos (44%), African Americans (43%), and whites (37%). Women (45%) are slightly more likely than men (39%) to hold this view. According to an April ABC News/Washington Post poll, adults nationwide were similarly divided, with 42 percent saying Russia undermined the legitimacy of the 2016 presidential election and 49 percent saying it did not rise to that level.

**“Given what you have heard or read, do you think interference by Russia undermined the legitimacy of the 2016 presidential election, or did it not rise to that level?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Undermined legitimacy	42%	65%	11%	37%	44%
Did not rise to that level	47	26	86	56	50
Don't know	11	8	3	7	6

Looking ahead to 2020, a majority of adults (54%) and likely voters (56%) think possible interference by Russia and other countries threatens the legitimacy of the upcoming presidential election. Three in four Democrats (74%) think possible interference threatens the legitimacy of the 2020 election, compared to half of independents (52%) and one in four Republicans (25%). At least half of residents in the Central Valley (50%), Los Angeles (56%), the San Francisco Bay Area (56%), and the Inland Empire (59%) hold this view; Orange/San Diego residents are divided (48% does threaten, 43% does not threaten). At least half across demographic groups—with the exception of men (49%)—think possible interference by Russia and other countries threatens the legitimacy of the 2020 presidential election. Women (59%) are more likely than men (49%) to hold this view. In the ABC News/Washington Post poll, 53 percent of adults nationwide said possible interference by Russia and other countries threatens the legitimacy of the 2020 presidential election (37% does not threaten).

**“Do you think possible interference by Russia and other countries does or does not threaten the legitimacy of the 2020 presidential election?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Does threaten	54%	74%	25%	52%	56%
Does not threaten	38	22	68	41	39
Don't know	9	4	6	7	5

## Importance of the US Census and Voting in 2020

The 2020 Census is fast approaching, and its impact on California could be huge. An undercount in the decennial census could cost California a congressional seat and shift political representation away from low-income communities of color. With much at stake, three in four California adults (75%) and eight in ten likely voters (81%) say it is very important to participate in the 2020 Census. Three in four or more across parties share this view. At least seven in ten across regions and demographic groups say participating in the census is very important. Similar shares of US-born (74%) and foreign-born (77%) residents hold this view.

**“How important is participating in the US Census in 2020? Would you say this is very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?”**

	All adults	Party			Race/Ethnicity			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites
Very important	75%	79%	75%	81%	72%	70%	78%	75%
Somewhat important	19	19	20	14	22	20	17	19
Not too important	3	2	3	2	1	5	3	3
Not at all important	2	—	1	2	5	4	1	1
Don't know	2	1	1	1	—	1	1	1

By comparison, nine in ten adults (89%) and likely voters (95%) say it is very important to vote in elections in 2020. More than nine in ten across parties hold this view, as do more than eight in ten across racial/ethnic groups. Across regions, more than eight in ten say it is very important, with those in the Inland Empire (92%) the most likely to hold this view. More than eight in ten across demographic groups say voting in elections in 2020 is very important.

Much of the discussion surrounding the 2020 Census centers on the Trump administration's proposed addition of a question about citizenship status. The US Supreme Court is expected to make a decision by the end of June on whether this question can be included. Today, six in ten adults (63%) and likely voters (61%) are concerned that the Census Bureau will not keep answers to the 2020 Census confidential. Across parties, more than seven in ten Democrats (73%) express concern, compared to fewer independents (64%) and Republicans (48%). Latinos (74%), African Americans (70%), and Asian Americans (64%) are more likely than whites (52%) to be concerned. Majorities across demographic groups and regions say they are concerned, with residents in Los Angeles (69%) the most likely to be concerned. Foreign-born residents (71%) are more likely than US-born residents (58%) to express concern that the Census Bureau will not keep answers to the 2020 Census confidential. In a February survey by the US Census Bureau, 72 percent of adults nationwide were concerned about confidentiality.

**“How concerned are you, if at all, that the Census Bureau will not keep answers to the 2020 Census confidential?”**

	All adults	Party			Race/Ethnicity			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites
Extremely concerned	13%	16%	7%	14%	19%	11%	13%	12%
Very concerned	20	24	14	19	26	21	27	14
Somewhat concerned	30	33	27	31	25	32	34	26
Not too concerned	18	14	20	18	11	23	13	22
Not at all concerned	17	12	32	16	17	13	11	24
Don't know	2	2	1	2	1	—	3	2

## 2020 Presidential Election

With the March 2020 presidential primary less than a year away, 69 percent of likely voters are following news about the candidates very (28%) or fairly (41%) closely. One in three likely voters (34%) say they would reelect Donald Trump (24% definitely, 10% probably), while two in three (65%) say they would vote for someone else (57% definitely, 8% probably). Eight in ten Republican likely voters (82%) say they would vote to reelect Trump, while nine in ten Democrats (93%) and two in three independents (66%) say they would vote for someone else. Among likely voters, majorities of whites, Latinos, and those in other racial/ethnic groups say they would vote for someone else. (Sample sizes for Asian American and African American likely voters are too small for separate analysis.) Younger likely voters (77% 18 to 34, 71% 35 to 54) are more likely than those 55 and older (56%) to hold this view. In a Fox News poll in May, a majority of adults nationwide (54%) said they would vote for someone else.

**“If the 2020 presidential election were held today, would you definitely vote to reelect Donald Trump, probably vote to reelect Trump, probably vote for someone else, or definitely vote for someone else?”**

Likely voters only	All likely voters	Party			Age		
		Dem	Rep	Ind	18 to 34	35 to 54	55 and older
Definitely vote to reelect Donald Trump	24%	3%	65%	16%	14%	18%	32%
Probably vote to reelect Trump	10	3	17	16	7	11	10
Probably vote for someone else	8	6	4	14	9	12	4
Definitely vote for someone else	57	87	12	52	68	59	52
Don't know	1	1	2	2	2	–	2

When asked which attributes are more important in a presidential candidate, half of likely voters (52%) say experience and a proven record, while 39 percent say new ideas and a different approach. Likely voters were more divided in December 2015 (44% experience, 46% new ideas). Today, Democrats are divided on this question (49% experience, 42% new ideas) while majorities of Republicans (60%) and independents (53%) prefer experience and a proven record.

For the 2020 Democratic presidential primary, 48 percent of likely voters who are either registered Democrats or independents who lean Democratic say it is more important to nominate the candidate who seems most likely to defeat Donald Trump than to nominate someone whose positions on the issues come closest to theirs (42%). Independents (54%) are slightly more likely than Democrats (47%) to prefer the candidate most likely to defeat Trump. Half of those age 18 to 44 say it is more important to nominate the candidate whose positions come closest to theirs, while half of those age 45 and older prefer the candidate who seems most likely to defeat Trump. Whites (29%) are less likely than Latinos (53%) and those in other racial/ethnic groups (54%) to prefer the candidate whose positions come closest to theirs.

**“What's more important to you—that Democrats nominate the presidential candidate whose positions on the issues come closest to yours, or the candidate who seems most likely to defeat Donald Trump in November 2020?”**

Likely voters who are Democrats or independents who lean Democratic only	All likely voters	Education			Age	
		High school only	Some college education	College graduate	18 to 44	45 and older
The presidential candidate whose positions on the issues come closest to yours	42%	56%	42%	38%	51%	37%
The candidate who seems most likely to defeat Donald Trump	48	33	50	53	43	52
Both (volunteered)	6	3	5	7	6	6
Don't know	4	9	3	2	1	5

# Regional Map



# Methodology

The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, president and CEO and survey director at the Public Policy Institute of California. Associate survey director Dean Bonner and survey research associate Rachel Ward served as project managers for this survey, and additional assistance was provided by survey research associate Alyssa Dykman. The Californians and Their Government survey series is supported with funding from the James Irvine Foundation and the PPIC Donor Circle. The PPIC Statewide Survey invites input, comments, and suggestions from policy and public opinion experts and from its own advisory committee, but survey methods, questions, and content are determined solely by PPIC's survey team.

Findings in this report are based on a survey of 1,713 California adult residents, including 1,198 interviewed on cell phones and 515 interviewed on landline telephones. Interviews took an average of 18 minutes to complete. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights from May 19–28, 2019.

Cell phone interviews were conducted using a computer-generated random sample of cell phone numbers. All cell phone numbers with California area codes were eligible for selection. Once a cell phone user was reached, it was verified that this person was age 18 or older, a resident of California, and in a safe place to continue the survey (e.g., not driving). Cell phone respondents were offered a small reimbursement to help defray the cost of the call. Cell phone interviews were conducted with adults who have cell phone service only and with those who have both cell phone and landline service in the household.

Landline interviews were conducted using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers that ensured that both listed and unlisted numbers were called. All landline telephone exchanges in California were eligible for selection. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (age 18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing using the "last birthday method" to avoid biases in age and gender.

For both cell phones and landlines, telephone numbers were called as many as eight times. When no contact with an individual was made, calls to a number were limited to six. Also, to increase our ability to interview Asian American adults, we made up to three additional calls to phone numbers estimated by Survey Sampling International as likely to be associated with Asian American individuals.

Live landline and cell phone interviews were conducted by Abt Associates in English and Spanish, according to respondents' preferences. Accent on Languages, Inc., translated new survey questions into Spanish, with assistance from Renatta DeFever.

Abt Associates uses the US Census Bureau's 2013–2017 American Community Survey's (ACS) Public Use Microdata Series for California (with regional coding information from the University of Minnesota's Integrated Public Use Microdata Series for California) to compare certain demographic characteristics of the survey sample—region, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and education—with the characteristics of California's adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to the ACS figures. To estimate landline and cell phone service in California, Abt Associates used 2016 state-level estimates released by the National Center for Health Statistics—which used data from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) and the ACS. The estimates for California were then compared against landline and cell phone service reported in this survey. We also used voter registration data from the California Secretary of State to compare the party registration of registered voters in our sample to party registration statewide. The landline and cell phone samples were then integrated using a frame integration weight, while sample balancing adjusted for differences across regional, age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, telephone service, and party registration groups.

The sampling error, taking design effects from weighting into consideration, is  $\pm 3.3$  percent at the 95 percent confidence level for the total unweighted sample of 1,713 adults. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 3.3 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for unweighted subgroups is larger: for the 1,426 registered voters, the sampling error is  $\pm 3.6$  percent; for the 1,123 likely voters, it is  $\pm 4.1$  percent, for the 740 respondents who answered question 35b (preference for Democratic nominee), it is  $\pm 4.9$  percent. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

We present results for five geographic regions, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population. “Central Valley” includes Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. “San Francisco Bay Area” includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. “Los Angeles” refers to Los Angeles County, “Inland Empire” refers to Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, and “Orange/San Diego” refers to Orange and San Diego Counties. Residents of other geographic areas are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, and likely voters, but sample sizes for these less populous areas are not large enough to report separately.

We present results for non-Hispanic whites, who account for 42 percent of the state’s adult population, and also for Latinos, who account for 35 percent of the state’s adult population and constitute one of the fastest-growing voter groups. We also present results for non-Hispanic Asian Americans, who make up about 15 percent of the state’s adult population, and non-Hispanic African Americans, who comprise about 6 percent. Results for other racial/ethnic groups—such as Native Americans—are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, and likely voters, but sample sizes are not large enough for separate analysis. Results for African American and Asian American likely voters are combined with those of other racial/ethnic groups because sample sizes for African American and Asian American likely voters are too small for separate analysis. We compare the opinions of those who report they are registered Democrats, registered Republicans, and decline-to-state or independent voters; the results for those who say they are registered to vote in other parties are not large enough for separate analysis. We also analyze the responses of likely voters—so designated per their responses to survey questions about voter registration, previous election participation, intentions to vote this year, attention to election news, and current interest in politics.

The percentages presented in the report tables and in the questionnaire may not add to 100 due to rounding.

We compare current PPIC Statewide Survey results to those in our earlier surveys and to those in national surveys by ABC News/Washington Post, Fox News, Gallup, NBC News/Wall Street Journal, and the US Census Bureau. Additional details about our methodology can be found at [www.ppic.org/wp-content/uploads/SurveyMethodology.pdf](http://www.ppic.org/wp-content/uploads/SurveyMethodology.pdf) and are available upon request through [surveys@ppic.org](mailto:surveys@ppic.org).



# Questionnaire and Results

## CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

May 19–28, 2019

1,713 California Adult Residents:

English, Spanish

MARGIN OF ERROR  $\pm 3.3\%$  AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE

PERCENTAGES MAY NOT ADD TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING

- 1. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Gavin Newsom is handling his job as governor of California?**

45% approve  
29 disapprove  
26 don't know

- 2. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Newsom is handling the issue of wildfire prevention and response in California?**

44% approve  
24 disapprove  
32 don't know

- 3. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Newsom is handling the PG&E bankruptcy and utilities' responsibilities for wildfire damage costs?**

32% approve  
30 disapprove  
38 don't know

- 4. How concerned are you about rising electricity bills because of utilities' responsibilities for wildfire damage costs? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?**

41% very concerned  
37 somewhat concerned  
13 not too concerned  
8 not at all concerned  
1 don't know

- 5. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job?**

39% approve  
44 disapprove  
17 don't know

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

44% good times  
47 bad times  
9 don't know

- 7. How would you rate your own personal financial situation? Would you say you are in excellent shape, good shape, only fair shape, or poor shape financially?**

8% excellent  
35 good  
38 only fair  
18 poor  
1 don't know

- 8. Does the cost of your housing place a financial strain on you and your family today?**

52% yes  
47 no  
1 don't know

Next, do you favor or oppose these state government proposals to provide more affordable housing in your part of California?

*[rotate questions 9 to 11]*

- 9. How about reducing state government regulations by changing CEQA—the California Environmental Quality Act?**

47% favor  
30 oppose  
24 don't know

- 10. How about requiring local governments to approve a certain amount of new housing development before they can receive state funding for their local transportation projects?**

61% favor  
31 oppose  
8 don't know

- 11. How about requiring local governments to change the land-use zoning for new development from single-family housing to multi-family housing near mass transit and job centers?**

62% favor  
30 oppose  
8 don't know

Next,

- 12. Do you think the state budget situation in California—that is, the balance between government spending and revenues—is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem for the people of California today?**

45% big problem  
36 somewhat of a problem  
12 not a problem  
7 don't know

- 13. Governor Newsom recently released a revised budget plan for the next fiscal year that includes \$147 billion in general fund spending. The proposed budget will increase spending on K–14 and higher education and health and human services. The plan includes \$4 billion to eliminate budgetary debts and reverse the deferrals of the past decades. The plan includes \$1.8 billion in additional funds to bring the rainy day fund to \$16.5 billion dollars. In general, do you favor or oppose the governor's budget plan?**

62% favor  
29 oppose  
3 have not heard anything about the budget (*volunteered*)  
6 don't know

- 14. In his revised budget plan, Governor Newsom proposes \$1 billion to address homelessness. The plan allocates \$650 million in one-time spending to local governments for homeless emergency aid, \$150 million for mental health programs, and \$120 million for programs which coordinate housing and health and social services. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?**

74% favor  
23 oppose  
3 don't know

- 15. How much of a problem is homelessness in your part of California? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?**

63% big problem  
23 somewhat of a problem  
13 not a problem  
— don't know

- 16. Changing topics, do you think parents should be required to vaccinate their children for diseases like measles, mumps, and rubella, or do you think parents should be able to decide whether or not to vaccinate their children?**

73% should be required  
26 should be able to decide  
2 don't know

- 17. In general, how safe are vaccines given to children for diseases like measles, mumps, and rubella—very safe, somewhat safe, not very safe, or not safe at all?**

62% very safe  
27 somewhat safe  
4 not very safe  
3 not safe at all  
4 don't know

- 18. How concerned are you that the recent outbreak of measles will become more widespread—very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?**

43% very concerned  
36 somewhat concerned  
13 not too concerned  
7 not at all concerned  
1 don't know

Next,

- 19. How much of a problem are violence and street crime in your local community today—a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?**

27% big problem  
36 somewhat of a problem  
37 not much of a problem  
1 don't know

- 20. How would you rate the job your local police are doing in controlling crime in your community—excellent, good, fair, or poor?**

25% excellent  
40 good  
27 fair  
8 poor  
1 don't know

- 21. Do you think the police in your community treat all racial and ethnic groups fairly almost always, most of the time, only some of the time, or almost never?**

30% almost always  
31 most of the time  
20 only some of the time  
9 almost never  
4 always (*volunteered*)  
1 never (*volunteered*)  
5 don't know

Changing topics,

- 22. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Donald Trump is handling his job as president?**

34% approve  
61 disapprove  
4 don't know

- 23. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way the US Congress is handling its job?**

30% approve  
63 disapprove  
7 don't know

- 24. As you may know, Special Counsel Robert Mueller has completed his investigation of possible collusion between Trump's 2016 presidential campaign and Russia. From what you have heard or read about it, do you think the Mueller investigation cleared Trump of all wrongdoing, or did it not clear him of all wrongdoing?**

30% cleared Trump of all wrongdoing  
57 did not clear Trump of all wrongdoing  
13 don't know

- 25. Based on what you know, do you think Congress should or should not begin impeachment proceedings that could lead to Trump being removed from office?**

49% should begin impeachment proceedings  
45 should not begin impeachment proceedings  
6 don't know

On another topic,

**26. Given what you have heard or read, do you think interference by Russia undermined the legitimacy of the 2016 presidential election, or did it not rise to that level?**

42% undermined legitimacy  
47 did not rise to that level  
11 don't know

**27. Do you think possible interference by Russia and other countries does or does not threaten the legitimacy of the 2020 presidential election?**

54% does threaten  
38 does not threaten  
9 don't know

On another topic,

*[rotate questions 28–30; always ask question 29 after question 28]*

**28. How important is participating in the US Census in 2020? Would you say this is very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?**

75% very important  
19 somewhat important  
3 not too important  
2 not at all important  
2 don't know

**29. How concerned are you, if at all, that the Census Bureau will not keep answers to the 2020 Census confidential—extremely concerned, very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?**

13% extremely concerned  
20 very concerned  
30 somewhat concerned  
18 not too concerned  
17 not at all concerned  
2 don't know

**30. How important is voting in elections in 2020? Would you say this is very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?**

89% very important  
7 somewhat important  
2 not too important  
3 not at all important  
— don't know

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

71% yes *[ask q31a]*  
29 no *[skip to q32b]*

**31a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or are you registered as a decline-to-state or independent voter?**

43% Democrat *[ask q32]*  
24 Republican *[skip to q32a]*  
5 another party *(specify) [skip to q33]*  
28 independent *[skip to q32b]*

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

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

*[skip to q33]*

**32a. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?**

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

*[skip to q33]*

**32b. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?**

27% Republican Party  
39 Democratic Party  
23 neither *(volunteered)*  
11 don't know

On another topic,

**33. [likely voters only]** How closely are you following the news about candidates for the 2020 presidential election—very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?

- 21% very closely
- 33 fairly closely
- 27 not too closely
- 18 not at all closely
- don't know

*[question 34 not asked]*

**35. [likely voters only]** Which of the following is more important to you in a presidential candidate *[rotate]* (1) experience and a proven record *[or]* (2) new ideas and a different approach?

- 52% experience and a proven record
- 39 new ideas and a different approach
- 6 both (*volunteered*)
- 3 don't know

**35a. [likely voters only]** If the 2020 presidential election were held today, would you definitely vote to reelect Donald Trump, probably vote to reelect Trump, probably vote for someone else, or definitely vote for someone else?

- 24% definitely vote to reelect Donald Trump
- 10 probably vote to reelect Trump
- 8 probably vote for someone else
- 57 definitely vote for someone else
- 1 don't know

**35b. [Democratic likely voters and independents who lean Democratic only]** What's more important to you—that Democrats nominate the presidential candidate *[rotate]* [1] whose positions on the issues come closest to yours, or the candidate [2] who seems most likely to defeat Donald Trump in November 2020?

- 42% the presidential candidate whose positions on the issues come closest to yours
- 48 the candidate who seems most likely to defeat Donald Trump
- 6 both (*volunteered*)
- 4 don't know

**36. Next, would you consider yourself to be politically:**

*[read list, rotate order top to bottom]*

- 15% very liberal
- 19 somewhat liberal
- 31 middle-of-the-road
- 20 somewhat conservative
- 14 very conservative
- 2 don't know

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

- 22% great deal
- 38 fair amount
- 30 only a little
- 9 none
- don't know

*[d1–d15 demographic questions]*

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