



**PPIC
STATEWIDE
SURVEY**

OCTOBER 2005

**Special Survey on Californians
and the Initiative Process**

in collaboration with

The James Irvine Foundation

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**Public
Policy
Institute of
California**

The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) is a private operating foundation established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. The Institute is dedicated to improving public policy in California through independent, objective, nonpartisan research.

PPIC's research agenda focuses on three program areas: population, economy, and governance and public finance. Studies within these programs are examining the underlying forces shaping California's future, cutting across a wide range of public policy concerns: the California economy, education, employment and income, immigration, infrastructure and urban growth, poverty and welfare, state and local finance, and the well-being of children and families.

PPIC was created because three concerned citizens – William R. Hewlett, Roger W. Heyns, and Arjay Miller – recognized the need for linking objective research to the realities of California public policy. Their goal was to help the state's leaders better understand the intricacies and implications of contemporary issues and make informed public policy decisions when confronted with challenges in the future. PPIC does not take or support positions on any ballot measure or on any local, state, or federal legislation, nor does it endorse, support, or oppose any political parties or candidates for public office.

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Preface

The PPIC Statewide Survey series provides policymakers, the media, and the general public with objective, advocacy-free information on the perceptions, opinions, and public policy preferences of California residents. Inaugurated in April 1998, the survey series has generated a database that includes the responses of more than 124,000 Californians. The current survey is the third in a special series on *Californians and the Initiative Process*, supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation.

On November 8th, California voters will have the opportunity to participate in a special election. The state ballot will include no candidates, presenting instead eight citizens' initiatives on a wide range of topics. The last statewide special election was held in 2003 on the question of recalling the governor. Before that, there were proposition-only special elections in 1973, 1979, and 1993.

The three special surveys we are conducting in advance of the November special election are designed to provide information about Californians' reactions to the election and the initiative questions, about their attitudes toward the initiative process, and about the role that government distrust plays in shaping public opinion about the legislative process, the initiative process, and fiscal and governance reforms. This survey series seeks to raise public awareness, inform decisionmakers, and stimulate public discussions about the state's system of governance, the initiative process, and various proposals for fiscal and governance reforms.

The November 8th special election provides a unique opportunity to observe how the public views, reacts to, and approaches information-gathering and ballot choices on citizens' initiatives. This report presents the responses of 2,003 adult residents throughout the state, including 1,580 registered voters, 1,079 likely voters, and 827 of those identified as special election voters, on a wide range of issues:

- The special election, including awareness of election news and advertising, and voter interest, support, and underlying attitudes toward the state ballot measures. These include parental notification before abortion (Proposition 73), teachers' permanent status and dismissal (Proposition 74), public employee union dues and political contributions (Proposition 75), state spending and school funding limits (Proposition 76), and redistricting (Proposition 77).
- State issues, including overall approval ratings of Governor Schwarzenegger and ratings on his handling of governance reforms, overall approval ratings of the state legislature and specific legislators representing local districts, and support for reforms of legislative term limits, and the election and initiative processes.
- National issues, including overall approval ratings for President Bush, Congress, and California's two senators; specific approval ratings for President Bush on the federal budget and energy policy; assessments of local representation in Congress; distrust in government; and opinions about the U.S. Supreme Court, abortion, and birth control.
- The extent to which Californians—based on voter status, party affiliation, demographics, race/ethnicity, and region of residence—may differ in their attitudes toward the initiative process, the special election and the specific ballot measures, and governance reforms.

This is the 60th PPIC Statewide Survey, which has included a number of special editions on the Central Valley (11/99, 3/01, 4/02, 4/03, 4/04), Los Angeles County (3/03, 3/04, 3/05), Orange County (9/01, 12/02, 12/03, 12/04), San Diego County (7/02), population growth (5/01), land use (11/01, 11/02), housing (11/04), the environment (6/00, 6/02, 7/03, 11/03, 7/04, 7/05), the state budget (6/03, 1/04, 5/04, 1/05, 5/05), and California's future (8/04).

Copies of this report may be ordered by e-mail (order@ppic.org) or phone (415-291-4400). Copies of this and earlier reports are posted on the publications page of the PPIC web site (www.ppic.org). For questions about the survey, please contact survey@ppic.org.

Regional Groupings Used in This Report



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Press Release

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<http://www.ppic.org/main/pressreleaseindex.asp>

SPECIAL SURVEY ON CALIFORNIANS AND THE INITIATIVE PROCESS

IF YOU CALL IT, WILL THEY COME? VOTER INTEREST IN SPECIAL ELECTION SURGES

No Ballot Measure Enjoys Majority Support; Californians Back Some Reforms to Initiative Process

SAN FRANCISCO, California, October 28, 2005 — Surging voter interest in the November 8th special election could test the low-turnout predictions of many political pundits, according to a new survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), with funding from The James Irvine Foundation. But greater voter attention does not translate into increased support for specific ballot measures or for the man who called the election in the first place, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Although most likely voters continue to question the wisdom of the special election – 54 percent call it a bad idea – they are nonetheless showing more interest in and awareness of it. Eighty-one percent of likely voters say they are closely or somewhat closely following news about the special election, compared to 69 percent in September. “This level of interest is similar to what we observed during the 2002 gubernatorial election, which had a 51 percent voter turnout,” says PPIC survey director Mark Baldassare.

Voters also appear to be more aware of the specific measures on the November ballot: When asked which initiative interests them the most, a majority of voters are able to name a specific measure, with Proposition 75 (18%) and Proposition 74 (15%) leading the pack. Last month, voters’ top response was don’t know (38%) or none (12%). One reason for the increased awareness? Advertising. Eighty-three percent of likely voters say they have seen television advertising about ballot measures.

However, greater awareness has failed to sway public opinion when it comes to specific ballot measures. Indeed, only one measure (Proposition 75) has seen significant movement since August – in a downward direction. None of the measures actively supported by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger currently enjoys majority support, even when the likely voter pool is limited to a subset of voters who are particularly engaged in the special election (special election voters):

- **Teacher tenure (Proposition 74)** – Likely voters’ support for this measure – which would increase probationary periods for public school teachers – stayed relatively steady during the last month, rising from 43 percent in September to 46 percent today. Among special election voters, 46 percent say they support the measure while 49 percent oppose it. A majority of likely voters (55%) say the outcome of this proposition is very important for improving teacher quality in California’s public schools.
- **Use of Union Dues (Proposition 75)** – Support for Proposition 75 – which requires employees’ consent to use union dues for political contributions – has dropped 12 points among likely voters since August (from 58% to 46%). Special election voters are divided in their support for this initiative (47% yes, 47% no). Likely voters who are union members or have immediate family in a union oppose it (62% no, 34% yes). Still, strong majorities of likely voters believe that both unions (61%) and corporations (79%) have too much influence on candidate elections and ballot initiatives.
- **Spending and funding limits (Proposition 76)** – As in August and September, the measure to limit state spending and change school funding requirements still trails by a wide margin (62% oppose, 30% support). Sixty-two percent of special election voters say they will vote no on this measure while 32 percent will vote yes. Despite the lack of support for Proposition 76, an overwhelming majority of likely voters (89%) believe that the state’s budgeting process needs work.

- **Redistricting (Proposition 77)** – More likely voters continue to oppose (50%) than support (36%) the proposal to have a panel of retired judges rather than lawmakers draw legislative districts. However, 14 percent remain undecided. Among special election voters, 50 percent oppose the measure and 38 percent support it. Despite the lack of majority support for this measure, many likely voters (69%) believe that the way the governor and legislature go about the redistricting process needs change.

Proposition 73 – which would require doctors to notify parents when a minor seeks an abortion – has the support of 42 percent of likely voters, with 48 percent opposed. Special election voters are similarly divided on this measure (42% yes, 49% no). Voters on both sides do agree on one thing: Most (83%) say the outcome of this vote is at least somewhat important.

Ratings for State Officials Remain Low

Despite the fact that his special election appears to have galvanized voters, Governor Schwarzenegger's approval ratings remain at a low point. Currently, 33 percent of Californians approve and 58 percent disapprove of the way Governor Schwarzenegger is handling his job as governor. Likely voters are slightly more positive about the governor than are Californians generally: 38 percent approve of his performance in office, while 57 percent disapprove. Fifty-seven percent of state residents and 56 percent of likely voters also disapprove of his handling of government reform. And far more residents today (39%) than one year ago (17%) describe the governor's time in office as worse than they expected.

The state legislature also remains in negative territory, with 56 percent of Californians and 65 percent of likely voters disapproving of its performance. When asked about the job performance of legislators from their own districts, residents are more positive: 38 percent approve and 39 percent disapprove of their legislators' performance in office. However, these ratings have declined sharply from one year ago (49% approve, 31% disapprove). Given these less-than-flattering assessments, it is not surprising that a majority of Californians (57%) believe term limits have been a good thing for the state and are opposed to term limit reform. Specifically, 62 percent of state residents oppose the idea of allowing legislators to serve up to 14 years in either the assembly or senate, rather than requiring them to split their time between the two houses.

Initiative Process: Californians Ready for Reform?

Californians are big believers in the initiative process, but many also think the system has flaws and could use reform. What are they willing to do to improve the initiative review process? Strong majorities of likely voters support changing the current initiative process to allow for a period of time in which the initiative sponsor and the legislature could meet to attempt to forge a compromise (77%) and having a system of review and revision of proposed initiatives to avoid legal and drafting errors before initiatives go to the ballot (73%). One review reform California voters won't accept? Only 37 percent favor – and 57 percent oppose – allowing the legislature and governor to amend initiatives after they are passed by voters.

In the context of a special election where millions of dollars are being spent on initiative campaigns, an overwhelming majority of voters (82%) favor increasing public disclosure of funding sources for initiative campaign and signature gathering efforts. Other campaign-related reforms fare less well: A majority of likely voters (52%) oppose increasing the number of signatures required to qualify an initiative for the ballot, while likely voters are divided about increasing the amount of time during which a sponsor may gather signatures (46% favor, 42% oppose).

Lackluster Support for Supreme Court Nominee; Abortion a Key Concern

As the debate about Supreme Court nominee Harriet Miers continues, about one in three California adults (34%) and likely voters (31%) believe the president's nominee to replace Justice Sandra Day O'Connor should be confirmed. About four in 10 adults (39%) and likely voters (46%) do not. Miers does not enjoy the broad support that John Roberts saw after his nomination to the court last summer: At that time, about half of Californians (49%) and likely voters (54%) said Roberts should be confirmed.

Abortion is a central point of debate over the Miers nomination, and a strong majority of Californians (63%) say the Supreme Court's decisions on abortion are very important to them personally. About six in 10 Californians want the Supreme Court to leave access to abortion either the same as it is now (48%) or to make it easier (12%), while 35 percent would like to make it harder. Democrats (75%) and independents (68%) would like to see access remain the same or be eased, while Republicans (51%) would like the Court to make abortion access more difficult. Nearly half of Latinos (47%) would like to make it harder to get an abortion, compared to 28 percent of whites. On a related topic, a strong majority of Californians (61%) and likely voters (63%) favor allowing women to get the morning after pill without a doctor's prescription.

More Key Findings

- **Economy Remains Top Issue** (page 7)
Californians continue to rank the economy (19%) and education (14%) as the most important problems facing the state, followed by immigration (9%). As further evidence of economic concerns, 56 percent of residents say the state will have bad economic times in the coming year. They are also twice as likely to say the state is headed in the wrong direction rather than the right direction (60% to 30%).
- **Support Grows for Public Funding of Campaigns** (page 10)
A majority of Californians (53%) believe that campaign contributions have a negative effect on the decisions made by elected officials. While they are divided about establishing a system of public funding for state and legislative campaigns, support for public funding has increased by 10 points since September 2004 (from 35% to 45%) and opposition has dropped by 11 points (from 57% to 46%).
- **Mixed Reviews for Federal Officials, Government** (pages 13-16)
Californians' generally negative view of government extends to the White House: Majorities of likely voters disapprove of President Bush's job performance overall (63%), as well as of his handling of the federal budget and energy policy (64% each). In contrast, most likely voters approve of the job their two U.S. Senators are doing (Feinstein 55%, Boxer 50%). While 55 percent of likely voters disapprove of the performance of the U.S. Congress, 57 percent believe their own House representative is doing a good job. Nevertheless, 74 percent of likely voters have little or no confidence in the federal government to do what is right and 69 percent believe it wastes a lot of tax dollars.

About the Survey

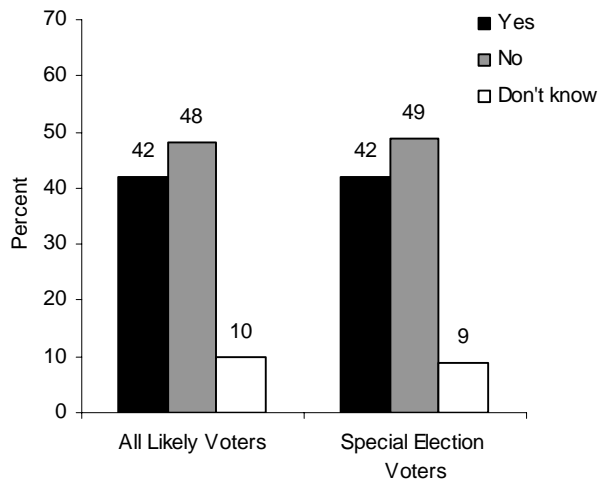
This survey on the initiative process and special election – made possible with funding from The James Irvine Foundation – is a special edition of the PPIC Statewide Survey. This is the third in a series of surveys designed to provide information about Californians' attitudes toward the state's initiative process and this November's special election. Findings of this survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,003 California adult residents interviewed between October 16 and October 23, 2005. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. The sampling error for the total sample is +/- 2%. The sampling error for the 1,079 likely voters is +/- 3% and for the 827 special election voters is +/- 3.5%. For more information on methodology, see page 19.

Mark Baldassare is research director at PPIC, where he holds the Arjay and Frances Fearing Miller Chair in Public Policy. He is founder of the PPIC Statewide Survey, which he has directed since 1998. His recent book, *A California State of Mind: The Conflicted Voter in a Changing World*, is available at www.ppic.org.

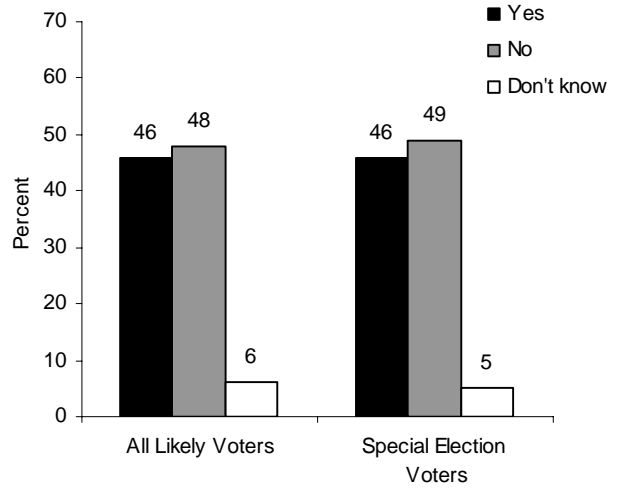
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This report will appear on PPIC's website (www.ppic.org) on October 28. ###

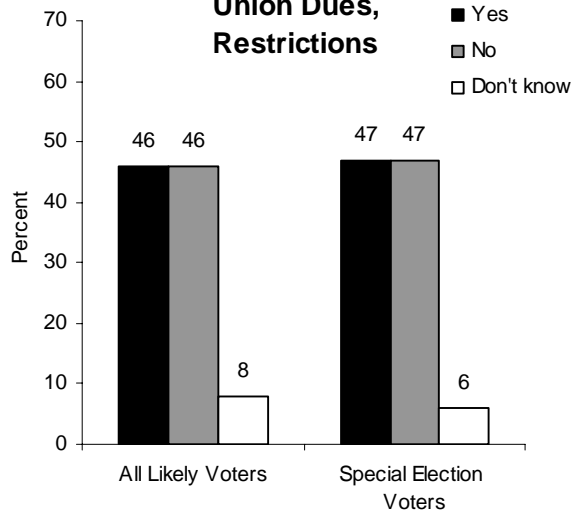
**Proposition 73:
Parental Notification Abortion**



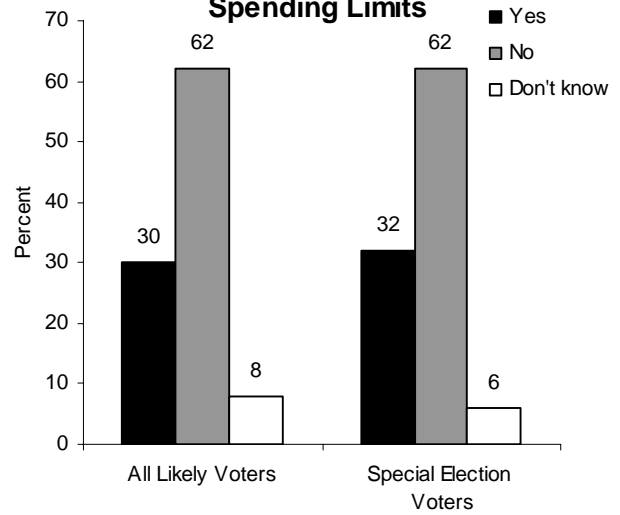
**Proposition 74:
Teacher Waiting Period**



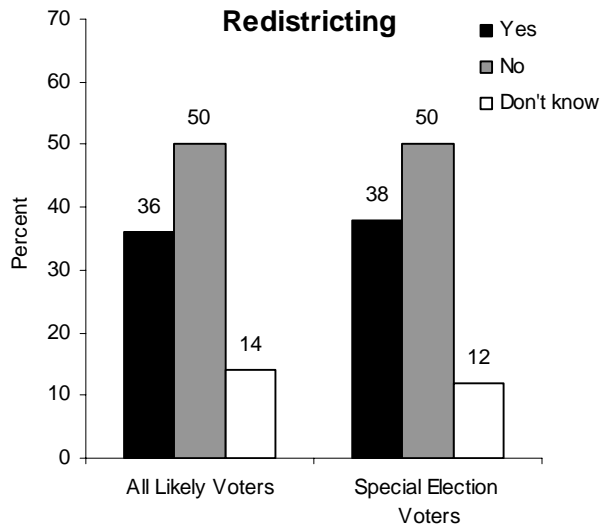
**Proposition 75:
Union Dues, Restrictions**



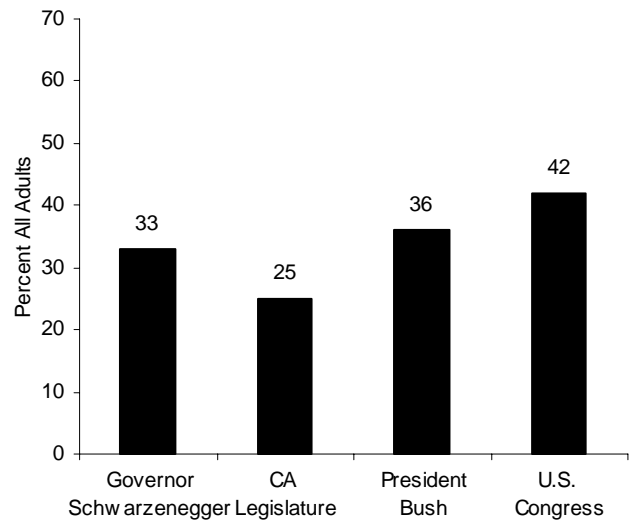
**Proposition 76:
Spending Limits**



**Proposition 77:
Redistricting**



Approval Ratings



Special Election

Voters' Interests

With the November 8th election in sight, Californians are showing more interest in the special election. While seven in 10 likely voters were very closely or fairly closely following the special election news in August and September, there are now eight in 10 likely voters who are paying close attention to news about the November election. About eight in 10 likely voters in most political and demographic groups and state regions are now following the election news. Compared to recent elections, election news interest today is similar to the level of interest we found in the 2002 gubernatorial election, which had a 51 percent voter turnout.

As another sign of growing interest in the special election, likely voters today much more frequently say there is a proposition on the ballot that they are most interested in, or that all of them are of interest. In just one month, there has been a 27-point increase in the percent saying they are most interested in *one* of the propositions (increasing from 43% to 63%) or *all* of the propositions on the ballot (increasing from 4% to 11%).

“How closely are you following news about the special election on November 8th?”

<i>Likely Voters Only</i>	August 2005	September 2005	October 2005
Very closely	21%	19%	31%
Fairly closely	47	50	50
Not too closely	23	23	15
Not at all closely	9	8	4

“Which one of the state propositions on the November 8th ballot are you most interested in?”

<i>Likely Voters Only</i>	August 2005	September 2005	October 2005
Propositions 73 to 80	42%	43%	63%
All of them	5	4	11
None of them	16	12	8
Other	3	3	2
Don't know	34	38	16

At a time when eight in 10 voters are following the special election news, 83 percent have seen television advertisements about the state propositions on the November ballot. This is similar to responses during the 2002 governor's election and the 2003 recall when eight in 10 likely voters had seen political commercials.

“Have you seen television advertisements about the state propositions on the November ballot?”

	Likely Voters	Party			Region			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California
Yes	83%	84%	84%	87%	80%	78%	85%	89%
No	17	16	16	13	20	22	15	11

Still, more likely voters continue to call the special election a bad idea (54%) than a good idea (41%). While most Republicans look favorably on the special election (70% good idea, 24% bad idea), Democrats (76% bad idea, 19% good idea) and independents (57% bad idea, 39% good idea) hold more negative views. Last month, 53 percent called the special election a bad idea and 40 percent said it was a good idea.

Proposition 73: Parental Notification Before Termination of a Minor’s Pregnancy

Likely voters are divided today, as they were in our August survey, regarding the Proposition 73 initiative that would require doctors to notify parents when a minor seeks an abortion: When read the ballot measure, 42 percent would vote yes on Proposition 73, while 48 percent would vote no. The “special election voters”—the subset of likely voters who are engaged in the special election—are similarly divided on Proposition 73 (42% yes, 49% no). Among all likely voters, there are sharp partisan differences, with Republicans supporting Proposition 73 (66%), while Democrats remain opposed (64%) and independents are divided (43% yes, 48% no). Sixty-seven percent of conservatives would vote yes, while 76 percent of liberals would vote no on this initiative. Proposition 73 has majority support in the Central Valley and Other Southern California region and majority opposition in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area.

Eight in 10 likely voters continue to say the outcome of the Proposition 73 vote is important to them, including half who say it is very important. Although both supporters and opponents of Proposition 73 consider the outcome important, those who would currently vote yes on this initiative are somewhat more likely than those who would vote no to say that the outcome is very important (57% to 50%). Women (57%) are more likely than men (46%) to say it is very important. About half of Democrats (54%) and Republicans (49%), and liberals (55%) and conservatives (53%), rate the outcome of Proposition 73 as very important to them.

“Proposition 73 is called the Waiting Period and Parental Notification before Termination of Minor’s Pregnancy Initiative Constitutional Amendment.... If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 73?”*

Likely Voters Only	August 2005	October 2005
Yes	44%	42%
No	48	48
Don't know	8	10

	Likely Voters	Party			Region				Special Election Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Yes	42%	25%	66%	43%	51%	33%	36%	51%	42%
No	48	64	24	48	39	57	53	41	49
Don't know	10	11	10	9	10	10	11	8	9

“How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 73? Is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?”

	Likely Voters	Prop. 73		Special Election Voters
		Yes	No	
Very important	51%	57%	50%	52%
Somewhat important	32	30	33	31
Not too important	10	9	10	9
Not at all important	4	3	5	4
Don't know	3	1	2	4

* For complete question wording, see question 13 in the survey questionnaire, page 22.

Proposition 74: Teachers Waiting Period for Permanent Status and Dismissal

Proposition 74—one of Governor Schwarzenegger’s three reform measures—has likely voters evenly divided, with 46 percent in favor of the plan to alter teacher employment policy and 48 percent against the plan. Likely voter support for Proposition 74—which would increase the time it takes for a public school teacher to receive tenure from the current two years to five years and modify the process for dismissing underperforming teachers—is similar today to a month ago. Among the likely voters who are engaged in the special election, 46 percent say they would vote yes while 49 percent would vote no.

Among all likely voters, Proposition 74 is opposed by seven in 10 Democrats, while seven in 10 Republicans support it, and independents are divided (49% yes, 43% no). The measure receives majority support in the Central Valley (53%) and Other Southern California region (52%), while a majority in the San Francisco Bay Area (58%) and half of those in Los Angeles (50%) are opposed. Likely voters with children in public schools support Proposition 74 more than do those without children in school (50% to 44%). It is also favored more by men than women (51% to 42%) and more by whites than Latinos (49% to 40%).

Most likely voters (55%) believe the vote outcome on Proposition 74 is *very important* to improving teacher quality. Among those planning to vote yes, 67 percent think the measure’s effect is very important. For those planning to vote no on Proposition 74, less than half (45%) think the vote outcome is very important, while 34 percent say it is not too important or not important at all.

“Proposition 74 is called the Public School Teachers Waiting Period for Permanent Status and Dismissal Initiative... If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 74?”*

Likely Voters Only	August 2005	September 2005	October 2005
Yes	49%	43%	46%
No	42	47	48
Don't know	9	10	6

	Likely Voters	Party			Region				Special Election Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Yes	46%	25%	71%	49%	53%	34%	43%	52%	46%
No	48	69	23	43	40	58	50	43	49
Don't know	6	6	6	8	7	8	7	5	5

“How important to improving teacher quality is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 74—very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?”

	Likely Voters	Prop. 74		Special Election Voters
		Yes	No	
Very important	55%	67%	45%	55%
Somewhat important	21	26	18	22
Not too important	9	6	12	8
Not at all important	11	1	22	12
Don't know	4	0	3	3

* For complete question wording, see question 15 in the survey questionnaire, page 22.

Proposition 75: Public Employee Union Dues and Political Contributions

Proposition 75, the initiative that would prohibit using public employee union dues for political contributions without individual employees' prior consent, has lost support since August. Likely voters are now evenly divided (46% yes, 46% no). Republicans (74%) strongly support Proposition 75, while Democrats (63%) are opposed and independents are split (45% yes, 51% no). Proposition 75 has majority support in the Central Valley and Other Southern California region and majority opposition in the San Francisco Bay Area. Union members or those with immediate family in a union oppose it (62% no, 34% yes). The subset of likely voters who are engaged in the special election are divided (47% yes, 47% no).

Among all likely voters, six in 10 agree that political contributions from labor unions have too much influence on candidate elections and ballot initiatives. This perception is strongly held among Republicans and independents while Democrats are divided on the issue. Also, eight in 10 likely voters, including overwhelming majorities of Democrats, Republicans, and independents, agree that business corporations have too much influence in candidate elections and ballot initiatives. Those who believe that labor unions have too much influence strongly favor Proposition 75 (64% yes, 29% no), while those who believe that business corporations have too much influence are divided on the measure (44% yes, 48% no).

“Proposition 75 is called the Public Employee Union Dues, Restrictions on Political Contributions, Employee Consent Requirement Initiative.... If the election were held today would you vote yes or no on Proposition 75?”

Likely Voters Only	August 2005	October 2005
Yes	58%	46%
No	33	46
Don't know	9	8

	Likely Voters	Party			Region				Special Election Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Yes	46%	27%	74%	45%	53%	36%	42%	53%	47%
No	46	63	20	51	38	56	49	40	47
Don't know	8	10	6	4	9	8	9	7	6

“Do you agree or disagree with this statement: Political contributions from _____ have too much influence on candidate elections and ballot initiatives?”

		Likely Voters	Party			Special Election Voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
Labor Unions	Agree	61%	45%	81%	63%	60%
	Disagree	34	49	14	32	35
	Don't know	5	6	5	5	5
Business Corporations	Agree	79	81	73	86	80
	Disagree	16	14	21	12	17
	Don't know	5	5	6	2	3

* For complete question wording, see question 17 in the survey questionnaire, page 22.

Proposition 76: State Spending and School Funding Limits

Another of the governor’s ballot measures, Proposition 76, which restricts state spending, continues to be opposed by six in 10 likely voters. Today, only 30 percent say they would vote yes on this measure, which would limit state spending to the prior year’s level plus three years’ average revenue growth and change the minimum school funding requirements. Among the subset of likely voters that are engaged in the special election, a similar 62 percent would vote no while 32 percent would vote yes on the initiative.

Among all likely voters, Democrats (81%) and independents (70%) are strongly opposed to Proposition 76, while a majority of Republicans (56%) support it. While support for Proposition 76 has risen by 8 points since September among Republicans (up from 48%), opposition has grown by 5 points among independents (up from 65%). Democrats’ views on this initiative have remained unchanged over time. Proposition 76 falls well short of majority support in all regions and is opposed especially strongly in the San Francisco Bay Area (74%) and Los Angeles (66%). While a majority in all racial/ethnic and demographic groups oppose Proposition 76, support is somewhat stronger among whites than Latinos (33% to 18%), among men than women (36% to 24%), and among older and more affluent voters.

Nonetheless, two in three likely voters think the state’s spending process is in need of a major overhaul. This perception is held by supporters (76%) and opponents (64%) of Proposition 76, among independents (72%), Republicans (71%), and Democrats (61%), and across all demographic groups.

“Proposition 76 is called the State Spending and School Funding Limits Initiative Constitutional Amendment.... If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 76?”*

<i>Likely Voters Only</i>	August 2005	September 2005	October 2005
Yes	28%	26%	30%
No	61	63	62
Don't know	11	11	8

	Likely Voters	Party			Region				Special Election Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Yes	30%	10%	56%	25%	35%	18%	27%	37%	32%
No	62	81	33	70	56	74	66	56	62
Don't know	8	9	11	5	9	8	7	7	6

“Do you think the way the governor and legislature go about state spending in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or is it fine the way it is?”

	Likely Voters	Prop. 76		Special Election Voters
		Yes	No	
Major changes	66%	76%	64%	68%
Minor changes	23	13	27	22
Fine the way it is	7	9	6	7
Don't know	4	2	3	3

* For complete question wording, see question 20 in the survey questionnaire, page 23.

Proposition 77: Redistricting

Another measure endorsed by Governor Schwarzenegger, Proposition 77, the Redistricting Initiative, has support from about one in three likely voters, while half oppose it and one in seven is undecided. This initiative would reassign responsibility for redrawing California’s legislative districts from the governor and state legislature to a three-member panel of retired judges selected by legislative leaders. Opposition to the measure has remained near the 50 percent level since August. Among the subset of likely voters who are engaged in the special election, support for Proposition 77 is similar (50% no, 38% yes, 12% don’t know).

Among all likely voters, a majority of Democrats (66%) and independents (57%) oppose the measure, while six in 10 Republicans support it. Central Valley voters are divided on Proposition 77, while opponents outnumber supporters in the other major regions. Fewer than half of likely voters across demographic groups would vote yes, although support is higher among whites than Latinos (40% to 26%).

Seven in 10 likely voters say the redistricting process needs major (44%) or minor (25%) changes. While 69 percent of those who would vote yes on Proposition 77 favor a major change in the redistricting process, only 31 percent of those who would vote no on the measure agree. A higher percentage of Republicans (55%) and independents (48%) than Democrats (36%) say major changes are needed. In our May survey, 63 percent of likely voters said that major (37%) or minor (26%) changes are needed.

“Proposition 77 is called the Redistricting Initiative Constitutional Amendment... If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 77?”*

Likely Voters Only	August 2005	September 2005	October 2005
Yes	34%	33%	36%
No	49	50	50
Don't know	17	17	14

	Likely Voters	Party			Region				Special Election Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Yes	36%	18%	60%	35%	40%	27%	36%	41%	38%
No	50	66	26	57	42	61	50	47	50
Don't know	14	16	14	8	18	12	14	12	12

“Do you think the way the governor and legislature go about the redistricting process in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or is it fine the way it is?”

	Likely Voters	Prop. 77		Special Election Voters
		Yes	No	
Major changes	44%	69%	31%	46%
Minor changes	25	21	30	26
Fine the way it is	19	6	32	19
Don't know	12	4	7	9

* For complete question wording, see question 22 in the survey questionnaire, page 23.

State Issues

Overall Attitudes

As California faces the November special election, a majority of residents believe the state is headed in the wrong direction. This opinion is shared across the state's regions, while likely voters offer similarly negative views. Democrats are more pessimistic than Republicans (73% to 44% wrong direction). Since August, a majority of adults have been saying the state is headed in the wrong direction, while opinions were divided last October (44% right direction, 44% wrong direction).

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

	All Adults	Region				Likely Voters
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Right direction	30%	32%	24%	27%	35%	29%
Wrong direction	60	56	66	62	55	62
Don't know	10	12	10	11	10	9

Californians continue to rank the economy and education as the most important problems facing them. These were also the top two issues in May, August, and September. At the beginning of the year, the state budget ranked as one of the top two issues, along with education, while the economy was ranked lower than it is today. Today, the economy is one of the top two concerns in all major regions. Likely voters and all adults express similar views about what are the most important issues. Democrats and independents name the economy (21%, 19%), while Republicans name immigration (20%) as their top issue. Latinos are nearly twice as likely as whites to name the economy as the most important issue facing Californians today (26% to 15%). As further evidence of their economic concerns, 56 percent of residents predict the state will experience bad economic times in the next year, compared to 34 percent who expect good times. Likely voters are similarly pessimistic (54% bad times, 35% good times).

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

	All Adults	Region				Likely Voters
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Economy, jobs, unemployment	19%	21%	20%	18%	16%	19%
Education, schools, teachers	14	10	22	14	11	17
Immigration, illegal immigration	9	8	7	8	12	11
Crime, gangs, drugs	6	3	4	7	4	2
Gasoline prices	6	8	3	5	8	4
Health care, health costs	6	6	6	7	4	6
State budget, deficit, taxes	6	7	5	7	7	7
Housing costs, housing availability	4	4	6	4	4	4
Other (specify)*	22	23	20	22	26	25
Don't know	8	10	7	8	8	5

*No single issue was mentioned by more than 2 percent of respondents.

Governor's Approval Ratings

Governor Schwarzenegger's approval ratings remain at a low point as voters tackle a special election ballot with initiatives he supports. Thirty-three percent of adults approve of his overall job performance, while 58 percent disapprove. A majority of registered voters (56%), likely voters (57%), and special election voters (57%) disapprove of the governor. The governor's ratings today are down sharply from one year ago when 61 percent of adults approved and 33 percent disapproved of his job performance.

Among political groups there is a sharp divide on the governor's ratings, with a majority of Republicans approving of his performance in office (69%) while a majority of independents (58%) and Democrats (80%) disapprove. Two in three adults in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles disapprove of the governor (67% and 65%, respectively), while about half in the Central Valley (49%) and Other Southern California region (51%) disapprove of his performance. Latinos are highly negative in their ratings of the governor, with 76 percent saying they disapprove of his performance in office, while whites' views about the governor are divided (43% approve, 47% disapprove).

“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling his job as governor of California?”

	All Adults	Party			Region				Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Approve	33%	12%	69%	31%	39%	25%	28%	40%	38%
Disapprove	58	80	22	58	49	67	65	51	57
Don't know	9	8	9	11	12	8	7	9	5

How do Californians rate the governor on his handling of government reforms? Thirty-one percent of all adults, 34 percent of registered voters, and 37 percent of likely voters approve of the governor's handling of government reform. This rating is similar to August's (35% approve, 50% disapprove) and marks a stunning decline in this area since January (58% approve, 30% disapprove). Today's ratings reflect partisan differences, with 66 percent of Republicans approving of his government reform efforts and a majority of Democrats (79%) and independents (59%) disapproving. Approval of the governor's handling of reforming California government is higher among whites (39%) than among Latinos (16%).

When asked to evaluate the governor's time in office, 55 percent of adults say it has been better (13%) or about the same (42%) as they expected, while 39 percent say it has been worse than expected. Last October, 81 percent of adults described Schwarzenegger's first year in office as better (40%) or about the same (41%) as they had expected, and just 17 percent said it was worse than they expected.

“Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Schwarzenegger is handling the issue of reforming California government?”

	All Adults	Party			Region				Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Approve	31%	12%	66%	30%	37%	23%	28%	37%	37%
Disapprove	57	79	22	59	52	65	64	49	56
Don't know	12	9	12	11	11	12	8	14	7

Legislature's Approval Ratings

The state legislature's approval ratings are also at a low point, with 25 percent of Californians saying they approve of its overall performance. The legislature's approval rating is similar to August's (27% approve, 56% disapprove) but down sharply from one year ago (43% approve, 41% disapprove).

Today, the disapproval rating for the way that the California legislature is handling its job is lower among all adults (56%) than the disapproval ratings among registered voters (60%), likely voters (65%), and special election voters (69%). While most Republicans are negative (68%), majorities of Democrats and independents also disapprove. Latinos (32%) give more positive ratings of the legislature than do whites (21%); however, majorities in most demographic groups disapprove of the legislature.

"Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California legislature is handling its job?"

	All Adults	Party			Region				Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Approve	25%	27%	16%	24%	28%	22%	26%	26%	21%
Disapprove	56	53	68	63	51	58	55	57	65
Don't know	19	20	16	13	21	20	19	17	14

When asked about the job performance of state legislators from their own districts, Californians are more positive. Thirty-eight percent approve and 39 percent disapprove of their legislators' performance in office. These are similar to last August's ratings, but show a sharp decline from a year ago (49% approve, 31% disapprove). Likely voters are currently similar to all adults in their assessments (38% approve, 43% disapprove). Residents in the San Francisco Bay Area and the Central Valley (42% each) are more positive about their legislators than Los Angeles (36%) or Other Southern California (34%) residents.

When asked to assess the effects of legislative term limits, 57 percent say it has been a good thing, and 14 percent say it has been a bad thing for California. Similarly, 62 percent oppose the idea of a legislator serving a total time limit of 14 years in either legislative branch rather than the current term limits of six years in the assembly and eight years in the state senate. Among those who disapprove of the legislature or their legislators, most say that term limits have been a good thing and most oppose changing the formula so that the time limit of 14 years of legislative service could be served in either chamber.

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

	All Adults	Party			Region				Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Approve	38%	42%	29%	41%	42%	42%	36%	34%	38%
Disapprove	39	39	47	38	36	38	42	40	43
Mixed (volunteered)	5	5	7	5	5	4	6	6	6
Don't know	18	14	17	16	17	16	16	20	13

Election Finance and Reforms

A majority of Californians continue to believe that campaign contributions have a negative effect on the decisions made by elected officials. Fifty-three percent of California residents today say contributions have a bad effect, while only 11 percent say they have a good effect and 22 percent say that campaign contributions are making no difference on the policy decisions made by lawmakers. These perceptions of the effects of money on policy decisions have improved from six years ago. In September 1999, 66 percent of Californians said contributions had a bad effect and 8 percent said they had a good effect.

Today, majorities across all political groups say that contributions have a negative effect on policy decisions. Independents (64%) are more likely than Democrats (59%) and Republicans (53%) to say campaign contributions have a bad effect. Majorities in all regions except for the Central Valley say contributions have a negative effect on the decisions of elected officials. Whites (63%) are far more likely than Latinos (33%) to say contributions have a bad effect. The likelihood of saying that contributions have a bad effect on policy increases with age, education, and income. Those who feel that things in California are going in the wrong direction are more likely than those who feel that the state is heading in the right direction to say that campaign contributions are having a bad effect (58%, 46%).

“Do you think that campaign contributions are currently having a good effect or a bad effect on the public policy decisions made by state elected officials in Sacramento, or are campaign contributions making no difference?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Good effect	11%	9%	11%	9%	9%
Bad effect	53	59	53	64	64
Making no difference	22	21	22	19	17
Both (volunteered)	2	2	3	0	2
Don't know	12	9	11	8	8

While a majority of residents believe that campaign contributions are having a negative effect on policy, Californians are divided on establishing a system of public funding for state and legislative campaigns. Forty-five percent say they would favor public funding of campaigns even if it cost each taxpayer a few dollars a year, while a similar 46 percent would oppose public funding. Interestingly, likely voters are more supportive of this change (51% favor, 41% oppose). A majority of Republicans (54%) oppose this idea, while a similar percentage of Democrats (53%) support it, and independents are split on public funding of campaigns (49% favor, 42% oppose). Favor for a system of public financing of state campaigns increases with age, income, and education. The percentage who say they favor public funding of campaigns increased by 10 points since September 2004 (35% favor, 57% oppose).

“Would you favor or oppose having a system of public funding for state and legislative campaigns in California if it cost each taxpayer a few dollars a year to run?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	45%	53%	37%	49%	51%
Oppose	46	39	54	42	41
Don't know	9	8	9	9	8

Initiative Review Reforms

While most Californians support the state's initiative process, many also see problems in its use, reflected in the fact that majorities of residents are open to making some changes in the review process.

In the context of the upcoming special election with eight initiatives on the ballot, it is noteworthy that all adults (75%) and likely voters (77%) express overwhelming support for changing the current initiative process to allow for a period of time in which the initiative sponsor and the legislature could meet in attempts to reach a compromise. There is strong support for this type of initiative review reform among Democrats, Republicans, and independents, and across regions and demographic groups. Liberals (80%) and moderates (78%) are more likely to support this reform than are conservatives (73%).

Importantly, both those who say that this special election is a bad idea (79%) and a good idea (72%) support having a period of time for a potential legislative compromise before initiatives go to the ballot.

Seven in 10 of all adults (70%) and likely voters (73%) also favor having a system of review and revision in order to avoid legal and drafting errors before initiatives go to the ballot. There is consensus across political groups, regions, and demographic groups on this issue. While favor for this proposal is high across the ideological spectrum, liberals (78%) are more likely to favor it than moderates (71%) and conservatives (67%). Support for this type of initiative review process increases with education and income. While support is high across racial and ethnic groups, Latinos (66%) are less likely than whites (73%) to favor this change to the initiative process. In January 2001, there was also overwhelming support and consensus across regions and groups when we asked about this initiative review reform.

Californians may be open to some changes to the initiative review process, but most do not want the legislature amending initiatives once the voters have passed them. A majority of adults (51%) and likely voters (57%) oppose allowing the legislature with the governor's approval to amend initiatives after six years. Majority opposition for this initiative reform is found among Democrats, Republicans, and independents. Opposition to this initiative change increases with education and income, and whites (54%) are more likely than Latinos (48%) to oppose it. When we asked about this initiative reform proposal in October 1998, 44 percent were in favor and 49 percent were opposed to it.

<i>Would you favor or oppose...</i>		All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
<i>Having a period of time in which the initiative sponsor and the legislature could meet to see if there is a compromise solution before initiatives go to the ballot?</i>	Favor	75%	80%	73%	76%	77%
	Oppose	17	13	23	17	18
	Don't know	8	7	4	7	5
<i>Having a system of review and revision of proposed initiatives to try to avoid legal issues and drafting errors?</i>	Favor	70	73	72	73	73
	Oppose	18	17	17	18	18
	Don't know	12	10	11	9	9
<i>Allowing the legislature, with the governor's approval, to amend initiatives after they have been in effect for six years?</i>	Favor	37	37	39	36	37
	Oppose	51	52	55	55	57
	Don't know	12	11	6	9	6

Initiative Campaign Reforms

In the context of a special election for which millions of dollars are being spent by sponsors to qualify initiatives and run their campaigns, an overwhelming majority of adults (74%) and likely voters (82%) favor increasing public disclosure of funding sources for initiative campaigns and signature gathering. Large majorities of Democrats (77%), Republicans (80%) and independents (77%) all favor increasing public disclosure of initiative funding sources. Residents across all major regions strongly favor this proposed initiative campaign reform. Majorities across demographic groups favor increased disclosure, although whites (81%) are more likely to favor it than Latinos (59%). Favor also increases with age, income, and education. Californians who think the special election was a good idea and a bad idea both strongly favor increased disclosure of the financial sponsors.

Californians are divided on a proposal that could make it more difficult to get an initiative on the ballot by increasing the number of signatures required for qualification (45% favor, 43% oppose). Among likely voters, 39 percent are in favor of this reform while 52 percent of likely voters are opposed. Republicans (58%) are more likely than independents (48%) to oppose this change in the initiative process, while more Democrats are likely to favor it (48% favor, 39% oppose). Of those who approve of the governor, 56 percent oppose increasing the number of signatures. However, of those who disapprove of Schwarzenegger’s job performance, 53 percent say they would favor increasing the number of signatures required for an initiative to qualify. Opposition increases with age, education and income. While 53 percent of whites oppose the change, 63 percent of Latinos favor this reform.

Californians are more supportive of a change in the process that could make it easier to qualify an initiative for the ballot. About half of adults (50%) and likely voters (46%) favor increasing the amount of time available for an initiative sponsor to gather signatures. About half of residents in all regions support lengthening the deadlines for qualifying an initiative for the ballot. Similar numbers of Democrats (47%), Republicans, and independents (50% each) say they would favor increasing the amount of time available. Favor for the proposed change decreases with income, age, and education. About half of those who view the special election as a good idea (54%) and a bad idea (46%) favor increasing the amount of time a sponsor may gather signatures to qualify a ballot initiative.

"Would you favor or oppose..."		All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
Increasing public disclosure of funding sources for signature gathering and initiative campaigns?	Favor	74%	77%	80%	77%	82%
	Oppose	17	15	14	18	12
	Don't know	9	8	6	5	6
Increasing the number of signatures required to qualify an initiative for the ballot?	Favor	45	48	35	43	39
	Oppose	43	39	58	48	52
	Don't know	12	13	7	9	9
Increasing the amount of time a sponsor may gather signatures to qualify an initiative for the ballot?	Favor	50	47	50	50	46
	Oppose	38	40	41	39	42
	Don't know	12	13	9	11	12

National Issues

President's Approval Ratings

Californians' negative opinions of government extend to the White House: Only 36 percent of all adults and 34 percent of likely voters approve of the way President Bush is handling his job, while six in 10 in each group disapprove. The president's approval rating is virtually the same as it was in July 2005—when it first dropped below 40 percent—and 10 points lower than it was in January 2005. Californians' views of the president's performance are in synch with national ratings, which recently dipped below 40 percent for the first time during his presidency and are currently at 39 percent, according to a recent national CNN/USA Today/Gallup Poll.

Across California, there continues to be strong partisan and regional differences in President Bush's approval ratings—with most Republicans (69%) approving and most independents (68%) and Democrats (84%) disapproving of how he is handling his job. His approval ratings are highest in the Central Valley (46%) and Other Southern California region (44%), and lower in Los Angeles (32%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (21%). However, Bush gets similar approval ratings from Latinos (38%) and whites (39%).

The president's approval ratings on the federal budget and taxes are declining as well. Today, 30 percent approve of his handling of fiscal issues, down from 40 percent last January and 46 percent in January 2004. Although Republicans (61%) give the president much higher approval ratings than Democrats (11%) and independents (25%) for his handling of the federal budget and taxes, Republican approval has dropped 15 points since January.

The president doesn't fare any better with Californians on energy policy. Fewer than three in 10 adults (29%) and likely voters (26%) approve of how he is handling this issue; about six in ten disapprove, up from 53 percent in July. Again, there are large partisan differences: An overwhelming majority of Democrats (80%) and independents (70%) disapprove of the president's energy policy; roughly half of Republicans (51%) approve of it. Support for Bush's energy policy is lower in the San Francisco Bay Area than elsewhere. It also declines with income and education. Californians are again in synch with national opinions on this issue, according to a recent *Newsweek* survey in which 28 percent of Americans approved of his handling of energy policy and 60 percent disapproved.

Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that...		All Adults	Party			Region				Likely Voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
George W. Bush is handling his job as president of the United States?	Approve	36%	14%	69%	28%	46%	21%	32%	44%	34%
	Disapprove	60	84	27	68	50	76	65	52	63
	Don't know	4	2	4	4	4	3	3	4	3
President Bush is handling the federal budget and taxes?	Approve	30	11	61	25	41	19	25	37	31
	Disapprove	63	85	32	69	52	76	68	56	64
	Don't know	7	4	7	6	7	5	7	7	5
President Bush is handling energy policy?	Approve	29	11	51	23	35	18	24	35	26
	Disapprove	60	80	32	70	52	73	64	53	64
	Don't know	11	9	17	7	13	9	12	12	10

California U.S. Senators' Approval Ratings

Although the majority of residents today give President Bush and Governor Schwarzenegger low ratings, most Californians approve of the job their two U.S. Senators are doing.

Up for reelection in 2006, Senator Dianne Feinstein has a 50 percent approval rating among all adults and 55 percent among likely voters, with about three in 10 in each group saying they disapprove. These ratings have changed very little since May 2005 (52% approve, 27% disapprove), October 2004 (51% approve, 26% disapprove), and October 2002 (49% approve, 25% disapprove).

Senator Feinstein gets higher approval ratings in the San Francisco Bay Area (56%) than in the Central Valley (50%), Los Angeles (49%), and Other Southern California region (49%). Across political groups, 69 percent of Democrats and 52 percent of independents approve of her performance, while 51 percent of Republicans disapprove. Support for Feinstein increases somewhat with age but is similar across education and income groups, among both Latinos (52%) and whites (49%), and among men and women (50% to 51%).

“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Dianne Feinstein is handling her job as U.S. Senator?”

	All Adults	Party			Region				Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Approve	50%	69%	30%	52%	50%	56%	49%	49%	55%
Disapprove	27	14	51	26	26	26	27	29	33
Don't know	23	17	19	22	24	18	24	22	12

Almost a year after her successful re-election campaign in November 2004, Senator Barbara Boxer currently has a 48 percent approval rating among all adults and 50 percent among likely voters. The ratings among adults today are similar to those in May (49% approve), down slightly from October 2004 (53% approve), and the same as in October 2002 (48% approve).

While Boxer has mostly positive ratings among a majority of Democrats (70%) and independents (51%), a large majority of Republicans (61%) disapprove of her performance in office. Support for Boxer is higher among adults in the San Francisco Bay Area (55%) and Los Angeles (50%) than in the Central Valley (45%) and Other Southern California region (46%). Support is also higher among women than men (51% to 45%) and among Latinos than whites (53% to 45%).

“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barbara Boxer is handling her job as U.S. Senator?”

	All Adults	Party			Region				Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Approve	48%	70%	21%	51%	45%	55%	50%	46%	50%
Disapprove	29	14	61	27	33	27	25	30	37
Don't know	23	16	18	22	22	18	25	24	13

U.S. Congress' Approval Ratings

Californians give much higher approval ratings to the U.S. Congress than to their state legislature: 42 percent of all adults approve of the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job; 46 percent disapprove. However, approval (37%) is lower and disapproval is higher (55%) among likely voters. Adults in California also give Congress higher ratings than Americans as a whole in a recent Gallup Poll, which found that 29 percent approved and 64 percent disapproved of the job Congress is doing.

Even though the GOP has the majority in Congress, less than a majority of California Republicans (48%) approve of the way Congress is handling its job. However, approval is much lower among Democrats (36%) and independents (35%). Similarly, approval ratings are higher among conservatives (49%) than among moderates (43%) or liberals (33%). Congress has higher approval in the Central Valley (51%) and Other Southern California region (46%) than in Los Angeles (38%) or the San Francisco Bay Area (34%). Approval declines with age, education, and income and is lower among whites (36%) than Latinos (58%). Solid majorities of those who approve of the president (62%) and his fiscal (64%) and energy (63%) policies also approve of Congress.

“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job?”

	All Adults	Party			Region				Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Approve	42%	36%	48%	35%	51%	34%	38%	46%	37%
Disapprove	46	54	40	58	37	53	51	43	55
Don't know	12	10	12	7	12	13	11	11	8

Despite their views of Congress, most Californians like the job their own representative is doing in the U.S. House of Representatives. Overall, 53 percent of all adults and 57 percent of likely voters approve of their representative to the U.S. Congress. These ratings are virtually the same as those in May, when 54 percent of adults and 58 percent of likely voters approved of their congressional representative's performance. (These are much higher approval ratings than the 38 percent they give to the state legislators who represent their local districts.) Across partisan affiliations, majorities of registered voters approve of their own representatives. Across regions, approval ratings are higher in the Central Valley than elsewhere. Although Californians give Congress higher ratings than other Americans do, they are not as positive about their representative. An ABC News/*Washington Post* survey found that 61 percent of Americans approve of the job their own representative is doing in Congress and 32 percent disapprove.

“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way your own representative to the U.S. House of Representatives in Congress is handling his or her job?”

	All Adults	Party			Region				Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Approve	53%	56%	53%	54%	60%	55%	51%	49%	57%
Disapprove	24	24	23	28	20	24	25	25	26
Don't know	23	20	24	18	20	21	24	26	17

Trust in Federal Government

Californians' trust in the federal government is presently at a low point since the PPIC Surveys began in 1998. Twenty-nine percent of adults say they trust the government in Washington to do what is right just about always (6%) or most of the time (23%). This proportion is down 3 points from 32 percent in January and 17 points from the historic high of 46 percent in January 2002. Californians' lack of trust is the same as that expressed by Americans in a recent CBS News/*New York Times* survey in which 29 percent said they trust the government in Washington to do what is right just about always (3%) or most of the time (26%). Considering their lack of trust in Sacramento, it is noteworthy that Californians now express as little confidence in the federal government (29%) as they did in the state government (30%) in August.

Trust in the federal government is lower among likely voters (26%). It is also relatively low in all political parties, although Republicans (40%) are more likely than Democrats (18%) or independents (24%) to say they trust the federal government just about always or most of the time. Latinos (35%) are more likely than whites (29%) to say they trust the government in Washington. Even among those who give President Bush positive job ratings, fewer than half (49%) trust the federal government.

“How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington today to do what is right--just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Just about always	6%	2%	7%	4%	4%
Most of the time	23	16	33	20	22
Only some of the time	59	69	55	62	64
None of the time, not at all (volunteered)	9	12	4	12	10
Don't know	3	1	1	2	0

Similarly, about seven in 10 adults and likely voters say the federal government wastes a lot of the money it receives in taxes. This perception is at an all-time high in PPIC Surveys, rising 6 points since February 2004 and 13 points since January 2002. Majorities across all demographic groups think the federal government wastes a lot of money, and it is one issue on which Democrats, Republicans, and independents agree. Even a large majority (57%) of those who approve of President Bush's fiscal policies think the government in Washington is very wasteful. Californians' views on the fiscal performance of the federal government are more negative than their views of the state government were in August, when 61 percent said the state government wasted a lot of money.

“Do you think the people in the federal government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
A lot	67%	69%	68%	69%	69%
Some	27	26	28	25	27
Don't waste very much	3	3	3	2	3
Don't know	3	2	1	4	1

Supreme Court

As the debate about Supreme Court nominee Harriet Miers continues, about one in three California adults (34%) and likely voters (31%) believe the president's nominee to replace Justice Sandra Day O'Connor should be confirmed. About four in 10 adults (39%) and likely voters (46%) believe Miers should not be confirmed. However, about one in four adults and likely voters are undecided.

In a national survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, 33 percent of adults supported her confirmation, 27 percent did not, and 40 percent were undecided. In California, about half of Republicans (53%) and conservatives (49%) support Miers; about six in 10 Democrats (57%) and liberals (62%) are opposed. Men and women have similar responses to her nomination to the Supreme Court.

Miers does not have the broad support that John Roberts had after his nomination to the Supreme Court last summer. In our August survey, about half of Californians (49%) and likely voters (54%) said Roberts should be confirmed, while 24 percent of adults and likely voters said he should not be confirmed.

“As you may know, George W. Bush has nominated Harriet Miers to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. Do you think the U.S. Senate should or should not confirm Miers's nomination to the Supreme Court?”

	All Adults	Party			Gender		Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Male	Female	
Should confirm	34%	23%	53%	28%	36%	33%	31%
Should not confirm	39	57	20	47	39	39	46
Have not heard enough to have an opinion (<i>volunteered</i>)	14	12	17	14	14	15	14
Don't know	13	8	10	11	11	13	9

Abortion is a central point of debate over the Miers nomination, and a strong majority of Californians (63%) say the Supreme Court's decisions on abortion are very important to them personally. These results are similar to those in a recent national survey by the Pew Research Center. In California, women are more likely than men, and Democrats are more likely than Republicans, to say that abortion is a Supreme Court issue that is very important to them. Whether or not they believe Miers should be confirmed (60%) or not confirmed (67%), strong majorities say that court decisions on abortion are very important to them. If they are likely to vote no (69%) on Proposition 73 (parental notification before abortion), they are more likely than those who would vote yes (55%) to say that court decisions on abortion are very important to them.

“Abortion is one issue the Supreme Court may rule on in the coming years. Please tell me how important this issue is to you personally--Are court decisions on abortion very important, fairly important, not too important, or not at all important to you?”

	All Adults	Party			Gender		Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Male	Female	
Very important	63%	69%	56%	61%	56%	69%	62%
Fairly important	21	19	25	20	23	18	22
Not too important	9	6	12	9	11	7	9
Not at all important	6	4	6	7	7	4	6
Don't know	1	2	1	3	3	2	1

Abortion and Morning After Pill

What policy direction should the Supreme Court take on the issue of abortion access? About six in 10 Californians want the Supreme Court to leave access to abortion the same as it is now (48%) or make it easier (12%), while 35 percent would like to make it harder. Two in three likely voters want current policies maintained (56%) or access to abortions made easier (12%). Californians reflect nationwide sentiment when it comes to supporting the status quo. An ABC News/*Washington Post* survey found that 47 percent want to leave abortion access unchanged. However, adults nationwide (42%) are more likely than Californians to want the Supreme Court to make getting an abortion more difficult.

Party differences on this issue are sharp, with 51 percent of Republicans wanting the Court to make it harder to get abortions, while a combined 75 percent of Democrats (59% same, 16% easier) and 68 percent of independents (52% same, 16% easier) want access to remain the same or be eased. Regionally, support for the Court maintaining the status quo or becoming more lenient is highest in San Francisco (52% same, 18% easier), while support for making it harder to get an abortion is highest in the Central Valley (41%). Nearly half of Latinos (47%) would like to make it harder to get an abortion, compared to 28 percent of whites. Half of likely voters (50%) who would vote yes on Proposition 73 prefer to make it harder to get an abortion, while 89 percent of the likely voters who would vote no on Proposition 73 would like to leave access to abortion the same (69%) or make it easier (20%) than it is now.

“Would you like to see the Supreme Court make it harder to get an abortion than it is now, make it easier to get an abortion than it is now, or leave the ability to get an abortion the same as it is now?”

	All Adults	Party			Gender		Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Male	Female	
Harder	35%	20%	51%	27%	35%	34%	28%
Easier	12	16	5	16	13	12	12
Same	48	59	40	52	46	49	56
Don't know	5	5	4	5	6	5	4

Another issue involving women’s reproductive choice is the ability to get the morning after pill, to prevent pregnancy, without a doctor’s prescription. Six in 10 California adults (61%) and likely voters (63%) support such access while three in 10 oppose it. A majority (52%) of Americans also favor making the morning after pill available over the counter, while 37 percent are opposed, according to a recent Pew Research Center survey. In California, majorities across most political and demographic groups support allowing women to obtain the morning after pill without a prescription. However, support is higher among Democrats (67%) and independents (69%) than among Republicans (51%) and higher among men (66%) than women (55%).

“Do you favor or oppose allowing women to get the morning after pill, which prevents pregnancy, without a doctor's prescription?”

	All Adults	Party			Gender		Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Male	Female	
Favor	61%	67%	51%	69%	66%	55%	63%
Oppose	32	26	41	24	27	37	28
Don't know	7	7	8	7	7	8	9

Survey Methodology

The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, research director and survey director at the Public Policy Institute of California, with assistance in research and writing from Jennifer Paluch, project manager for this survey, and survey research associates Dean Bonner, Lunna Lopes, and Sonja Petek. The survey was conducted with funding from The James Irvine Foundation and benefited from discussions with program staff, grantees, and others with expertise and interests in the state's initiative process, in addition to regional focus groups with voters also funded by the foundation; however, the survey methods, questions, and content of the report were solely determined by Mark Baldassare.

The findings of this survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,003 California adult residents interviewed between October 16 and October 23, 2005. Interviewing took place mostly on weekday and weekend evenings, using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers that ensured that both listed and unlisted numbers were called. All telephone exchanges in California were eligible for calling. Telephone numbers in the survey sample were called as many as six times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (age 18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing by using the "last birthday method" to avoid biases in age and gender. Interviews took an average of 19 minutes to complete. Interviewing was conducted in English or Spanish. *Accent on Languages* translated the survey into Spanish, and Schulman, Ronca & Bucuvalas, Inc. conducted the telephone interviewing. We used recent U.S. Census and state figures to compare the demographic characteristics of the survey sample with characteristics of California's adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to the census and state figures. The survey data in this report were statistically weighted to account for any demographic differences.

The sampling error for the total sample of 2,003 adults is +/- 2 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for subgroups is larger. The sampling error for the 1,580 registered voters is +/- 2.5 percent. The sampling error for the 1,079 likely voters is +/- 3 percent, and for the 827 "special election voters" (i.e., likely voters engaged in the November 8th election) it is +/- 3.5 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.

Throughout the report, we refer to four geographic regions. "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. "SF Bay Area" includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. "Los Angeles" refers to Los Angeles County, and "Other Southern California" includes the mostly suburban regions of Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties. These four regions were chosen for analysis because they are major population centers that account for approximately 90 percent of the state population.

We present specific results for Latinos because they account for about 30 percent of the state's adult population and constitute one of the fastest growing voter groups. The sample sizes for the African American and Asian subgroups are not large enough for separate statistical analysis. We do compare the opinions of registered Democrats, Republicans, and independents. The "independents" category includes those who are registered to vote as "decline to state."

We compare PPIC Statewide Survey responses to responses recorded in national surveys conducted by ABC News/*Washington Post*, CBS News/*New York Times*, CNN/*USA Today*/Gallup, the Gallup Poll, *Newsweek*, and the Pew Research Center. We use earlier PPIC Statewide Surveys to analyze time trends.

**PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY:
SPECIAL SURVEY ON CALIFORNIANS AND THE INITIATIVE PROCESS
OCTOBER 16 – 23, 2005
2,003 CALIFORNIA ADULT RESIDENTS: ENGLISH AND SPANISH
MARGIN OF ERROR +/-2% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE**

1. First, thinking about the state as a whole, what do you think is the most important issue facing people in California today?

[code, don't read]

- 19% economy, jobs, unemployment
- 14 education, schools, teachers
- 9 immigration, illegal immigration
- 6 crime, gangs, drugs
- 6 gasoline prices
- 6 health care, health costs, HMO reform
- 6 state budget, deficit, taxes
- 4 housing costs, availability
- 22 other (*specify*)
- 8 don't know

2. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling his job as governor of California?

- 33% approve
- 58 disapprove
- 9 don't know

[rotate questions 3 and 4]

3. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Schwarzenegger is handling the issue of reforming California government?

- 31% approve
- 57 disapprove
- 12 don't know

4. Governor Schwarzenegger was elected in the recall election in October 2003. Overall, how would you describe his time in office—has it been better than you expected, about the same as you expected, or worse than you expected?

- 13% better than expected
- 42 about the same as expected
- 39 worse than expected
- 1 mixed (*volunteered*)
- 5 don't know

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

- 25% approve
- 56 disapprove
- 19 don't know

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

- 38% approve
- 39 disapprove
- 5 mixed (*volunteered*)
- 18 don't know

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

- 30% right direction
- 60 wrong direction
- 10 don't know

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

- 34% good times
- 56 bad times
- 10 don't know

[Responses recorded for questions 9 through 23 are from likely voters only. All other responses are from all adults, except where noted.]

9. On another topic, Governor Schwarzenegger has called a special election in November 2005 to vote on budget, educational, and governmental reform measures. In general, do you think the special election is a good idea or a bad idea?

- 41% good idea
- 54 bad idea
- 2 neither (*volunteered*)
- 3 don't know

10. How closely are you following news about the special election on November 8th—very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?

- 31% very closely
- 50 fairly closely
- 15 not too closely
- 4 not at all closely

11. Have you seen television advertisements about the state propositions on the November ballot?

- 83% yes *[ask q.11a]*
- 17 no *[skip to q.12]*

11a. So far, have the television advertisements you have seen been very helpful, somewhat helpful, not too helpful, or not at all helpful to you in deciding how to vote on November 8th?

- 8% very helpful
- 29 somewhat helpful
- 24 not too helpful
- 36 not at all helpful
- 3 don't know

12. Which one of the state propositions on the November 8th ballot are you most interested in?

[code, don't read]

- 6% Proposition 73
- 15 Proposition 74
- 18 Proposition 75
- 9 Proposition 76
- 6 Proposition 77
- 3 Proposition 78
- 5 Proposition 79
- 1 Proposition 80
- 8 none of them (*volunteered*)
- 11 all equally (*volunteered*)
- 2 other answer (*specify*)
- 16 don't know

We have a few questions to ask you about some of the propositions on the November ballot.

[rotate five blocks of questions randomly:

(1) 13, 14; (2) 15, 16; (3) 17, 18, 19;
(4) 20, 21; (5) 22, 23]

13. Proposition 73 is called the “Waiting Period and Parental Notification Before Termination of Minor’s Pregnancy Initiative Constitutional Amendment.” It defines and prohibits abortion for an unemancipated minor until 48 hours after the physician notifies the minor’s parent or guardian, except in a medical emergency or with parental waiver. It mandates reporting requirements and authorizes monetary damages against physicians for violation. It has potential unknown net state costs of several million dollars annually for health and social services programs, the courts, and state administration combined. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 73?

- 42% yes
- 48 no
- 10 don't know

14. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 73? Is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 51% very important
- 32 somewhat important
- 10 not too important
- 4 not at all important
- 3 don't know

15. Proposition 74 is called the “Public School Teachers Waiting Period for Permanent Status and Dismissal Initiative.” It increases the probationary period for public school teachers from two years to five years. It modifies the process by which school boards can dismiss a teaching employee who receives two consecutive unsatisfactory performance evaluations. There would be unknown net effects on school districts’ costs, and costs would vary significantly by district. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 74?

- 46% yes
- 48 no
- 6 don't know

16. How important to improving teacher quality is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 74—very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 55% very important
- 21 somewhat important
- 9 not too important
- 11 not at all important
- 4 don't know

17. Proposition 75 is called the “Public Employee Union Dues, Restrictions on Political Contributions, Employee Consent Requirement Initiative.” It prohibits using public employee union dues for political contributions without individual employees’ prior consent. It excludes contributions benefiting charities or employees and requires unions to maintain and, upon request, report member political contributions to the Fair Political Practices Commission. Fiscal impacts are probably minor state and local government costs and would potentially be offset in part by fines and fees. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 75?

- 46% yes
- 46 no
- 8 don't know

[rotate questions 18 and 19]

18. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: Political contributions from labor unions have too much influence on candidate elections and ballot initiatives?

61% agree
34 disagree
5 don't know

19. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: Political contributions from business corporations have too much influence on candidate elections and ballot initiatives?

79% agree
16 disagree
5 don't know

20. Proposition 76 is called the "State Spending and School Funding Limits Initiative Constitutional Amendment." It limits state spending to the prior year's level plus three previous years' average revenue growth. It changes state minimum school funding requirements under Proposition 98. It permits the governor, under specified circumstances, to reduce budget appropriations of the governor's choosing. State spending is likely to be reduced relative to current law, due to the additional spending limit and new powers granted to the governor. Reductions could apply to schools and shift costs to other local governments. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 76?

30% yes
62 no
8 don't know

21. Do you think the way the governor and legislature go about state spending in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or is it fine the way it is?

66% major changes
23 minor changes
7 fine the way it is
4 don't know

22. Proposition 77 is called the "Redistricting Initiative Constitutional Amendment." It amends the state Constitution's process for redistricting California's senate, assembly, congressional, and Board of Equalization districts. It requires a three-member panel of retired judges selected by legislative leaders. The one-time state redistricting costs total no more than 1.5 million dollars and county costs are in the range of 1 million dollars. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 77?

36% yes
50 no
14 don't know

23. Do you think the way the governor and legislature go about the redistricting process in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or is it fine the way it is?

44% major changes
25 minor changes
19 fine the way it is
12 don't know

24. Changing topics, overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that George W. Bush is handling his job as president of the United States?

36% approve
60 disapprove
4 don't know

[rotate questions 25 and 26]

25. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Bush is handling the federal budget and taxes?

30% approve
63 disapprove
7 don't know

26. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Bush is handling energy policy?

29% approve
60 disapprove
11 don't know

[rotate questions 27 and 28]

27. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Dianne Feinstein is handling her job as U.S. Senator?

50% approve
27 disapprove
23 don't know

28. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barbara Boxer is handling her job as U.S. Senator?

48% approve
29 disapprove
23 don't know

[rotate questions 29 and 30]

29. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job?

42% approve
46 disapprove
12 don't know

30. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way your own representative to the U.S. House of Representatives in Congress is handling his or her job?

- 53% approve
- 24 disapprove
- 23 don't know

31. Next, people have different ideas about the government in Washington. How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington today to do what is right—just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

- 6% just about always
- 23 most of the time
- 59 only some of the time
- 9 none of the time, not at all (*volunteered*)
- 3 don't know

32. Do you think the people in the federal government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?

- 67% a lot
- 27 some
- 3 don't waste very much
- 3 don't know

33. As you may know, George W. Bush has nominated Harriet Miers to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. Do you think the U.S. Senate should or should not confirm Miers's nomination to the Supreme Court?

- 34% should confirm
- 39 should not confirm
- 14 have not heard enough to have an opinion
- 13 don't know

34. Abortion is one issue the Supreme Court may rule on in the coming years. Please tell me how important this issue is to you personally—Are court decisions on abortion very important, fairly important, not too important, or not at all important to you?

- 63% very important
- 21 fairly important
- 9 not too important
- 6 not at all important
- 1 don't know

35. Would you like to see the Supreme Court make it harder to get an abortion than it is now, make it easier to get an abortion than it is now, or leave the ability to get an abortion the same as it is now?

- 35% harder
- 12 easier
- 48 same
- 5 don't know

36. Do you favor or oppose allowing women to get the "morning after pill," which prevents pregnancy, without a doctor's prescription?

- 61% favor
- 32 oppose
- 7 don't know

37. On another topic, the California legislature has operated under term limits since 1990, meaning that members of the state senate and state assembly are limited in the number of terms they can hold their elected office. Do you think that term limits are a good thing or a bad thing for California, or do they make no difference?

- 57% good thing
- 14 bad thing
- 21 no difference
- 8 don't know

38. Under current term limits, a legislator is allowed to serve six years in the state assembly and eight years in the state senate. Would you favor or oppose a change in term limits that would allow members to serve up to 14 years of total legislative service in either branch?

- 29% favor
- 62 oppose
- 9 don't know

39. On another topic, do you think that campaign contributions are currently having a good effect or a bad effect on the public policy decisions made by state elected officials in Sacramento, or are campaign contributions making no difference?

- 11% good effect
- 53 bad effect
- 22 making no difference
- 2 both
- 12 don't know

40. Would you favor or oppose having a system of public funding for state and legislative campaigns in California if it cost each taxpayer a few dollars a year to run?

- 45% favor
- 46 oppose
- 9 don't know

California uses the direct initiative process, which enables voters to bypass the legislature and have issues put on the ballot—as state propositions—for voter approval or rejection. Reforms have been suggested to address issues that arise in the initiative process. Please say whether you would favor or oppose each of the following reform proposals.

[rotate questions 41 to 46]

41. Would you favor or oppose having a system of review and revision of proposed initiatives to try to avoid legal issues and drafting errors?

70% favor
18 oppose
12 don't know

42. Would you favor or oppose having a period of time in which the initiative sponsor and the legislature could meet to see if there is a compromise solution before initiatives go to the ballot?

75% favor
17 oppose
8 don't know

43. Would you favor or oppose allowing the legislature, with the governor's approval, to amend initiatives after they have been in effect for six years?

37% favor
51 oppose
12 don't know

44. Would you favor or oppose increasing public disclosure of funding sources for signature gathering and initiative campaigns?

74% favor
17 oppose
9 don't know

45. Would you favor or oppose increasing the number of signatures required to qualify an initiative for the ballot?

45% favor
43 oppose
12 don't know

46. Would you favor or oppose increasing the amount of time a sponsor may gather signatures to qualify an initiative for the ballot?

50% favor
38 oppose
12 don't know

47. On another topic, some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain that you are registered to vote?

79% yes *[ask q.48]*
20 no *[skip to q.50]*
1 don't know

48. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or as an independent?

43% Democrat *[skip to q.50]*
34 Republican *[skip to q.50]*
19 independent *[ask q.49]*
4 another party *[skip to q.50]*

49. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?

24% Republican party
40 Democratic party
23 neither
13 don't know

50. On another topic, would you consider yourself to be politically:

[rotate list as a set, starting from either the top or the bottom; read list]

10% very liberal
18 somewhat liberal
35 middle-of-the-road
22 somewhat conservative
11 very conservative
4 don't know

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

24% great deal
43 fair amount
26 only a little
6 none
1 don't know

[52-66: background and demographic questions]

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