

# THE FIELD POLL

THE INDEPENDENT AND NON-PARTISAN SURVEY  
OF PUBLIC OPINION ESTABLISHED IN 1947 AS  
THE CALIFORNIA POLL BY MERVIN FIELD

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Release #2262

Release Date and Time: **6:00 a.m., Thursday, January 24, 2008**

### **VOTERS CLOSELY DIVIDED ON PROP. 93 (TERM LIMITS) AND PROPS. 94-97 (INDIAN GAMING).**

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By Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

With large majorities of voters now aware of five controversial propositions appearing on the February 5<sup>th</sup> primary election ballot, there is a close division in voter preferences toward these measures.

Last December just 25% of likely voters were aware of Proposition 93, the initiative seeking to modify the state's existing term limits law. Now, two-thirds (65%) report having seen or heard something about the initiative.

A month ago the division of sentiment was 50% to 32% in favor of the proposition. Now, preferences are evenly split – 39% Yes and 39% No, with 22% undecided.

In regard to the referenda to approve or overturn four Indian gaming compacts – Propositions 94, 95, 96 and 97 – awareness has also soared in the past month from 27% to 70%.

Yet, as voter awareness has risen, voter statements have not changed much. Whereas voters were splitting 39% in favor and 33% opposed four weeks ago, in the latest survey the division is 42% Yes and 37% No, with 21% undecided.

It is expected that in the days leading up to the February 5<sup>th</sup> election the campaign organizations on both sides of these issues will be continuing their heavy print and electronic media advertising appeals. With voter preferences so closely divided, the outcomes of each are very much in doubt.

### **Proposition 93 trend**

Proposition 93 calls for reducing the total number of years a state legislator can serve in the Assembly and State Senate from 14 to 12, and allows a legislator to serve his or her entire 12 years in either legislative house. Should it pass, one of its consequences is that many of the state's current legislators, including the leaders in the Senate and Assembly, would avoid being termed out of office next year because they would be allowed to serve up to 12 years in their current legislative body.

In previous surveys taken over the past four months, *The Field Poll* has found sentiment running in favor of Prop. 93, on the order of five to three. However, as voter awareness of the initiative has increased, there has been a decided decline in Yes-side support and an increase in voters intending to vote No. This is resulting in an even split in voter preferences on Prop. 93, with 39% intending to vote Yes, 39% No and 22% undecided.

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**Table 1**  
**Trend of voter awareness and preferences toward Proposition 93,**  
**the "Limit on Legislators' Terms in Office" initiative**  
**(among likely voters in the February 2008 primary)**

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	<b>Mid-January</b>	<b>December</b>	<b>October</b>
	<b><u>2008</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
<u>Voter awareness of Prop. 93</u>			
Had heard	65%	25%	19%
Hadn't heard yet	35	75	81
<u>Voter preferences toward Prop. 93</u>			
Voting YES	39%	50%	49%
Voting NO	39	32	31
Undecided	22	18	20

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### **Changes in preferences by subgroup**

As more voters have become aware of Prop. 93, support for the initiative has declined significantly among certain segments of the likely voter population. Foremost among them are Republicans and conservatives. Last month these two voter segments were supporting Prop. 93 by two-to-one margins. Now, both groups are opposing the initiative by five to eight points. Other subgroups that have moved to the No side after exhibiting big earlier levels of support in December are voters age 50-64 and seniors age 65 and older. This change has opened up big differences in voter preferences by age, with voters under age 50 supporting the initiative by double-digit margins, while voter age 50 and older are opposed.

There are no large differences in voter preferences toward Prop. 93 by geographic region of the state. In addition, men and women are closely divided, with men slightly on the No side and women slightly on the Yes side.

**Table 2**  
**Voter preferences toward Proposition 93, the "Limits on Legislators' Terms in Office" initiative – Mid-January vs. December**  
**(among likely voters in the February 2008 primary)**

	<u>Mid-January</u>			<u>December</u>		
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>18</b>
<u>Party</u>						
(.48) Democrats	39%	33	28	47%	37	16
(.37) Republicans	38%	46	16	56%	29	15
(.15) Non-partisans/others	41%	40	19	47%	25	28
<u>Region</u>						
(.25) Los Angeles County	36%	33	31	50%	27	23
(.17) Orange/San Diego	39%	40	21	53%	31	16
(.14) Other Southern California	42%	42	16	57%	33	10
(.16) Central Valley	47%	36	17	55%	29	16
(.22) San Francisco Bay Area	36%	42	22	41%	42	17
(.06) Other Northern California*	31%	46	23	51%	27	22
<u>Gender</u>						
(.48) Male	38%	42	20	48%	37	15
(.52) Female	39%	36	25	52%	28	20
<u>Political ideology</u>						
(.34) Conservative	39%	44	17	55%	28	17
(.41) Middle-of-the-road	40%	39	21	52%	31	17
(.25) Liberal	37%	31	32	42%	38	20
<u>Age</u>						
(.26) 18-39	41%	31	28	50%	32	18
(.19) 40-49	53%	26	21	52%	32	16
(.34) 50-64	36%	43	21	53%	32	15
(.21) 65 or older	33%	49	18	47%	31	22
<u>Voting method</u>						
(.54) Precinct voter	37%	38	25	50%	32	18
(.46) Mail ballot voter	41%	40	19	51%	32	17

\* Small sample base.

### **Propositions 94, 95, 96 and 97 trend**

Voter awareness of the Indian gaming referenda has almost tripled in the past month. Yet, there has not been much change in voter dispositions.

Last December, Yes voters outnumbered No voters by six points, 39% to 33%. Now, two weeks before the election, supporters are maintaining a five point lead, 42% to 37%, with 21% of likely voters undecided.

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**Table 3**  
**Trend of voter awareness and preferences toward Propositions 94-97, the four Indian gaming referendums initiative, after voters are read its official ballot title and label (among likely voters in the February 2008 primary)**

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	<b>Mid-January <u>2008</u></b>	<b>December <u>2007</u></b>
<u>Voter awareness of Props 94-97</u>		
Had heard	70%	27%
Hadn't heard yet	30	73
<u>Voter preference toward Props 94-97</u>		
Voting YES	42%	39%
Voting NO	37	33
Undecided/mixed	21	28

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### **Preferences by subgroup**

Propositions 94, 95, 96 and 97 are four Indian gaming compacts recently approved by the state legislature and the governor. If approved, they would expand the number of slot machines allowable at four Southern California Indian casinos.

Opponents of the compacts qualified four separate referendum seeking to overturn the new laws.

The current survey finds 42% of likely voters in favor, 37% opposed, but greater than one in five (21%) are undecided.

Small pluralities of both Democrats and Republicans continue to support the Indian gaming measures, while non-partisans remain slightly opposed.

Voters living in Los Angeles County continue to show the biggest margins in favor. Voters in all other regions of the state, on the other hand, are sharply divided.

A small plurality of men continue to favor the propositions, while women remain evenly divided.

Those who have or will vote by mail now appear to be more disposed to support these referenda than are precinct voters, who are evenly divided.

As found in previous surveys, there is a direct connection between a voter's opinion about the fundamental idea of expanding Indian gaming in California and their views on these four referenda. Among the 42% of voters who generally favor expanding Indian casino gaming, the four measures are favored 75% to 13%. On the other hand, among the 43% of voters who are against expanded gaming in general, 68% are initially to vote No and 14% Yes.

**Table 4**  
**Voter preferences regarding four statewide referenda (Propositions 94-97) after being read a summary of its official ballot title and label – Mid-January vs. December (among likely voters in the February 2008 primary)**

	<u>Mid-January</u>			<u>December</u>		
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>28</b>
<u>Party</u>						
(.48) Democrats	41%	34	25	39%	31	30
(.37) Republicans	44%	40	16	43%	33	24
(.15) Non-partisans/others	38%	41	21	32%	42	26
<u>Region</u>						
(.25) Los Angeles County	49%	32	19	43%	30	27
(.17) Orange/San Diego	36%	38	26	38%	34	28
(.14) Other Southern California	45%	42	13	45%	35	20
(.16) Central Valley	39%	38	23	38%	38	24
(.22) San Francisco Bay Area	38%	40	22	36%	34	30
(.06) Other Northern California*	35%	34	31	29%	21	50
<u>Gender</u>						
(.48) Male	43%	35	22	46%	32	22
(.52) Female	41%	40	19	34%	34	32
<u>Political ideology</u>						
(.34) Conservative	36%	45	19	41%	38	21
(.41) Middle-of-the-road	47%	36	17	41%	30	29
(.25) Liberal	40%	29	31	35%	34	31
<u>Voting method</u>						
(.55) Precinct voter	38%	37	25	43%	32	25
(.45) Mail ballot voter	46%	37	17	36%	35	29
<u>Opinion of Indian gaming expansion</u>						
(.42) Favor	75%	13	12	64%	16	20
(.43) Oppose	14%	68	18	18%	52	30
(.15) Depends/no opinion	27%	17	56	37%	25	38

\* Small sample size.

### **Schwarzenegger influence**

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has been publicly advocating a Yes vote on both Prop. 93 and the four Indian gaming referenda, Props. 94-97.

When asked about this, about seven in ten voters maintain that Schwarzenegger's endorsements are having no effect on their voting decisions. Among the small minority of voters indicating that the governor's endorsements are having an effect on their vote, Schwarzenegger's support of the Indian gaming compacts appears to be having a more positive effect than his support of Prop. 93.

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**Table 5**  
**Impact that Governor Schwarzenegger's endorsement of Prop. 93**  
**and Props. 94-97 has on voter preferences**  
**(among likely voters in the February 2008 primary)**

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	<b><u>Prop. 93</u></b>	<b><u>Props.</u></b> <b><u>94-97</u></b>
More inclined to vote YES	13%	18%
More inclined to vote NO	11	11
No effect	72	68
No opinion	4	3

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## **Information About The Survey**

### **Sample Details**

The findings in this report are based on a random sample survey of 823 voters considered likely to vote in the February 5<sup>th</sup> California primary election. Interviewing was conducted by telephone in English and Spanish January 14-20, 2008. Up to six attempts were made to reach and interview each randomly selected voter on different days and times of day during the interviewing period.

The sample was developed from telephone listings of individual voters selected at random from a statewide list of registered voters in California. For this survey, the sample of Republicans interviewed was augmented. After the completion of interviewing, the results were weighted to re-align the overall sample to characteristics of the state's registered voter population by party, region and other demographic variables. Once a voter's name and telephone number has been selected, interviews are attempted only with the specified voter. Interviews were conducted on either the voter's landline or cell phone, depending on the source of the telephone listing from the voter file.

Sampling error estimates applicable to any probability-based survey depends on the sample size. The maximum sampling error for results based on the overall sample of 823 likely voters is +/- 3.4 percentage points. The maximum sampling error is based on percentages in the middle of the sampling distribution (percentages around 50%). Percentages at either end of the distribution (percentages around 10% or around 90%) have a smaller margin of error. The maximum sampling error will be larger for analyses based on subgroups of the overall sample. While there are other potential sources of error in surveys besides sampling error, the overall design and execution of the survey minimized the potential for these other sources of error.

### **Questions Asked**

Have you seen, read or heard anything about Proposition 93, a statewide ballot proposition having to do with term limits that will appear on the February 2008 primary election ballot?

(As you know) Proposition 93 is called the "Limits on Legislators' Terms in Office" initiative. It reduces permissible state legislative service to 12 years and allows all 12 years' service in one house. Current legislators can serve 12 years in their current house, regardless of prior legislative service. (IF ALREADY VOTED, ASK:) Did you vote Yes or No on Proposition 93? (IF DID NOT ALREADY VOTE, ASK:) If the election were being held today, would you vote Yes or No on Proposition 93?

(ASKED OF A RANDOM SUBSAMPLE OF VOTERS:) Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is advocating a Yes vote on the term limits reform initiative. (Did) (Does) Governor Schwarzenegger's support of Prop. 93 make you more inclined to vote Yes, less inclined to vote Yes, or (had) (have) no effect on your vote?

As you know, the state of California allows legal casino gaming, such as playing slot machines, dice, blackjack, and roulette, at casinos located on Indian tribal lands. Tax proceeds from these casinos are shared between the state government and the local governments where they are located. In general, do you favor or oppose expanding the number of casino gaming establishments on Indian tribal lands in California?

Have you seen, read or heard anything about four separate referendums to ratify amendments to four Indian gaming compacts that will appear on California's February primary election ballot as Propositions 94 to 97?

(As you know) these referendum are amendments to four Indian Gaming compacts. A "Yes" vote on each approves and a "No" vote rejects a law that ratifies an amendment to existing gaming compacts between the state and four Southern California Indian tribes. Fiscal impact: Net increase in annual state revenues from each referendum probably in the tens of millions of dollars, growing over time through the year 2030. (IF ALREADY VOTED, ASK:) Did you vote Yes or No on Propositions 94 through 97? (IF DID NOT ALREADY VOTE, ASK:) If the election were being held today, would you vote Yes or No on Propositions 94 through 97?

(ASKED OF A RANDOM SUBSAMPLE OF VOTERS:) Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is advocating a Yes vote to approve these four Indian gaming compacts. (Did) (Does) Governor Schwarzenegger's support make you more inclined to vote Yes, less inclined to vote Yes, or (had) (have) no effect on your vote on Propositions 94 through 97?