

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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BROWN HOLDS SIXTEEN-POINT LEAD OVER KASHKARI IN GOVERNOR'S RACE. HE IS MAINTAINING BIG LEADS AMONG MOST KEY VOTER SUBGROUPS.

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By Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

The latest *Field Poll* completed last week finds incumbent Democratic Governor Jerry Brown maintaining a large sixteen-point lead (50% to 34%) over his Republican rival, businessman Neel Kashkari, in this year's election for Governor of California.

While likely voter preferences are highly partisan and ideologically based, Brown holds large leads over Kashkari among most of the state's key voter constituencies. For example, among voters who identify themselves as middle-of-the-road in politics Brown bests Kashkari by 32 points. Among voters with no party preference the Governor holds an 18-point advantage. And, among permanent mail ballot registrants, who are likely to constitute a majority of voters in the November election, Brown leads by nineteen points.

There is the wide gap in voter recognition of the two gubernatorial candidates. Brown, a fixture on the California political scene for almost a half-century, is nearly universally known and viewed quite favorably by the likely electorate. In this survey 56% of likely voters say they generally hold a favorable opinion of Brown, while 35% view him unfavorably. Brown's current job performance marks among the likely electorate are similar, with 58% approving and 36% disapproving.

By contrast, Kashkari, an investment banker who served under the administration of President George W. Bush but has never before sought public office, is known to only a little more than half (59%) of this state's likely voters. Among likely voters with an opinion of Kashkari, more currently view him positively (35%) than negatively (24%).

Table 1		
Trend of voter preferences for Governor in the November 2014 general election (among likely voters)		
	Late August/ Early September	June
Brown (D)	50%	52%
Kashkari (R)	34	32
Undecided	16	16

(D) denotes Democrat (R) denotes Republican

Brown preferred among key voter subgroups

While likely voter preferences in the Governor's race are highly partisan and ideological, Brown holds substantial leads over Kashkari among most of the state's key voter segments. Demonstrating the partisan alignment of voter preferences, 83% of rank-and-file Democrats and 91% of self-described liberals favor Brown, while 77% of Republicans and 83% of political conservatives are backing Kashkari.

However, Brown holds large leads among several key swing voter segments. For example, among those who identify themselves as middle-of-the-road in politics Brown bests Kashkari by 32 points and among voters with no party preference the Governor holds an 18-point advantage. In addition, among permanent mail ballot registrants, who are likely to constitute a majority of all voters in this year's election, Brown leads by nineteen points.

Brown also holds significant preference leads over Kashkari among both men and women, and across each of the state's major racial and ethnic subgroups.

Regionally, Brown receives his strongest support among voters in heavily Democratic Los Angeles County and the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. Kashkari does best among voters in areas of Southern California outside of Los Angeles County and in the Central Valley, where he holds small leads.

Table 2			
Voter preferences for Governor in the November 2014 general election across subgroups of the likely voter population			
	Brown	Kashkari	Undecided
Total statewide	50%	34	16
<u>Party registration</u>			
(.45) Democrats	83%	6	11
(.34) Republicans	11%	77	12
(.21) No party preference/other	42%	24	34
<u>Political ideology</u>			
(.35) Conservative	16%	71	13
(.39) Middle-of-the-road	55%	23	22
(.26) Liberal	91%	1	8
<u>Area</u>			
(.71) Coastal counties	55%	30	15
(.29) Inland counties	44%	39	17
<u>Region</u>			
(.23) Los Angeles County	52%	30	18
(.32) Other Southern California	37%	45	18
(.15) Central Valley*	36%	48	16
(.23) San Francisco Bay Area	77%	14	9
(.07) Other Northern California*	45%	25	30
<u>Gender</u>			
(.47) Male	50%	33	17
(.53) Female	50%	35	15
<u>Age</u>			
(.25) 18 – 39	53%	29	18
(.43) 40 – 64	50%	32	18
(.32) 65 or older	49%	40	11
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
(.69) White non-Hispanic	50%	39	11
(.17) Latino*	49%	28	23
(.05) African American*	82%	9	9
(.09) Asian American	40%	19	41
<u>Permanent mail ballot registrant</u>			
(.55) Yes	52%	33	15
(.45) No	48%	35	17

* Small sample base.

Big differences in voter recognition of the two gubernatorial candidates

There is the wide gap in voter recognition of the two gubernatorial candidates. Greater than nine in ten likely voters (91%) have an opinion of Brown and opinions divide 56% favorable vs. 35% unfavorable.

Democrats are nearly unanimous in their positive regard for the Governor, while Republicans view him negatively nearly four to one. Voters not identifying with either major party view Brown more positively than negatively 52% to 33%.

Table 3			
Trend of voter image ratings of Governor Jerry Brown			
	Favorable	Unfavorable	No opinion
Late Aug./Early Sept. 2014*	56%	35	9
June 2014*	54%	31	15
April 2014*	61%	35	4
December 2013	56%	37	7
June 2011	58%	31	11
Late October 2010*	47%	47	6
September 2010*	44%	47	9
July 2010*	42%	40	18
March 2010*	41%	37	22
January 2010*	44%	32	24
October 2009	44%	29	27
October 2005	39%	31	30
May 1992	38%	58	4
May 1991	40%	45	15
February 1990	42%	47	11
July 1986	44%	50	6
May 1980	49%	50	1
May 1978	71%	23	6
May 1977	69%	21	10
Party registration (Late Aug./Early Sept. 2014)			
Democrats	85%	7	8
Republicans	21%	75	4
No party preference/others	52%	33	15

* Survey conducted among likely voters. Other surveys among all registered voters.

By contrast, with only about two months to go before the November election, only a little more than half of likely voters (59%) offers an opinion of Kashkari. Opinions of Kashkari are more favorable (35%) than unfavorable (24%) among those able to offer an assessment.

Table 4
Trend of voter image ratings of businessman Neel Kashkari

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
Late August/Early Sept. 2014*	35%	24	41
June 2014*	28%	16	56
April 2014*	16%	20	64
December 2013	9%	8	83
<u>Party registration (Late Aug./Early Sept. 2014)</u>			
Democrats	14%	43	43
Republicans	67%	3	30
No party preference/others	28%	18	54

* Survey conducted among likely voters. Other surveys among all registered voters.

Brown's job approval ratings remain positive

Likely voter assessments of the job performance of the Governor mirror his image ratings, with 58% approving of the job Brown is doing and 36% disapproving.

Brown has received more positive than negative job marks throughout his current tenure as Governor. His current five-to-three approve to disapprove ratio is similar to those he has received in five previous *Field Polls* dating back to February 2013.

Table 5
Trend of Brown's job performance ratings during his current term as Governor

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
Late August/Early September 2014*	58%	36	6
June 2014	54%	29	17
April 2014	59%	32	9
December 2013	58%	33	9
July 2013	51%	33	16
February 2013	57%	31	12
October 2012*	46%	37	17
September 2012	46%	37	17
July 2012	44%	42	14
Late May 2012	43%	40	17
February 2012	45%	38	17
November 2011	47%	36	17
September 2011	49%	32	19
June 2011	46%	31	23
March 2011	48%	21	31

* Survey conducted among likely voters. Other surveys among all registered voters.

Differing candidate histories

Brown, 76, has been a fixture on the California political scene for almost a half-century. In addition to serving as Governor for two terms prior to his current tenure in office, he has held other prominent state, local and party positions, including state Attorney General, Secretary of State, chairman of the state Democratic Party, and Mayor of Oakland.

Kashkari, 41, earned the Republican nomination this year by finishing second behind Brown in the state's June open primary. While Kashkari out-pollled a crowded field of other gubernatorial challengers, capturing 19.4% of the vote, he ran thirty-five points behind Brown, who received 54.3% of the primary vote.

Prior to formally announcing his candidacy for governor in January, Kashkari was an investment banker and federal government administrator. In 2008 he was appointed by President George W. Bush to serve as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Financial Stability. In that post he oversaw the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), which was formed in response to the financial crisis of 2007-2008.

The two gubernatorial candidates are scheduled to debate tonight in what is likely to be their only formal debate prior to the November election.

Information About The Survey

Methodological Details

The findings in this report are based on a *Field Poll* completed August 14-28, 2014 among 467 voters considered likely to vote in the November 2014 general election. Interviews were administered by telephone using live interviewers in six languages and dialects – English, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, and Vietnamese. In order to cover a broad range of issues and still minimize respondent fatigue, the image ratings of the gubernatorial candidates were asked of a random subsample of 236 likely voters.

The overall sample included supplemental interviews conducted among the state's growing ethnic voter population. Funding for the survey's supplemental interviews conducted with Asian American voters was provided by Professor Karthick Ramakrishnan of the University of California, Riverside as part of the National Asian American Survey project.

Individual voters were sampled at random from voters with telephones drawn from the statewide voter registration rolls. The supplemental sample of Asian Americans was developed from voter roll listings targeting Chinese American, Korean American and Vietnamese American voters based primarily on their ethnic surnames. Once a voter's name and telephone number had been selected, interviews are attempted only with the specified voter on either their landline or cell phone, depending on the source of the listing from the voter file. After the completion of interviewing, the overall sample was weighted to align it to the proper distribution of voters by race/ethnicity and other political, demographic and geographic characteristics of the California voter population.

Sampling error estimates applicable to the results of any probability-based survey depend on sample size and the percentage distributions being examined. The maximum sampling error for results from the overall likely voter sample is +/- 4.8 percentage points, while findings based on the random subsample of likely voters have a maximum sampling error of +/- 6.5 percentage points. The maximum sampling error estimates are based on survey findings in the middle of the sampling distribution (i.e., results at or near 50%). Percentages at either tail of the distributions (i.e., results closer to 10% or 90%) have somewhat smaller margins of error. There are other potential sources of error in surveys of public opinion besides sampling error. However, the overall design and execution of this survey sought to minimize these other possible errors.

The Field Poll was established in 1947 as *The California Poll* by Mervin Field, who is still an active advisor. The Poll has operated continuously since then as an independent, non-partisan survey of California public opinion. *The Field Poll* receives financial support from leading California newspapers and television stations, who purchase the rights of first release to *Field Poll* reports in their primary viewer or readership markets. The *Poll* also receives funding from the University of California and California State University systems, who receive the data files from each *Field Poll* survey shortly after its completion for teaching and secondary research purposes, as well as from foundations, non-profit organizations, and others as part of the *Poll's* policy research sponsor program.

Questions Asked

In the election for Governor, businessman Neel Kashkari, Republican, is running against incumbent Governor Jerry Brown, Democrat. If the election were being held today, for whom would you vote for Governor – Republican Neel Kashkari or Democrat Jerry Brown?

Is your opinion of (Republican Neel Kashkari, businessman) (Democrat Jerry Brown, Governor) favorable or unfavorable?

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Jerry Brown is handling his job as Governor of California?