

DECEMBER 2008

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY

CALIFORNIA

Californians & their government

in collaboration with
The James Irvine Foundation

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PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

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ABOUT THE SURVEY

The PPIC Statewide Survey 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, this is the 93rd PPIC Statewide Survey in a series that has generated a database that includes the responses of more than 198,000 Californians. This survey is the 33rd in the *Californians and Their Government* series, which periodically examines the social, economic, and political trends that influence public policy preferences and ballot choices. The series is currently supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation.

This survey includes interviews with Californians who report voting in the November 4 election, and provides a unique opportunity to observe how voters view, react to, and approach information-gathering, and how they make ballot choices, and participate in the citizens' initiative process. The four surveys conducted before and after the November 4 election are designed to provide information on Californians' perceptions of the election, their support for the presidential candidates and state propositions, and the role of the state's political context in shaping their ballot choices. This survey series seeks to raise public awareness, inform decisionmakers, and stimulate public discussion about the state's governance system and initiative process, and various proposals for governance and initiative reform.

On November 4, California voters made important decisions in a statewide general election that included the selection of the next president, 100 members of the California Legislature, all 53 of California's members of the House of Representatives, and 12 state propositions. The state ballot included four state bond measures, three of which were approved (Propositions 1A, 3, and 12). California voters also approved Proposition 8, eliminating the right of same-sex marriage, and rejected Proposition 4, requiring parental notification before a minor's abortion. Voters passed Proposition 11, establishing an independent redistricting commission; Proposition 2, requiring roomier cages for some farm animals; and Proposition 9, a victims' rights measure. This report presents the responses of 2,003 election voters throughout the state on these issues:

- The November election, including interest levels, information sources, and reasons for voting choices on Proposition 1A (high-speed rail system bond), Proposition 4, Proposition 8, as well as support for Proposition 11, including whether a citizens' redistricting commission would lead to more representative state legislators. The survey also examines candidate preferences and attitudes towards the presidential election.
- State political context, including perceptions of the current direction of the state and future economic outlook; approval ratings of Governor Schwarzenegger and the California Legislature; confidence in the policymaking of elected officials and of California's voters at the ballot box; satisfaction with and attitudes toward the citizens' initiative process; and support for initiative reforms, including reforms to the process and to initiative campaigns.
- The extent to which California voters—based on their political party affiliation, region of residence, race/ethnicity, and other demographics—may differ in their perceptions, attitudes, and preferences regarding the November election and their views on the state's political context.
- Copies of this report may be ordered online (www.ppic.org) or by phone (415-291-4400). For questions about the survey, please contact survey@ppic.org. View our searchable PPIC Statewide Survey database online at <http://www.ppic.org/main/survAdvancedSearch.asp>.

PRESS RELEASE

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PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

Post-Election Survey: Proposition 8 Results Expose Deep Rifts Over Same-Sex Marriage

PARTISAN DIVIDE ALSO EMERGES IN VOTES ON HIGH-SPEED RAIL, ABORTION RESTRICTIONS, AND REDISTRICTING

SAN FRANCISCO, California, December 3, 2008 — Proposition 8, the ballot measure that banned same-sex marriage in the state, drew its strongest support from evangelical Christians and Republicans, according to a post-election survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) with funding from The James Irvine Foundation. Majorities of Latinos, voters without a college degree, and those age 55 and older also backed the measure, which passed by a 4-point margin (52% yes, 48% no).

In a history-making presidential election that energized voters, California's 12 state ballot propositions generated high interest as well. Eight in 10 voters (81%) report that they followed news about the measures at least fairly closely, and a solid majority (63%) say they were most interested in Proposition 8. The survey, which polled 2,003 voters from November 5–16, finds these differences between Proposition 8 supporters and opponents:

- Evangelical or born-again Christians (85%) were far more likely than others (42%) to vote yes.
- Three in four Republicans (77%) voted yes, two in three Democrats (65%) voted no, and independents were more closely divided (52% yes, 48% no).
- Supporters of Republican presidential candidate John McCain were far more likely than those who backed President-elect Barack Obama to vote yes (85% vs. 30%).
- Latinos (61%) were more likely than whites (50%) to vote yes; and 57 percent of Latinos, Asians, and blacks combined voted yes. (Samples sizes for Asians and blacks are too small to report separately.)
- Voters without a college degree (62%) were far more likely than college graduates (43%) to vote yes.
- While most voters (65%) consider the outcome of Proposition 8 to be very important, the measure's supporters (74%) are far more likely than those who voted no (59%) to view the outcome as very important.

When voters are asked the separate question of whether they favor or oppose same-sex marriage, they are divided, with 47 percent in favor, 48 percent opposed, and 5 percent unsure—a result consistent with responses in the October PPIC pre-election survey.

“In our surveys, Californians have been closely divided on the issue of same-sex marriage for the last three years,” says Mark Baldassare, PPIC president, CEO, and survey director. “Proposition 8 had highly motivated supporters and a well-funded campaign, and in the end, they prevailed.”

The reason that voters most frequently cite in voting for Proposition 8 is that marriage between only a man and a woman should be recognized (63%); 16 percent cite religious objections. Most Californians who voted no (70%) say they did so because same-sex couples should be given the freedoms and rights guaranteed to everyone.

PROPOSITION 4 DEFEATED IN HIGHLY PARTISAN VOTE

The vote on Proposition 4 also revealed a partisan divide, but with a different result. The proposition, which would have required a parent to be notified before a minor could have an abortion, was defeated (48% yes, 52% no). It is the third time voters have rejected this proposal. Most Republicans (66%) voted yes, most Democrats (65%) voted no, and, again, independents were closely split (51% in favor, 49% opposed). Most evangelicals (74%), Latinos (62%), and voters without a college degree (55%) also supported Proposition 4. More proponents (50%) than opponents (42%) view the outcome as very important. Women (51%) are much more likely than men (37%), and Latinos (56%) are more likely than whites (42%) to say the outcome is very important.

The top reason given for supporting Proposition 4 is that parents deserve to know if their daughter is having an abortion (72%). The most frequently cited reason by voters who opposed the measure is a belief in a woman's right to choose without consulting anyone (38%).

Asked more generally about whether the government should restrict access to abortion, most voters (71%) say no.

CALIFORNIANS SEE HIGH-SPEED RAIL AS ROUTE TO THE FUTURE

Despite a worsening fiscal crisis, Californians authorized nearly \$10 billion to begin building high-speed train service linking Southern California, Sacramento/San Joaquin Valley, and the San Francisco Bay Area (53% yes, 47% no). The top reasons voters give for a yes vote on Proposition 1A is that high-speed rail service is important to the future of California (37%), will help fill California's transportation needs (16%), reduce traffic congestion (10%), and make travel more convenient (10%). Those who voted no say they did so because the state cannot afford to build the service (44%) or that the bond amount is too much (24%).

The vote split along partisan lines on this measure as well, with most Democrats (65%) voting yes, most Republicans (66%) voting no, and independents more closely divided (53% yes, 47% no). A strong majority (70%) of voters think high-speed rail is at least somewhat important to California's future, with voters in the Bay Area (48%) and Los Angeles (44%) more likely to say so than those in Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego counties (36%) or the Central Valley (35%).

SUPPORTERS OF REDISTRICTING REFORM APPEAR HEADED FOR A WIN

With an undetermined number of provisional and mail-in ballots still to be counted, Proposition 11 is passing by a slim margin (51% yes, 49% no). The measure, which had the active support of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, would take the authority to draw state legislative district boundaries from the legislators and give it to an independent commission.

Most Republicans (59%) and independents (54%) voted yes, and most Democrats (56%) voted no. More white voters (53%) than Latino voters (47%) favored it. Over half (56%) of the voters who approve of the governor's performance and half (54%) of those who disapprove of the legislature voted yes on Proposition 11.

Supporters say they voted for it because it would change unfair voting districts (30%) and because legislators should not be allowed to draw their own districts (21%). Opponents say the change is not necessary right now (18%), the outcome would not benefit them politically (9%), or the proposition was too confusing (9%).

VOTERS TRUST EACH OTHER TO MAKE POLICY AT THE BALLOT BOX

California's voters are generally satisfied (67%) with the initiative process and express more trust in their fellow voters than in their elected officials to make public policy. A solid majority (62%) say they were very happy (19%) or somewhat happy (43%) about having to vote on the 12 state ballot measures this election, while 30 percent were unhappy (20% somewhat, 10% very). Half say they trust California voters a great deal (13%) or a fair amount (39%) to make public policy at the ballot box, a consistent finding in PPIC post-election surveys (52% 2006, 50% 2005, 55% 2004).

But Californians think there's room for improvement in the process. Seven in 10 say there is a need for major (35%) or minor (35%) changes, with Democrats (42%) much more likely than independents (31%) or Republicans (28%) to favor major changes. Voters support a number of reform proposals:

- A system of review and revision to avoid legal issues and drafting errors (77% favor, 15% oppose);
- A time period in which the initiative sponsor and legislature try to reach a compromise solution before the initiative reaches the ballot (77% favor, 17% oppose);
- Restriction of initiatives to the November general election, when turnout is typically higher (50% favor, 41% oppose);
- More public disclosure of funding sources for signature gathering and initiative campaigns (84% favor, 12% oppose);
- A requirement that initiatives be the focus of televised debates (72% favor, 23% oppose).

Voters' faith in their own ability to make decisions is understandable, given their lack of confidence in the state's elected officials to do the job. Only 37 percent have a great deal (4%) or a fair amount of trust and confidence (33%) in the state's elected officials when it comes to making public policy—a 15-point decline since November 2006 (52%) and the lowest point of voters' confidence in their elected officials since PPIC began asking this question four years ago (52% 2006, 41% 2005, 48% 2004).

INTERNET USE GROWS, BUT MORE VOTERS RELY ON TRADITIONAL INFORMATION SOURCES

In a year that saw digital media become a powerful tool in the presidential election, what was the impact on California ballot races? More voters received news or information about the state propositions through the Internet or email than in November 2006 (40% today, 35% 2006), and more say they found the Internet the most helpful source of information in deciding how to vote (13% today, 8% 2006). But the Internet is still dwarfed by more traditional resources as the ones that voters rely upon to make decisions. More voters (37%) name the secretary of state's voter guide than any other source as the most helpful—a 5-point decline since November 2006, but 6 points higher than November 2005. The next most frequently mentioned sources are advertisements (16% today, 17% 2006, 24% 2005) and news coverage (15% today, 11% 2006, 17% 2005).

Regardless of their information sources, at least eight in 10 voters across all political, regional, and demographic groups say they are at least somewhat satisfied with the information they had to make decisions on the ballot propositions.

MORE KEY FINDINGS:

- **Anatomy of a landslide**—Page 14
Most women (63%) and Latinos (78%) voted for Obama despite early predictions that they might not. Nearly six in 10 (59%) independents voted for him.
- **Voters see economy as top issue**—Page 16
A strong majority (59%) of voters who participated in the election consider the economy to be the top issue, followed by the state budget (13%), gay rights and same-sex marriage (4%), and other issues. Sixty-eight percent say California is going in the wrong direction, and only 19 percent see it going in the right direction.
- **Schwarzenegger, legislature get low ratings**—Page 17
Forty-two percent of voters approve of the job Schwarzenegger is doing. The legislature fares worse, with a 21 percent approval rating. Just 23 percent approve of the way the legislature and governor are working together.
- **Voters critique November initiatives**—Page 21
Most voters agree that too much money was spent on the initiative campaigns (75%), the ballot wording was too complicated and confusing (63%), and there were too many initiatives (52%).

ABOUT THE SURVEY

This post-election edition of the PPIC Statewide Survey is part of the *Californians and Their Government* series supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation. The series seeks to raise public awareness, inform decisionmakers, and stimulate public discussion about the state's governance system, initiative process, and proposals for reform. This is the 93rd PPIC Statewide Survey in a series that has generated a database of the responses of more than 198,000 Californians. Findings are based on a telephone survey of 2,003 California voters in the November 4 election who were interviewed from November 5–16, 2008. Interviews were conducted in English or Spanish. The sampling error for the total sample is $\pm 2\%$ and larger for subgroups. For more information on methodology, see page 25.

Mark Baldassare is president and CEO of 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.

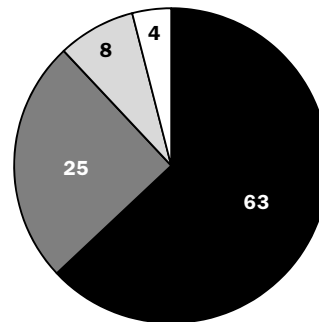
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NOVEMBER 2008 ELECTION

KEY FINDINGS

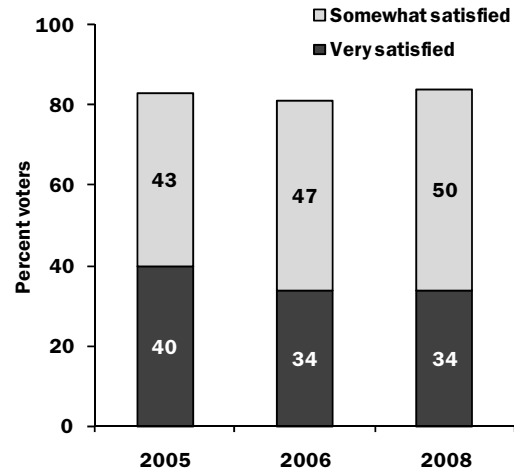
- Eight in 10 California voters were closely following news about the 12 state ballot propositions. More than six in 10 were most interested in Proposition 8. *(page 8)*
- Consistent with previous elections, a plurality of voters (37%) considered the official voter information guide the most useful resource in deciding how to vote on the propositions. Eighty-six percent rated the information guide as very or somewhat useful, and 64 percent said the same of news stories, compared to 33 percent saying commercials were very or somewhat useful in deciding how to vote. Most voters were satisfied with the information available to them on the state propositions. *(page 9)*
- There were large partisan differences in support for Propositions 1A, 4, 8, and 11. “Yes” voters on Propositions 4, 8, and 11 were more likely than the “no” voters to say the outcomes were very important. Support for Proposition 8 was highest among evangelical Christians and Republicans. The top reason given for voting yes on Proposition 8 was that marriage should be recognized as only between a man and a woman (63%). *(pages 10–13)*
- Senator Barack Obama won the presidential election with the overwhelming support of the state’s Democratic voters and six in 10 independents, as well as majority support across most demographic groups. More than six in 10 voters were more enthusiastic than usual about voting in the presidential election. Obama voters were nearly twice as likely as McCain voters to say they were more enthusiastic (80% to 43%). *(page 14)*

Proposition Receiving Most Voter Interest

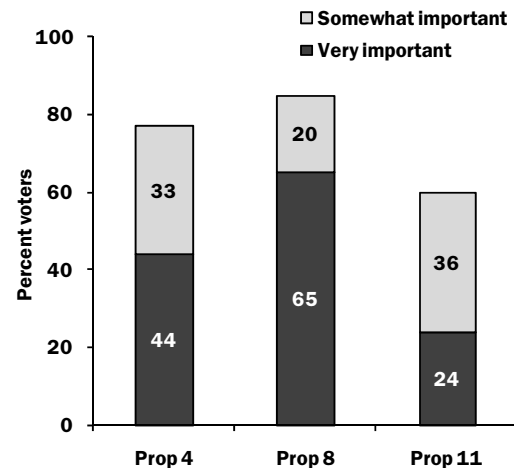


- Prop 8: Same-Sex Marriage Ban
- All other propositions
- None/All (vol)
- Don't know

Satisfaction with Information on Propositions



Importance of the Outcome of the Vote On...



VOTER INTERESTS

Californians voted on 12 state propositions on the November ballot, passing seven and rejecting five. An overwhelming 81 percent said they had followed news about the measures very (38%) or fairly (43%) closely. This was slightly higher than the 77 percent in November 2006 who said they had followed news about the 13 initiatives on that midterm ballot at least fairly closely, but slightly less than the 85 percent in November 2005 saying they had paid similar attention to the eight propositions in the special election.

Today, most Republicans (83%), independents (82%), and Democrats (79%) report following initiative news at least fairly closely. Similarly, about eight in 10 voters across regions say they followed news about the state ballot measures at least fairly closely, although those in the Other Southern California region (41%) and in Los Angeles (40%) are somewhat more likely than voters in the Central Valley (36%) and San Francisco Bay Area (34%) to report following the news very closely. About eight in 10 Latino and white voters say they followed news about the ballot measures at least fairly closely, with 42 percent of Latinos and 37 percent of whites saying they followed initiative news very closely.

“Regardless of how you voted, before deciding how to vote on the 12 state propositions, how closely were you following news about these measures?”

	Very closely	Fairly closely	Not too closely	Not at all closely	Don't know	
General Election Voters	38%	43%	13%	5%	1%	
Party	Democrat	36	43	15	5	1
	Republican	39	44	12	5	–
	Independent	40	42	12	4	2
Region	Central Valley	36	45	13	5	1
	San Francisco Bay Area	34	47	14	3	2
	Los Angeles	40	39	15	5	1
	Other Southern California	41	40	12	5	2

By far the biggest draw among the November 2008 measures was Proposition 8, the same-sex marriage ban that 63 percent of voters say is the one that most interested them. None of the other measures was of highest interest to more than 5 percent of voters. This is especially notable because the highest interest expressed in previous post-election surveys was for Proposition 73 (parental notification) in 2005 (23%) and Proposition 87 (alternative energy research) in 2006 (21%). Today, majorities across demographic groups name Proposition 8 as the one that interested them the most. Interest in Proposition 8 increases with education and income and decreases with age.

“Which one of the 12 state propositions on the November 4th ballot were you most interested in?”

<i>Top four propositions mentioned</i>		Proposition 8 Same-sex marriage	Proposition 1A High-speed rail	Proposition 2 Farm animals	Proposition 4 Parental notification
General Election Voters		63%	5%	5%	5%
Party	Democrat	63	6	5	4
	Republican	67	4	4	5
	Independent	56	7	5	5
Region	Central Valley	64	7	5	3
	San Francisco Bay Area	63	7	6	4
	Los Angeles	59	4	4	7
	Other Southern California	64	5	4	4

VOTER INFORMATION SOURCES

Voters continue to name the official voter information guide (37%) as the most helpful resource for deciding how to vote on the state propositions, followed by advertisements (16%), news coverage (15%), and the Internet (13%). The number of voters naming the official voter guide has declined 5 points since November 2006 (42%), but is 6 points higher than in November 2005 (31%). Mention of news coverage is slightly higher than in 2006 (11%) and similar to 2005 (17%), while mention of advertisements is similar to 2006 (17%), but has declined 8 points since 2005 (24%). Mention of the Internet as the most helpful resource has increased by 5 points (8% in 2005 and 2006).

Republicans (41%) are somewhat more likely than Democrats (35%) and independents (34%) to say that the voter information guide was most helpful in deciding how to vote, while independents (17%) are somewhat more likely than Democrats and Republicans (12% each) to have relied on the Internet. More whites (39%) used the voter information guide than Latinos (30%), while Latinos (25%) were much more likely than whites (14%) to find political advertisements most helpful. Mention of the Internet is highest among younger voters (30% for ages 18–34, 15% for ages 35–54, and 5% for ages 55 and older).

“People learned about the ballot propositions a number of different ways. Which way did you find the most helpful in deciding how to vote on the 12 state propositions?”

Top four sources mentioned	General Election Voters	Party		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
Official voter information guide and sample ballot	37%	35%	41%	34%
Advertisements	16	17	15	16
News and media coverage	15	16	14	12
Internet	13	12	12	17

Although the Internet did not serve as the primary source of information for most voters, 40 percent received news or information about the propositions through the Internet or email—a 5-point increase since November 2006 (35% 2006, 40% today). Independents (47%) are more likely than Republicans (40%) and Democrats (38%) to say they obtained information through the Internet or email. Use of electronic information declines sharply with age and increases sharply with higher education and income.

Regardless of which information source voters relied on most in deciding how to vote on propositions, a majority says the voter information guide (86%) and news stories (64%) were at least somewhat useful in their decisionmaking process. Most voters (66%) say political commercials are not too useful. Latino voters are more likely than white voters to rate news stories (77% to 62%) and political commercials (54% to 25%) as very or somewhat useful information sources.

“In deciding how to vote on the 12 state propositions on the November election ballot, how useful to you were each of these information sources?”

	Voter information guide on the state propositions mailed to voters by the Secretary of State	News stories about the state propositions that appeared in the media	Political commercials paid for by the initiative campaigns
Very useful	54%	19%	8%
Somewhat useful	32	45	25
Not too useful	12	34	66
Don't know	2	2	1

Eighty-four percent of voters say they were satisfied (34% very satisfied, 50% somewhat satisfied) with the information they had in making decisions on ballot propositions. At least eight in 10 across all political, regional, and demographic groups report they were at least somewhat satisfied with the information.

PROPOSITION 1A: HIGH-SPEED RAIL

Proposition 1A, the “Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act” authorizing nearly \$10 billion in funding to begin building a high-speed train service linking Southern California, Sacramento/San Joaquin Valley, and the San Francisco Bay area, passed by 6 points (53% yes, 47% no).

In an open-ended question, the top reason voters give for voting yes on the measure is their perception that high-speed rail is important to the future of California (37%). Those who voted yes also think high-speed rail will help fill California’s unmet transportation needs (16%), reduce traffic congestion (10%), and make travel more convenient (10%). Those who voted no are most likely to cite as reasons the state budget deficit or that the state cannot afford it (44%), or that the bond amount is too much (24%).

Divisions are clear across party lines, with a strong majority of Democrats (65%) voting yes on the proposition and a strong majority of Republicans (66%) voting no. Independents split their votes (52% yes, 48% no). White voters are less likely than non-whites to have supported the measure. Support for the proposition is similar across income groups, but declines somewhat with age.

“Proposition 1A was called the ‘Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act.’ Did you vote yes or no on this measure?”

	Party			Age		Race/Ethnicity	
	Dem	Rep	Ind	18–54	55 and older	White	Non-white
Voted yes	65%	34%	52%	55%	49%	49%	60%
Voted no	35	66	48	45	51	51	40

Seven in 10 voters think a high-speed rail system is very (40%) or somewhat (30%) important to California’s future. However, there is a sharp division between yes and no voters, with 67 percent of yes voters and only 15 percent of no voters perceiving the rail as very important to the state’s future.

Opinions on high-speed rail’s importance are split along party lines, with half of Democrats and four in 10 independents saying it is very important, compared to just 28 percent of Republicans. The system is considered more important by voters in the San Francisco Bay Area (48%) and Los Angeles (44%) than in the Other Southern California region (36%) or the Central Valley (35%). Over two in three across demographic groups say the high-speed rail system is at least somewhat important to California’s future.

“As you may know, Proposition 1A passed. How important is a high-speed rail system for California’s future?”

	General Election Voters	Proposition 1A	
		Voted yes	Voted no
Very important	40%	67%	15%
Somewhat important	30	30	31
Not too important	15	2	27
Not at all important	11	–	23
Don't know	4	1	4

When asked about their confidence in the state government’s ability to plan for future growth, only 10 percent of voters express a great deal of confidence; 44 percent have some confidence and 45 percent have very little (31%) or no (14%) confidence. Of those who voted yes on Proposition 1A, 71 percent have at least some confidence in the state’s ability to plan. Of those who voted no, 61 percent have very little or no confidence.

PROPOSITION 4: PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

Proposition 4, the “Waiting Period and Parental Notification before Termination of Minor’s Pregnancy Initiative Constitutional Amendment,” lost by a 4-point margin (48% yes, 52% no). In 2005 and 2006, voters defeated similar measures by slightly larger margins (2005: 47% yes, 53% no; 2006: 46% yes, 54% no).

Among yes voters, the top reason given for supporting Proposition 4 is that parents deserve to know if their daughter is having an abortion (72%). Those who voted no were less unified in their reasons, but nearly four in 10 cited a woman’s right to choose without consulting anyone (38%), fewer cited child safety or the availability of safe abortions (15%), 11 percent cited protecting minors from abusive family members.

Proposition 4 was a highly partisan issue, with two in three Democrats (65%) voting no, two in three Republicans voting yes (66%), and independents evenly divided (51% yes, 49% no). There is also a sharp difference between those who self-identify as evangelical or born-again (74% yes) and others (60% no). College-educated voters were less likely than those without college degrees to vote yes (42% to 55%). Proposition 4 drew greater support from men (50%) than women (46%), from parents with children ages 18 and younger (52%) than those without children (46%), and from Latinos (62%) than whites (44%). Support for the proposition declines among higher income and is higher among older voters.

“Proposition 4 was called the ‘Waiting Period and Parental Notification Before Termination of Minor’s Pregnancy Initiative Constitutional Amendment.’ Did you vote yes or no on this measure?”

	Party			Education		Evangelical/Born-again	
	Dem	Rep	Ind	Non-college graduates	College graduates	Yes	No
Voted yes	35%	66%	51%	55%	42%	74%	40%
Voted no	65	34	49	45	58	26	60

About three in four voters say the outcome of Proposition 4 is very (44%) or somewhat important (33%). The measure is considered very important by more yes voters (50%) than no voters (42%). Democrats (46%) and Republicans (45%) are somewhat more likely than independents (38%) to call the outcome of Proposition 4 very important. Women (51%) are much more likely than men (37%) and Latinos (56%) are much more likely than whites (42%) to say the outcome is very important.

“As you may know, Proposition 4 did not pass. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 4?”

	General Election Voters	Proposition 4	
		Voted yes	Voted no
Very important	44%	50%	42%
Somewhat important	33	30	37
Not too important	13	13	12
Not at all important	6	5	7
Don't know	4	2	2

When asked more generally about whether government should pass more laws to restrict access to abortion, seven in 10 voters say government should not interfere (71%), while only one in four say government should pass more restrictions (24%). Vast majorities of Democrats (82%) and independents (72%) say government should not interfere with a woman’s right to abortion, but even 55 percent of Republicans agree. Women (71%) and men (72%) are similar in their views that government should not interfere with a woman’s access to abortion.

PROPOSITION 8: SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Proposition 8, the “Eliminates Right of Same-Sex Couples to Marry Initiative Constitutional Amendment,” passed by a 4-point margin (52% yes, 48% no).

Far and away the most cited reason for voting yes is that that marriage should be recognized as only between a man and a woman (63%), while 16 percent mention religious objections. Overwhelmingly, the top reason given for voting no on Proposition 8 is that same-sex couples should be given the freedoms and rights guaranteed to everyone (70%).

Differences in support for Proposition 8 are evident across party lines, with three in four Republicans (77%) voting yes and two in three Democrats (65%) voting no, while independents were more divided (52% yes, 48% no). The measure was supported by a majority of those without a college education (62%), while a majority of those with a college degree voted no (57%). Evangelical or born-again Christians (85%) are far more likely than others (42%) to have voted yes. Whites (50%) are less likely than Latinos (61%) to have voted yes; 57 percent of Latinos, Asians and blacks combined voted yes (sample sizes are too small to report Asians and blacks separately). Voters who supported Obama (30%) were far less likely than those who supported McCain (85%) to vote yes. Support for Proposition 8 increases with age (43% for ages 18–34; 50% for ages 35–54, yes; 56% for ages 55 and older) and declines with income.

“Proposition 8 was called the ‘Eliminates Right of Same-Sex Couples to Marry Initiative Constitutional Amendment.’ Did you vote yes or no on this measure?”

	Party			Education		Evangelical/Born-again	
	Dem	Rep	Ind	Non-college graduates	College graduates	Yes	No
Voted yes	35%	77%	52%	62%	43%	85%	42%
Voted no	65	23	48	38	57	15	58

Two in three voters consider the outcome of Proposition 8 very important (65%), while another one in five consider it somewhat important (20%). Proposition 8 supporters are far more likely than those who voted no to say the outcome is very important (74% to 59%). At least six in 10 Latino (67%), white (64%), female (69%), and male voters (60%), and voters in all age, income, and education groups consider the outcome of Proposition 8 very important. Evangelical Christians (77%) are far more likely than other voters (61%) to say the outcome of the vote on Proposition 8 is very important to them.

“As you may know, Proposition 8 passed. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 8?”

	General Election Voters	Proposition 8	
		Voted yes	Voted no
Very important	65%	74%	59%
Somewhat important	20	18	22
Not too important	8	5	10
Not at all important	5	3	7
Don't know	2	–	2

In a separate question, voters were asked whether they favor or oppose allowing gay and lesbian couples to be legally married. Voters are divided, with 47 percent of voters in favor, 48 percent opposed, and 5 percent unsure, mirroring the results among likely voters in our October pre-election survey. Among those voting no on Proposition 8 in the November election, only 8 percent are opposed to same-sex marriage—an 11-point decline from our October pre-election survey.

PROPOSITION 11: REDISTRICTING

Proposition 11, the “Redistricting Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute,” transfers the authority to draw state electoral district boundaries from the legislature to a commission of registered voters. This measure passed by a slim margin (51% yes, 49% no).

Those voting yes on this measure say they voted for the proposition because it would change unfair voting districts (30%) and because legislators should not be allowed to draw their own districts (21%). Those who voted no are more divided in their reasons for opposing Proposition 11: Eighteen percent say that it is not necessary right now, 9 percent say that the outcome of redistricting would not be beneficial, and 9 percent say that the measure was too confusing to understand.

Majorities of Republican (59%) and independent voters (54%) were in favor of Proposition 11, while a majority of Democrats (56%) were opposed. More than half of the voters who approve of Governor Schwarzenegger’s performance and half of those who disapprove of the legislature’s job performance voted yes on Proposition 11. The initiative was favored by more white (53%) than Latino (47%) voters, and its support increased with higher income and age, and was higher among college-educated voters.

“Proposition 11 was called the ‘Redistricting Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute.’ Did you vote yes or no on this measure?”*

	Party			Governor		Legislature	
	Dem	Rep	Ind	Approve	Disapprove	Approve	Disapprove
Voted yes	44%	59%	54%	56%	47%	41%	54%
Voted no	56	41	46	44	53	59	46

* For complete text of question, see p. 32.

Six in 10 voters say the outcome of Proposition 11 is very (24%) or somewhat (36%) important; however, yes voters (41%) are much more likely than no voters (14%) to call it very important. Fewer than three in 10 across parties say it is very important (20% Democrats, 25% independents, 28% Republicans). Men (27%) are more likely than women (20%), and whites (24%) are more likely than Latinos (19%) to say very important. Voters who disapprove of the legislature place more importance on the outcome.

“As you may know, Proposition 11 passed. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 11?”

	General Election Voters	Proposition 11	
		Voted yes	Voted no
Very important	24%	41%	14%
Somewhat important	36	45	37
Not too important	19	9	29
Not at all important	12	4	15
Don't know	9	1	5

When asked if an independent commission will result in legislators who more effectively represent their districts than legislators do today, 55 percent of voters say yes. Nearly six in 10 Republicans (59%) and independents (58%) and half of Democrats (52%) agree. Latinos (59%), whites (56%), men (58%), and women (52%) all hold this view, as do at least half across regions and other demographic groups. Among those who voted yes on Proposition 11, 79 percent agree that an independent redistricting commission will result in more effective representation, compared to only 32 percent of those who voted no.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

In California, the Democratic ticket of Barack Obama and Joe Biden won in a landslide victory over the Republican ticket of John McCain and Sarah Palin (61% to 37%). Seven in 10 voters were satisfied with the choice of candidates in the election for U.S. President; however, Democrats (88%) and Obama supporters (90%) were far more likely to be satisfied than Republicans (51%) and McCain supporters (45%).

Obama enjoyed the support of 90 percent of Democrats and 59 percent of independents, while McCain garnered support from eight in 10 Republicans. Nearly eight in 10 Latinos and half of whites voted for Obama, as did 63 percent of women and 56 percent of men. Obama enjoyed majority support across all age, education, and income groups.

“For president, did you happen to vote for Barack Obama, the Democrat, or John McCain, the Republican?”

General Election Voters		Barack Obama	John McCain	Someone else
General Election Results		61%	37%	2%
Party	Democrat	90	8	2
	Republican	18	81	1
	Independent	59	36	5
Gender	Men	56	41	3
	Women	63	35	2
Race/Ethnicity	Latinos	78	21	1
	Whites	52	45	3
Age	18–34	72	26	2
	35–54	60	37	3
	55 and older	56	41	3

Six in 10 voters were more enthusiastic than usual about voting in the presidential election. Voters who chose Obama (80%) were far more enthusiastic about voting than those who voted for McCain (43%). Enthusiasm was much greater among Latinos (71%) than whites (58%) and somewhat greater among women (66%) than men (59%). Voters under age 35 (76%) were far more likely than those age 55 and older (57%) to express more enthusiasm about voting in this election.

“Thinking about the presidential election that was just held, were you more enthusiastic about voting than usual, or less enthusiastic?”

	General Election Voters	Presidential Vote Choice	
		Obama	McCain
More enthusiastic	63%	80%	43%
Less enthusiastic	17	5	31
Same (volunteered)	19	15	24
Don't know	1	–	2

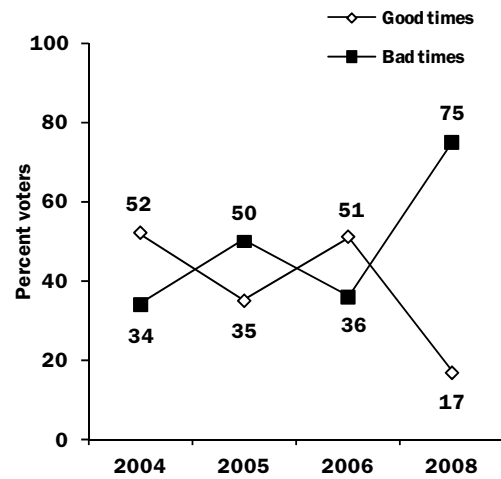
Nearly six in 10 Californians (57%) were satisfied with the amount of attention the candidates for president spent on the issues most important to them. Democrats (74%), however were more satisfied than independents (49%) and Republicans (41%). Obama voters (76%) were more than twice as satisfied as McCain voters (35%) with the amount of attention the candidates gave to the issues.

STATE POLITICAL CONTEXT

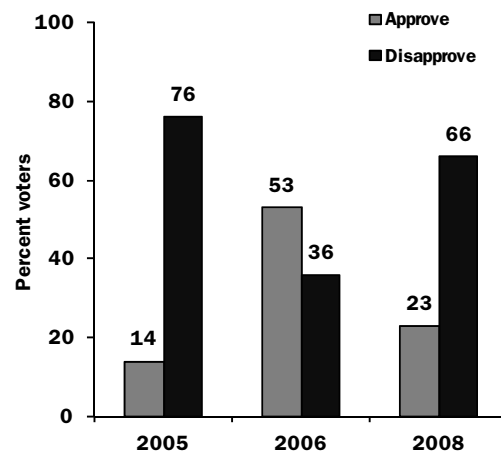
KEY FINDINGS

- Strong majorities of California voters hold pessimistic views regarding the direction of the state and the California economy over the next year. Six in 10 voters view jobs and the economy as the most important issue facing the state of California. (page 16)
- About four in 10 voters approve of the governor's job performance, one in five approve of the legislature's job performance, and two in three disapprove of the way that the legislature and the governor are working together. (page 17)
- When it comes to making public policy, half of voters have confidence in their fellow voters (52%). Fewer have confidence in their elected officials (37%). (page 18)
- About six in 10 voters say they felt happy about voting on the November ballot measures, but most say voting made no difference in how they view California politics. (page 19)
- Two in three voters are at least somewhat satisfied with the initiative process, but seven in 10 also think changes are needed. Many voters say that the wording of initiatives was too complicated, that there were too many initiatives on the ballot, and that too much money was spent by the initiative campaigns. (page 20, 21)
- Seventy-seven percent of voters support having a system of review and revision of proposed initiatives, to avoid legal issues and drafting errors; 77 percent also favor establishing a time period for sponsors and the legislature to meet and compromise, thus avoiding a ballot measure. Half of voters would support limiting ballot initiatives to November elections, when turnout is highest. (pages 22-23)

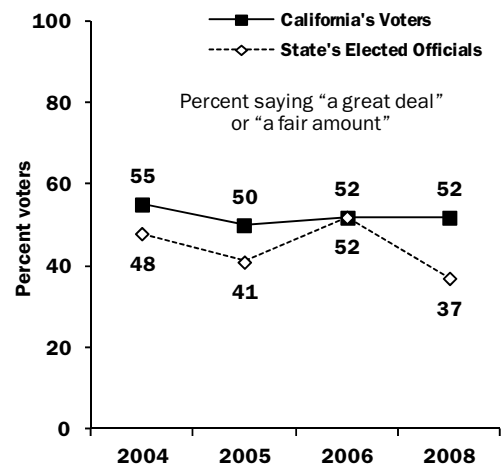
Economic Outlook for California



Approval of the Way the Governor and Legislature are Working Together



Confidence In _____ to Make Public Policy



OVERALL MOOD

A strong majority of voters who participated in the November 4 general election say the most important issue facing the state is the economy (59%), followed by the state budget (13%). Fewer name gay rights and same-sex marriage (4%), education (3%), or any other issues. The economy is the top issue mentioned across all political, regional, and demographic groups. Voters today are far more concerned about the economy than were voters in November 2006 (20% immigration, 14% economy, 13% education). In 2005, the economy and education were the top issues for voters (18% economy, 18% education).

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

<i>Top three issues mentioned</i>		Jobs, economy	State budget, deficit, taxes	Gay rights, same-sex marriage
General Election Voters		59%	13%	4%
Party	Democrat	65	9	4
	Republican	53	17	6
	Independent	58	13	5
Region	Central Valley	59	14	5
	San Francisco Bay Area	59	12	5
	Los Angeles	62	10	3
	Other Southern California	57	13	6

Voter pessimism about the state economy extends to the direction of the state. Sixty-eight percent of voters say the state is headed in the wrong direction and only 19 percent say it is headed in the right direction. This contrasts starkly with November 2006, when 53 percent said the state was headed in the right direction and 39 percent said wrong direction. Findings today are similar to the post-election survey of 2005 when 68 percent said wrong direction and only 23 percent said right direction.

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

		Right direction	Wrong direction	Don't know
General Election Voters		19%	68%	13%
Party	Democrat	21	65	14
	Republican	18	72	10
	Independent	14	69	17
Region	Central Valley	15	71	14
	San Francisco Bay Area	21	64	15
	Los Angeles	19	68	13
	Other Southern California	19	70	11

Three in four California voters say the state is headed toward bad economic times (75%); just 17 percent say they expect good economic times in the next year. Voters in the Other Southern California region (80%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (77%) are more pessimistic than residents in the Central Valley (71%) and Los Angeles (68%). Latino voters (33%) are far more likely than white voters (12%) to say they expect good times in the year ahead. Optimism decreases as education and income increase and is greater among younger voters. Voters in 2006 were far more optimistic about economic times (51% good times, 36% bad times) and much less pessimistic in 2005 (35% good times, 50% bad times).

APPROVAL RATINGS OF STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS

Forty-two percent of voters approve of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's job performance, while 49 percent disapprove. These ratings are similar to those among likely voters in our November survey (45% approve, 46% disapprove), but mark a steep decline from November 2006 voter rankings (60% approve, 32% disapprove). Approval today is similar to that of November 2005 election voters (39% approve, 56% disapprove). Today, a majority of Republicans (53%) approve of the governor, while at least half of independent (50%) and Democratic voters (57%) disapprove of his job performance. Latinos (63%) are far more likely than whites (43%) to disapprove of the governor's job performance.

The California Legislature fares far worse than the governor in its overall approval ratings. Sixty-nine percent of voters disapprove of its overall performance, while just 21 percent approve. The legislature's current ratings are similar to its approval ratings among likely voters in our November survey (20% approve, 69% disapprove), and among November 2005 voters (20% approve, 66% disapprove), but also mark a significant decline from November 2006 voters (36% approve, 49% disapprove). Majorities of voters across regions, parties, and demographic groups disapprove of the legislature's job performance.

"Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that..."

		General Election Voters	Party		
			Dem	Rep	Ind
<i>... Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling his job as governor of California?</i>	Approve	42%	34%	53%	41%
	Disapprove	49	57	38	50
	Don't know	9	9	9	9
<i>... the California Legislature is handling its job?</i>	Approve	21	25	16	21
	Disapprove	69	64	77	67
	Don't know	10	11	7	12

A strong majority of voters (66%) also disapprove of the way the governor and legislature are working together in making public policy; 23 percent approve. More than six in 10 voters across political and regional groups disapprove. White voters (67%) are somewhat more likely than Latino voters (61%) to disapprove of the way the governor and legislature are working together. Voters today are far more pessimistic about their elected officials working together in making public policy than in November 2006 (53% approve, 36% disapprove), but are more positive than they were in November 2005 (14% approve, 76% disapprove).

"Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature and the governor are working together in making public policy?"

		Approve	Disapprove	Don't know
General Election Voters		23%	66%	11%
Party	Democrat	22	66	12
	Republican	23	66	11
	Independent	25	63	12
Region	Central Valley	23	66	11
	San Francisco Bay Area	21	66	13
	Los Angeles	21	70	9
	Other Southern California	28	63	9

CONFIDENCE IN POLICYMAKING

When it comes to trust and confidence in the state’s elected officials to make public policy, voters’ attitudes reflect their low approval ratings of the governor and legislature. A majority (63%) say they have not too much (45%) or no confidence at all (18%), compared to 37 percent who say they have a great deal (4%) or a fair amount (33%). This marks a 15-point decline from November 2006, when half of voters (52%) said they trusted them a great deal or a fair amount. This post-election survey marks the lowest point of voter confidence in the state’s elected officials making public policy since we began asking voters four years ago (48% November 2004; 41% November 2005; 52% November 2006; 37% today).

Today, Republican (70%) and independent voters (68%) are more likely than Democratic voters (55%) to say they have not too much or no confidence at all in the state’s elected officials when it comes to making public policy. More than half of voters across all regional and demographic groups hold this negative perception, including 60 percent of Latinos and 65 percent of whites. Of those who disapprove of the legislature, 75 percent say they have not too much or no confidence at all in their elected officials to make public policy, and among those who disapprove of the governor, 71 percent say the same.

“How much trust and confidence do you have in the state’s elected officials when it comes to making public policy?”

	General Election Voters	Party		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
A great deal	4%	5%	2%	3%
A fair amount	33	38	28	28
Not too much	45	44	46	48
None at all	18	11	24	20
Don’t know	–	2	–	1

California voters are far much more trusting in their fellow voters when it comes to making public policy decisions at the ballot box. Half (52%) of voters say they trust California voters a great deal (13%) or a fair amount (39%) when it comes to making public policy at the ballot box; 45 percent say they have not too much (34%) confidence, or none at all (11%). Findings today are similar to those in each of our post-election surveys, in which half or more said they had a great deal or a fair amount of confidence in California’s voters (55% November 2004, 50% November 2005, 52% November 2006, 52% today).

Across parties today, Democratic (57%) and independent voters (53%) are more likely than Republican voters (48%) to express at least a fair amount of confidence in their peers. Latino voters (64%) are far more likely than white voters (48%) to express confidence. Confidence in California’s voters decreases as age, education, and income increase.

“How much trust and confidence do you have in California’s voters when it comes to making public policy at the ballot box?”

	General Election Voters	Party		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
A great deal	13%	15%	11%	14%
A fair amount	39	42	37	39
Not too much	34	32	37	36
None at all	11	8	14	11
Don’t know	3	3	1	–

VOTING ON STATE PROPOSITIONS

A strong majority of California voters (62%) report that they were happy (19% very, 43% somewhat) about having to vote on the 12 state propositions on the November 4 general election ballot, while three in 10 say they were unhappy (10% very, 20% somewhat). Findings today among voters are similar to November 2006 (60% happy, 35% unhappy) when 13 state propositions were on the ballot. By comparison, voters in the 2005 special election called by the governor were much less happy about voting on those eight propositions (46% happy, 51% unhappy).

Across parties today, at least six in 10 voters say they were happy about having to vote on the 12 state propositions. Solid majorities across regional and demographic groups were happy, but Latino voters are more likely to say this than white voters (77% to 58%) are. Happiness about voting on the 12 state propositions declines with increases in age and education.

“Overall, how did you feel about having to vote on the 12 state propositions on the November 4th general election ballot?”

	General Election Voters	Party		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
Very happy	19%	17%	20%	21%
Somewhat happy	43	44	42	45
Somewhat unhappy	20	21	19	18
Very unhappy	10	10	10	7
Neither (volunteered)	6	5	6	6
Don't know	2	3	3	3

Voters are more likely to say voting on the 12 state propositions has made them feel no different (52%) about California politics than to say it has made them feel better (23%) or worse (22%). In 2006 we asked voters a similar question about voting in the general election: 54 percent of voters said it made no difference, while 30 percent said it made them feel better, and 14 percent said it made them feel worse about California politics. In 2005, responses were more negative: 38 percent said that voting in the special election made them feel worse about California politics, only 21 percent said it made them feel better, and 38 percent said it made them feel no different.

Across parties today, Republican and independent voters (55% each) are somewhat more likely than Democratic voters (49%) to say it made no difference. Latino voters (41%) are far more likely than white voters (18%) to report they feel better about California politics after voting on the 12 state propositions. Of those who report being very happy about voting on the 12 state propositions, 48 percent say they feel better about California politics, while among those who report being very unhappy about voting, 57 percent say they feel worse about California politics.

“Overall, would you say voting on the 12 state propositions on the November 4th election ballot has made you feel better, worse, or no different about California politics?”

	General Election Voters	Party		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
Better	23%	24%	23%	23%
Worse	22	24	20	19
No different	52	49	55	55
Don't know	3	3	2	3

SATISFACTION WITH CITIZENS' INITIATIVES

Two in three California voters are satisfied with the way the initiative process is working in California today, but only 18 percent are very satisfied. Three in 10 are not satisfied with the process (29%). Voters in the November 2006 election expressed nearly identical opinions (19% very, 50% somewhat, 27% not satisfied). After the November 2005 special election in which voters turned down all eight propositions, they were much less satisfied (10% very, 43% somewhat, 44% not too satisfied).

Today, independent (73%) and Republican voters (72%) are more likely than Democratic voters (63%) to be at least somewhat satisfied with the way the initiative process is working in California today. Majorities of voters across regional and demographic groups are at least somewhat satisfied with the process. Latinos (81%) are far more likely than whites (65%) to express satisfaction. Voter satisfaction with the initiative process declines somewhat with age, and is lower among college graduates. Voters who were happy about voting on 12 state propositions are far more likely than those who were unhappy to say that they are satisfied with the way the initiative process is working (79% to 46%).

“Generally speaking, would you say you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with the way the initiative process is working in California today?”

	General Election Voters	Party		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
Very satisfied	18%	15%	22%	19%
Somewhat satisfied	49	48	50	54
Not satisfied	29	33	23	24
Don't know	4	4	5	3

Despite general satisfaction with the initiative process, most voters believe there is room for improvement. Seven in 10 think it is in need of major (35%) or minor changes (35%), and only 23 percent say

it is fine the way it is. Similar proportions said changes were needed in 2005 (72%) and in 2006 (67%).

Today, Democrats (42%) are much more likely than independents (31%) and Republicans (28%) to say the process is in need of major changes. White voters (33%) are much less likely to hold this view than Latino voters (44%). Still, a solid majority of voters across all political, regional, and demographic groups believe at least minor changes are needed. Seven in 10 of those that are not satisfied with the initiative process think major changes are needed. Voters who were unhappy about having to vote on 12 propositions are nearly twice as likely as happy voters to say major changes are needed (52% to 28%).

“Do you think the citizens’ initiative process in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or that it is basically fine the way it is?”

	General Election Voters	Party		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
Major changes	35%	42%	28%	31%
Minor changes	35	35	33	40
Fine the way it is	23	17	32	24
Don't know	7	6	7	5

OVERALL PERCEPTIONS OF NOVEMBER 4 BALLOT INITIATIVES

When read several statements about November 4 ballot initiatives, most voters agree strongly or somewhat that too much money was spent by the initiative campaigns (75%). Majorities also agree that ballot wording was too complicated and confusing (63%) and that there were too many ballot initiatives (52%).

By far, voters are the most likely to agree that too much money was spent by initiative campaigns this November (51% strongly, 24% somewhat agree). More money was spent on Proposition 8 (banning same-sex marriage), than on any initiative this year in the nation. (Proposition 87 in 2006 on funding for alternative energy still holds the record for the most money spent on a California ballot measure.) Still, voters were somewhat more likely to say too much money was spent on initiative campaigns in 2005 (83% 2005, 78% 2006, 75% today). Today, large majorities of voters across parties and demographic groups agree.

Thirty-one percent of voters agree strongly and 32 percent somewhat agree that the wording of initiatives was too complicated and confusing. While perceptions were similar in 2006 (33% strongly, 30% somewhat agree), voters were somewhat less likely to agree in 2005 (28% strongly, 27% somewhat). Today, at least six in 10 voters across parties agree with this statement (68% Democrats, 60% Republicans, 60% independents). The perception that ballot wording is too confusing increases somewhat with older age.

Fewer voters agree (26% strongly, 26% somewhat) with the statement that there were too many propositions. Sixty percent of voters said the same in 2006 when 13 propositions appeared on the ballot. By contrast, fewer voters (41%) in the November 2005 special election, which included eight propositions, felt there were too many that year. Today, Democratic voters (58%) are much more likely to agree with this view than Republican (48%) and independent voters (46%).

“For the following items, please say if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.”

	General Election Voters	Party			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<i>There was too much money spent by the initiative campaigns.</i>	Strongly agree	51%	51%	53%	48%
	Somewhat agree	24	24	23	26
	Somewhat disagree	11	11	11	14
	Strongly disagree	5	6	4	5
	Don't know	9	8	9	7
<i>The wording of initiatives on the state ballot was too complicated and confusing.</i>	Strongly agree	31	33	30	29
	Somewhat agree	32	35	30	31
	Somewhat disagree	23	18	27	26
	Strongly disagree	13	13	12	13
	Don't know	1	1	1	1
<i>There were too many initiatives on the state ballot.</i>	Strongly agree	26	29	26	18
	Somewhat agree	26	29	22	28
	Somewhat disagree	28	24	31	30
	Strongly disagree	18	16	19	21
	Don't know	2	2	2	3
	Don't know	9	8	9	7

INITIATIVE PROCESS REFORMS

Most voters support several reform proposals that would change important elements of the process for placing citizens' initiatives on the ballot in California.

To try to avoid legal issues and drafting errors, 77 percent of voters and vast majorities across parties (81% Democrats, 77% independents, 75% Republicans), support having a system of review and revision of proposed initiatives. The same percentage of voters in November 2005 (77%) held this view. Today, more than seven in 10 voters across regional and demographic groups support a system of review and revision of initiatives. Favor for this proposal is high among those who are satisfied with the initiative process (78%), those who are not (79%), and those who want major (80%) or minor changes (82%) in the initiative process.

Similarly high percentages of voters overall (77%) and across parties (83% Democrats, 74% independents, 72% Republicans) favor having a time period when the initiative sponsor and the legislature could try to reach a compromise solution before the initiative reaches the ballot. Support for this proposal has declined somewhat since 2005 (83% 2005, 80% 2006, 77% today). Today, more than three in four voters across regions and demographic groups favor this proposal. Favor for this solution is high among those who are satisfied (77%) and not satisfied (81%) with the initiative process and among those who want major changes (79%) or minor changes (81%) in the initiative process.

Because November elections typically see the largest voter turnout, with much smaller proportions voting in primary and special elections, one proposed reform would allow initiatives to appear on November general election ballots only. Fifty-three percent of voters in November 2005 supported this idea compared to 50 percent today. Across parties, Democratic voters (53%) are the most likely to favor this proposal, followed by Republicans (48%) and independents (45%). Across regions, San Francisco Bay Area voters (54%) are most in favor of this proposal, followed by those in Los Angeles (51%), the Central Valley (49%), and the Other Southern California region (47%). A solid majority of Latino voters (63%) support this proposal, compared to 48 percent of white voters. Majorities of voters who say they are not satisfied with the initiative process (57%) and those who think major changes are needed (58%) favor this proposal.

“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. How about...”

		General Election Voters	Party		
			Dem	Rep	Ind
<i>... a system of review and revision of proposed initiatives to try to avoid legal issues and drafting errors?</i>	Favor	77%	81%	75%	77%
	Oppose	15	13	17	14
	Don't know	8	6	8	9
<i>...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	77	83	72	74
	Oppose	17	13	22	20
	Don't know	6	4	6	6
<i>...only allowing initiatives in November general elections, instead of in any statewide election, such as primaries or special elections?</i>	Favor	50	53	48	45
	Oppose	41	38	44	46
	Don't know	9	9	8	9

INITIATIVE CAMPAIGN REFORMS

Large majorities of voters also express support for reform proposals that would change the type and amount of information provided by initiative campaigns.

Reflecting concerns about the amount of money that was spent on initiative campaigns this year, more than eight in 10 voters overall (84%) and across parties (85% independents, 84% Democrats, 84% Republicans) favor increasing public disclosure of funding sources for signature-gathering and initiative campaigns. Similar percentages of voters in November 2005 (85%) and November 2006 (84%) favored this idea, as did likely voters this past October (84%).

Today, vast majorities of voters across demographic groups, including more than eight in 10 across regions, support increased disclosure of initiative funding sources. White voters (87%) are somewhat more likely to support this proposal than Latino voters (79%); favor increases with higher education and income levels. More than eight in 10 voters who are satisfied (84%) and who are not satisfied (86%) with the initiative process express support for increased disclosure. Support is also high among those who think the process needs major (83%) or minor changes (87%).

“...How about increasing public disclosure of funding sources for signature gathering and initiative campaigns?”

	General Election Voters	Party		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
Favor	84%	84%	84%	85%
Oppose	12	11	13	11
Don't know	4	5	3	4

Another proposal would require the yes and no sides of initiative campaigns to debate their positions on television. Although not as popular as increasing disclosure of initiative campaign funding, 72 percent of voters support the televised debate idea. Voters in November 2005 (77%) were slightly more likely to favor this idea.

Today, Democratic (75%) and independent (74%) voters are somewhat more likely than Republican voters (67%) to support the idea of televised initiative debates. More than two in three across regions and demographic groups favor this proposal. Latinos (80%) are much more likely than whites (70%) to express support for this idea. Support declines somewhat with older age. Among those satisfied and not satisfied with the initiative process, more than seven in 10 favor this idea. Support is high among those who say major (74%) or minor changes (77%) are needed and those who think the process is fine as is (65%).

“...How about requiring the yes and no sides of the initiative campaigns to participate in a series of televised debates?”

	General Election Voters	Party		
		Dem	Rep	Ind
Favor	72%	75%	67%	74%
Oppose	23	21	27	23
Don't know	5	4	6	3

REGIONAL MAP



METHODOLOGY

The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, president and CEO and survey director at the Public Policy Institute of California, with research support from Dean Bonner, project manager for this survey, and survey research associates Jennifer Paluch, Sonja Petek, and Nicole Fox. The *Californians and Their Government* series is currently supported with funding from The James Irvine Foundation. We benefit from discussions with PPIC staff, foundation staff, and other policy experts; however, the methods, questions, and content of this report were solely determined by Mark Baldassare and the survey staff.

The findings in this report are based on a telephone survey of 2,003 California voters in the November 4 election who were interviewed from November 5–16, 2008. Interviewing took place on weekday nights and weekend days, using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers that ensured that both listed and unlisted numbers were called. All landline telephone exchanges in California were eligible. 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 using the “last birthday method” to avoid biases in age and gender. Eligible respondents were those who reported that they had voted in the November election, either at their local polling place, by mail ballot, or at an early voting site. Each interview took an average of 19 minutes to complete. Interviewing was conducted in English or Spanish. Accent on Languages, Inc. translated the survey into Spanish with assistance from Renatta DeFever. Abt SRBI Inc. conducted the telephone interviewing. We used data from the PPIC Statewide Surveys, media exit polling, and election statistics from the California Secretary of State to compare with the demographic characteristics of election voters in this survey sample. The survey sample of voter characteristics was comparable to PPIC Statewide Survey statistics and other state figures. Statistical weighting of the data to account for any demographic differences did not change any of the findings in this report significantly.

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 voters in California were interviewed. The sampling error for subgroups is larger. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

We present results for four geographic regions, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population. “Central Valley” includes Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. “San Francisco Bay Area” includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. “Los Angeles” refers to Los Angeles County, and “Other Southern California” includes Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties. Voters from other geographic areas are included in the results reported for all general election voters. Sample sizes for these less populated areas are not large enough to report separately. 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. Sample sizes for African American and Asian American voters are not large enough for separate analysis. We compare the opinions of registered Democrats, Republicans, and independents (those who are registered as “decline to state”). We compare current PPIC Statewide Survey results to those in our earlier surveys of likely voters, and of election voters in November 2004, November 2005, and November 2006.

QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESULTS

CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

November 5–16, 2008

2,003 California Voters in the November 4 Election:
English, Spanish

MARGIN OF ERROR $\pm 2\%$ 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]

59% jobs, economy
13 state budget, deficit, taxes
4 gay rights, same-sex marriage
3 education, schools
2 health care, health costs
2 housing costs, housing availability, subprime housing crisis
2 immigration, illegal immigration
13 other
2 don't know

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

19% right direction
68 wrong direction
13 don't know

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

17% good times
75 bad times
8 don't know

4. For president, did you happen to vote for *[rotate names]* [1] Barack Obama, the Democrat *[or]* [2] John McCain, the Republican?

[actual vote]

61% Barack Obama, the Democrat
37 John McCain, the Republican
2 someone else (*specify*)

5. In general, would you say you were satisfied or not satisfied with your choices of candidates in the election for U.S. President on November 4th?

70% satisfied
27 not satisfied
3 don't know

6. Would you say you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the amount of attention that the candidates for president spent on the issues most important to you?

57% satisfied
35 dissatisfied
8 don't know

7. Thinking about the presidential election that was just held, were you more enthusiastic about voting than usual, or less enthusiastic?

63% more enthusiastic
17 less enthusiastic
19 same (volunteered)
1 don't know

Now, thinking about the November 4th election, the ballot included 12 state propositions—two measures placed on the ballot by the governor and legislature and 10 citizens’ initiatives.

8. Overall, how did you feel about having to vote on the 12 state propositions on the November 4th general election ballot—would you say you were very happy, somewhat happy, somewhat unhappy, or very unhappy?

- 19% very happy
- 43 somewhat happy
- 20 somewhat unhappy
- 10 very unhappy
- 6 neither (*volunteered*)
- 2 don’t know

9. Overall, would you say voting on the 12 state propositions on the November 4th election ballot has made you feel better, worse, or no different about California politics?

- 23% better
- 22 worse
- 52 no different
- 3 don’t know

10. And regardless of how you voted, before deciding how to vote on the 12 state propositions, how closely were you following news about these measures?

- 38% very closely
- 43 fairly closely
- 13 not too closely
- 5 not at all closely
- 1 don’t know

11. People learned about the ballot propositions a number of different ways. Which way did you find the most helpful in deciding how to vote on the 12 state propositions?

[code, don’t read]

- 37% official voter information guide and sample ballot
- 16 advertisements—radio, television, newspaper, mail
- 15 news and media coverage—radio, television, newspaper
- 13 Internet
 - 5 Internet in general
 - 4 Internet news sites
 - 2 official proposition sites
 - 2 voter resource sites
- 6 newspaper endorsements—columns, editorials
- 4 opinions of friends, family, coworkers
- 5 something/someone else
- 4 don’t know

12. Did you happen to get any news or information about the 12 state propositions on the November election ballot on the Internet or through email?

- 40% yes
- 59 no
- 1 don’t know

In deciding how to vote on the 12 state propositions on the November election ballot, how useful to you were each of these information sources—very useful, somewhat useful, or not too useful?

[rotate question 13 to 15]

13. The voter information guide on the state propositions mailed to voters by the Secretary of State.

- 54% very useful
- 32 somewhat useful
- 12 not too useful
- 2 don’t know

14. News stories about the state propositions that appear in the media.

19% very useful
45 somewhat useful
34 not too useful
2 don't know

15. Political commercials paid for by the initiative campaigns.

8% very useful
25 somewhat useful
66 not too useful
1 don't know

16. Overall, how satisfied were you with the information you had to make choices on the ballot propositions?

34% very satisfied
50 somewhat satisfied
11 not too satisfied
4 not at all satisfied
1 don't know

17. Which one of the 12 state propositions on the November 4th ballot were you most interested in?

[code, don't read]

5% Proposition 1A—Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act
5 Proposition 2—Standards for Confining Farm Animals. Initiative Statute
2 Proposition 3—Children's Hospital Bond Act. Grant Program. Initiative Statute
5 Proposition 4—Waiting Period and Parental Notification Before Termination of Minor's Pregnancy. Initiative Constitutional Amendment
1 Proposition 5—Nonviolent Drug Offenses. Sentencing, Parole and Rehabilitation. Initiative Statute
0 Proposition 6—Police and Law Enforcement Funding. Criminal Penalties and Laws. Initiative Statute
2 Proposition 7—Renewable Energy Generation. Initiative Statute
63 Proposition 8—Eliminates Right of Same-Sex Couples to Marry. Initiative Constitutional Amendment
0 Proposition 9—Criminal Justice System. Victims' Rights. Parole. Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute
1 Proposition 10—Alternative Fuel Vehicles and Renewable Energy. Bonds. Initiative Statute
3 Proposition 11—Redistricting. Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute
1 Proposition 12—Veterans' Bond Act of 2008
4 none of them (*volunteered*)
4 all equally (*volunteered*)
4 don't know

For each of the following, please tell me if you voted yes or no on the measure. First,

18. Proposition 1A was called the “Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act.” Did you vote yes or no on this measure?

[actual vote]

53% voted yes
47 voted no

[q18a asked of those who say they voted yes]

18a. And why did you vote yes?

[code, don't read]

37% important to the future of California/
it is needed/good idea
16 need more transportation/more
trains
10 it will reduce congestion on
highways/traffic is a problem
10 convenience of travel/speed of
travel/faster transportation
8 good for the environment/ air
pollution is a problem/ reduces air
pollution
4 safe and reliable transportation
4 it will create jobs/good for the
economy
4 some other reason
7 don't know

[skip to question 19]

[q18b asked of those who say they voted no]

18b. And why did you vote no?

[code, don't read]

44% state wastes too much/budget
deficit/money could be better used
elsewhere/cannot afford it
24 bond amount is too much
9 this is not the solution/not needed
5 state bond debt is too high already
2 already spend too much on
transportation
2 transportation funds should be spent
locally
10 some other reason
4 don't know

19. As you may know, Proposition 1A passed. How important is a high-speed rail system for California's future—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

40% very important
30 somewhat important
15 not too important
11 not at all important
4 don't know

20. How much confidence do you have in the state government's ability to plan for the future and growth?

10% a great deal
44 only some
31 very little
14 none
1 don't know

21. Proposition 4 was called the “Waiting Period and Parental Notification Before Termination of Minor's Pregnancy Initiative Constitutional Amendment.” Did you vote yes or no on this measure?

[actual vote]

48% voted yes
52 voted no

[q21a asked of those who say they voted yes]

21a. And why did you vote yes?

[code, don't read]

72% parents deserve to know/the girls are
too young to decide
7 need parental permission for
medicine to be given at school, but
a child can have an abortion without
parental consent
7 it is the right thing to do/it is
important
4 child safety
4 pro-life/oppose abortion
4 some other reason
2 don't know

[skip to question 22]

[q21b asked of those who say they voted no]

21b. And why did you vote no?

- 38% pro-choice/female should decide without consulting anyone
- 15 child safety/safe abortions
- 11 protect children from abusive family members
- 9 not doctor's responsibility/only family should be involved, not doctors
- 5 not a government issue
- 2 already voted against this in earlier elections
- 2 chips away at abortion rights/step in wrong direction
- 12 some other reason
- 6 don't know

22. As you may know, Proposition 4 did not pass. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 4—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 44% very important
- 33 somewhat important
- 13 not too important
- 6 not at all important
- 4 don't know

23. Proposition 8 was called the "Eliminates Right of Same-Sex Couples to Marry Initiative Constitutional Amendment." Did you vote yes or no on this measure?

[actual vote]

- 52% voted yes
- 48 voted no

[q23a asked of those who say they voted yes]

23a. And why did you vote yes?

[code, don't read]

- 63% preserve marriage, traditional values/only marriage between a man and a woman should be recognized
- 16 religious objections/homosexuality is wrong, unnatural
- 6 protect children from being taught about same-sex marriage in school
- 3 domestic partnerships/civil unions are available to same-sex couples
- 2 overturns decision of activist judges
- 8 some other reason
- 2 don't know

[skip to question 24]**[q23b asked of those who say they voted no]**

23b. And why did you vote no?

[code, don't read]

- 70% right to marry/same freedoms and rights should be guaranteed to everyone/equal protection under law
- 5 government should not be involved
- 4 courts ruled that banning same-sex marriage was unconstitutional
- 4 I really don't care if gay people get married/it is not a big deal to me
- 3 lifetime commitment of lesbian and gay couples should be recognized
- 2 states' rights issue
- 2 Proposition 8 is wrong and unfair
- 8 some other reason
- 2 don't know

24. As you may know, Proposition 8 passed. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 8—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 65% very important
- 20 somewhat important
- 8 not too important
- 5 not at all important
- 2 don't know

25. Proposition 11 was called the “Redistricting Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute.” It changes authority for establishing state office boundaries from elected representatives to a commission. It establishes a multilevel process to select commissioners from the registered voter pool. The Commission will be comprised of Democrats, Republicans, and representatives of neither party. Did you vote yes or no on this measure?

[actual vote]

51% voted yes
49 voted no

[q25a asked of those who say they voted yes]

25a. And why did you vote yes?

[code, don't read]

30% changes unfair voting districts, gerrymandered districts
21 legislature is the problem, should not draw its own districts/conflict of interest for legislators
9 shake up the political establishment
8 districts should be drawn by a commission/independent, unbiased, non-partisan commission is better
7 shifts power to citizens/citizens are better than legislature
2 I am a Republican, outcome of redistricting would be beneficial
2 friends, family supported it
10 some other reason
11 don't know

[skip to question 26]

[q25b asked of those who say they voted no]

25b. And why did you vote no?

[code, don't read]

18% not necessary right now
9 don't like the way it was written/too confusing to understand
9 I am a Democrat, outcome of redistricting wouldn't be beneficial
7 too much bureaucracy/creates extra bureaucracy
6 too much money, additional expenses
5 governor endorsed it/don't trust governor
3 citizens are not the solution
3 should be the work of the legislature
2 opposed by group, public figure I trust
20 some other reason
18 don't know

26. As you may know, Proposition 11 passed. How important to you is the outcome of the vote on Proposition 11—is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

24% very important
36 somewhat important
19 not too important
12 not at all important
9 don't know

27. If voting districts were drawn by an independent commission of citizens, do you think California would generally have state legislators who more effectively represent their districts than legislators do today, or not?

55% yes, would
24 no, would not
21 don't know

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

42% approve
49 disapprove
9 don't know

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

21% approve
69 disapprove
10 don't know

30. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature and the governor are working together in making public policy?

23% approve
66 disapprove
11 don't know

31. In general, how much trust and confidence do you have in the state's elected officials when it comes to making public policy?

4% a great deal
33 a fair amount
45 not too much
18 none at all

32. How much trust and confidence do you have in California's voters when it comes to making public policy at the ballot box?

13% a great deal
39 a fair amount
34 not too much
11 none at all
3 don't know

Changing topics, 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 and rejection.

33. Generally speaking, would you say you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with the way the initiative process is working in California today?

18% very satisfied
49 somewhat satisfied
29 not satisfied
4 don't know

34. Do you think the citizens' initiative process in California is in need of major changes, minor changes or that it is basically fine the way it is?

35% major changes
35 minor changes
23 fine the way it is
7 don't know

In thinking about the initiatives on the November 4th election ballot, please say if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements.

[rotate questions 35 to 37]

35. The wording of initiatives on the state ballot was too complicated and confusing.

31% strongly agree
32 somewhat agree
23 somewhat disagree
13 strongly disagree
1 don't know

36. There were too many initiatives on the state ballot.

26% strongly agree
26 somewhat agree
28 somewhat disagree
18 strongly disagree
2 don't know

37. There was too much money spent by the initiative campaigns.

51% strongly agree
24 somewhat agree
11 somewhat disagree
5 strongly disagree
9 don't know

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 38 to 42]

38. How about only allowing initiatives in November general elections, instead of in any statewide election, such as primaries or special elections?
- 50% favor
41 oppose
9 don't know
39. How about a system of review and revision of proposed initiatives to try to avoid legal issues and drafting errors?
- 77% favor
15 oppose
8 don't know
40. How about 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?
- 77% favor
17 oppose
6 don't know
41. How about increasing public disclosure of funding sources for signature gathering and initiative campaigns?
- 84% favor
12 oppose
4 don't know
42. How about requiring the yes and no sides of the initiative campaigns to participate in a series of televised debates?
- 72% favor
23 oppose
5 don't know

On another topic,

[rotate questions 43 and 44]

43. Which of the following statements comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right? **[rotate]** (1) The government should pass more laws that restrict the availability of abortion; **[or]** (2) the government should not interfere with a woman's access to abortion.
- 24% government should pass more laws
71 government should not interfere
5 don't know
44. Next, do you favor or oppose allowing gay and lesbian couples to be legally married?
- 47% favor
48 oppose
5 don't know
45. Are you registered to vote as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or as an independent?
- 48% Democrat *[skip to q45b]*
35 Republican *[skip to q44c]*
1 another party *(specify) [skip to q46]*
16 independent *[skip to q45a]*
- 45a. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?
- 27% Republican party
41 Democratic party
28 neither *(volunteered)*
4 don't know
- [skip to question 46]**
- 45b. Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or not a very strong Democrat?
- 62% strong
35 not very strong
3 don't know
- [skip to question 46]**
- 45c. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?
- 53% strong
43 not very strong
4 don't know

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

[read list, rotate order top to bottom]

- 12% very liberal
- 21 somewhat liberal
- 29 middle-of-the-road
- 21 somewhat conservative
- 15 very conservative
- 2 don't know

47. Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in politics?

- 36% great deal
- 45 fair amount
- 16 only a little
- 3 none

[d1-d15: demographic questions]

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