



Californians & Their Government

Mark Baldassare Dean Bonner Alyssa Dykman Rachel Lawler

CONTENTS

Press Release	3
State and National Issues	6
Approval Ratings and the 2020 Election	13
Regional Map	20
Methodology	21
Questionnaire and Results	23

*Supported with funding from the James Irvine Foundation
and the PPIC Donor Circle*



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

© 2019 Public Policy Institute of California

The Public Policy Institute of California is dedicated to informing and improving public policy in California through independent, objective, nonpartisan research.

PPIC is a public charity. It does not take or support positions on any ballot measures or on any local, state, or federal legislation, nor does it endorse, support, or oppose any political parties or candidates for public office.

Short sections of text, not to exceed three paragraphs, may be quoted without written permission provided that full attribution is given to the source.

Research publications reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of our funders or of the staff, officers, advisory councils, or board of directors of the Public Policy Institute of California.

CONTACT

Steven Bliss 415-291-4412
Abby Cook 415-291-4436

News Release

EMBARGOED: Do not publish or broadcast until 9:00 p.m. PT on Wednesday, October 2, 2019.

Para ver este comunicado de prensa en español, por favor visite nuestra página de internet:
www.ppic.org/press-release/

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

California's 2020 Democratic Primary Is a Three-Way Race, but Many Voters Would Consider a Different Candidate

CALIFORNIANS SAY HOMELESSNESS AND THE ECONOMY ARE TOP ISSUES FACING THE STATE

SAN FRANCISCO, October 2, 2019—As California's 2020 Democratic presidential primary draws closer, Elizabeth Warren, Joe Biden, and Bernie Sanders lead by a wide margin. However, many voters say they would consider supporting a candidate other than their current choice. These are among the key findings of a statewide survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC).

Likely voters identifying as registered Democrats or as Democratic-leaning independents support Elizabeth Warren (23%), Joe Biden (22%), and Bernie Sanders (21%) at levels well above Kamala Harris (8%) and Pete Buttigieg (6%). No other candidate is preferred by more than 3 percent, and 9 percent say they don't know which candidate they prefer. However, among voters with a candidate preference, more than half (53%) would consider supporting another candidate.

Many view the candidates' performance in the primary debates as important in determining their preference. After five debates, an overwhelming majority of likely Democratic primary voters say debate performances are very (41%) or somewhat (43%) important.

"Many Democratic-leaning voters are open to switching allegiances at this early stage of the presidential primary season, and most see the debates as important for choosing a candidate," said Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO.

Among all Californians, about one-third (30% adults, 35% likely voters) approve of the job President Trump is doing, with wide partisan divisions. The president's approval ratings were similar in January 2019 and last September. Fewer than half approve of the job being done by US senators Dianne Feinstein (40% adults, 44% likely voters) and Kamala Harris (40% adults, 43% likely voters). Roughly half (49% adults, 51% likely voters) approve of their own representative in the US House, well above the share approving of Congress overall (33% adults, 24% likely voters).

"Californians give Congress lower approval ratings than their two senators and their House representative, while the president's approval rating is remarkably stable as he faces a new controversy," Baldassare said.

Homelessness and the Economy Viewed as Top Issues Facing the State

When asked to identify the most important issue facing the state today, Californians are most likely to name homelessness (15% adults, 16% likely voters) and jobs and the economy (15% adults, 13% likely voters). Other top issues named include housing costs and availability (11% adults, 11% likely voters),

immigration and illegal immigration (9% adults, 11% likely voters), and the environment (8% adults, 10% likely voters).

"Homelessness and housing costs are now being mentioned as much as the economy and immigration when asking about the most important problems facing the people of California today," Baldassare said.

The most important issue varies across regions. In Los Angeles, one in five residents (21%) identify homelessness, while one in five in the San Francisco Bay Area (22%) name housing. Pluralities in the Central Valley (19%), Inland Empire (14%), and Orange/San Diego (14%) identify jobs and the economy as the top issue.

Many Californians are concerned about the overall direction of the state. Fewer than half (46% adults, 41% likely voters) say the state is headed in the right direction, while 48 percent of adults and 54 percent of likely voters say it is headed in the wrong direction. In fact, the share of adults who are optimistic about the direction of the state is at its lowest point since May 2015.

Most View Immigrants as a Benefit to the State

An overwhelming majority of Californians (71%) see immigrants as a benefit to the state because of their hard work and job skills. At least six in ten have held this view since January 2013. Across regions, residents of Los Angeles (76%) are the most likely to view immigrants as a benefit (73% San Francisco Bay Area, 72% Orange/San Diego, 67% Central Valley, 67% Inland Empire). Older adults (59% 55 and older) are much less likely than younger adults (79% 18 to 34, 76% 35 to 54) to view immigrants as a benefit.

Half of Californians worry a lot (29%) or some (21%) that someone they know could be deported. Across regions, the level of concern is highest in the Inland Empire, with 41 percent saying they worry a lot (30% Los Angeles, 29% Central Valley, 26% Orange/San Diego, 26% San Francisco Bay Area).

Most Californians Oppose Restricting Abortion Rights and Access

Abortion rights as established by *Roe v. Wade* in 1973 could be considered in the US Supreme Court's new term, which starts on October 7. Strong majorities of Californians (66% adults, 73% likely voters) do not want to see the Supreme Court overturn *Roe v. Wade*. According to a Gallup poll conducted in June, 60 percent of adults nationwide do not want *Roe v. Wade* overturned.

In California, strong majorities of Democrats (85%) and independents (69%) and a slim majority of Republicans (51%) do not want the ruling overturned. There is notable variation across racial/ethnic groups, with whites (76%) and African Americans (72%) most likely to oppose overturning *Roe v. Wade*, followed by Asian Americans (67%) and Latinos (55%).

Asked whether some states are going too far in either expanding or restricting abortion access, a majority of Californians (54% adults, 61% likely voters) say yes. Most Democrats (78%) and independents (58%), but only a quarter of Republicans (27%), hold this view. Majorities of African Americans (71%), Asian Americans (66%), and whites (57%) are concerned that some states are making it too difficult to get an abortion, while Latinos are divided: 45 percent are concerned that some states are making it too difficult, but 46 percent are concerned that some states are making it too easy.

"Strong majorities of Californians continue to support a woman's constitutional right to an abortion, and many express concerns about some states making it too difficult to have an abortion," Baldassare said.

Disaster Threats, Gun Violence, Health Care Costs Raise Concerns

Californians face the threat of natural disasters such as wildfires, floods, and earthquakes. An overwhelming majority say they are either very (29%) or somewhat (54%) knowledgeable about preparing for a disaster. At the same time, a solid majority are either very (28%) or somewhat (32%)

worried about damage, injury, or major household disruption from a natural disaster. This concern is more prevalent among lower-income Californians (annual household income under \$40,000), with an overwhelming majority saying they are very (40%) or somewhat (30%) worried.

In the wake of several recent mass shootings, including one in Gilroy, California, 68 percent of Californians say laws covering the sale of guns should be more strict, while 10 percent say they should be less strict and 19 percent say they should be kept as they are now. Views were similar in October 2018 (64% more strict, 13% less strict, 21% kept as they are). About four in ten (38%) say they are very concerned about the threat of a mass shooting in their area, up from 28% in January 2016. Lower-income Californians are especially likely to be very concerned (48%) about this threat.

A strong majority of Californians say they are very (38%) or somewhat (32%) worried about being able to cover the cost of health care in the next few years, with at least two-thirds across regions expressing concern (66% Central Valley, 68% Orange/San Diego, 69% San Francisco Bay Area, 70% Inland Empire, 75% Los Angeles). The level of concern is particularly high among lower-income Californians: more than half (52%) say they are very worried about affording health care costs.

“Many lower-income Californians are worried about their ability to pay their health care costs and cope with disasters such as wildfires and earthquakes, as well as about mass shootings in their local areas,” Baldassare said.

School Bond Has Slim Margin of Support amid Economic Concern

A \$15 billion bond for school and college construction that has been approved by the legislature for the March 2020 ballot—and is awaiting the governor’s signature—is favored by 66 percent of adults but only 54 percent of likely voters.

This narrow margin coincides with concern about the state’s economic outlook. Fewer than half (41% adults, 37% likely voters) expect good times financially in California during the next 12 months, while slightly larger shares (50% adults, 54% likely voters) expect bad times.

As the first year of the 2019–20 legislative session concludes, approval of state officials is mixed. Governor Newsom’s approval rating (44% adults, 43% likely voters) is identical to when he took office in January 2019, but disapproval (32% adults, 44% likely voters) is up from January. Asked about how the state legislature is handling its job, fewer than half approve (43% adults, 38% likely voters), while 40 percent of adults and 51 percent of likely voters disapprove.

“A \$15 billion state bond measure for education funding on the March ballot starts with slim majority support as the state’s elected leaders and economic outlook are getting mixed reviews,” Baldassare said.

A potential November 2020 ballot measure that would amend Proposition 13 to tax commercial (but not residential) properties at their current market rate and direct some of the new revenue to K–12 public schools is supported by 57 percent of adults. However, fewer than half (47%) of likely voters favor the measure, and this share is down somewhat from April 2019 (54%). A potential state bond measure to fund water infrastructure is favored by 68 percent of adults and 57 percent of likely voters.

Confidence in Voting System Declines

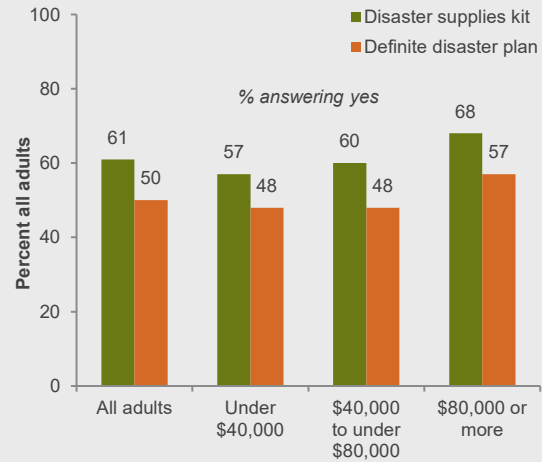
Amid concerns about America’s voting system, how confident are Californians about the system in their state? Just over one-third have a great deal (18%) or quite a lot (18%) of confidence, down from October 2004 (26% great deal, 25% quite a lot). There are partisan differences in concerns about the system: Democrats (50%) and independents (43%) are more likely than Republicans (34%) to believe it is too hard for eligible people to vote, while Republicans (79%) are more likely than independents (53%) and Democrats (43%) to believe it is too easy for ineligible people to vote.

State and National Issues

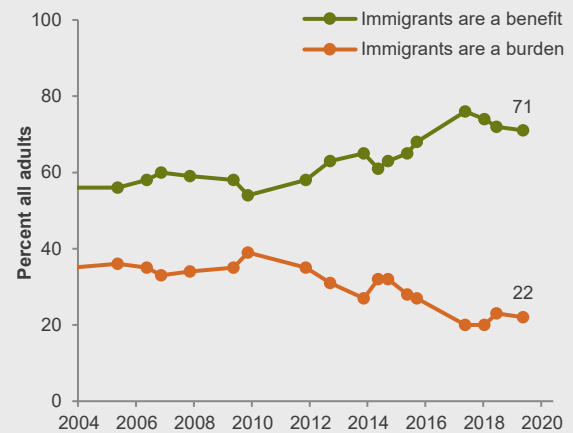
Key Findings

- Californians name homelessness (15%) and jobs and the economy (15%) as the most important issues facing the state today, followed by housing costs, immigration, and environmental issues. Californians provide mixed reviews about the state’s direction and economic outlook. *(page 7)*
- Most Californians (83%) say they are at least somewhat knowledgeable about disaster preparedness; half say they have a definite disaster plan and six in ten have a disaster supplies kit. Six in ten adults are very (28%) or somewhat (32%) worried about personal injury, property damage, or a major disruption of their routine as the result of a disaster. *(page 8)*
- Seventy-one percent of adults say immigrants are a benefit to California. Half worry either a lot (29%) or somewhat (21%) about someone they know being deported as a result of increased federal immigration enforcement. *(page 9)*
- Today, more than half of Californians (55%) have a favorable opinion of the Affordable Care Act, while seven in ten say they are very (38%) or somewhat (32%) worried about being able to afford the cost of their health care over the next few years. *(page 10)*
- Two-thirds of Californians think laws covering the sale of guns should be stricter and a similar proportion are very (38%) or somewhat (28%) concerned about the threat of a mass shooting in the area where they live. *(page 11)*
- Sixty-six percent of California adults think the Supreme Court should not overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Fifty-four percent say that some states are making it too difficult for people to get an abortion. *(page 12)*

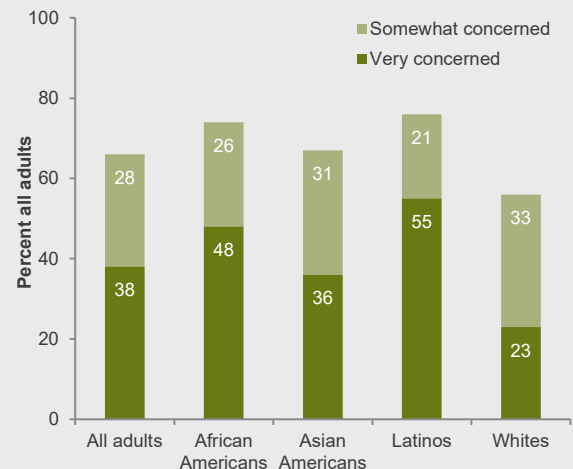
Households that have a disaster supplies kit or a definite disaster plan



Perception of immigrants in California



Concern about the threat of a mass shooting



Top Issues and the State of the State

Californians are most likely to name homelessness (15% adults, 16% likely voters) and jobs and the economy (15% adults, 13% likely voters) as the most important issues facing California today. Other top issues include housing costs and availability (11% adults, 11% likely voters), immigration and illegal immigration (9% adults, 11% likely voters), and the environment (8% adults, 10% likely voters). One in five Los Angeles residents (21%) name homelessness as the most important issue, while one in five in the San Francisco Bay Area (22%) name housing; pluralities in the Central Valley (19%), Inland Empire (14%), and Orange/San Diego (14%) name jobs and the economy.

Today, 46 percent of adults and 41 percent of likely voters say that California is generally headed in the right direction. Optimism was somewhat higher in January (55% adults, 51% likely voters) and last September (51% adults, 50% likely voters). Indeed, the share of adults saying California is headed in the right direction is the lowest it has been since May 2015. Today, Democrats (61%) are far more likely than independents (39%) and Republicans (13%) to hold this view. A slim majority of residents in Los Angeles (51%) think things are going in the right direction, compared to fewer elsewhere. Majorities of Latinos (56%) and Asian Americans (54%) think things are going in the right direction, while fewer African Americans (44%) and whites (38%) say the same.

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

		Right direction	Wrong direction	Don't know
All adults		46%	48%	6%
Likely voters		41	54	5
Party	Democrats	61	34	5
	Republicans	13	85	2
	Independents	39	54	6
Region	Central Valley	39	54	7
	Inland Empire	44	55	1
	Los Angeles	51	46	4
	Orange/San Diego	45	48	8
	San Francisco Bay Area	47	46	7

Californians’ views on the economy are mixed, with 41 percent of adults saying we will have good times financially in California in the next 12 months and 50 percent saying we will have bad times. Likely voters are similarly divided. Expectations of good times were similar in May (44% adults, 42% likely voters). Today, 38 percent of Democrats and Republicans expect good times, as do 36 percent of independents. Regionally, about four in ten expect good times. Latinos (46%) are the most likely to expect good times, followed by African Americans (42%), whites (39%), and Asian Americans (34%). Men (48%) are much more likely than women (33%) to expect good times.

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

		Good times	Bad times	Don't know
All adults		41%	50%	10%
Likely voters		37	54	10
Party	Democrats	38	53	9
	Republicans	38	49	13
	Independents	36	52	12
Region	Central Valley	37	54	9
	Inland Empire	42	47	11
	Los Angeles	39	52	10
	Orange/San Diego	44	45	11
	San Francisco Bay Area	39	51	10

Disaster Preparedness

This summer, California experienced a 7.1 magnitude earthquake, the state’s strongest quake in more than 20 years. Given the threat of earthquakes and other natural disasters like wildfires and floods, how knowledgeable are Californians about disaster preparedness? Most Californians say they are very (29%) or somewhat (54%) knowledgeable about steps they can take to prepare for a disaster. Findings were similar when we last asked this question in 2014 (33% very, 54% somewhat, 8% not too, 4% not at all).

“First, how knowledgeable would you say you are about steps you can take to prepare for a disaster, such as a major earthquake, wildfire, or flood? Would you say you are very knowledgeable, somewhat knowledgeable, not too knowledgeable, or not at all knowledgeable?”

	All adults	Household income			Home ownership	
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	Own	Rent
Very knowledgeable	29%	25%	24%	37%	36%	24%
Somewhat knowledgeable	54	54	61	54	53	56
Not too knowledgeable	9	11	9	7	6	11
Not at all knowledgeable	7	9	7	2	5	8

Sixty-one percent of Californians say their household has a disaster supplies kit equipped with food, water, and other essential supplies, while 38 percent say they do not. Californians today are somewhat more likely to report having a disaster kit than they were in 2014 (52% yes, 47% no). At least half across regions and demographic groups report having a kit. The shares of adults who have a kit increase as income rises. Homeowners (67%) are more likely than renters (58%) to have a disaster kit. Asian Americans (65%) are the most likely to have a kit, followed by whites (61%), Latinos (59%), and African Americans (50%). Regionally, residents in Los Angeles (65%) are the most likely to report having a disaster kit.

Half of Californians (50%) have a definite disaster plan in case of an earthquake, wildfire, flood, or other disaster; 44 percent do not have a plan. Californians today are slightly more likely than those in 2014 to have a plan (44% yes, 51% no). More than four in ten across regions and demographic groups have a plan. Homeowners (58%) are more likely than renters (46%), and older adults (52% 35 to 54, 56% 55 and older) are more likely than younger adults (42% 18 to 34), to have a definite plan. Majorities of African Americans (64%) and whites (54%) have a plan, compared to fewer Asian Americans (48%) and Latinos (41%). Regionally, Los Angeles residents (53%) are the most likely to have a plan. Forty-one percent of adults report having a disaster supplies kit and disaster plan, while 28 percent do not have either.

Six in ten adults are very (28%) or somewhat (32%) worried that their household will experience personal injury, property damage, or a major disruption of their routine if there is a disaster. Findings were similar in 2014 (28% very, 36% somewhat, 24% not too, 11% not at all). Majorities across demographic groups—with the exception of those with incomes more than \$80,000—are at least somewhat worried. Across regions, Los Angeles residents (67%) are the most likely to be at least somewhat worried.

“How worried are you that you and the members of your household will experience personal injury, property damage, or a major disruption of your routine if there is a disaster, such as a major earthquake, wildfire, or flood? Would you say very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried?”

	All adults	Household income			Home ownership	
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	Own	Rent
Very worried	28%	40%	26%	13%	23%	31%
Somewhat worried	32	30	33	34	34	31
Not too worried	28	22	26	39	29	27
Not at all worried	11	7	13	14	13	9
Don't know	1	1	2	–	1	1

Immigration Policy

An overwhelming majority of Californians (71%) continue to see immigrants as a benefit because of their hard work and job skills, while one in five (22%) say immigrants are a burden. The share of likely voters holding each view is similar (66% benefit, 28% burden). In surveys since January 2013, at least six in ten Californians have said immigrants are a benefit. Today, most Democrats (88%) and independents (65%) view immigrants positively, while a majority of Republicans (58%) think immigrants are a burden because they use public services. Majorities across regions and demographic groups view immigrants as a benefit, but there are notable differences. Regionally, residents in Los Angeles (76%) are the most likely to view immigrants as a benefit (73% San Francisco Bay Area, 72% Orange/San Diego, 67% Central Valley, 67% Inland Empire). Latinos (86%), Asian Americans (81%), and African Americans (72%) are much more likely than whites (56%) to view immigrants as a benefit. Older adults (59% 55 and older) are much less likely than younger adults (79% 18 to 34, 76% 35 to 54) to view immigrants as a benefit.

“Please indicate which statement comes closest to your own view—even if neither is exactly right. Immigrants today are a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills or Immigrants today are a burden to California because they use public services.”

	All adults	Party			Race/Ethnicity			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites
Immigrants are a benefit	71%	88%	31%	65%	72%	81%	86%	56%
Immigrants are a burden	22	11	58	25	23	16	9	36
Don't know	6	1	11	9	5	3	5	8

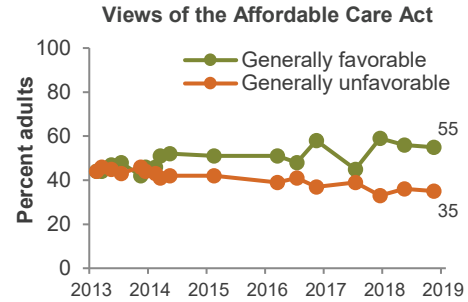
Half of Californians say they worry a lot (29%) or some (21%) that someone they know could be deported; among likely voters, 19 percent worry a lot and 21 percent worry some. Findings were similar among adults last September, when 29 percent said they worried a lot and 20 percent worried some. Today, Democrats (33% a lot, 25% some) are far more likely than independents (20% a lot, 18% some) and Republicans (4% a lot, 12% some) to worry that someone they know will be deported. Notably, 52 percent of Latinos and 47 percent of residents not born in the United States say they worry a lot. Californians under age 55 are more likely than older adults to say they worry a lot (34% to 18%). Across regions, residents of the Inland Empire (41%) are the most likely to say they worry a lot (30% Los Angeles, 29% Central Valley, 26% Orange/San Diego, 26% San Francisco Bay Area). Californians with no college education (43%) are much more likely than those with some college (22%) and college graduates (17%) to say they worry a lot. Similarly, those with annual household incomes under \$40,000 (41%) are much more likely than those with higher incomes (25% \$40,000 to \$80,000, 15% \$80,000 or more) to say they worry a lot that someone they know could be deported.

“When it comes to increased federal immigration enforcement, how much do you worry that someone that you know could be deported? Would you say that you worry a lot, some, not much, or not at all?”

	All adults	Party			Race/Ethnicity			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites
A lot	29%	33%	4%	20%	26%	20%	52%	14%
Some	21	25	12	18	18	25	19	21
Not much	15	16	16	16	7	25	12	15
Not at all	35	24	68	44	48	30	16	49
Don't know	1	1	–	1	–	–	1	1

Health Care Policy

A majority of Californians (55%) and likely voters (54%) have a favorable view of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Findings were similar last March (56% adults, 55% likely voters) and in October 2018 (59% adults, 53% likely voters). Democrats and Republicans offer opposing views, while independents are divided. Half or more across regions view the law favorably (50% Orange/San Diego, 51% Central Valley, 58% Inland Empire, 59% Los Angeles, 59% San Francisco Bay Area). While whites are divided, majorities across other demographic groups hold positive views. Renters (59%) are somewhat more likely than homeowners (51%) to view the ACA favorably. In a recent Kaiser Family Foundation survey, a similar share of adults nationwide held each view (53% favorable, 41% unfavorable).



“As you may know, a health reform bill was signed into law in 2010, known commonly as the Affordable Care Act or Obamacare. Given what you know about the health reform law, do you have a generally favorable or generally unfavorable opinion of it?”

	All adults	Party			Race/Ethnicity			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites
Favorable	55%	77%	22%	46%	79%	63%	59%	47%
Unfavorable	35	17	73	45	16	25	28	47
Don't know	10	5	4	9	5	12	14	7

While a majority of adults view the ACA favorably, seven in ten say they are very (38%) or somewhat (32%) worried about being able to afford the cost of their health care over the next few years. Democrats (74%) are more likely than Republicans (52%) and independents (65%) to say they are at least somewhat worried. Regionally, at least two in three across regions are somewhat or very worried (66% Central Valley, 68% Orange/San Diego, 69% San Francisco Bay Area, 70% Inland Empire, 75% Los Angeles). At least six in ten across racial/ethnic groups are worried, with Latinos the most likely to be very worried. The share saying they are at least somewhat worried declines with increasing age (74% ages 18 to 34, 70% ages 35 to 54, 67% age 55 and older), education (77% high school only, 70% some college, 61% college graduate), and income. Women (74%) are somewhat more likely than men (65%) to be very or somewhat worried, and renters (76%) are much more likely than homeowners (63%) to say this. In a recent ABC News/Washington Post poll, adults nationwide expressed slightly higher levels of concern, with 72 percent saying they were very (45%) or somewhat (27%) worried about being able to afford the cost of their health care.

“What do you think about being able to afford the cost of your health care, including the cost of insurance and your out-of-pocket expenses, over the next few years? Is this something that you are very worried about, somewhat worried, not so worried, or not worried at all?”

	All adults	Household income			Race/Ethnicity			
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites
Very worried	38%	52%	33%	24%	37%	27%	53%	30%
Somewhat worried	32	28	40	32	34	42	30	30
Not so worried	12	9	12	17	8	17	7	15
Not worried at all	18	11	14	27	20	14	10	24
Don't know	1	–	2	–	–	–	–	1

Gun Policy

In the wake of a summer of mass shootings, including one in Gilroy, California, do Californians think that laws covering the sale of guns should be made more strict, less strict, or kept as they are? Two-thirds of adults (68%) think these laws should be stricter, while 19 percent think they should be kept as they are now and 10 percent say they should be less strict. Findings were similar in October 2018 (64% more strict, 13% less strict, 21% kept as they are now). The vast majority of Democrats (87%) favor stricter laws, while a plurality of Republicans (44%) want them kept as they are now; more than half of independents (58%) favor stricter laws. Regionally, three in four adults in the San Francisco Bay Area (74%) and Los Angeles (73%) favor stricter laws, compared to fewer elsewhere (59% Central Valley, 65% Inland Empire, 68% Orange/San Diego). Among racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (80%) and Asian Americans (79%) are the most likely to favor stricter laws, followed by African Americans (73%) and whites (56%). Women (77%) are much more likely than men (59%) to hold this view. Younger adults (68% 18 to 34) are as likely as older adults (70% 35 to 54, 66% 55 and older) to support stricter laws. The shares holding this view decline as income rises (74% under \$40,000; 64% \$40,000 to \$80,000; 61% \$80,000 or more). Renters (72%) are slightly more likely than homeowners (65%) to favor stricter laws.

“In general, do you think laws covering the sale of guns should be more strict, less strict, or kept as they are now?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
More strict	68%	87%	32%	58%	65%
Less strict	10	4	22	13	12
Kept as they are now	19	7	44	27	22
Don't know	3	2	3	2	2

Two-thirds (66%) of adults say they are very (38%) or somewhat (28%) concerned about the threat of a mass shooting in the area where they live. Similar shares of likely voters are concerned (29% very, 32% somewhat). The share of Californians who are very concerned has risen since January 2016 (28%). Today, Democrats (78%) are twice as likely as Republicans (38%) and far more likely than independents (58%) to be at least somewhat concerned. Majorities across regions are at least somewhat concerned (58% Orange/San Diego, 60% Central Valley, 67% San Francisco Bay Area, 69% Inland Empire, 71% Los Angeles). Latinos (76%) and African Americans (74%) are more likely than Asian Americans (67%) and whites (56%) to be at least somewhat concerned. Women (74%) are much more likely than men (56%) to be somewhat or very concerned. About two in three across age groups are somewhat or very concerned (67% 18 to 34, 66% 35 to 54, 63% 55 and older). Those with only a high school diploma (71%) are slightly more likely than those with some college (60%) and college graduates (64%) to be somewhat or very concerned; those with incomes under \$40,000 are slightly more likely than those with higher incomes to hold this view. Renters (69%) are more likely than homeowners (60%) to be at least somewhat concerned.

“How concerned are you about the threat of a mass shooting in the area where you live? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not concerned at all?”

	All adults	Party			Household income			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	
Very concerned	38%	44%	15%	29%	48%	32%	29%	29%
Somewhat concerned	28	34	23	29	24	31	32	32
Not very concerned	19	13	31	20	16	18	21	21
Not at all concerned	16	9	30	22	11	19	19	17

Abortion Policy

Once the new Supreme Court term begins on October 7, 2019, the justices may hear one or more cases with the potential to significantly affect abortion rights established by the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision. Today, 66 percent of adults and 73 percent of likely voters do not want to see the Supreme Court overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Findings were similar in September 2018 (66% adults, 76% likely voters). A strong majority of Democrats (85%) and independents (69%), and a slim majority of Republicans (51%), do not want the ruling overturned. Regionally, at least six in ten do not want it overturned (60% Central Valley, 63% Los Angeles, 64% Inland Empire, 72% Orange/San Diego, 73% San Francisco Bay Area). Across racial/ethnic groups, whites (76%) and African Americans (72%) are the most likely to not want the decision overturned, followed by Asian Americans (67%) and Latinos (55%). Similar shares of women (69%) and men (63%)—and about two in three across age groups (68% 18 to 34, 66% 35 to 54, 66% 55 and older)—hold this view. Shares holding this view increase along with levels of education (56% high school only, 71% some college, 77% college graduate) and income (58% under \$40,000, 68% \$40,000 to under \$80,000, 79% over \$80,000). In a June Gallup poll, 33 percent of adults nationwide wanted the Supreme Court case to be overturned, while 60 percent did not.

“As you may know, the 1973 Supreme Court case *Roe v. Wade* established a woman’s constitutional right to have an abortion. Would you like to see the Supreme Court overturn the *Roe v. Wade* decision, or not?”

	All adults	Gender		Household income		
		Men	Women	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	\$80,000 or more
Yes, overturn	27%	30%	24%	33%	25%	17%
No, not overturn	66	63	69	58	68	79
Don't know	7	7	6	9	6	4

A majority of adults (54%) and likely voters (61%) think some states are making it too difficult to have access to an abortion, while 38 percent of adults and 33 percent of likely voters say some states are making it too easy. An overwhelming majority of Democrats (78%) say some states are making it too difficult, compared to 58 percent of independents and 27 percent of Republicans. At least half in the Inland Empire (50%), Los Angeles (52%), Orange/San Diego (57%), and the San Francisco Bay Area (67%) say some states are making it too difficult, while Central Valley residents are divided (43% too difficult, 49% too easy). Majorities across racial/ethnic groups say some states are making it too difficult—with the exception of Latinos, who are divided (45% too difficult, 46% too easy). Similar shares of women (57%) and men (51%) think some states are making it too difficult. Younger adults (61% 18 to 34) are more likely to hold this view (50% 35 to 54, 52% 55 and older), as are those with more education (42% high school only, 57% some college, 68% college graduate) and higher incomes (49% under \$40,000, 56% \$40,000 to \$80,000, 65% over \$80,000). Those with no children in their household (58%) are more likely than those with children (47%) to say some states are making it too difficult. In an August Pew Research Center survey, 59 percent of adults nationwide said that some states are making it too difficult, while 39 percent felt some states were making it too easy to get an abortion.

“Thinking about abortion policies around the country, which is your greater concern: that some states are making it too difficult for people to be able to get an abortion; or that some states are making it too easy for people to get an abortion?”

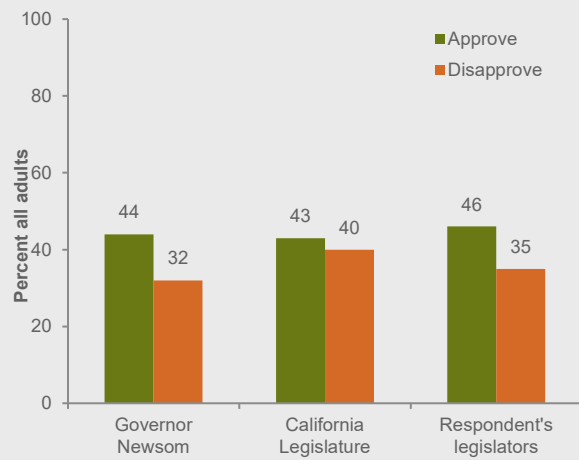
	All adults	Party			Race/Ethnicity			
		Dem	Rep	Ind	African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites
Too difficult	54%	78%	27%	58%	71%	66%	45%	57%
Too easy	38	19	65	33	26	26	46	35
Don't know	8	4	8	9	3	7	9	8

Approval Ratings and the 2020 Election

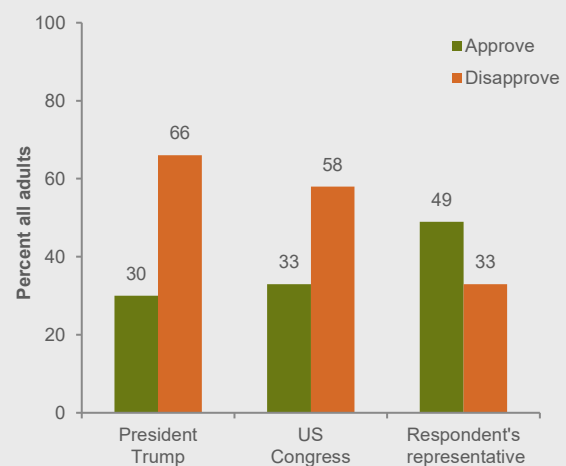
Key Findings

- Forty-four percent of Californians approve of Governor Newsom’s job performance. Similarly, 43 percent approve of the state legislature overall and 46 approve of their own state legislators. *(page 14)*
- Thirty percent of adults approve of President Trump. A third (33%) approve of the US Congress, while 49 percent approve of their own representative in the US House. *(page 15)*
- Forty percent of Californians approve of Senator Dianne Feinstein and 40 percent approve of Senator Kamala Harris; approval levels are similar among likely voters (44% Feinstein, 43% Harris). *(page 16)*
- About one in three adults have quite a lot or a great deal of confidence in the system in which votes are cast and counted in California elections. Forty-five percent are concerned that it is too hard for eligible people to vote, while 54 percent are concerned that it is too easy for ineligible people to vote. *(page 17)*
- Fifty-four percent of likely voters say they would vote yes on a \$15 billion bond measure for school construction and modernization. A ballot measure to tax commercial properties according to their current market value falls slightly short of majority support among likely voters (47%). *(page 18)*
- Among likely voters who are either registered Democrats or independents who lean Democratic, Elizabeth Warren, Joe Biden, and Bernie Sanders garner the most support in the Democratic presidential primary. More than eight in ten say a candidate’s debate performance is very (41%) or somewhat (43%) important when deciding how to vote in the primary. *(page 19)*

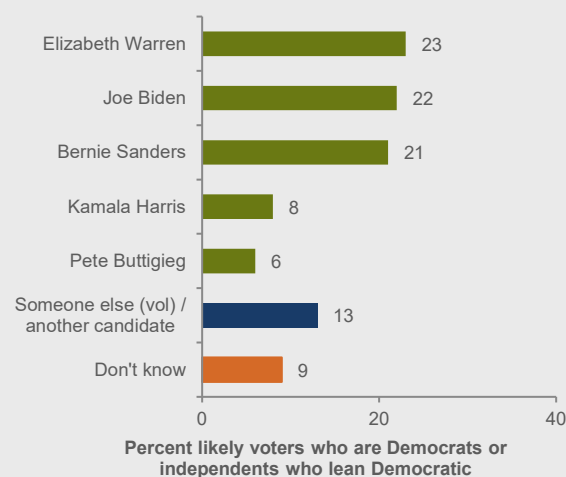
Approval of state elected officials



Approval of federal elected officials



Choice for president in March 2020 Democratic primary



Approval Ratings of State Elected Officials

Governor Newsom has an approval rating of 44 percent among adults and 43 percent among likely voters. The governor’s first approval rating in January was identical (44% adults, 43% likely voters). Since January, fewer adults now say they have not heard enough or don’t have an opinion (33% January, 24% today), while more express disapproval. Today, approval is at 64 percent among Democrats, 37 percent among independents, and 14 percent among Republicans. At least four in ten adults across the state’s major regions approve of Governor Newsom. About half or more of African Americans (57%), Latinos (51%), and Asian Americans (48%)—and fewer whites (38%)—approve of the governor.

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

		Approve	Disapprove	Don't know
All adults		44%	32%	24%
Likely voters		43	44	13
Party	Democrats	64	15	22
	Republicans	14	78	8
	Independents	37	39	24
Region	Central Valley	44	37	19
	Inland Empire	41	36	23
	Los Angeles	46	29	26
	Orange/San Diego	42	36	22
	San Francisco Bay Area	46	26	28

At the end of the first year of the 2019–20 session, 43 percent of adults and 38 percent of likely voters approve of the way that the state legislature is handling its job. Approval ratings were similar among both groups in January (49% adults, 46% likely voters) and last September (46% adults, 44% likely voters). Today, 57 percent of Democrats, 34 percent of independents, and 12 percent of Republicans approve. At least four in ten adults across the state’s major regions approve of the legislature.

Forty-six percent of adults and 41 percent of likely voters approve of the way that the state legislators representing their state assembly and senate districts are doing their jobs. Approval of their own state legislators was slightly higher for likely voters in March (51% adults, 48% likely voters). Today, 58 percent of Democrats, 36 percent of independents, and 23 percent of Republicans approve of their own legislators. Across the state’s major regions, half in Los Angeles and fewer elsewhere (47% San Francisco Bay Area, 45% Central Valley, 42% Orange/San Diego, 41% Inland Empire) approve of their own legislators.

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

		All adults	Party			Likely voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
the way that the California Legislature is handling its job	Approve	43%	57%	12%	34%	38%
	Disapprove	40	27	80	49	51
	Don't know	17	15	8	18	11
the job that the state legislators representing your assembly and senate districts are doing at this time	Approve	46	58	23	36	41
	Disapprove	35	27	63	45	45
	Don't know	19	16	14	18	14

Approval Ratings of Federal Elected Officials

President Trump has an approval rating of 30 percent among adults and 35 percent among likely voters. The president’s approval rating was similar in January (30% adults, 36% likely voters) and last September (30% adults, 37% likely voters). Today, 82 percent of Republicans approve of President Trump, compared to 34 percent of independents and 8 percent of Democrats. Regionally, about one in three adults approve in the Central Valley, Orange/San Diego, and Inland Empire, while about one in four adults approve in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles. Whites (43%) are much more likely to approve than Asian Americans (26%), Latinos (18%), and African Americans (8%). In a recent Gallup poll, 43 percent of adults nationwide approved of President Trump’s job performance and 54 percent disapproved.

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

		Approve	Disapprove	Don't know
All adults		30%	66%	4%
Likely voters		35	62	2
Party	Democrats	8	90	1
	Republicans	82	17	1
	Independents	34	63	3
Region	Central Valley	36	64	–
	Inland Empire	32	63	5
	Los Angeles	23	72	5
	Orange/San Diego	34	58	8
	San Francisco Bay Area	26	71	3

Thirty-three percent of adults and 24 percent of likely voters approve of the way the US Congress is handling its job. When the Democrats took control of the US House in January, a similar 34 percent of adults and 23 percent of likely voters approved of Congress. Today, Democrats (33%) are more likely to approve than independents (22%) and Republicans (21%). Latinos (45%) are more likely than Asian Americans (37%), African Americans (28%), and whites (22%) to approve. In a recent Gallup poll, 18 percent of adults nationwide approved of Congress, while 78 percent disapproved.

About half of adults (49%) and likely voters (51%) approve of their own representative in the US House. Approval was similar in March (52% adults, 51% likely voters). Today, two in three Democrats (66%) approve of their own representative, compared to about one in three independents (37%) and Republicans (33%). Half in the Inland Empire (52%), Los Angeles (52%), and the San Francisco Bay Area (52%)—and fewer in the Central Valley (46%) and Orange/San Diego (41%)—approve. About half or more across racial/ethnic groups (56% African Americans, 56% Asian Americans, 50% whites, 48% Latinos) approve of their representative.

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

		All adults	Party			Likely voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
the way the US Congress is handling its job	Approve	33%	33%	21%	22%	24%
	Disapprove	58	62	72	70	71
	Don't know	9	6	7	8	5
the way your own representative to the US House of Representatives in Congress is handling his or her job	Approve	49	66	33	37	51
	Disapprove	33	21	54	46	38
	Don't know	18	13	13	18	11

Approval Ratings of California’s US Senators

US Senator Dianne Feinstein has an approval rating of 40 percent among all adults and 44 percent among likely voters. Approval among all adults was slightly higher in March (47% adults, 48% likely voters). Today, 64 percent of Democrats approve, compared to 32 percent of independents and 19 percent of Republicans. About half of adults in the San Francisco Bay Area (48%) approve, compared to fewer in other regions (43% Los Angeles, 40% Orange/San Diego, 36% Inland Empire, 32% Central Valley). Majorities of African Americans (57%) and fewer in other racial/ethnic groups (41% Latinos, 41% whites, 38% Asian Americans) approve. Women (46%) are more likely than men (35%) to approve of Senator Feinstein. However, approval ratings do not vary much by education or homeownership.

“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Dianne Feinstein is handling her job as US senator?”

		Approve	Disapprove	Don't know
All adults		40%	37%	22%
Likely voters		44	47	9
Party	Democrats	64	23	12
	Republicans	19	73	8
	Independents	32	50	18
Region	Central Valley	32	47	21
	Inland Empire	36	43	22
	Los Angeles	43	34	22
	Orange/San Diego	40	36	25
	San Francisco Bay Area	48	30	22

Forty percent of adults and 43 percent of likely voters approve of Kamala Harris’s job performance as US senator. Approval was similar in March (45% adults, 48% likely voters). Today, 64 percent of Democrats approve, compared to 32 percent of independents and 13 percent of Republicans. About half of adults in the San Francisco Bay Area (49%) approve, compared to fewer in other regions (40% Los Angeles, 37% Orange/San Diego, 35% Central Valley, 34% Inland Empire). A majority of African Americans (57%) approve, compared to fewer in other racial/ethnic groups (41% whites, 40% Asian Americans, 38% Latinos). Women (43%) are slightly more likely than men (36%) to approve of Senator Harris. However, approval ratings do not vary much by age, education, income, or homeownership.

“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Kamala Harris is handling her job as US senator?”

		Approve	Disapprove	Don't know
All adults		40%	37%	24%
Likely voters		43	46	11
Party	Democrats	64	20	16
	Republicans	13	73	14
	Independents	32	47	21
Region	Central Valley	35	41	24
	Inland Empire	34	42	24
	Los Angeles	40	35	25
	Orange/San Diego	37	39	24
	San Francisco Bay Area	49	28	23

California Elections and Voting

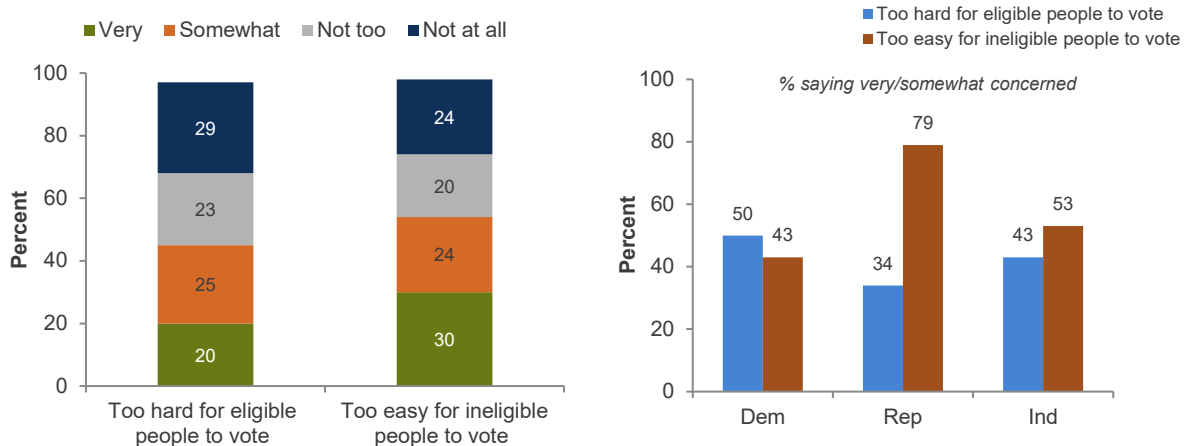
Amid ongoing concerns about the electoral process in the US, how much confidence do Californians have in the system in which votes are cast and counted in their state? Fewer than four in ten have a great deal (18%) or quite a lot (18%) of confidence, while six in ten have some (29%) or very little (30%). Likely voters hold similar opinions. Findings among all adults were similar in September 2017 (21% great deal, 19% quite a lot, 29% some, 28% very little). But the shares expressing a great deal or quite a lot of confidence have decreased since October 2008 (24% great deal, 23% quite a lot) and October 2004 (26% great deal, 25% quite a lot). Today, the share saying they have a great deal or quite a lot of confidence is higher among Democrats (52%) than among independents (35%) or Republicans (27%).

“How much confidence do you have in the system in which votes are cast and counted in California elections—a great deal, quite a lot, some, or very little?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Great deal	18%	27%	11%	18%	22%
Quite a lot	18	25	16	17	20
Some	29	29	25	31	28
Very little	30	17	41	31	27
None (<i>volunteered</i>)	3	1	5	2	3
Don't know	3	1	2	1	2

Critics of the electoral process fall into two main camps: those who point to voter suppression as being a major threat to the democratic process and those who say voter fraud is the bigger problem. A slight majority of Californians (54%) are very or somewhat concerned that it is too easy for ineligible people to vote in California elections, while 45 percent are very or somewhat concerned that it is too hard for eligible people to vote. Responses were similar on both questions in 2017. Today, Democrats (50%) are much more likely than Republicans (34%) to be concerned that it is too hard for eligible people to vote; 43 percent of independents hold this view. Conversely, Republicans (79%) are far more likely than Democrats (43%) and independents (53%) to be concerned that it is too easy for ineligible people to vote. Concern that it is too hard for eligible people to vote is higher among African Americans (66%) and Latinos (56%) than among Asian Americans (40%) and whites (36%). Concern that it is too easy for ineligible people to vote is slightly lower among African Americans (46%) than among whites (53%), Asian Americans (54%), and Latinos (55%).

Concern about voting in California elections



2020 State Ballot Measures

The legislature and governor will likely place a \$15 billion school construction bond—called the Public Preschool, K–12, and College Health and Safety Bond Act of 2020—on the March 2020 ballot. Sixty-six percent of adults and 54 percent of likely voters say they would vote yes on this state bond measure. Democrats (78%) and independents (58%) are far more likely than Republicans (34%) to support this bond. More than two in three across regions support the bond, except in Orange/San Diego (59%). Latinos (83%), African Americans (77%), and Asian Americans (67%) are much more likely than whites (52%) to support this measure. Support declines as age, education levels, and income increase.

“If the state ballot had a \$15 billion bond measure to pay for construction and modernization of public schools, community colleges, and California’s four-year college systems, would you vote yes or no?”

		Yes	No	Don't know
All adults		66%	28%	6%
Likely voters		54	40	6
Party	Democrats	78	16	6
	Republicans	34	59	7
	Independents	58	34	8
Region	Central Valley	68	27	5
	Inland Empire	70	29	1
	Los Angeles	69	26	5
	Orange/San Diego	59	33	8
San Francisco Bay Area		67	26	7

A citizens’ initiative that will likely appear on the November 2020 ballot would change Proposition 13 by taxing commercial properties according to their current market value and directing some of the revenue to K–12 public schools. Fifty-seven percent of adults and 47 percent of likely voters would vote yes on this measure, with partisans sharply divided. Orange/San Diego residents are the least likely to support the measure across regions. Support is higher among Latinos (70%) and African Americans (67%) than among Asian Americans (53%) and whites (47%), and it declines as age, education levels, and income increase.

“What if there was a state ballot measure to have commercial properties taxed according to their current market value and direct some of this new tax revenue to state funding for K–12 public schools? Would you vote yes or no?”

		Yes	No	Don't know
All adults		57%	34%	9%
Likely voters		47	45	8
Party	Democrats	69	23	8
	Republicans	28	65	7
	Independents	48	41	10
Region	Central Valley	56	36	8
	Inland Empire	60	31	9
	Los Angeles	59	31	10
	Orange/San Diego	48	39	13
San Francisco Bay Area		62	30	8

Another possible state ballot measure in November 2020 includes funding for water infrastructure projects. When asked about such a state bond measure, 68 percent of adults and 57 percent of likely voters say they are in favor. Majorities across regions and demographic groups would vote yes.

2020 Presidential Primary

The Democratic primary in California has been moved from June to March—and likely voters who are Democrats or Democratic-leaning independents are paying attention. Nearly eight in ten are following news about candidates for the 2020 presidential election very (37%) or fairly (41%) closely. With five debates having already taken place, most Democratic primary likely voters view the candidates’ performances in public debates as very (41%) or somewhat (43%) important. Latinos (61%) are much more likely than whites (37%) or members of other racial/ethnic groups (30%) to say debates are very important. (Sample sizes for Asian American and African American likely voters in the Democratic primary are too small for separate analysis.)

“In deciding who to vote for in the presidential primary, how important to you are the candidates’ performances in public debates—very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?”

Likely voters who are Democrats or independents who lean Democratic only	All likely voters	Gender		Age	
		Men	Women	18 to 44	45 and older
Very important	41%	38%	43%	46%	37%
Somewhat important	43	42	43	39	46
Not too important	12	15	9	10	12
Not at all important	4	4	4	5	4
Don't know	1	1	–	–	1

If the 2020 Democratic primary for president were being held today, two in three likely voters would choose either Elizabeth Warren (23%), Joe Biden (22%), or Bernie Sanders (21%); one in ten are unsure. (The 11 candidates who qualified for an upcoming Democratic National Committee debate before the beginning of our fielding the survey were listed in this question.) In response to an open-ended question in July, likely voters named Kamala Harris (19%), Warren (15%), Sanders (12%), and Biden (11%). Today, Biden is preferred by three in ten older voters, while nearly four in ten voters under 45 prefer Sanders. Sanders has the support of 39 percent of Latinos, while Warren has the support of 34 percent of whites.

“If the March 3, 2020, Democratic primary for president were being held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for...or someone else?*”**

Likely voters who are Democrats or independents who lean Democratic only	All likely voters	Gender		Age	
		Men	Women	18 to 44	45 and older
Elizabeth Warren	23%	22%	23%	19%	25%
Joe Biden	22	24	20	12	29
Bernie Sanders	21	22	20	38	10
Kamala Harris	8	10	7	7	8
Pete Buttigieg	6	5	6	6	6
Someone else (specify)/ another candidate	13	9	13	12	12
Don't know	9	8	9	6	10

*For the full list of candidates included in this question, see page 24.

Among Democratic primary likely voters who have a candidate preference, 53 percent say they would consider supporting someone else, while 44 percent say they would definitely support their current candidate as long as he or she is in the race. Results were similar in a national September ABC News/Washington Post poll (55% would consider another candidate, 43% would definitely support named candidate).

Regional Map



Methodology

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

Findings in this report are based on a survey of 1,705 California adult residents, including 1,194 interviewed on cell phones and 511 interviewed on landline telephones. Interviews took an average of 18 minutes to complete. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights from September 16–25, 2019.

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

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

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

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

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

The sampling error, taking design effects from weighting into consideration, is ± 3.2 percent at the 95 percent confidence level for the total unweighted sample of 1,705 adults. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 3.2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for unweighted subgroups is larger: for the 1,344 registered voters, the sampling error is ± 3.7 percent; for the 1,031 likely voters, it is ± 4.2 percent; for the 692 respondents who answered question 9 (preference for Democratic nominee), it is ± 4.9 percent. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

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

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

The 11 candidates who had qualified for an upcoming Democratic National Committee debate prior to the beginning of our fielding the survey were included as rotated choices for question 9—preference for Democratic nominee—followed by the option “or someone else,” allowing for respondents to name other candidates.

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

We compare current PPIC Statewide Survey results to those in our earlier surveys and to those in national surveys by ABC News/Washington Post, Gallup, Kaiser Family Foundation, and the Pew Research Center. Additional details about our methodology can be found at www.ppic.org/wp-content/uploads/SurveyMethodology.pdf and are available upon request through surveys@ppic.org.

Questionnaire and Results

CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

September 16– 25, 2019

1,705 California Adult Residents:

English, Spanish

MARGIN OF ERROR $\pm 3.2\%$ AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE
PERCENTAGES MAY NOT ADD TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING

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]

- 15% homelessness
- 15 jobs, economy
- 11 housing costs, availability
- 9 immigration, illegal immigration
- 8 environment, pollution, global warming
- 6 government in general, problems with elected officials, parties
- 6 state budget, deficit, taxes
- 3 crime, gangs, drugs
- 3 education, schools, teachers
- 3 infrastructure
- 2 guns, gun control
- 2 health care, health insurance
- 2 water, drought
- 12 other *(specify)*
- 3 don't know

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

- 44% approve
- 32 disapprove
- 24 don't know

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

- 43% approve
- 40 disapprove
- 17 don't know

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

- 46% approve
- 35 disapprove
- 19 don't know

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

- 46% right direction
- 48 wrong direction
- 6 don't know

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

- 41% good times
- 50 bad times
- 10 don't know

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

- 70% yes *[ask q7a]*
- 30 no *[skip to q8b]*

7a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or are you registered as a decline-to-state or independent voter?

- 43% Democrat *[ask q8]*
- 24 Republican *[skip to q8a]*
- 5 another party *(specify) [skip to q11]*
- 28 independent *[skip to q8b]*

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

- 61% strong
- 37 not very strong
- 2 don't know

[skip to q9]

8a. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

- 67% strong
- 31 not very strong
- 2 don't know

[skip to q11]

8b. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?

- 21% Republican Party
- 46 Democratic Party
- 25 neither (volunteered)
- 8 don't know

9. *[Democratic likely voters and independents who lean Democratic only]* If the March 3, 2020, Democratic primary for president were being held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for? *[rotate names and then ask "or someone else?"]*

- 23% Elizabeth Warren
- 22 Joe Biden
- 21 Bernie Sanders
- 8 Kamala Harris
- 6 Pete Buttigieg
- 3 Andrew Yang
- 2 Cory Booker
- 2 Julian Castro
- 1 Amy Klobuchar
- 1 Beto O'Rourke
- 1 Tom Steyer
- 3 someone else *(specify)*
- 9 don't know

9a. *[Democratic likely voters and independents who lean Democratic only who named a candidate at Q9] [rotate] [1]* Would you consider supporting another candidate to be the Democratic Party's nominee, *[or] [2]* are you definitely supporting *[named candidate]* as long as s/he is in the race)?

- 53% would consider another candidate
- 44 definitely supporting named candidate
- 2 don't know

10. *[Democratic likely voters and independents who lean Democratic only]* In deciding who to vote for in the presidential primary, how important to you are the candidates' performances in public debates—very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 41% very important
- 43 somewhat important
- 12 not too important
- 4 not at all important
- 1 don't know

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

- 38% very closely
- 39 fairly closely
- 15 not too closely
- 8 not at all closely
- don't know

[rotate questions 12, 13, and 13a]

12. If the state ballot had a \$15 billion bond measure to pay for construction and modernization of public schools, community colleges, and California's four-year college systems, would you vote yes or no?

- 66% yes
- 28 no
- 6 don't know

13. If the state ballot had a bond measure to pay for water infrastructure projects, would you vote yes or no?

- 68% yes
- 22 no
- 11 don't know

13a. As you may know, under Proposition 13, residential and commercial property taxes are both strictly limited. What if there was a state ballot measure to have commercial properties taxed according to their current market value and direct some of this new tax revenue to state funding for K-12 public schools? Would you vote yes or no?

- 57% yes
- 34 no
- 9 don't know

On another topic,

14. How much confidence do you have in the system in which votes are cast and counted in California elections—a great deal, quite a lot, some, or very little?

- 18% great deal
- 18 quite a lot
- 29 some
- 30 very little
- 3 none (*volunteered*)
- 3 don't know

[rotate questions 15 and 16]

15. How concerned are you that it is too hard for eligible people to vote in California elections? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not concerned at all?

- 20% very concerned
- 25 somewhat concerned
- 23 not too concerned
- 29 not at all concerned
- 3 don't know

16. How concerned are you that it is too easy for people who are not eligible to vote in California elections? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not concerned at all?

- 30% very concerned
- 24 somewhat concerned
- 20 not too concerned
- 24 not at all concerned
- 2 don't know

We have a few questions to ask you about how prepared you are personally for earthquakes, wildfires, floods, or other disasters.

17. First, how knowledgeable would you say you are about steps you can take to prepare for a disaster, such as a major earthquake, wildfire, or flood? Would you say you are very knowledgeable, somewhat knowledgeable, not too knowledgeable or not at all knowledgeable?

- 29% very knowledgeable
- 54 somewhat knowledgeable
- 9 not too knowledgeable
- 7 not at all knowledgeable
- don't know

[rotate questions 18 and 19]

18. Does your household have a disaster supplies kit equipped with food, water, and other essential supplies?

- 61% yes
- 38 no
- 1 don't know

19. Does your household have a definite disaster plan in case of an earthquake, wildfire, flood, or other disaster?

- 50% yes
- 44 no
- 5 not very definite; kind of have a plan (*volunteered*)
- 1 don't know

20. How worried are you that you and the members of your household will experience personal injury, property damage, or a major disruption of your routine if there is a disaster, such as a major earthquake, wildfire, or flood? Would you say very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried?

- 28% very worried
- 32 somewhat worried
- 28 not too worried
- 11 not at all worried
- 1 don't know

Changing topics,

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

- 30% approve
- 66 disapprove
- 4 don't know

[rotate questions 22 and 23]

22. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Dianne Feinstein is handling her job as US senator?

- 40% approve
- 37 disapprove
- 22 don't know

23. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Kamala Harris is handling her job as US senator?

- 40% approve
- 37 disapprove
- 24 don't know

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

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

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

- 49% approve
- 33 disapprove
- 18 don't know

On another topic,

26. Please indicate which statement comes closest to your own view—even if neither is exactly right. [rotate] [1] Immigrants today are a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills [or] [2] Immigrants today are a burden to California because they use public services?

- 71% immigrants are a benefit to California
- 22 immigrants are a burden to California
- 6 don't know

27. When it comes to increased federal immigration enforcement, how much do you worry that someone that you know could be deported? Would you say that you worry a lot, some, not much, or not at all?

- 29% a lot
- 21 some
- 15 not much
- 35 not at all
- 1 don't know

Next,

28. As you may know, a health reform bill was signed into law in 2010, known commonly as the Affordable Care Act or Obamacare. Given what you know about the health reform law, do you have a [rotate] [1] generally favorable [or] [2] generally unfavorable opinion of it?

- 55% generally favorable
- 35 generally unfavorable
- 10 don't know

29. What do you think about being able to afford the cost of your health care, including the cost of insurance and your out-of-pocket expenses, over the next few years? Is this something that you are very worried about, somewhat worried, not so worried, or not worried at all?

- 38% very worried
- 32 somewhat worried
- 12 not so worried
- 18 not worried at all
- 1 don't know

On another topic,

30. In general, do you think laws covering the sale of guns should be more strict, less strict, or kept as they are now?

- 68% more strict
- 10 less strict
- 19 kept as they are now
- 3 don't know

31. How concerned are you about the threat of a mass shooting in the area where you live? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not concerned at all?

- 38% very concerned
- 28 somewhat concerned
- 19 not very concerned
- 16 not concerned at all
- don't know

Changing topics,

32. As you may know, the 1973 Supreme Court case *Roe v. Wade* established a woman's constitutional right to have an abortion. Would you like to see the Supreme Court overturn the *Roe v. Wade* decision, or not?

- 27% yes, overturn Roe versus Wade
- 66 no, not overturn Roe versus Wade
- 7 don't know

32a. Thinking about abortion policies around the country, which is your greater concern [rotate] [1] that some states are making it too difficult for people to be able to get an abortion; [or] [2] that some states are making it too easy for people to get an abortion?

- 54% some states are making it too difficult to get an abortion
- 38 some states are making it too easy to get an abortion
- 8 don't know

33. Next, would you consider yourself to be politically:

[read list, rotate order top to bottom]

- 15% very liberal
- 18 somewhat liberal
- 31 middle-of-the-road
- 20 somewhat conservative
- 13 very conservative
- 4 don't know

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

- 26% great deal
- 38 fair amount
- 29 only a little
- 7 none
- 1 don't know

[d1–d15 demographic questions]

PPIC STATEWIDE
SURVEY ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

Ruben Barrales
Senior Vice President, External Relations
Wells Fargo

Angela Glover Blackwell
Founder in Residence
PolicyLink

Mollyann Brodie
Senior Vice President
Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation

Bruce E. Cain
Director
Bill Lane Center for the American West
Stanford University

Caroline Choi
Senior Vice President, Corporate Affairs
Edison International and Southern
California Edison

Jon Cohen
Chief Research Officer
SurveyMonkey

Joshua J. Dyck
Co-Director
Center for Public Opinion
University of Massachusetts, Lowell

Lisa García Bedolla
*Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and
Dean of the Graduate Division*
University of California, Berkeley

Russell Hancock
President and CEO
Joint Venture Silicon Valley

Sherry Bebitch Jeffe
Professor
Sol Price School of Public Policy
University of Southern California

Robert Lapsley
President
California Business Roundtable

Carol S. Larson
President and CEO
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

Donna Lucas
Chief Executive Officer
Lucas Public Affairs

Sonja Petek
Fiscal and Policy Analyst
California Legislative Analyst's Office

Lisa Pitney
Vice President of Government Relations
The Walt Disney Company

Robert K. Ross, MD
President and CEO
The California Endowment

Most Reverend Jaime Soto
Bishop of Sacramento
Roman Catholic Diocese of Sacramento

Carol Whiteside
Principal
California Strategies

PPIC BOARD OF
DIRECTORS

Steven A. Merksamer, Chair

Senior Partner
Nielsen Merksamer Parrinello
Gross & Leoni LLP

Mark Baldassare

President and CEO
Public Policy Institute of California

María Blanco

Executive Director
University of California
Immigrant Legal Services Center

Louise Henry Bryson

Chair Emerita, Board of Trustees
J. Paul Getty Trust

A. Marisa Chun

Partner
Crowell & Moring LLP

Chet Hewitt

President and CEO
Sierra Health Foundation

Phil Isenberg

Former Chair
Delta Stewardship Council

Mas Masumoto

Author and Farmer

Leon E. Panetta

Chairman
The Panetta Institute for Public Policy

Gerald L. Parsky

Chairman
Aurora Capital Group

Kim Polese

Chairman
ClearStreet, Inc.

Karen Skelton

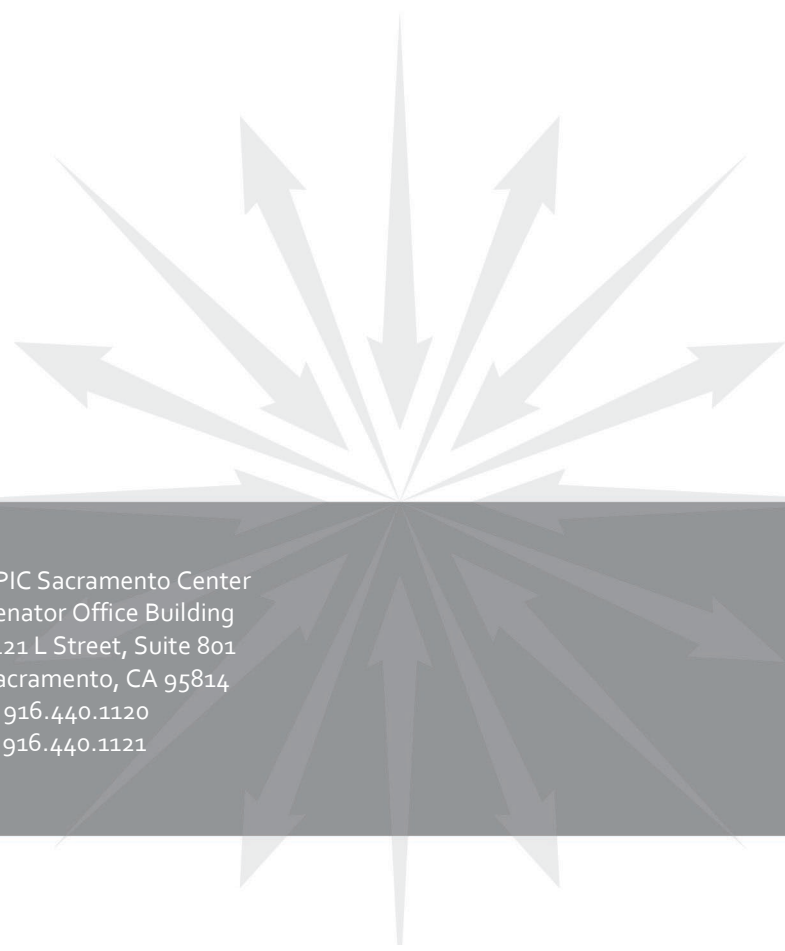
Founder and President
Skelton Strategies

Helen Iris Torres

CEO
Hispanas Organized for Political Equality

Gaddi H. Vasquez

*Retired Senior Vice President,
Government Affairs*
Edison International
Southern California Edison



Public Policy Institute of California
500 Washington Street, Suite 600
San Francisco, CA 94111
T: 415.291.4400
F: 415.291.4401
PPIC.ORG

PPIC Sacramento Center
Senator Office Building
1121 L Street, Suite 801
Sacramento, CA 95814
T: 916.440.1120
F: 916.440.1121



PPIC

**PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA**

25 YEARS