



Californians & Their Government

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CONTENTS

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Press Release | 3 |
| State Post-Election Landscape | 6 |
| Federal Post-Election Landscape | 14 |
| Regional Map | 20 |
| Methodology | 21 |
| Questionnaire and Results | 23 |

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PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

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.

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News Release

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www.ppic.org/press-release/

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

Majorities Put High Priority on Universal Health Coverage, Free Community College

YET IMPROVING JOBS, ECONOMY SEEN AS MOST IMPORTANT IN PLANNING FOR FUTURE

SAN FRANCISCO, December 12, 2018—As Governor-Elect Gavin Newsom prepares to begin his first term, most Californians say universal health coverage and tuition-free community college should be high priorities for new state funding. This is among the key findings of a new statewide survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC).

In his campaign, Newsom highlighted a number of policy priorities, including universal preschool and tuition-free community college. He also indicated support for statewide universal health coverage. The PPIC survey asks about these policies and one more—building a high-speed rail system—that would require a significant amount of new state funding. The results:

- Majorities of adults (60%) and likely voters (57%) say universal health coverage should be a very high or high priority.
- A slight majority of adults (53%) and nearly half of likely voters (47%) say tuition-free community college should be a very high or high priority.
- Fewer than half of Californians (48% adults, 41% likely voters) say the same about universal preschool.
- Far fewer (25% adults, 19% likely voters) say the same about high-speed rail. Californians voted to allocate money to begin building the rail project in 2008.

Summing up, PPIC president and CEO Mark Baldassare said: “Majorities of Californians place a high priority for new state spending on universal health coverage and tuition-free community college, rather than high-speed rail.”

The survey asks Californians to make fiscal choices for the next budget year, when the state is projected to have a surplus of several billion dollars. A majority of adults (57%) say they would prefer to spend the surplus to increase state funding for education and health and human services. Far fewer would prefer to use the surplus to pay down debt and build up a reserve (21%) or for one-time spending for transportation, water, and infrastructure (16%).

Signs of Concern about the Economy

In the wake of the November election, a majority of California adults (54%) say that things in the state are generally going in the right direction. Their responses were similar in September. But residents are more pessimistic today when asked if we will have good times financially in the state in the year ahead—fewer than half of adults (46%) believe this. Optimism was higher in September when a majority of residents (53%) predicted good financial times ahead.

In keeping with this note of caution about the economy, Californians are most likely to name jobs and the economy (17%) as the most important issue facing people in the state today. The next most frequently named issues are the environment (10%), housing affordability (9%), and immigration (9%). Notably—in the wake of the recent wildfires—9 percent say wildfires are the most important state issue. Across regions, San Francisco Bay Area residents are the most likely to name housing affordability as the top issue, and Central Valley residents are the most likely to say wildfires.

When asked what the state government's most important priority should be in planning for the future, 39 percent say improving jobs and the economy, 20 percent say protecting the environment, and 15 percent say updating water and transportation infrastructure. Across all parties and demographic groups, improving jobs and the economy is the highest priority.

"Californians say that improving jobs and the economy is the most important priority for the future," Baldassare said. "And many believe that children will be worse off than their parents."

Half of adults (50%) say that children growing up today will be worse off financially than their parents, while fewer (40%) say children will be better off. Slight majorities of Latinos (54%) and Asian Americans (51%) think children will be better off, while most African Americans and whites (62% each) say they will be worse off. US-born Californians (34%) are much less likely than immigrants (53%) to say children will be better off than their parents.

Asked if the state will be a better or worse place to live in 2025 than it is now, 40 percent say it will be better, 32 percent say worse, and 23 percent say it will be the same.

Two-thirds of Californians (67%) say the state is divided into two economic groups: the "haves" and the "have nots." Solid majorities across income groups express this view, as do majorities across parties (Democrats 73%, independents 69%, Republicans 60%). Across racial/ethnic groups, African Americans (82%) are the most likely to say the state is divided into haves and have nots, followed by Latinos (68%), whites (67%), and Asian Americans (55%).

When asked to choose which of the two economic groups they are in, Californians are split: 40 percent say they are haves, and 45 percent say they are have nots. Two-thirds of residents (66%) with an annual household income of \$80,000 or more say they are in the haves group, while 62 percent of those with incomes under \$40,000 say they are have nots. Californians with annual household incomes of \$40,000 to \$80,000 are divided (42% haves, 44% have nots).

Should the government do more to make sure that all residents have an equal opportunity to get ahead? A majority (53%) say yes, while 41 percent say that all Californians have an equal opportunity now.

Less Than Half Approve of Newsom's Policies—A Third Don't Know Yet

After Newsom's landslide victory in November, 42 percent of adults and 41 percent of likely voters approve of his plans and policies based on what they know so far, while 25 percent of adults and 32 percent of likely voters disapprove. About a third say they don't know or haven't heard enough to have an opinion yet (34% adults, 27% likely voters). Asked if they want Newsom to generally continue outgoing governor Jerry Brown's policies, just 35 percent of adults and 39 percent of likely voters say yes. Half (48% adults, 50% likely voters) say they want Newsom to mostly change to different policies.

"As Gavin Newsom makes plans for his new administration, nearly half of Californians say they want him to take a different policy direction from Governor Brown," Baldassare said.

In the final survey before the end of his fourth term, Brown's approval rating stands at 51 percent among adults and 52 percent among likely voters. His rating after the November 2014 election was similar (54% adults, 57% likely voters). After the November 2010 election, it was lower (41% adults, 47% likely voters).

In the aftermath of an election that gave Democrats a majority in the California Legislature of more than two-thirds, the legislature's approval rating is 47 percent among adults and 43 percent among likely voters. Ratings were similar after the November 2014 election (41% adults, 39% likely voters) but lower after the November 2010 election (26% adults, 18% likely voters).

Half Have No Confidence that Trump Will Make the Right Decisions

In contrast with their views about the direction of the state, only about a third of Californians (32% adults, 27% likely voters) are satisfied with the way things are going in the nation. Partisan differences are stark: 51 percent of Republicans are satisfied, but just 18 percent of Democrats and 26 percent of independents are. Half of state residents (48% adults, 50% likely voters) have no confidence at all that President Trump will make the right decisions for the country's future.

The president's job approval rating is 32 percent among adults and 36 percent among likely voters, with partisans divided (76% Republicans, 28% independents, 12% Democrats approve). Approval of Congress is lower (29% adults, 20% likely voters). Republicans are more likely to disapprove (56%) than approve (34%), and strong majorities of Democrats (74%) and independents (73%) disapprove.

California played a prominent role in shifting control of the US House of Representatives from the Republicans to the Democrats. How do Californians feel about the switch? Majorities of adults (53%) and likely voters (55%) say it is a good thing. Far fewer say it is a bad thing (17% adults, 22% likely voters) or will make no difference (27% adults, 21% likely voters). Majorities of Latinos (66%) and African Americans (59%) say the switch is a good thing, while fewer Asian Americans (47%) and whites (44%) agree. Notably, women (59%) are much more likely than men (46%) to say this is a good thing.

With congressional Democrats now in the majority, California adults are split over whether their representative should work with the Trump administration (49%) or push back (44%). A small majority of likely voters (53%) prefer working with the administration (41% push back).

"Most Californians say the election outcome of Democratic control of the House is a good thing," Baldassare said. "About half say they have no confidence at all in President Trump."

Bipartisan Support for a Way to Let Undocumented Residents Stay

The survey asks about two issues of national debate: immigration and government regulation.

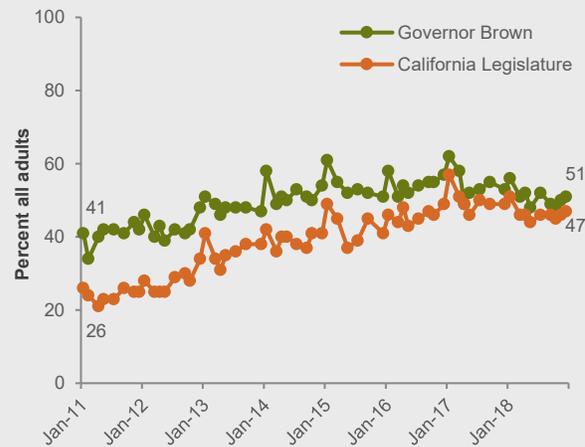
- **Immigration:** Since January 2013, at least two-thirds of Californians have said that immigrants are a benefit to the state because of their hard work and job skills. Today, a large majority of Californians (72%) express this view, while 23 percent say immigrants are a burden to the state because they use public services. Majorities across regions agree that immigrants are a benefit to the state. Across parties, 83 percent of Democrats and 73 percent of independents say immigrants are a benefit, while 55 percent of Republicans say they are a burden. There is bipartisan agreement on one aspect of immigration: 84 percent of adults say there should be a way for undocumented immigrants living in the US to stay here legally if certain requirements are met, with 94 percent of Democrats, 85 percent of independents, and 60 percent of Republicans in agreement.
- **Regulation:** Majorities (58% adults, 58% likely voters) say government regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest, while far fewer (35% adults, 39% likely voters) say regulation does more harm than good. Asked about environmental regulation, most (59% adults, 61% likely voters) say stricter environmental laws and regulation are worth the cost, while just a third (33% adults, 33% likely voters) say they cost too many jobs and hurt the economy. While most Democrats and independents view regulation of business and the environment positively, two-thirds of Republicans say that business regulation does more harm than good (66%) and environmental laws and regulation hurt the economy (67%).

State Post-Election Landscape

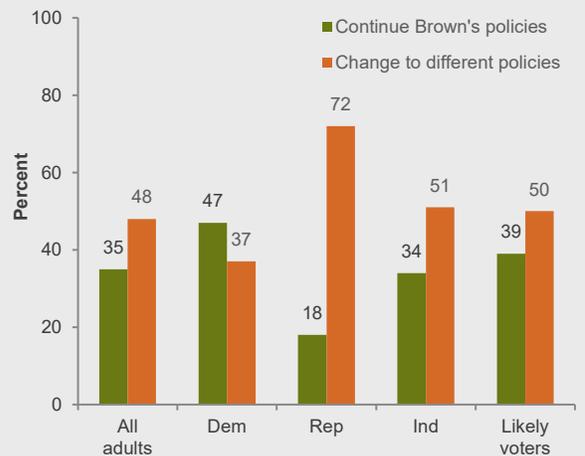
Key Findings

- Californians mention jobs and the economy (17%) most often when asked what is the most important issue facing California. About one in ten mention the environment, immigration, wildfires, or housing. *(page 7)*
- About half of Californians approve of the job performance of Governor Brown and the state legislature. *(page 8)*
- Asked what they think of Governor-Elect Gavin Newsom, four in ten say they approve of his plans and policies for California. Fewer than four in ten say that he should continue Governor Brown’s policies. *(page 9)*
- Two in three Californians think the state is divided into economic groups—the “haves” and the “have nots”—and 45 percent say they are part of the have nots. Half of Californians say the government should do more to ensure all Californians have an equal opportunity to get ahead. *(page 10)*
- Californians are divided about whether the state will be a better place (40%) or a worse place (32%) in 2025 than it is now. Half say that children who grow up in California today will be worse off financially than their parents. *(page 11)*
- With a state budget surplus of several billion dollars, six in ten Californians want to see an increase in state funding for education and health and human services, one in five prefer paying down debt and building up the reserve, and one in six prefer one-time infrastructure spending. *(page 11)*
- Majorities of Californians say universal health coverage (60%) and tuition-free community college (53%) should be a very high or high priority for new state funding, while just under half say this about universal preschool (48%) and even fewer say this about a high-speed rail system (25%). *(page 12)*

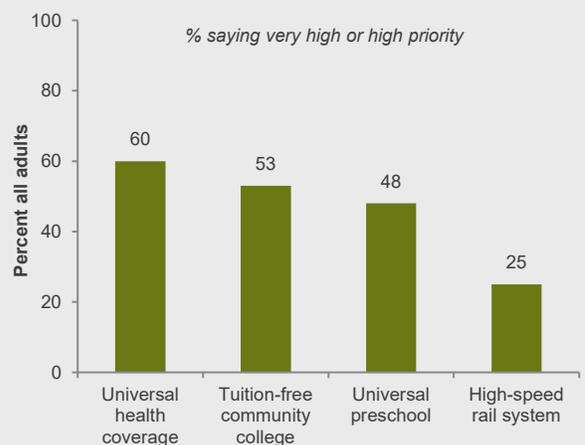
Approval ratings of state elected officials



Should Governor-Elect Newsom continue Governor Brown’s policies or change to different policies?



Priority of potential policy choices



Overall Mood

Californians are most likely to name jobs and the economy (17% adults, 14% likely voters) as the most important issue facing Californians today, while about one in ten mention the environment, housing affordability, and immigration. Notably, in the wake of recent wildfires, one in ten Californians today say that wildfires are the most important state issue. Across regions, Inland Empire residents are the most likely to mention jobs and the economy, San Francisco Bay Area residents are the most likely to name housing affordability, and Central Valley residents are the most likely to say that wildfires are the top issue.

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

| Top 5 issues | All adults | Region | | | | | Likely voters |
|--|------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| | | Central Valley | Inland Empire | Los Angeles | Orange/San Diego | San Francisco Bay Area | |
| Jobs, economy | 17% | 12% | 26% | 19% | 19% | 12% | 14% |
| Environment, pollution, global warming | 10 | 7 | 5 | 13 | 4 | 16 | 11 |
| Housing costs, availability | 9 | 5 | 3 | 11 | 8 | 16 | 11 |
| Immigration, illegal immigration | 9 | 9 | 13 | 8 | 15 | 5 | 11 |
| Wildfires, fires | 9 | 16 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 12 | 6 |

In the wake of the November 6 election, about half of Californians (54% adults, 50% likely voters) say that things in California are generally going in the right direction. The proportion saying that things are going in the right direction was similar in the September PPIC survey (51% adults, 50% likely voters). Today, Democrats (72%) are more likely than independents (53%) and Republicans (16%) to say things are going in the right direction. Majorities in the San Francisco Bay Area (71%), Los Angeles (54%), and Orange/San Diego (51%)—and fewer elsewhere—hold this view. Asian Americans (71%), Latinos (60%), and African Americans (57%) are more likely than whites (43%) to hold this positive view.

“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 | | 54% | 41% | 5% |
| Likely voters | | 50 | 46 | 4 |
| Party | Democrats | 72 | 22 | 6 |
| | Republicans | 16 | 81 | 3 |
| | Independents | 53 | 43 | 5 |
| Region | Central Valley | 46 | 48 | 5 |
| | Inland Empire | 36 | 59 | 5 |
| | Los Angeles | 54 | 41 | 5 |
| | Orange/San Diego | 51 | 45 | 3 |
| | San Francisco Bay Area | 71 | 25 | 4 |

However, fewer than half of Californians (46% adults, 46% likely voters) believe that we will have good times financially in California during the next 12 months. In our September survey, majorities of Californians (53% adults, 55% likely voters) held this optimistic view of the state’s economy.

Approval of State Elected Officials

In the final survey before the end of his record-setting fourth term, Governor Jerry Brown’s approval rating stands at 51 percent among California adults and 52 percent among likely voters. Brown’s approval ratings were similar after the November 2014 election (54% adults, 57% likely voters in December 2014) and lower among adults after the November 2010 election (41% adults, 47% likely voters in January 2011). Today, the governor’s approval rating stands at 68 percent among Democrats, 48 percent among independents, and 18 percent among Republicans. Majorities in the San Francisco Bay Area (61%) and Los Angeles (51%)—and fewer elsewhere—approve. Majorities of African Americans (60%), Latinos (58%), and Asian Americans (53%)—but fewer whites (43%)—approve.

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

| | | Approve | Disapprove | Don't know |
|---------------|------------------------|---------|------------|------------|
| All adults | | 51% | 31% | 18% |
| Likely voters | | 52 | 40 | 8 |
| Party | Democrats | 68 | 15 | 17 |
| | Republicans | 18 | 77 | 5 |
| | Independents | 48 | 37 | 15 |
| Region | Central Valley | 47 | 37 | 15 |
| | Inland Empire | 41 | 40 | 19 |
| | Los Angeles | 51 | 28 | 22 |
| | Orange/San Diego | 47 | 35 | 18 |
| | San Francisco Bay Area | 61 | 21 | 18 |

In the wake of election wins giving the Democrats a two-thirds majority, the California Legislature’s approval rating is at 47 percent among all adults and 43 percent among likely voters. Approval ratings were similar after the November 2014 election (41% adults, 39%, likely voters in December 2014) and lower after the November 2010 election (26% adults, 18% likely voters in January 2011). Today, a majority of Democrats (66%)—fewer independents (42%) and Republicans (13%)—approve. About half of adults in the San Francisco Bay Area (55%) and Los Angeles (50%)—and fewer elsewhere—approve. Majorities of Latinos (57%), African Americans (54%), and Asian Americans (52%)—and fewer whites (36%)—approve.

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

| | | Approve | Disapprove | Don't know |
|---------------|------------------------|---------|------------|------------|
| All adults | | 47% | 39% | 15% |
| Likely voters | | 43 | 47 | 10 |
| Party | Democrats | 66 | 20 | 13 |
| | Republicans | 13 | 81 | 5 |
| | Independents | 42 | 44 | 14 |
| Region | Central Valley | 41 | 45 | 14 |
| | Inland Empire | 40 | 49 | 11 |
| | Los Angeles | 50 | 35 | 15 |
| | Orange/San Diego | 39 | 44 | 17 |
| | San Francisco Bay Area | 55 | 31 | 15 |

Governor-Elect Gavin Newsom

After a landslide victory with 62 percent of the vote in the November election, about four in ten Californians (42% adults, 41% likely voters) say they approve of Governor-Elect Gavin Newsom’s plans and policies for California from what they know so far. Fewer than one in three disapprove, while about three in ten say they don’t know or haven’t heard enough to have an opinion yet. Across parties, Democrats (61%) are the most likely to approve, and residents in the San Francisco Bay Area (52%) and Los Angeles (47%) are the most likely to hold this view. African Americans (54%), Asian Americans (49%), and Latinos (49%) are more likely than whites (32%) to approve.

“From what you know so far, overall do you approve or disapprove of Governor-Elect Gavin Newsom’s plans and policies for California?”

| | | Approve | Disapprove | Have not heard enough (volunteered) | Don't know |
|---------------|------------------------|---------|------------|--|------------|
| All adults | | 42% | 25% | 22% | 12% |
| Likely voters | | 41 | 32 | 19 | 8 |
| Party | Democrats | 61 | 10 | 18 | 11 |
| | Republicans | 13 | 67 | 14 | 6 |
| | Independents | 41 | 28 | 21 | 10 |
| Region | Central Valley | 36 | 32 | 19 | 12 |
| | Inland Empire | 26 | 30 | 33 | 11 |
| | Los Angeles | 47 | 18 | 21 | 14 |
| | Orange/San Diego | 39 | 28 | 21 | 13 |
| | San Francisco Bay Area | 52 | 22 | 18 | 9 |

As Governor-Elect Newsom makes plans for his new administration, fewer than four in ten say they want him to continue Jerry Brown’s policies (35% adults, 39% likely voters), while about half say they prefer change (48% adults, 50% likely voters). Across parties, Democrats (47%) are the most likely to want a continuation of Brown’s policies; across regions, San Francisco Bay Area residents (46%) are the most likely to prefer continuity. No more than four in ten Asian Americans (40%), Latinos (36%), whites (33%), and African Americans (32%) say they want continuity.

“Would you rather see Gavin Newsom as the next California governor generally continue Jerry Brown’s policies or mostly change to different policies?”

| | | Continue Jerry Brown’s policies | Change to different policies | Don't know |
|---------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| All adults | | 35% | 48% | 17% |
| Likely voters | | 39 | 50 | 12 |
| Party | Democrats | 47 | 37 | 17 |
| | Republicans | 18 | 72 | 11 |
| | Independents | 34 | 51 | 15 |
| Region | Central Valley | 32 | 54 | 14 |
| | Inland Empire | 18 | 67 | 15 |
| | Los Angeles | 34 | 48 | 19 |
| | Orange/San Diego | 34 | 49 | 17 |
| | San Francisco Bay Area | 46 | 33 | 21 |

Economic Conditions

Sixty-seven percent of Californians say that the state is divided into two economic groups: the “haves” and the “have nots.” Similar shares of adults held this view when we last asked this question in December 2015 (67% divided, 29% not divided). Today, solid majorities across income groups say the state is divided in this way. African Americans (82%) are the most likely to hold this view, followed by Latinos (68%), whites (67%), and Asian Americans (55%). At least six in ten across regions and age and education groups say the state is divided into haves and have nots. Majorities of Democrats (73%), independents (69%), and Republicans (60%) hold this view.

“Some people think that California is divided into economic groups, the haves and have nots, while others think it is not divided that way. Do you think that California is divided into haves and have-nots, or do you think that California is not divided that way?”

| | 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 |
| Divided into haves and have nots | 67% | 66% | 63% | 73% | 82% | 55% | 68% | 67% |
| Not divided that way | 30 | 31 | 35 | 25 | 18 | 42 | 30 | 29 |
| Don't know | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | – | 3 | 3 | 4 |

When asked to choose which of the two economic groups they are in, Californians are split: 40 percent say haves, 45 percent say have nots. Findings were similar in December 2015 (40% haves, 44% have nots). Today, 66 percent of Californians with annual household incomes of \$80,000 or more say they are in the haves, while 62 percent of those with incomes under \$40,000 say they are in the have nots; Californians with annual household incomes of \$40,000 to under \$80,000 are divided (42% haves, 44% have nots). More than half of Latinos and African Americans say they are in the have nots, while a slight majority of whites say they are in the haves; a plurality of Asian Americans say they are in the haves. Adults in the San Francisco Bay Area (49%) are the most likely to say they are in the haves. Half of Republicans (52%) and Democrats (50%) hold this view, compared to fewer independents (39%).

“If you had to choose, which of these groups are you in— the haves or have nots?”

| | 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 |
| Haves | 40% | 26% | 42% | 66% | 35% | 43% | 27% | 52% |
| Have nots | 45 | 62 | 44 | 20 | 56 | 31 | 61 | 36 |
| Neither (<i>volunteered</i>) | 9 | 7 | 7 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 7 | 8 |
| Don't know | 6 | 4 | 7 | 3 | – | 16 | 5 | 4 |

Fifty-three percent of adults say the government should do more to make sure that all Californians have an equal opportunity to get ahead, while 41 percent say that all Californians have an equal opportunity to get ahead. In December 2015, a similar share (51%) said the government should do more. Today, a solid majority of Democrats (65%) say the government should do more, while seven in ten Republicans (69%) say that all Californians have an equal opportunity to get ahead; independents are divided (47% do more, 44% equal opportunity). African Americans (73%) are the most likely to say the government should do more, compared to fewer Latinos (61%), Asian Americans (52%), and whites (44%). Women (58%), renters (59%), and those with household incomes under \$40,000 (60%) are more likely than men (47%), homeowners (46%), and those with incomes of \$40,000 or more (50%) to say government should do more.

California’s Future

When asked what they think the state government’s most important priority should be in planning for California’s future, a plurality of residents (39%) say improving jobs and the economy should be the top priority. One in five adults (20%) say protecting the environment should be the most important priority, while 15 percent say updating water and transportation infrastructure is most important. Today, improving jobs and the economy is the highest priority across all parties and demographic groups.

Californians are somewhat divided on whether California will be a better place to live in 2025. Forty percent say it will be a better place than it is now, while 32 percent say it will be a worse place and 23 percent say it will be the same. Findings were similar when we last asked this question in December 2014 (37% better, 28% worse, 29% no change). However, Californians were far more pessimistic about the state’s future in 2006, when only 24 percent expected the state to be a better place to live in 2025 and 46 percent expected it to be a worse place. Today, pluralities of Democrats and independents expect the state to be a better place in 2025, while six in ten Republicans expect it to be a worse place. Regionally, pluralities in Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Area, and Orange/San Diego are optimistic about the state in 2025, while pluralities in the Inland Empire and the Central Valley are pessimistic.

“Overall, do you think that in 2025 California will be a better place to live than it is now or a worse place to live than it is now or will there be no change?”

| | | Better place | Worse place | No change | Don't know |
|---------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| All adults | | 40% | 32% | 23% | 5% |
| Likely voters | | 35 | 39 | 21 | 5 |
| Party | Democrats | 45 | 25 | 25 | 5 |
| | Republicans | 15 | 61 | 20 | 4 |
| | Independents | 43 | 30 | 21 | 6 |
| Region | Central Valley | 30 | 38 | 24 | 8 |
| | Inland Empire | 33 | 45 | 17 | 5 |
| | Los Angeles | 44 | 27 | 23 | 6 |
| | Orange/San Diego | 41 | 29 | 25 | 5 |
| | San Francisco Bay Area | 44 | 28 | 24 | 4 |

Still, half of adults (50%) think that when children in California today grow up they will be worse off financially than their parents; 40 percent think they will be better off. Slight majorities of Latinos (54%) and Asian Americans (51%) think children will be better off, while majorities of African Americans and whites (62% each) say they will be worse off. Californians age 55 and older (34%) are less likely than younger Californians (42% 18 to 34, 44% 35 to 54) to think children growing up in California will be better off financially than their parents. US-born Californians (34%) are much less likely than immigrants (53%) to say they will be better off.

“When children today in California grow up, do you think they will be better off or worse off financially than their parents?”

| | All adults | Age | | | Race/Ethnicity | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|----------|----------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------|--------|
| | | 18 to 34 | 35 to 54 | 55 and older | African Americans | Asian Americans | Latinos | Whites |
| Better off | 40% | 42% | 44% | 34% | 32% | 51% | 54% | 28% |
| Worse off | 50 | 49 | 47 | 53 | 62 | 39 | 38 | 62 |
| Same (<i>volunteered</i>) | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Don't know | 8 | 6 | 7 | 10 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 9 |

Fiscal Choices

The Legislative Analyst’s Office recently released a budget report that anticipates a state budget surplus of several billion dollars in the next fiscal year. When asked how they would prefer to use this extra money, a majority of Californians (57%) would prefer to increase state funding for education and health and human services. One in five adults (21%) would prefer to pay down debt and further build up the state’s reserves, while 16 percent would prefer to use the surplus for one-time spending on infrastructure. A strong majority of Democrats (67%) and a plurality of independents (49%) would prefer to spend the projected surplus on increasing funding for education and health and human services, while a plurality of Republicans would prefer to pay down debt and build up reserves. Across racial/ethnic groups, majorities of Latinos (75%), Asian Americans (61%), and African Americans (59%) would like to increase funding for education and health and human services; fewer whites (43%) have this preference. Californians age 18 to 54 (63%) are more likely than those age 55 and older (48%) to prefer spending the projected surplus on education and health and human services.

“The state is projected to have a budget surplus of several billion dollars. In general, how would you prefer to use this extra money?”

| | All adults | Party | | | Race/Ethnicity | | | |
|---|------------|-------|-----|-----|-------------------|-----------------|---------|--------|
| | | Dem | Rep | Ind | African Americans | Asian Americans | Latinos | Whites |
| Pay down debt and build up reserve | 21% | 14% | 44% | 28% | 25% | 16% | 9% | 31% |
| Increase state funding for education, health and human services | 57 | 67 | 22 | 49 | 59 | 61 | 75 | 43 |
| One-time spending for transportation, water, and infrastructure | 16 | 15 | 23 | 20 | 10 | 21 | 12 | 19 |
| Other (<i>volunteered</i>) | 4 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| Don't know | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | – | 2 | 2 |

As California workers prepare to receive their W-2 forms in the new year, about half of Californians (49%) say major changes are needed in the state and local tax system, compared to about 42 percent in March 2017. Today, Republicans are far more likely than independents and Democrats to say major changes are needed. Majorities of whites and African Americans, and nearly half of Latinos, say major changes are needed; fewer Asian Americans (32%) say the same. Notably, majorities across all regions except the San Francisco Bay Area (37%) say major changes are needed to the state and local tax system.

“Overall, do you think the state and local tax system is in need of major changes, minor changes, or do you think it is fine the way it is?”

| | All adults | Party | | | Race/Ethnicity | | | |
|--------------------|------------|-------|-----|-----|-------------------|-----------------|---------|--------|
| | | Dem | Rep | Ind | African Americans | Asian Americans | Latinos | Whites |
| Major changes | 49% | 41% | 73% | 52% | 52% | 32% | 48% | 55% |
| Minor changes | 27 | 36 | 16 | 32 | 31 | 41 | 21 | 26 |
| Fine the way it is | 19 | 19 | 8 | 14 | 13 | 23 | 24 | 14 |
| Don't know | 5 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 5 |

Half of Californians (51%) and likely voters (49%) say they would rather pay higher taxes and have a state government that provides more services than pay lower taxes and have fewer services (45% adults, 47% likely voters). Adults’ preferences for higher taxes and more services were similar this September (50%) and in December 2014 (50%). Today, Democrats (67%) are far more likely than independents (49%) and Republicans (15%) to prefer higher taxes and more services. African Americans (66%) and Latinos (59%) are more likely than Asian Americans (45%) and whites (43%) to say this.

Policy Priorities

Governor-Elect Newsom highlighted a number of policy priorities in his campaign for governor. Chief among them were universal preschool and tuition-free community colleges. He also indicated support for statewide universal health coverage. When asked about four policies that would require a significant amount of new state funding, a majority of adults (60%) and likely voters (57%) say universal health coverage is a very high or high priority. A slight majority of adults (53%) and nearly half of likely voters (47%) say tuition-free community college is a very high or high priority, while nearly half of adults (48%) and four in ten likely voters (41%) say the same of universal preschool. Notably, only a quarter of adults and one in five likely voters see building a high-speed rail system as a very high or high priority.

“Please tell me if each of the following should be a very high priority, a high priority, medium priority, low priority, or very low priority. How about...?”

| All adults | Universal health coverage | Tuition-free community college | Universal preschool | Building a high-speed rail system |
|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Very high priority | 22% | 17% | 14% | 8% |
| High priority | 38 | 36 | 34 | 17 |
| Medium priority | 20 | 24 | 27 | 28 |
| Low priority | 11 | 14 | 16 | 26 |
| Very low priority | 8 | 9 | 7 | 20 |
| Don't know | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |

Strong majorities of Democrats and independents see universal health coverage as a very high or high priority, while fewer than one in four Republicans say this. Majorities across regions and age, education, income, and racial/ethnic groups say universal coverage should be a very high or high priority.

Majorities of Democrats and independents say tuition-free community college should be a very high or high priority, while only one in five Republicans say the same. At least half across regions say tuition-free community college should be at least a high priority.

Majorities of Democrats (57%) and residents in Los Angeles (55%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (51%) say universal preschool is a very high or high priority. Across racial/ethnic groups, majorities of African Americans (68%) and Latinos (60%) say universal preschool is at least a high priority.

Notably, when asked about building a high-speed rail system, no more than a third of adults across parties, regions, age groups, and income groups say it should be a very high or high priority.

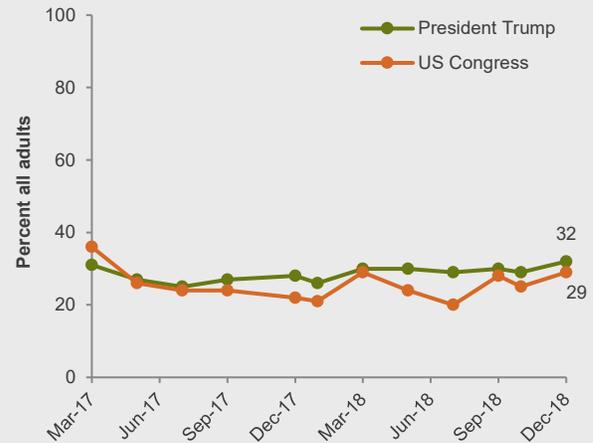
| Percent saying very high or high priority | | Universal health coverage | Tuition-free community college | Universal preschool | Building a high-speed rail system |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| All adults | | 60% | 53% | 48% | 25% |
| Likely voters | | 57 | 47 | 41 | 19 |
| Party | Democrats | 80 | 62 | 57 | 22 |
| | Republicans | 23 | 20 | 20 | 8 |
| | Independents | 61 | 53 | 48 | 23 |
| Region | Central Valley | 58 | 52 | 45 | 23 |
| | Inland Empire | 57 | 55 | 45 | 25 |
| | Los Angeles | 67 | 58 | 55 | 30 |
| | Orange/San Diego | 55 | 50 | 43 | 20 |
| | San Francisco Bay Area | 63 | 53 | 51 | 26 |

Federal Post-Election Landscape

Key Findings

- About two in three Californians are dissatisfied with the way things are going in the United States at this time. When asked how much confidence they have in President Trump to make the right decisions for the country's future, 48 percent say they have none at all. *(page 15)*
- One in three Californians approve of President Trump's job performance—with partisans deeply divided. Approval of Congress is at 29 percent. *(page 16)*
- Half of Californians (53%)—with partisans divided—say it is a good thing that control of the US House of Representatives will switch from the Republicans to the Democrats. Californians are divided when asked if it is more important for their own House representative to work with the Trump administration (49%) or to push back against it (44%). *(page 17)*
- Overwhelming majorities of Californians view immigrants as a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills (72%), and say there should be a way for undocumented immigrants to stay in the US legally (84%). Majorities across regions and racial/ethnic groups say that there should be a way for undocumented immigrants to stay legally. *(page 18)*
- When it comes to the role of government, majorities of Californians—with partisans divided—say that government regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest (58%) and that stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost (59%). Majorities across racial/ethnic groups and regions say that stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost. *(page 19)*

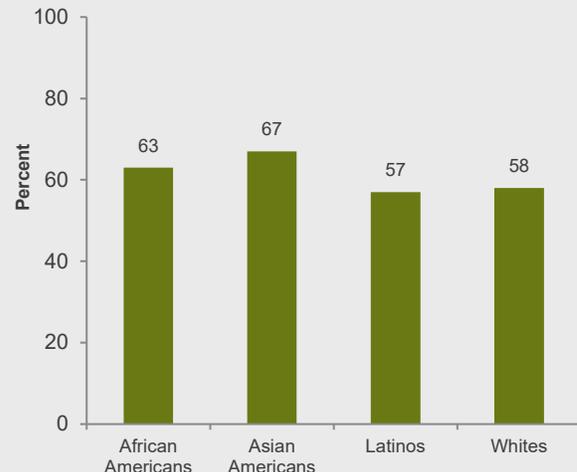
Approval ratings of federal elected officials



View that undocumented immigrants currently living in the United States should be allowed to stay legally



Belief that stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost



Direction of the Country

About three in ten Californians (32%) and likely voters (27%) are satisfied with the way things are going in the United States at this time, while more than six in ten are dissatisfied (64% adults, 71% likely voters). Similar shares of adults nationwide (35%) were satisfied with the way things are going in the country at this time according to a November Gallup poll. Today, Republicans (51%) are far more likely than independents (26%) and Democrats (18%) to be satisfied. Regionally, fewer than four in ten are satisfied. Across racial/ethnic groups, satisfaction is highest among Latinos (39%), followed by whites and Asian Americans (29% each), and African Americans (20%). Across demographic groups, no more than four in ten are satisfied.

“In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way that things are going in the United States at this time?”

| | | Satisfied | Dissatisfied | Don't know |
|---------------|------------------------|-----------|--------------|------------|
| All adults | | 32% | 64% | 4% |
| Likely voters | | 27 | 71 | 3 |
| Party | Democrats | 18 | 80 | 2 |
| | Republicans | 51 | 45 | 4 |
| | Independents | 26 | 71 | 3 |
| Region | Central Valley | 33 | 64 | 3 |
| | Inland Empire | 35 | 61 | 4 |
| | Los Angeles | 31 | 66 | 3 |
| | Orange/San Diego | 34 | 62 | 3 |
| | San Francisco Bay Area | 30 | 64 | 6 |

About three in ten Californians have a great deal (14%) or a good amount (13%) of confidence in President Trump to make the right decisions for the country’s future; seven in ten have only some confidence (24%) or none at all (48%). Similar shares of Californians held these views in January 2017. Today, Republicans (74%) are far more likely than independents (22%) and Democrats (10%) to be confident. Fewer than four in ten across regions and across age, education, income, and racial/ethnic groups are confident.

“How much confidence do you have in President Trump to make the right decisions for the country’s future—a great deal of confidence, a good amount, just some, or none at all?”

| | | A great deal | Good amount | Just some | None at all | Don't know |
|---------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| All adults | | 14% | 13% | 24% | 48% | 1% |
| Likely voters | | 19 | 14 | 17 | 50 | 1 |
| Party | Democrats | 3 | 7 | 17 | 72 | – |
| | Republicans | 47 | 27 | 12 | 14 | – |
| | Independents | 10 | 12 | 29 | 46 | 2 |
| Region | Central Valley | 18 | 14 | 29 | 39 | 1 |
| | Inland Empire | 20 | 15 | 25 | 40 | – |
| | Los Angeles | 10 | 17 | 26 | 46 | 1 |
| | Orange/San Diego | 19 | 11 | 17 | 50 | 3 |
| | San Francisco Bay Area | 11 | 10 | 21 | 56 | 2 |

Approval of Federal Elected Officials

Thirty-two percent of adults and 36 percent of likely voters approve of the way that Donald Trump is handling his job as president of the United States. The president’s approval rating was similar in October (29% adults, 39% likely voters) and last December (28% adults, 34% likely voters). Today, 76 percent of Republicans, 28 percent of independents, and 12 percent of Democrats approve of President Trump. Regionally, the president’s approval rating is lowest in the San Francisco Bay Area (26%) and highest in the Inland Empire (47%, 29% Los Angeles, 31% Orange/San Diego, 37% Central Valley). Across racial/ethnic groups, whites (43%) are more likely than Asian Americans (28%), African Americans (25%), and Latinos (19%) to approve. A recent Gallup weekly tracking poll had adults nationwide giving the president a somewhat similar approval rating (38% approve, 60% disapprove).

“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 | | 32% | 63% | 5% |
| Likely voters | | 36 | 61 | 3 |
| Party | Democrats | 12 | 83 | 5 |
| | Republicans | 76 | 20 | 3 |
| | Independents | 28 | 67 | 6 |
| Region | Central Valley | 37 | 58 | 4 |
| | Inland Empire | 47 | 50 | 3 |
| | Los Angeles | 29 | 66 | 5 |
| | Orange/San Diego | 31 | 61 | 8 |
| | San Francisco Bay Area | 26 | 68 | 6 |

Three in ten adults (29%) and 20 percent of likely voters approve of the US Congress. Approval was similar in October (25% adults, 20% likely voters) and last December (22% adults, 15% likely voters). Today, one in three Republicans (34%) approve, while one in five independents (21%) and Democrats (18%) approve. Across regions, no more than one in three Californians approve of the way that the US Congress is handling its job. Across racial/ethnic groups, approval is highest among Asian Americans (40%), compared to fewer Latinos (34%), whites (24%), and African Americans (13%). Approval of the US Congress among adults nationwide was at 21 percent in a November Gallup poll.

“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the US Congress is handling its job?”

| | | Approve | Disapprove | Don't know |
|---------------|------------------------|---------|------------|------------|
| All adults | | 29% | 62% | 9% |
| Likely voters | | 20 | 74 | 6 |
| Party | Democrats | 18 | 74 | 7 |
| | Republicans | 34 | 56 | 9 |
| | Independents | 21 | 73 | 7 |
| Region | Central Valley | 27 | 66 | 6 |
| | Inland Empire | 33 | 57 | 10 |
| | Los Angeles | 30 | 60 | 10 |
| | Orange/San Diego | 28 | 63 | 9 |
| | San Francisco Bay Area | 28 | 64 | 8 |

Next Congress

California played a role in shifting control of the US House from the Republicans to the Democrats—the state’s new congressional delegation will comprise 46 Democrats and 7 Republicans (the current delegation is split 39 to 14). Fifty-three percent of Californians say the switch in control of Congress is a good thing, while 27 percent say this switch does not make a difference and 17 percent say it is a bad thing. Findings are similar among likely voters (55% good thing, 22% bad thing, 21% no difference). Eight in ten Democrats and a majority of independents say Democratic control is a good thing, while 56 percent of Republicans say it is a bad thing (29% no difference). At least half of Californians across regions—except in the Inland Empire (43%)—think the switch is a good thing (61% San Francisco Bay Area, 55% Los Angeles, 53% Orange/San Diego, 50% Central Valley). Majorities of Latinos (66%) and African Americans (59%), and fewer Asian Americans (47%) and whites (44%), say this is a good thing. Notably, women (59%) are much more likely than men (46%) to say this is a good thing.

“As you may know, as a result of the recent election, control of the US House of Representatives will switch from the Republicans to the Democrats. Do you think that this switch is a good thing, a bad thing, or doesn’t it make any difference?”

| | All adults | Party | | | Race/Ethnicity | | | |
|----------------------------|------------|-------|-----|-----|-------------------|-----------------|---------|--------|
| | | Dem | Rep | Ind | African Americans | Asian Americans | Latinos | Whites |
| Good thing | 53% | 80% | 15% | 54% | 59% | 47% | 66% | 44% |
| Bad thing | 17 | 3 | 56 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 8 | 28 |
| Does not make a difference | 27 | 15 | 29 | 31 | 32 | 41 | 22 | 24 |
| Don't know | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 | – | 6 | 3 | 3 |

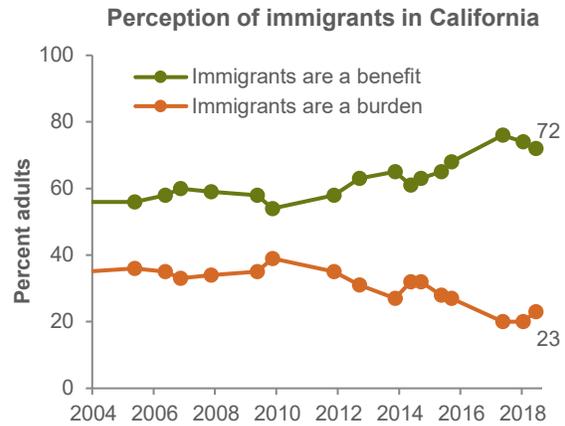
With congressional Democrats now in the majority, Californians are divided on whether their representative should work with (49%) or push back against (44%) the Trump administration. Half of likely voters (53%) prefer working with the Trump administration (41% push back). Democrats prefer their representative push back rather than work with the Trump administration by a two-to-one margin (62% to 31%), while an overwhelming majority of Republicans (89%) and about half of independents (54%) prefer working with the Trump administration. Majorities of Latinos (62%) and African Americans (55%) prefer their representative to push back, while majorities of Asian Americans (52%) and whites (61%) prefer their representative to work with the Trump administration. Preference for working with the Trump administration increases with rising age and income. Slightly more than half of men (53%) prefer that their representative work with the Trump administration, while women are divided (44% work with, 48% push back). In our October survey, likely voters were divided about which was more important for congressional candidates to do (45% work with, 48% push back).

“Which of the following is more important to you for your own representative to the US House of Representatives in Congress: that they work with the Trump administration or that they push back against the Trump administration?”

| | All adults | Party | | | Race/Ethnicity | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-------|-----|-----|-------------------|-----------------|---------|--------|
| | | Dem | Rep | Ind | African Americans | Asian Americans | Latinos | Whites |
| Work with the Trump administration | 49% | 31% | 89% | 54% | 41% | 52% | 32% | 61% |
| Push back against the administration | 44 | 62 | 9 | 40 | 55 | 36 | 62 | 32 |
| Both (<i>volunteered</i>) | 3 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Don't know | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 10 | 3 | 2 |

Immigration Policy

An overwhelming majority of Californians (72%) continue to think that immigrants are a benefit to the state because of their hard work and job skills. In surveys since January 2013 at least two in three Californians have said immigrants are a benefit. Today, Democrats (83%) and independents (73%) view immigrants positively, while 55 percent of Republicans think immigrants are a burden because they use public services. While at least six in ten across regions and demographic groups view immigrants as a benefit, there are notable differences. Across regions, the share seeing immigrants as a benefit is highest in the San Francisco Bay Area (80%), followed by Los Angeles (72%), the Central Valley (69%), Orange/San Diego (68%), and the Inland Empire (64%). Latinos (86%), African Americans (79%), and Asian Americans (76%) are more likely than whites (60%) to view immigrants as a benefit, and this perception declines with rising age. Californians with household incomes under \$40,000 (79%) are much more likely than those with higher incomes (67%) to think that immigrants are 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 | 72% | 83% | 38% | 73% | 79% | 76% | 86% | 60% |
| Immigrants are a burden | 23 | 11 | 55 | 20 | 18 | 19 | 10 | 34 |
| Don't know | 5 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 6 |

When asked how to handle undocumented immigrants living in the United States, 84 percent say there should be a way for them to stay in the country legally if certain requirements are met, while just 14 percent say they should not be allowed to stay in this country legally. More than eight in ten Californians have held this view in PPIC surveys since January 2016. Today, overwhelming majorities of Democrats (94%) and independents (85%) say there should be a way for these immigrants to stay legally, as do six in ten Republicans (60%). More than three in four across regions say there should be a way for immigrants to stay, with Orange/San Diego (78%) residents being the least likely to hold this view. Across demographic groups, more than three in four think there should be a way for undocumented immigrants to stay. Notably, Latinos (94%) are the most likely—and whites (77%) the least likely—to hold this view. The belief that immigrants should be able to stay declines with rising age.

“Which comes closer to your view about how to handle undocumented immigrants who are living in the US? There should be a way for them to stay in the country legally, if certain requirements are met, or they should not be allowed to stay in this country legally?”

| | All adults | Party | | | Race/Ethnicity | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|-------|-----|-----|-------------------|-----------------|---------|--------|
| | | Dem | Rep | Ind | African Americans | Asian Americans | Latinos | Whites |
| A way for them to stay legally | 84% | 94% | 60% | 85% | 87% | 86% | 94% | 77% |
| Should not be allowed to stay | 14 | 5 | 37 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 5 | 21 |
| Don't know | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | – | – | 1 | 2 |

Government Regulation

Regulation of business is a topic that divides partisans and is central to the debate about the role of government. A majority of Californians (58%) and likely voters (58%) say that government regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest, while fewer than four in ten say it does more harm than good. Last March, 56 percent of adults and likely voters said regulations are necessary. Today, most Democrats (73%) and independents (58%) say it is necessary to protect the public interest, while two in three Republicans (66%) say it does more harm than good. The share holding the view that government regulation of business is necessary varies across regions; it is highest in the San Francisco Bay Area (71%), followed by Los Angeles (59%), the Central Valley (57%), Orange/San Diego (50%), and the Inland Empire (48%). This perception is similar among men (57%) and women (60%) and the share holding this view declines with rising age.

“Please indicate which statement comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right—government regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest, or government regulation of business does more harm than good?”

| | All adults | Party | | | Likely voters |
|--|------------|-------|-----|-----|---------------|
| | | Dem | Rep | Ind | |
| Necessary to protect the public interest | 58% | 73% | 30% | 58% | 58% |
| Does more harm than good | 35 | 20 | 66 | 38 | 39 |
| Don't know | 7 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 3 |

When asked specifically about stricter environmental laws and regulations, six in ten adults (59%) and likely voters (61%) say they are worth the cost; one in three say they cost too many jobs and hurt the economy. Last March, slightly more than half of adults (54%) and six in ten likely voters (61%) said these regulations are worth the cost. Today, most Democrats (77%) and six in ten independents (62%) say stricter laws and regulations are worth the cost, while two in three Republicans say they cost too many jobs and hurt the economy. Majorities across regions say they are worth the cost, but this perception is more prevalent in the San Francisco Bay Area (65%) and Los Angeles (63%) than in the Central Valley (55%), the Inland Empire (53%), and Orange/San Diego (52%). Majorities across racial/ethnic groups see these regulations as worth the cost; Asian Americans are the most likely to hold this view (67%), followed by African Americans (63%), whites (58%), and Latinos (57%). Majorities across age, education, and income groups view these laws as worth the cost, although the shares holding this view decline with rising age and education levels. Women (63%) are somewhat more likely than men (55%) to say that regulations are worth the cost.

“Please indicate which statement comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right—stricter environmental laws and regulations cost too many jobs and hurt the economy, or stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost?”

| | All adults | Party | | | Likely voters |
|---|------------|-------|-----|-----|---------------|
| | | Dem | Rep | Ind | |
| Cost too many jobs and hurt the economy | 33% | 17% | 67% | 32% | 33% |
| Worth the cost | 59 | 77 | 26 | 62 | 61 |
| Don't know | 8 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 6 |

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 assistance from associate survey director Dean Bonner, project manager for this survey, and survey research associates Alyssa Dykman and Lunna Lopes. The Californians and Their Government 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 1,704 California adult residents, including 1,193 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 November 11–20, 2018.

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 2012–2016 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 ± 3.3 percent at the 95 percent confidence level for the total unweighted sample of 1,704 adults. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 3.3 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for unweighted subgroups is larger: for the 1,391 registered voters, the sampling error is ± 3.7 percent; for the 1,094 likely voters, it is ± 4.1 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 about a third 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 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 Gallup. 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

November 11– 20, 2018

1,704 California adult residents:

English, Spanish

MARGIN OF ERROR ±3.3% 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]

- 17% jobs, economy
- 10 environment, pollution, global warming
- 9 housing costs, availability
- 9 immigration, illegal immigration
- 9 wildfires, fires
- 5 government in general, problems with elected officials, parties
- 5 homelessness
- 4 crime, gangs, drugs
- 4 health care, health insurance
- 4 state budget, deficit, taxes
- 3 education, schools, teachers
- 3 water, drought
- 2 infrastructure
- 11 other (*specify*)
- 5 don't know

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

- 51% approve
- 31 disapprove
- 18 don't know

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

- 47% approve
- 39 disapprove
- 15 don't know

4. From what you know so far, overall do you approve or disapprove of Governor-Elect Gavin Newsom's plans and policies for California?

- 42% approve
- 25 disapprove
- 22 have not heard enough to have an opinion (*volunteered*)
- 12 don't know

5. Would you rather see Gavin Newsom as the next California governor generally continue Jerry Brown's policies or mostly change to different policies?

- 35% continue Jerry Brown's policies
- 48 change to different policies
- 17 don't know

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

- 54% right direction
- 41 wrong direction
- 5 don't know

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

- 46% good times
- 45 bad times
- 9 don't know

Next,

8. Some people think that California is divided into economic groups, the haves and have nots, while others think it is not divided that way. Do you think that California is divided into haves and have nots, or do you think that California is not divided that way?

- 67% divided into haves and have nots
- 30 not divided that way
- 3 don't know

9. If you had to choose, which of these groups are you in—the haves or have nots?

- 40% haves
- 45 have nots
- 9 neither (*volunteered*)
- 6 don't know

10. Do you think that in California today [*rotate*] [1] all people have an equal opportunity to get ahead, [*or*] [2] the government should do more to make sure that all Californians have an equal opportunity to get ahead.

- 41% people have equal opportunity
- 53 government should do more
- 1 both (*volunteered*)
- 2 neither (*volunteered*)
- 3 don't know

11. Next, what do you think should be the state government's most important priority in planning for California's future?

[Read rotated list, then ask: "or something else?"]

- 39% improving jobs and the economy
- 20 protecting the environment
- 9 creating a more equal society
- 15 updating the transportation and water systems
- 18 something else [*specify*]
- 2 don't know

12. Overall, do you think that in 2025 California will be a better place to live than it is now or a worse place to live than it is now or will there be no change?

- 40% better place
- 32 worse place
- 23 no change
- 5 don't know

13. When children today in California grow up, do you think they will be better off or worse off financially than their parents?

- 40% better off
- 50 worse off
- 2 same (*volunteered*)
- 8 don't know

Next,

14. The state is projected to have a budget surplus of several billion dollars. In general, how would you prefer to use this extra money? [*rotate*] [1] Would you prefer to pay down state debt and build up the reserve [*or*] [2] would you prefer to increase state funding for education, health, and human service programs [*or*] would you prefer one-time state spending for transportation, water, and infrastructure projects?

- 21% pay down debt and build up the reserve
- 57 increase state funding for education, health and human services
- 16 one-time state spending for transportation, water, infrastructure
- 4 other (*volunteered*)
- 2 don't know

15. In general, which of the following statements do you agree with more—[*rotate*] [1] I'd rather pay higher taxes and have a state government that provides more services, [*or*] [2] I'd rather pay lower taxes and have a state government that provides fewer services?

- 51% higher taxes and more services
- 45 lower taxes and fewer services
- 5 don't know

16. Overall, do you think the state and local tax system is in need of major changes, minor changes, or do you think it is fine the way it is?

- 49% major changes
- 27 minor changes
- 19 fine the way it is
- 5 don't know

Next, there are several policy choices that the governor and legislature could make in the next few years. Each of them would require a significant amount of new state funding. Please tell me if each of the following should be a: *[rotate order]* very high priority, a high priority, medium priority, low priority, *[or]* very low priority

[rotate questions 17 to 20]

17. How about universal health coverage?

- 22% very high priority
- 38 high priority
- 20 medium priority
- 11 low priority
- 8 very low priority
- 1 don't know

18. How about universal preschool?

- 14% very high priority
- 34 high priority
- 27 medium priority
- 16 low priority
- 7 very low priority
- 2 don't know

19. How about tuition-free community college?

- 17% very high priority
- 36 high priority
- 24 medium priority
- 14 low priority
- 9 very low priority
- 1 don't know

20. How about building a high-speed rail system from Southern California to the Central Valley and the San Francisco Bay Area?

- 8% very high priority
- 17 high priority
- 28 medium priority
- 26 low priority
- 20 very low priority
- 1 don't know

Next,

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

- 32% approve
- 63 disapprove
- 5 don't know

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

- 29% approve
- 62 disapprove
- 9 don't know

23. In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way that things are going in the United States at this time?

- 32% satisfied
- 64 dissatisfied
- 4 don't know

24. How much confidence do you have in President Trump to make the right decisions for the country's future—a great deal of confidence, a good amount, just some, or none at all?

- 14% great deal of confidence
- 13 a good amount
- 24 just some
- 48 none at all
- 1 don't know

25. As you may know, as a result of the recent election, control of the US House of Representatives will switch from the Republicans to the Democrats. Do you think that this switch is a good thing, a bad thing, or doesn't it make any difference?

- 53% good thing
- 17 bad thing
- 27 does not make a difference
- 4 don't know

26. Which of the following is more important to you for your own representative to the US House of Representatives in Congress—[rotate] (1) that they work with the Trump administration [or] (2) that they push back against the Trump administration?

- 49% work with the Trump administration
- 44 push back against the Trump administration
- 3 both (*volunteered*)
- 4 don't know

Changing topics,

27. 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.

- 72% immigrants are a benefit to California
- 23 immigrants are a burden to California
- 5 don't know

28. Which comes closer to your view about how to handle undocumented immigrants who are living in the US [rotate] [1] There should be a way for them to stay in the country legally, if certain requirements are met [or] [2] They should not be allowed to stay in this country legally?

- 84 allowed to stay legally
- 14 not allowed to stay legally
- 1 don't know

[question 29 not asked]

Changing topics,

[question 30 not asked]

For each of the following issues, please indicate which statement comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.

[rotate questions 31 to 32]

31. [rotate] [1] Government regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest; [or] [2] Government regulation of business does more harm than good.

- 58% government regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest
- 35 government regulation of business does more harm than good
- 7 don't know

32. [rotate] [1] Stricter environmental laws and regulations cost too many jobs and hurt the economy [or] [2] Stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost.

- 33% stricter environmental laws and regulations cost too many jobs and hurt the economy
- 59 stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost
- 8 don't know

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

- 67% yes *[ask q33a]*
- 33 no *[skip to q34b]*

33a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or are you registered as a decline-to-state or independent voter?

- 44% Democrat *[ask q34]*
- 25 Republican *[skip to q34a]*
- 5 another party (*specify*) *[skip to q35]*
- 25 independent *[skip to q34b]*

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

- 54% strong
- 43 not very strong
- 3 don't know

[skip to q35]

34a. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

57% strong
42 not very strong
1 don't know

[skip to q35]

34b. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?

22% Republican Party
49 Democratic Party
21 neither (*volunteered*)
8 don't know

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

[read list, rotate order top to bottom]

13% very liberal
20 somewhat liberal
29 middle-of-the-road
21 somewhat conservative
14 very conservative
3 don't know

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

29% great deal
34 fair amount
29 only a little
8 none
– don't know

[d1-d15 demographic questions]

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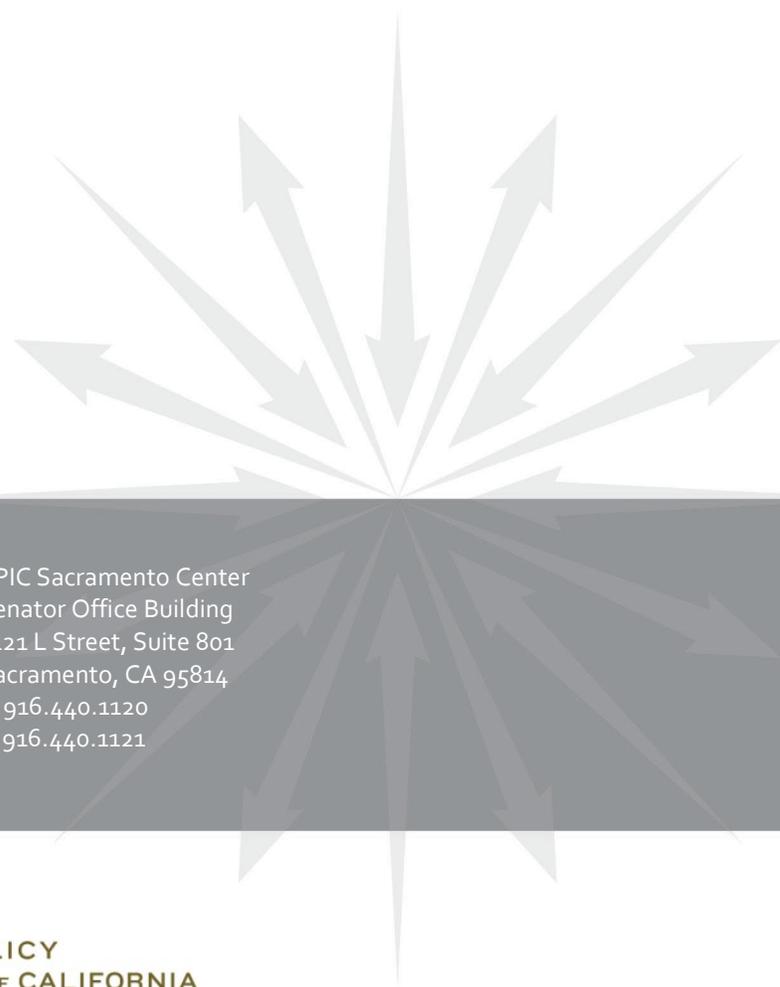
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