

THE FIELD POLL

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

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CALIFORNIA'S COMPETING TAX INITIATIVES

**WHILE SUPPORT FOR PROP. 30 IS
BELOW 50% IT CONTINUES TO LEAD.
PROP. 38 NOW TRAILING BY A DOUBLE
DIGIT MARGIN.**

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By Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

While support for Proposition 30, the income and sales tax increase initiative advanced by Governor Jerry Brown, has fallen below the majority needed for passage, Yes voters continue to outnumber No voters 48% to 38%. Another 14% of likely voters are undecided.

By contrast Proposition 38, the competing income tax increase initiative supported by civil rights attorney Molly Munger, now trails among likely voters by a double-digit margin, 34% to 49%. This represents a significant decline in voter support from mid-September when 41% were on the Yes side and 44% on the No side.

Supporters and opponents of Prop. 30 hold very different opinions about a wide range of matters relating to state government and taxes, as well as the governor's job performance. Supporters tend to approve the job Brown is doing, believe the amount they pay in state taxes is about right, and are very concerned about the potential impact of the automatic spending cuts that would be imposed if voters reject Prop. 30. Opponents are more likely to disapprove of the governor's performance, believe they pay too much in state taxes, are less concerned about spending cuts and think the state can provide roughly the same level of services even if it had to reduce its budget by \$6 billion, the approximate amount of Prop. 30's proposed tax increase.

These are the findings from the final pre-election *Field Poll* conducted among 1,566 voters considered likely to vote in next week's general election. The survey was completed by telephone using live interviewers in six languages and dialects.

Trend of voter preferences on Props. 30 and 38

In each of three previous *Field Poll* surveys, Proposition 30 had been receiving the support of a slim majority of voters. However support is now 48%, slightly less than the majority it needs for passage. On the other hand, in each measure the proportions of likely voters intending to vote No has not exceeded 38%.

The current survey finds just one in three likely voters (34%) now favoring the competing tax initiative, Proposition 38, the lowest level of support it has received all year.

Table 1
Trend of voter preferences toward Proposition 30 and Proposition 38
on California's November 2012 election ballot
(among likely voters)

	<u>Voting yes</u>	<u>Voting no</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
<u>Proposition 30 (Brown)</u>			
Late October	48%	38	14
Mid September	51%	36	13
Early July	54%	38	8
Late May	52%	35	13
<u>Proposition 38 (Munger)</u>			
Late October	34%	49	17
Mid September	41%	44	15
Early July	46%	46	8
Late May	42%	43	15
February	45%	48	7

Voter preferences toward Prop. 30 tied to views about Governor Brown, state government and taxes

Voter preferences on Prop. 30 are directly related to how they view Governor Brown, the amount they pay in state taxes, their level of concern about the spending cuts that would take place if Prop. 30 is rejected and whether they believe the state can provide the same level of services if the state budget were to be cut by \$6 billion, the approximate amount of Prop. 30's proposed tax increase.

For example, Prop. 30 is favored by a greater than four to one margin (71% to 16%) among the 46% of voters who approve of the job Brown is doing as governor. By contrast, among the 37% who disapprove of his performance, the initiative trails greater than three to one (21% Yes vs. 71% No).

Prop. 30 is also strongly backed by a two-to-one majority among the 47% of voters who believe the amount they are paying in state taxes is about right. However, the initiative trails greater than two to one among the 38% of voters who feel they are already paying more than they should in state taxes.

The poll finds that 58% of voters are very concerned about the potential impact that the automatic spending cuts that would be imposed should Prop. 30 be defeated. Among this group, support for Prop. 30 is running greater than three to one (68% to 20%). On the other hand, large majorities of voters who report less concern about the impact that the automatic spending cuts would have on the state are voting No on Prop. 30.

Californians divide into two approximately equal size camps when asked whether they believe the state can continue to provide roughly the same level of services it now does if its budget had to be reduced by \$6 billion. Statewide 48% think that it can, while 44% disagree. Of those who foresee little impact on public services, most are voting No on Prop. 30. By contrast, large majorities who believe state services would be seriously affected by these budget cuts are voting Yes.

Table 2
How job ratings of Governor Brown, the amount voters believe they pay in state taxes, concerns about the spending cuts if Prop. 30 is rejected relates to voting preferences on Prop. 30 (among likely voters)

% of likely voters	Job Brown is doing as Governor	Vote on Prop. 30		
		Yes	No	Undecided
(46%)	Approve	71%	16	13
(37%)	Disapprove	21%	71	8
(17%)	No opinion	40%	26	34
Amount of state taxes voter pays				
(38%)	Pay more than I should	28%	61	11
(47%)	Pay about the right amount	58%	26	16
(8%)	Pay less than I should*	72%	12	16
Concern about effects of spending cuts if Prop. 30 is rejected				
(58%)	Very concerned	68%	20	12
(21%)	Somewhat concerned	34%	56	10
(17%)	Not concerned	13%	79	8
State can provide roughly the same level of services even if its budget is cut by \$6 billion (agree/disagree)				
(22%)	Agree strongly	19%	72	9
(26%)	Agree somewhat	38%	51	11
(20%)	Disagree somewhat	62%	26	12
(24%)	Disagree strongly	83%	11	6

* Small sample base.

Differences in Prop. 30 preferences across subgroups of the likely voter electorate

Support for Prop. 30 is strongest among Democrats (68%), voters under age 30 (61%), those living in the San Francisco Bay Area and other parts of Northern California (63%), among union households (59%), Korean-Americans (59%), African-Americans (58%) and Latinos (56%). Opposition is greatest among Republicans, voters age 65 or older, those living in areas of Southern California outside of Los Angeles County or the South Coast, and voters in the Central Valley.

While voter opinions of Prop. 30 are highly partisan, independent voters with no party preference are backing it 52% to 34%.

White non-Hispanics are closely divided on the initiative, while voters in each of the state's major racial/ethnic subgroups are on the Yes side.

There is a significant gender gap in voter preferences on Prop. 30. Men are closely divided, 46% Yes and 43% No, while women are supporting it by seventeen points (50% to 33%).

Homeowners are also divided in their views of Prop. 30, while renters are backing the initiative nearly two to one.

Table 3
Voter preferences toward Proposition 30 - by subgroup
(among likely voters)

	Yes	No	Undecided/ refused
Total likely voters	48%	38	14
<u>Interviewing period</u>			
October 25 – 30	50%	37	13
October 17 – 24	47%	38	15
<u>Voting frequency</u>			
Regular voter	48%	38	14
New/occasional voter	55%	27	18
<u>Party registration</u>			
Democrats	68%	17	15
Republicans	22%	66	12
No party preference/others	52%	34	14
<u>Voting method</u>			
Precinct voter	46%	37	17
Mail ballot voter	50%	39	11
Already voted	54%	42	4
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	46%	43	11
Female	50%	33	17
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
White non-Hispanic	46%	43	11
Latino	56%	25	19
African-American*	58%	16	26
Asian-American (total)	49%	30	21
Chinese-American*	53%	26	21
Korean-American*	59%	26	15
Vietnamese-American*	39%	6	55
Other Asian-Americans*	48%	41	11
<u>Age</u>			
18 – 29	61%	27	12
30 – 39	56%	28	16
40 – 49	49%	37	14
50 – 64	49%	39	12
65 or older	38%	48	14
<u>Parent of child under 18</u>			
Yes	49%	36	15
No	48%	38	14
<u>Union affiliation</u>			
Union household	59%	29	12
Non-union household	46%	40	14
<u>Area</u>			
Coastal counties	52%	34	14
Inland counties	41%	47	12
<u>Region</u>			
Los Angeles County	49%	34	17
South Coast	41%	42	17
Other Southern California	38%	49	13
Central Valley	41%	49	10
San Francisco Bay Area	63%	25	12
Other Northern California*	63%	28	9
<u>Tenure</u>			
Homeowner	45%	41	14
Renter	57%	30	13

* Small sample base.

Comparing individual voter preferences on Props. 30 and 38

Most voters are either supporting both Propositions 30 and 38 (25%) or are opposing both (29%). However, among those who are dividing these preferences, 24% of voters are backing Prop. 30 but not Prop. 38, while 9% of voters are backing Prop. 38 and not Prop. 30.

Table 4
Comparing the preferences of individual voters on Proposition 30 (Brown)
and Proposition 38 (Munger)
(among likely voters)

	Late October	Mid Sept.	Late May
Support both Props. 30 and 38	25%	35%	35%
Oppose both Props. 30 and 38	29	30	28
Support Prop. 30/ oppose or undecided on Prop. 38	24	17	17
Support Prop. 38/ oppose or undecided on Prop. 30	9	7	7
Oppose Prop. 30/undecided on Prop. 38	2	1	2
Oppose Prop. 38/undecided on Prop. 30	1	1	2
Undecided on both initiatives	10	9	9

Information About The Survey

Methodological Details

The results reported in this release come from a survey completed by *The Field Poll* among a total of 1,912 California registered voters, 1,566 of whom were considered likely to vote in the November general election. The survey was conducted by telephone using live interviewers in six languages and dialects – English, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, and Vietnamese from Field Research Corporation’s central location call center in San Diego. Data collection was conducted over two consecutive interviewing periods. The first spanned the period October 17-24 and included 815 likely voters, while the second was completed October 25-30 and included 751 likely voters. Some questions were asked of voters interviewed in the first interviewing wave, while others were asked of voters interviewed only during the second wave.

The voter samples from each interviewing wave were supplemented with additional interviews conducted among Asian-American voters to enable the survey compare how voters compared to the state’s other major racial/ethnic voting populations. Funding for the multi-ethnic samples was provided by the New America Media, through a grant from the San Francisco Foundation.

Up to six attempts were made to reach and interview each randomly selected voter on different days and times of day during the interviewing period. Interviews were completed on either a voter’s landline phone or a cell phone. In this survey 1,479 interviews were conducted on a landline phone and 433 were completed through a cell phone contact. After completion of interviewing, the overall sample was weighted to align it to the proper statewide distribution of voters by race/ethnicity and other demographic characteristics of the voter population.

Sampling error estimates applicable to any probability-based survey depend upon its sample size. According to statistical theory, 95% of the time results from the overall likely voter sample are subject to a maximum sampling error of +/- 2.6 percentage points, while findings based on voters interviewed in each of the two interviewing waves have a maximum sampling error of +/- 3.6 percentage points. The maximum sampling error is based on percentages in the middle of the sampling distribution (percentages around 50%). Percentages at either end of the distribution have a smaller margin of error. Sampling error will be larger for analyses based on subgroups of the overall sample.

The Field Poll was established in 1947 as *The California Poll* by Mervin Field, who is still an active advisor. The *Poll* has operated continuously since then as an independent, non-partisan survey of California public opinion. The *Poll* receives annual funding from media subscribers of *The Field Poll*, from several California foundations, and the University of California and California State University systems, who receive the data files from each *Field Poll* survey shortly after its completion for teaching and secondary research purposes.

Questions Asked

I am going to read some of the statewide initiatives that are on the November election ballot. Please tell me whether you are inclined to vote Yes or No on each.

Proposition 30 is the Temporary Taxes to Fund Education, Guaranteed Local Public Safety Funding initiative. It increases taxes on earnings over 250,000 dollars for seven years and sales taxes by ¼ cent for four years, to fund schools and guarantees public safety realignment funding. Fiscal impact: Increased state tax revenues through 2018-2019, averaging about 6 billion dollars annually over the next few years. Revenues available for funding state budget. In 2012-2013, planned spending reductions, primarily to education programs, would not occur.

(IF ALREADY VOTED:) Did you vote YES or NO on Proposition 30?

(IF HAVEN'T VOTED YET:) If the election were being held today, would you vote YES or NO on Proposition 30?

Proposition 38 is the Tax to Fund Education and Early Childhood Programs initiative. It increases taxes on earnings using sliding scale for twelve years. Revenues would go to the K-12 schools and early childhood programs, and for four years, to repaying state debt. Fiscal Impact: Increased state tax revenues for 12 years, roughly 10 billion dollars annually in initial years, tending to grow over time. Funds used for schools, child care, and preschool, as well as providing savings on state debt payments.

(IF ALREADY VOTED:) Did you vote YES or NO on Proposition 38?

(IF HAVEN'T VOTED YET:) If the election were being held today, would you vote YES or NO on Proposition 38?

(THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE ASKED DURING THE POLL'S FIRST INTERVIEWING PERIOD ONLY)

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

Thinking about your California state taxes and fees, do you feel you are asked to pay more than you should, about the right amount or less than you should?

(THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE ASKED DURING THE POLL'S SECOND INTERVIEWING PERIOD ONLY)

If voters reject Proposition 30, Governor Brown's initiative to temporarily increase taxes, in order to balance its budget, the state government will impose automatic spending cuts, primarily to education and the K-12 schools. How concerned are you about the effects of these spending cuts – very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned or not at all concerned?

Some people believe that by simply eliminating waste and inefficiencies the state government can provide roughly the same level of services it currently does even if its budget had to be cut by about 6 billion dollars. Do you strongly agree, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat or strongly disagree with this view?