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NEWSOM LEADS IN EARLY VOTER PREFERENCES FOR GOVERNOR.

By Mark DiCamillo, Director, *The Field Poll*

The final pre-election survey conducted jointly by *The Field Poll* and the Institute of Governmental Studies at UC Berkeley also included measures of initial voter preferences in the 2018 gubernatorial election. The results indicate that Democratic Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom begins the race as the early favorite.

When paired against six prominent Democrats and two prominent Republicans who have been mentioned as possible gubernatorial candidates in 2018,^{*} Newsom is the choice of 23% of the state's registered voters, far surpassing each of the other potential Democratic contenders. San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer, who has frequently been mentioned as a possible Republican gubernatorial candidate, places second in this setting, with 16%, followed by another GOP possibility, Fresno Mayor Ashley Swearingin, at 11%. The six other Democrats listed – Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, former Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, businessman/environmentalist Tom Steyer, Secretary of State Alex Padilla, State Treasurer John Chiang and former state controller Steve Westly – each trail with single digit support, while 25% of voters are initially undecided.

The poll demonstrates that initial voter preferences are strongly tied to a voter's party registration. While Newsom is the choice of 34% of rank-and-file Democrats, he receives just 2% support from registered Republicans. Similarly, the two Republican gubernatorial possibilities, Faulconer and Swearingin, each receive strong backing from fellow GOP voters, but very little support from registered Democrats.

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^{*} The survey was taken before the announcement by former State Schools Superintendent Delaine Eastin that she intends to be a candidate for Governor in 2018, and her name unfortunately was not included in this survey.

Table 1				
Voter preferences for Governor in 2018 among nine possible candidates – overall and by party registration of the voter (among California registered voters)				
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>No party pref./other</u>
Gavin Newsom, Lt. Governor, Democrat	23%	34%	2%	27%
Kevin Faulconer, San Diego Mayor, Republican	16	3	42	9
Ashley Swarengin, Fresno Mayor, Republican	11	1	31	9
Eric Garcetti, Los Angeles Mayor, Democrat	7	9	3	7
Antonio Villaraigosa, Former Los Angeles Mayor, Democrat	6	8	2	4
Tom Steyer, Businessman/ Environmentalist, Democrat	5	7	1	7
Alex Padilla, California Secretary of State, Democrat	4	8	*	3
John Chiang, State Treasurer, Democrat	2	2	3	1
Steve Westly, Former State Controller, Democrat	1	3	*	*
Undecided	25	25	16	33

* Less than 1/2 of 1%

An alternate poll measurement underscores the effect that party affiliation has on voter preferences. When measuring gubernatorial preferences, voters in the poll were divided into two matching subsamples. The results reported in Table 1 above are those obtained when voters are shown the names, titles and party affiliation of each of the potential candidates, similar to what voters would see on the election ballot. However, for the second subsample of voters, the poll listed the same nine gubernatorial possibilities, but without making reference to their party affiliation.

In this setting, Democratic Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom again places first, with 21% of the preferences, similar to what he receives when he is identified to voters as a Democrat. However, support for the two GOP possibilities tested, Faulconer and Swarengin, falls off dramatically when their party affiliation is not identified, as they lose most of the backing they had been receiving from rank-and-file Republicans. The proportion of all registered voters statewide who are undecided in this setting increases significantly to 40%, and includes 51% of Republicans and 47% of no party preference voters.

Table 2				
Voter preferences for Governor when the same candidates are displayed <i>WITHOUT</i> their party affiliations – overall and by voters' party registration				
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>No party pref./other</u>
Gavin Newsom, Lt. Governor	21%	31%	4%	21%
Eric Garcetti, Los Angeles Mayor	9	12	8	6
Kevin Faulconer, San Diego Mayor	6	3	13	4
Antonio Villaraigosa, Former Los Angeles Mayor	5	7	4	4
Tom Steyer, Businessman/ Environmental	5	6	3	5
John Chiang, State Treasurer	5	6	5	3
Alex Padilla, California Secretary of State	4	6	3	3
Ashley Swearingin, Fresno Mayor	3	1	5	5
Steve Westly, Former State Controller	2	1	4	2
Undecided	40	27	51	47

Big differences in early gubernatorial preferences by region

Early voter preferences for governor also vary significantly by region. Newsom's early lead is derived primarily from the very strong early backing he receives from voters in Northern California. Among registered voters in that part of the state, he holds a nearly four-to-one advantage over his nearest opponent. By contrast, Newsom and Faulconer are receiving similar levels of support from voters in Southern California, while in the Central Valley Newsom narrowly trails Swearingin, the Fresno Mayor.

Table 3				
Voter preferences for Governor in 2018 among the nine possible candidates – overall and by region* (among California registered voters)				
	Total	Southern California	Central Valley	Northern California
Gavin Newsom, Lt. Governor, Democrat	23%	18%	17%	39%
Kevin Faulconer, San Diego Mayor, Republican	16	19	14	10
Ashley Swearingin, Fresno Mayor, Republican	11	9	20	9
Eric Garcetti, Los Angeles Mayor, Democrat	7	9	4	2
Antonio Villaraigosa, Former Los Angeles Mayor, Democrat	6	8	2	3
Tom Steyer, Businessman/ Environmentalist, Democrat	5	6	2	4
Alex Padilla, California Secretary of State, Democrat	4	4	7	4
John Chiang, State Treasurer, Democrat	2	1	5	2
Steve Westly, Former State Controller, Democrat	1	2	1	1
Undecided	25	24	28	26

* The above results are based on the subsample of voters shown the party affiliations of the candidates, along with their names and job titles.

Information About the Survey

Methodological Details

The findings in this report come from a survey of California voters conducted jointly by *The Field Poll* and the Institute of Governmental Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. The survey was completed online by YouGov October 25-31, 2016 in English and Spanish. For the preference measures in this release, the statewide sample was split into two matching subsamples of 600 registered voters each. In one subsample the names, titles and party affiliation of the candidates were listed, while in the other the names and titles of the candidates were displayed without reference to their party affiliations.

YouGov administered the survey among California registered voters who were included as part of its online panel of over 1.5 million U.S. residents. Eligible panel members were asked to participate in the poll through an invitation email containing a link to the survey. YouGov selected voters using a proprietary sampling technology frame that establishes interlocking targets, so that the characteristics of the voters selected approximate the demographic and regional profile of the overall California registered voter population. To help ensure diversity among poll respondents, YouGov recruits its panelists using a variety of methods, including web-based advertising and email campaigns, partner-sponsored solicitations, and telephone-to-web recruitment or mail-to-web recruitment. Difficult-to-reach populations are supplemented through more specialized recruitment efforts, including telephone and mail surveys.

The Field Poll and the Institute of Governmental Studies were jointly responsible for developing all questions included in the survey. After survey administration, YouGov forwarded its data file to *The Field Poll* for processing. *The Field Poll* then took the lead in developing and applying post-stratification weights to more precisely align the sample to *Field Poll* estimates of the demographic characteristics of the California registered voter population both overall and by region.

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

Questions Asked

If the election for Governor of California were being held today, which of these possible candidates would be your first choice? (THE ORDERING OF CANDIDATES WAS RANDOMIZED TO AVOID POSSIBLE SEQUENTIAL BIAS)

Note about Sampling Error Estimates

Polls conducted online using an opt-in panel do not easily lend themselves to the calculation of sampling error estimates as are traditionally reported for random sample telephone surveys.