

# UC Berkeley

## IGS Poll

### Title

Release #2022-18: Strong bipartisan voter support for the new state law creating a CARE Court for the severely mentally ill.

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***Strong bipartisan voter support for the new state law creating  
a CARE Court for the severely mentally ill.***

by Mark DiCamillo, Director, *Berkeley IGS Poll*  
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By a five-to-one margin (76% to 15%) California voters overwhelmingly endorse the new state law creating a CARE Court that would provide court-ordered treatment for the severely mentally ill, including the homeless, even if they did not seek it. In addition, of those in favor, 41% say they support the creation of the court strongly.

Backing of the new law crosses party lines and also spans voters across all major regions of the state and demographic subgroups. Among Democrats 80% support the law, as do 69% of Republicans and 74% of voters not affiliated with either major party. Creation of the CARE Court is backed by more than seven in ten men and women as well as across voters of all races and ethnic backgrounds.

Support includes at least two-thirds of voters across all major regions of the state and increases to 80% among voters in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

These findings come from the latest *Berkeley IGS Poll* conducted online among 8,725 registered voters in California September 22-27 in English and Spanish.

Observed IGS co-director Eric Schickler, “Support for the CARE Court law shows that mental health treatment is one of the rare policy areas in California where there is broad, bipartisan consensus that a serious problem exists and for a potential way to address it.”

**Table 1**  
**Voter opinions about the new state law creating a CARE Court to provide court-ordered treatment for the severely mentally ill even if they did not seek it**  
**(among registered voters)**

	<b>Favor (net) %</b>	<b>Favor strongly %</b>	<b>Favor somewhat %</b>	<b>Oppose (net) %</b>	<b>Oppose somewhat %</b>	<b>Oppose strongly %</b>
<b>Total registered voters</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>
<u>Party registration</u>						
Democrats	80	45	35	12	8	4
Republicans	69	36	33	20	8	12
No party preference/others	74	38	36	16	9	7
<u>Political ideology</u>						
Strongly conservative	69	41	28	23	10	13
Somewhat conservative	75	42	33	16	9	7
Moderate	75	40	35	14	8	6
Somewhat liberal	84	41	43	9	7	2
Strongly liberal	75	40	35	17	11	6
<u>Region</u>						
Los Angeles County	75	44	31	14	8	6
San Diego County	78	40	38	14	9	5
Orange County	74	33	41	15	10	5
Inland Empire	71	38	33	19	10	9
Central Coast	78	37	41	15	7	8
Central Valley	76	41	35	17	10	7
San Francisco Bay Area	80	44	36	11	6	5
North Coast/Sierras	66	31	35	25	10	15
<u>Gender</u>						
Male	72	37	35	17	9	8
Female	79	44	35	13	8	5
<u>Age</u>						
18-29	64	29	35	21	14	7
30-39	72	39	33	19	9	10
40-49	75	41	34	14	8	6
50-64	81	45	36	12	7	5
65 or older	84	47	37	11	7	4
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>						
White	79	39	40	14	8	6
Latino	75	46	29	16	10	6
Asian/Pacific Islander	71	36	35	15	9	6
Black	78	48	30	16	8	8

*Note: Differences between 100% and the sum of favor and oppose percentages equal proportions with no opinion.*

**Majority support for bill that would have made kindergarten mandatory**

The poll also found majority support for another proposed law that would have made kindergarten mandatory in California before children could enter the first grade.

A 57% majority of voters favored the proposed law, while 33% were opposed. The law was approved by both houses of the state legislature in its latest session, but it was eventually vetoed by Governor Gavin Newsom, ostensibly for cost reasons.

In contrast to opinions about the new CARE Court law, views about making kindergarten mandatory divides voters along partisan and ideological lines. Among Democrats seven in ten back the proposed law, as do self-described liberals. However, among Republicans and strong conservatives about six in ten are opposed to the idea.

**Table 2**  
**Voter views about a proposed state law to make**  
**kindergarten mandatory in California**  
**(among registered voters)**

	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Oppose</b>	<b>No opinion</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Total registered voters</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>10</b>
<u>Party registration</u>			
Democrats	70	20	10
Republicans	32	58	10
No party preference/other	56	33	11
<u>Political ideology</u>			
Strongly conservative	30	63	7
Somewhat conservative	45	48	7
Moderate	56	32	12
Somewhat liberal	72	19	9
Strongly liberal	74	16	10
<u>Region</u>			
Los Angeles County	59	30	11
San Diego County	58	31	11
Orange County	50	40	10
Inland Empire	56	38	6
Central Coast	55	35	10
Central Valley	55	37	8
San Francisco Bay Area	61	27	12
North Coast/Sierras	52	29	19
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	52	37	11
Female	61	29	10
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
White	54	37	9
Latino	64	27	9
Asian/Pacific Islander	57	28	15
Black	64	28	8

### **About the Survey**

The findings in this report are based on a *Berkeley IGS Poll* completed by the Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) at the University of California, Berkeley. The poll was administered online in English and Spanish September 22-27, 2022, among 8,725 California registered voters. Funding for the poll was provided in part by the *Los Angeles Times*.

The *Berkeley IGS Poll* is administered by distributing email invitations to stratified random samples of the state's registered voters. The latest poll also included an oversampling of registered voters in Los Angeles County, administered using the same methods, to enable the poll to examine specific issues of interest to voters in Los Angeles and to the *Times*. After the completion of data collection, the results were weighted to realign the Los Angeles County oversample to its actual share of the statewide registered voter population.

Each email invited voters to participate in a non-partisan survey conducted by the University and provided a link to the IGS website where the survey was housed. Reminder emails were distributed to non-responding voters and an opt out link was provided for voters not wishing to receive further email invitations.

Samples of registered voters with email addresses were provided to IGS by Political Data, Inc., a leading supplier of registered voter lists in California and were derived from information contained on the voter registration rolls. Prior to the distribution of emails, the overall sample was stratified by age and gender to obtain a proper balance of survey respondents across major segments of the registered voter population.

To protect the anonymity of survey respondents, voters' email addresses and all other personally identifiable information derived from the original voter listing were purged from the data file and replaced with a unique and anonymous identification number during data processing. In addition, post-stratification weights were applied to align the sample of registered voters responding to the survey to population characteristics of the state's registered voters.

The sampling error associated with the results from the survey are difficult to calculate precisely because of sample stratification and the post-stratification weighting. Nevertheless, it is likely that findings based on the overall sample of registered voters are subject to a sampling error of approximately +/-2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

### **Question wording**

The legislature approved a plan to create a CARE Court to provide court-ordered treatment for Californians struggling with severe mental illness including those who are homeless. The CARE Court would have the authority to order mental health treatment for people with severe mental illnesses even if they did not seek it. Do you favor or oppose this action?

The legislature also passed a bill requiring that all 5-year-olds in the state attend kindergarten rather than leaving it up to the parent to decide. Do you favor or oppose this action?

### **About the Institute of Governmental Studies**

The Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) is an interdisciplinary organized research unit that pursues a vigorous program of research, education, publication, and public service. A component of the University of California system's flagship Berkeley campus, IGS is the oldest organized research unit in the UC system and the oldest public policy research center in the state. IGS's co-directors are Professor Eric Schickler and Associate Professor G. Cristina Mora.

IGS conducts periodic surveys of public opinion in California on matters of politics and public policy through its *Berkeley IGS Poll*. The poll seeks to provide a broad measure of contemporary public opinion and generate data for subsequent scholarly analysis. The director of the *Berkeley IGS Poll* is Mark DiCamillo. For a complete listing of stories issued by the *Berkeley IGS Poll* go to <https://www.igs.berkeley.edu/research/berkeley-igs-poll>.