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Title

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Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3rx1h9cv>

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Publication Date

2022-08-24



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Release #2022-14

Wednesday, August 24, 2022

Californians consider abortion an important issue in this year's election; Voters appear ready to approve Proposition One.

by Mark DiCamillo, Director, *Berkeley IGS Poll*
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Eight in ten California voters (81%) consider abortion to be of importance to them when voting in this year's Congressional and other state and local elections. In particular, 63% rate the issue "very important." In addition, 71% say they would vote Yes on Proposition One, a constitutional amendment on the November statewide election ballot that would prohibit the state from denying or interfering with a woman's right to an abortion and guarantees access to contraceptives.

Two-thirds of the state's voters (68%) disapprove of the U.S. Supreme Court decision to overturn *Roe vs. Wade* and grant individual states the right to limit or ban abortion, with 60% disapproving strongly.

Also, by a 65% to 29% margin Californians support new policies recently passed by the state legislature and signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom which aim to assist women in other states to obtain an abortion in California.

A similarly large majority of voters (66%) also express concern that given the High Court's recent actions on the issue of abortion, it will begin to reconsider other past rulings on social issues, such as those protecting contraception rights and same-sex marriage.

In each instance nearly all major segments of the registered voter population side with the majority pro-choice views on abortion, except for the state's Republicans and conservatives.

These are the findings from the latest statewide *Berkeley IGS Poll* administered online in English and Spanish August 9-15, 2022 among 9,254 California registered voters.

IGS co-director, G. Cristina Mora, notes that the findings "show that the majority of California voters disagree with the Supreme Court's recent ruling and approve of measures that would help to safeguard women's rights in the state."

Voters overwhelmingly back the state’s constitutional amendment on abortion rights

The November statewide election will feature a constitutional amendment, Proposition One, placed on the ballot by the legislature, that would prohibit the state from denying or interfering with a woman’s right to an abortion and guarantees access to contraceptives.

When read a summary of the ballot measure, seven in ten registered voters (71%) say they would vote Yes to approve the amendment while 18% would vote No. Support spans virtually all major regions and demographic subgroups of the registered voter population. The only segments opposed are Republicans and strong conservatives.

Table 1
Voter preferences regarding PROPOSITION ONE, a statewide constitutional amendment
that guarantees a woman’s right to abortion and to contraceptives
(among California registered voters)

	Yes	No	Undecided
	%	%	%
Total registered voters	71	18	11
<u>Party registration</u>			
Democrats	89	5	6
Republicans	35	49	16
No party preference/other	74	14	12
<u>Political ideology</u>			
Strongly conservative	23	66	11
Somewhat conservative	41	39	21
Moderate	75	11	14
Somewhat liberal	94	2	4
Strongly liberal	96	1	3
<u>Region</u>			
Los Angeles County	72	16	12
San Diego County	72	16	12
Orange County	69	21	10
Inland Empire	66	25	9
Central Coast	74	21	5
Central Valley	66	24	10
San Francisco Bay Area	80	11	9
North Coast/Sierras	65	20	15
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	68	21	11
Female	75	16	9
<u>Age</u>			
18-29	79	12	9
30-39	76	13	11
40-49	68	20	12
50-64	66	22	12
65 or older	69	22	9
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
White non-Hispanic	72	20	8
Latino	67	19	14
Asian/Pacific Islander	78	12	10
Black	76	12	12

Abortion seen as an important issue to California voters in this year’s elections

Eight in ten voters (81%) rate the issue of abortion as being important to them in this year’s Congressional and other state and local elections, with 63% describing the issue as “very important.”

The segments most likely to rate abortion a “very important” issue are voters who identify as strongly liberal (85%) or somewhat liberal (78%) in politics, Democrats (77%), voters living in the state’s Central Coast region (74%), women (71%), Blacks (69%), and voters 18-29 (69%).

Table 2
Importance of the issue of abortion when voting in this year elections for Congress and other state and local races (among California registered voters)

	Important %	Not important %	No opinion %	“Very important” %
Total registered voters	81	15	4	63
<u>Party registration</u>				
Democrats	91	7	2	77
Republicans	65	29	6	43
No party preference/other	77	18	5	57
<u>Political ideology</u>				
Strongly conservative	63	32	5	51
Somewhat conservative	65	29	6	38
Moderate	78	16	6	57
Somewhat liberal	92	6	2	78
Strongly liberal	97	3	*	85
<u>Region</u>				
Los Angeles County	82	14	4	64
San Diego County	80	14	6	62
Orange County	77	18	5	57
Inland Empire	82	15	3	63
Central Coast	84	14	2	74
Central Valley	75	20	5	58
San Francisco Bay Area	84	13	3	64
North Coast/Sierras	80	20	*	68
<u>Gender</u>				
Male	76	21	3	54
Female	85	11	4	71
<u>Age</u>				
18-29	86	9	5	69
30-39	81	15	4	63
40-49	76	19	5	63
50-64	80	16	4	60
65 or older	79	17	4	61
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>				
White non-Hispanic	80	17	3	63
Latino	81	14	5	66
Asian/Pacific Islander	84	12	4	59
Black	85	12	3	69

Six in ten Californians strongly disapprove of High Court ruling on abortion

Two-thirds of voters (68%) disapprove of the recent Supreme Court decision overturning Roe vs. Wade and granting individual states the right to limit or ban abortion, 60% strongly.

Views about the ruling are highly partisan and ideological. Greater than eight in ten Democrats and liberals strongly disapprove of the ruling, while large majorities of Republicans and conservatives support the decision. Majorities of voters in all major regions and demographic subgroups disapprove, with Bay Area voters, younger voters, women, Blacks, and Asian/Pacific Islanders voicing the highest levels of disapproval.

Table 3
Views of the U.S. Supreme Court decision overturning Roe v Wade and allowing individual states to limit or ban abortion (among California registered voters)

	Approve %	Disapprove %	No opinion %	“Disapprove strongly” %
Total registered voters	27	68	5	60
<u>Party registration</u>				
Democrats	8	88	4	82
Republicans	68	26	6	17
No party preference/other	25	69	6	59
<u>Political ideology</u>				
Strongly conservative	81	15	4	10
Somewhat conservative	62	31	7	20
Moderate	19	71	10	58
Somewhat liberal	4	94	2	90
Strongly liberal	2	97	1	95
<u>Region</u>				
Los Angeles County	22	70	8	62
San Diego County	27	69	4	62
Orange County	33	61	6	52
Inland Empire	36	59	5	52
Central Coast	26	70	4	65
Central Valley	35	60	5	50
San Francisco Bay Area	18	77	5	70
North Coast/Sierras	38	60	2	55
<u>Gender</u>				
Male	32	62	6	54
Female	23	73	4	65
<u>Age</u>				
18-29	17	77	6	69
30-39	23	71	6	63
40-49	26	68	6	59
50-64	32	63	5	52
65 or older	35	63	2	57
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>				
White non-Hispanic	29	67	4	61
Latino	28	65	7	56
Asian/Pacific Islander	19	74	7	64
Black	18	77	5	69

Broad support for newly passed laws assisting women in other states to get abortions in California

In response to the High Court’s ruling, Governor Gavin Newsom and the state legislature recently approved new laws aimed at assisting women in other states to obtain an abortion in California. When asked their reaction to these laws, voters are supportive 65% to 29%.

The division of responses is similar to those of the poll’s other abortion-related questions, with majorities across nearly all major regions and demographic subgroups approving the new laws, with the only exceptions being Republicans and conservatives.

Table 4
Views of new laws that assist women in other states to get an abortion in California (among California registered voters)

	Approve %	Disapprove %	No opinion %	“Approve strongly” %
Total registered voters	65	29	6	50
<u>Party registration</u>				
Democrats	86	9	5	72
Republicans	22	70	8	10
No party preference/other	65	26	9	48
<u>Political ideology</u>				
Strongly conservative	12	83	6	7
Somewhat conservative	32	61	7	14
Moderate	65	24	11	44
Somewhat liberal	92	6	2	77
Strongly liberal	97	2	1	90
<u>Region</u>				
Los Angeles County	68	23	9	54
San Diego County	64	31	5	50
Orange County	58	35	7	44
Inland Empire	54	39	7	41
Central Coast	68	30	2	52
Central Valley	58	36	6	43
San Francisco Bay Area	75	19	6	58
North Coast/Sierras	62	37	1	50
<u>Gender</u>				
Male	60	33	7	45
Female	69	24	7	55
<u>Age</u>				
18-29	77	17	6	63
30-39	70	22	8	57
40-49	59	32	9	43
50-64	59	35	6	43
65 or older	61	34	5	46
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>				
White non-Hispanic	64	31	5	50
Latino	63	28	9	50
Asian/Pacific Islander	70	23	7	53
Black	73	20	7	57

Concern that the High Court will also reconsider other past rulings

Two in three California voters (66%) are also concerned that given the High Court’s overturning of Roe vs. Wade, that it will also reconsider other past rulings on social issues, such as those protecting contraception rights and same-sex marriage.

Concerns are greatest among the state’s Democrats, liberals, women, younger voters, Blacks, and those living in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Table 5
Concern that the U.S. Supreme Court will reconsider other past rulings that the protect
contraception rights and same-sex marriage (among California registered voters)

	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Not too concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Total registered voters	51	15	12	17
<u>Party registration</u>				
Democrats	72	15	6	3
Republicans	13	12	24	45
No party preference/other	48	16	13	16
<u>Political ideology</u>				
Strongly conservative	13	5	17	60
Somewhat conservative	17	15	28	33
Moderate	45	21	13	12
Somewhat liberal	75	17	4	2
Strongly liberal	88	8	3	3
<u>Region</u>				
Los Angeles County	53	15	10	15
San Diego County	48	13	17	18
Orange County	43	18	12	22
Inland Empire	46	13	13	21
Central Coast	54	14	10	19
Central Valley	45	15	15	19
San Francisco Bay Area	58	16	11	12
North Coast/Sierras	56	6	12	24
<u>Gender</u>				
Male	45	15	15	21
Female	56	14	10	14
<u>Age</u>				
18-29	54	17	13	10
30-39	51	17	12	13
40-49	48	13	11	20
50-64	47	15	12	20
65 or older	52	13	12	20
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>				
White non-Hispanic	53	13	11	20
Latino	48	17	13	13
Asian/Pacific Islander	51	18	14	10
Black	56	16	9	15

Note: Differences between 100% and sum of each row’s percentages equal proportions with no opinion.

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 August 9-15, 2022, among 9,254 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, while the estimated sampling error of results from the random subsample is +/-2.5 percentage points.

Question wording

(ASKED OF A RANDOM SUBSAMPLE OF 4,595 REGISTERED VOTERS STATEWIDE)

How important are each of the following issues to you when thinking about the candidates that you might support for Congress and other state and local offices in the November general election? Abortion.

(ASKED OF THE OVERALL SAMPLE OF 9,254 REGISTERED VOTERS STATEWIDE)

In the November election, California voters will be asked to vote on Proposition One, a statewide constitutional amendment having to do with abortion rights. It reads as follows: “The state shall not deny or interfere with an individual’s reproductive freedom in their most intimate decisions, which includes their fundamental right to choose to have an abortion and their fundamental right to choose or refuse contraceptives.” If you were voting today, would you vote YES or NO on Proposition One?

Do you approve or disapprove of the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision on abortion that overturned Roe vs. Wade and said that individual states may limit or ban abortions?

In response to this U.S. Supreme Court ruling, Governor Gavin Newsom and the California state legislature passed several new laws that would assist women living in other states to obtain an abortion in California. Do you approve or disapprove of these new laws?

How concerned are you that now that the U.S. Supreme Court has overturned Roe vs. Wade, it will reconsider other past rulings that protect contraception rights and same-sex marriage?

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 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 to 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>.