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## IGS Poll

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***While Biden and Harris job ratings have declined some, Californians strongly support the President's infrastructure and domestic spending proposals - Plurality also favors changing the U.S. Senate filibuster rule 48% to 37% -***

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President Joe Biden's job performance ratings among Californians have declined some over the past three months, but they remain strong, with 59% of voters approving, down from 62% three months ago. Voter assessments of the home-state of Vice President Kamala Harris are also somewhat lower than they were earlier in the year, with 49% now offering a positive assessment compared to 53% in April.

Nevertheless, greater than seven in ten of the state's voters back Biden's infrastructure and domestic spending packages, and majorities say they would continue to back them even if the President is unable to obtain bipartisan support for each in the Congress.

By a 48% to 37% margin, Californians also favor changing the Senate filibuster rule so that most major bills can be voted upon and approved by a simple majority of Senators rather than the 60 votes now required to end debate on such legislation.

About half of the state's voters (47%) say that they and their families have directly benefited from the federal stimulus package passed earlier this year that sought to provide relief to Americans due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Most likely to report having been helped by the law were Californians with annual household incomes of less than \$40,000, Latinos, Blacks, and registered Democrats.

These are the topline findings from the latest *Berkeley IGS Poll* completed online last week among a stratified random sample of 5,785 registered voters throughout California.

Reflecting on the findings IGS co-director Eric Schickler offered these observations, "Although the President's approval remains high in California, the poll suggests a decline in enthusiasm from voter views of Biden during his first 100 days. This may be due to frustration that voters see with the pace of progress his administration is having in winning legislative approval of his programs in Congress."

**Biden’s approval rating in California stands at 59%, down slightly from April**

President Biden’s job approval rating in California has declined slightly over the past three months but remains quite strong. At present, 59% of the state’s registered voters approve of his performance, while 37% disapprove. This compares to a slightly more favorable 62% to 34% approval rating that he received in the last *Berkeley IGS Poll* completed in late April. Most of the decline comes from the ranks of voters who say they “strongly approve” of the President’s performance, which declined from 39% in April to 30% in the latest poll.

Democrats remain strongly supportive of the President, with 86% approving of his performance, 50% saying they approve strongly. Republican voters have a completely different view, with 86% disapproving of the job Biden is doing, 74% strongly. The views of No Party Preference voters largely mirror those of the overall voting public.

**Table 1  
California voter views of the job Joe Biden is doing as President**

	<b>Approve (total) %</b>	Approve strongly %	Approve somewhat %	<b>Disapprove (total) %</b>	Disapprove somewhat %	Disapprove strongly %
<b>Total statewide</b>						
<b>July 2021</b>	<b>59</b>	30	29	<b>37</b>	10	27
April 2021	62	39	23	34	8	26
<b><u>Party registration (July)</u></b>						
Democrats	86	50	36	9	6	3
Republicans	11	3	8	86	12	74
No party preference	58	23	35	36	15	21
Other parties	43	10	33	49	12	37

*Differences between 100% and the sum of each row’s percentages equal proportion with no opinion.*

**Harris’ approval rating as Vice President also dips among her home-state voters**

The job marks given to Vice President Harris among her home-state voters have also declined some over the past three months. In April 53% of California voters said they approved of her performance in office and 33% disapproved. Now, 49% approve and 38% disapprove. Like the erosion in the President’s job marks, the decline in Harris’ ratings is most evident among voters who strongly approve of her performance, with 24% now reporting this, down from 35% in April.

Voter views of Harris are also very partisan. Greater than three in four Democrats (77%) approve of the job the Vice President is doing, while 88% of Republicans disapprove. The intensity of voter disapproval among Republican voters is also more pronounced than her approval is among Democrats, with 74% of GOP voters voicing strong disapproval of her performance compared to just 42% of Democrats who strongly approve.

**Table 2**  
**California voter views of the job Kamala Harris is doing as Vice President**

	<b>Approve (total) %</b>	Approve strongly %	Approve somewhat %	<b>Disapprove (total) %</b>	Disapprove somewhat %	Disapprove strongly %
<b>Total statewide</b>						
<b>July 2021</b>	<b>49</b>	24	25	<b>38</b>	8	30
April 2021	53	35	18	33	6	27
<b>Party registration (July)</b>						
Democrats	77	42	35	12	7	5
Republicans	6	3	3	88	6	82
No party preference	44	18	26	36	12	24
Other parties	34	8	26	48	9	39

*Differences between 100% and the sum of each row's percentages equal proportion with no opinion.*

**Strong backing of President Biden's proposed infrastructure and domestic spending packages**

When read a summary of the major elements of the two major pieces of legislation that President Biden is now seeking to get through Congress, 76% of Californians say they support his proposed infrastructure package and 72% are supportive of his domestic spending proposal.

Registered Democrats are nearly unanimous in their backing of each proposal, while the state's No Party Preference registrants are being strongly supportive. By contrast, majorities of the state's Republican voters are opposed, although significant proportions, ranging from 40% on the infrastructure package to 32% on Biden's domestic spending package, are supportive.

**Table 3**  
**Opinions of President Biden's proposed infrastructure and domestic spending packages after being read a summary of their major provisions (among California registered voters)**

	<b>Support %</b>	<b>Oppose %</b>	<b>No opinion %</b>
<b>Infrastructure package (total)</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>
Democrats	96	2	2
Republicans	40	54	6
No Party Preference	80	16	4
Other parties	66	27	7
<b>Domestic spending package (total)</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>
Democrats	94	4	2
Republicans	32	61	7
No Party Preference	75	19	6
Other parties	64	28	8

**Majorities favor Congress passing both packages even if they don't receive bipartisan support**

The poll also asked voters whether they favored Congress acting on each proposal even if they do not receive bipartisan support. The results indicate that greater than half of California voters approve of Congress passing each proposal whether they receive getting bipartisan support. This compares to about one in four who feel Congress should only approve them if members of both parties are supporting them. Another one in seven think Congress should reject both packages with or without bipartisan backing.

Consistent with their overall views of each spending package, partisan differences color voter opinions about this. While greater than three in four Democrats favor Congress approving both packages even if they are unable to obtain bipartisan support, very few Republicans take this view.

**Table 4**  
**Congressional approval of the President's proposed infrastructure and domestic spending packages (among California registered voters)**

	<b>Approve regardless of bipartisan support</b>	<b>Approve only with bipartisan support</b>	<b>Don't approve at all</b>	<b>No opinion</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Infrastructure package (total voters)</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>
Democrats	78	14	1	7
Republicans	8	46	38	8
No Party Preference	53	29	10	8
Other parties	42	28	20	10
<b>Domestic spending package (total voters)</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>
Democrats	78	13	2	7
Republicans	7	39	45	9
No Party Preference	49	27	12	12
Other parties	37	32	18	13

**About half of Californians say they would support changing the Senate's filibuster rule**

One of the more contentious issues under discussion in Washington is whether the Senate should change its filibuster rule, which prevents that body from voting on most major bills unless 60 of its 100 members vote to end debate. Given the Senate's current 50-50 make-up of Democrats and Republicans, the filibuster rule has far-reaching consequences in the current legislative year, since it is preventing Senate Democrats from bringing to a vote most of Biden's legislative proposals unless they can garner the backing of at least 10 Republican members.

The survey attempted to gauge voter opinions about the Senate's filibuster rule by presenting voters with the following description and question:

*Under the Senate’s rules, senators can block most major pieces of legislation by using a procedure known as the filibuster. A filibuster prevents the Senate from voting on a bill unless 60 of the Senate’s 100 members vote to end debate. Supporters of the rule say it’s a good thing since it requires bills to receive broad support to be voted upon. Opponents say it’s too restrictive since it allows a minority of senators to block bills that are supported by the majority. What do you think the Senate should do with the filibuster rule -- keep it in place so that most Senate bills require at least 60 votes to be voted upon or change the filibuster rule so that bills can be voted upon and approved by a simple majority?*

In this setting, 48% of California voters say they would favor changing the Senate’s filibuster rule so that bills can be voted on by a simple majority, while 37% support keeping the rule requiring the votes of at least 60 Senators to end debate. Another 15% have no opinion.

Views about changing the Senate’s filibuster rule differ markedly by party, with about seven in ten Democrats supporting its change, while greater than seven in ten Republicans favor keeping it in place.

**Table 5**  
**Voter opinions of the filibuster rule that prevents the Senate from voting on most bills unless 60 of the Senate’s 100 members vote to end debate**  
**(among California registered voters)**

	<b>Support changing the filibuster rule to a simple majority %</b>	<b>Favor keeping the filibuster rule as is %</b>	<b>No opinion %</b>
<b>Total statewide</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>15</b>
Democrats	69	17	14
Republicans	15	74	11
No party preference	45	37	18
Other parties	33	45	22

Voter views about changing the Senate filibuster rule are also directly correlated with what actions they feel Congress should take regarding the President’s two major spending proposals. The large majority of those who favor changing the filibuster rule to a simple majority also support Congress approving of both of Biden’s spending packages with or without winning bipartisan backing.

**Which Californians were most likely to benefit from the federal Covid-19 stimulus package?**

Earlier this year the Biden administration won Congressional approval of a \$1.9 trillion stimulus package to provide Americans with relief due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. In its latest survey, the *Berkeley IGS Poll* asked voters about the impact of the stimulus bill on themselves and their families.

The results show that about half of the state’s voters (47%) say that they or their families were helped by the federal stimulus package, 40% say it had no impact, while 8% reported a negative impact.

The segments of the voting public most likely to report directly benefiting from the law were those with an annual household income of less than \$40,000, Latinos, Blacks, and registered Democrats.

**Table 6**  
**Impact that the Covid-19 stimulus package has had on Californians and their families (among California registered voters)**

	<b>Helped %</b>	<b>No impact %</b>	<b>Hurt %</b>	<b>No opinion %</b>
<b>Total statewide</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Party registration</b>				
Democrats	63	32	1	4
Republicans	20	58	17	5
No party preference	47	40	8	5
Other parties	43	34	15	7
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>				
White	37	48	9	6
Latino	66	26	5	3
Asian/Pacific Islander	46	42	7	5
Black/African American	64	28	3	5
<b>Annual household income</b>				
Less than \$20,000	73	16	6	5
\$20,000-\$39,999	65	26	5	4
\$40,000-\$59,999	57	29	6	8
\$60,000-\$99,999	48	39	7	6
\$100,000-\$149,999	42	49	8	1
\$150,000-\$199,999	32	53	10	5
\$200,000 or more	18	65	12	5

**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. Funding for the poll was provided in part by the *Los Angeles Times*.

The poll was administered online in English and Spanish July 18-24, 2021 among a stratified random sample of 5,795 registered voters across California. The survey distributed email invitations to stratified random samples of the state’s registered voters. 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 state's official voter registration rolls. Prior to the distribution of emails, the overall sample was stratified by age and gender in an attempt 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 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 due to the effects 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**

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Joe Biden is handling his job as President?

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Kamala Harris is handling her job as Vice President?

Earlier this year Congress passed, and President Biden signed into law a \$1.9 trillion stimulus package in response to the coronavirus pandemic?

Has the stimulus law helped, hurt or had no impact on you and your family?

President Biden has also proposed two other large spending plans to Congress.

**(ORDERING OF THE PRESIDENT'S TWO SPENDING PACKAGES WERE ROTATED)**

(One of the proposals) (The other proposal) is an infrastructure package and it includes moneys to repair and rebuild roads, bridges, airports, trains, improve public transit systems, power grids, and access to high-speed Internet in rural communities, build more charging stations for electric vehicles and set new clean energy standards for the nation. In general, do you support or oppose this plan?

What action would you like to like the Congress to take regarding the President's infrastructure spending package?



(One of the proposals) (The other proposal) is a domestic spending package and it includes moneys to expand Medicare coverages for seniors and childcare services for working parents, provide more home and community-based care options for the elderly, greater college tuition support for students, and expanded paid leave for employees. In general, do you support or oppose this plan?

What action would you like to like the Congress to take regarding the President's domestic spending package?

Under the Senate's rules, senators can block most major pieces of legislation by using a procedure known as the filibuster. A filibuster prevents the Senate from voting on a bill unless 60 of the Senate's 100 members vote to end debate. Supporters of the rule say it's a good thing since it requires bills to receive broad support to be voted upon. Opponents say it's too restrictive since it allows a minority of senators to block bills that are supported by the majority. What do you think the Senate should do with the filibuster rule?

- (1) Keep it in place, so that most Senate bills require at least 60 votes to be voted upon
- (2) Change the filibuster rule so that bills can be voted upon and approved by a simple majority

#### **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, which is disseminated widely, 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 copy of the detailed tabulations to this report or a listing of past poll reports issued by the poll, please visit <https://www.igs.berkeley.edu/research/berkeley-igs-poll>.