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U.S. Senate race remains wide-open affair as candidate field expands.
- Porter and Schiff continue to lead, with Garvey and Lee not far behind -

by Mark DiCamillo, Director, *Berkeley IGS Poll*

The race to fill the U.S. Senate seat vacated by the late Dianne Feinstein in next year's March primary election remains a wide-open affair. Democratic Congressional representatives Katie Porter and Adam Schiff remaining atop the field among an expanding list of challengers, with a very large proportion of the state's likely voters (30%) remaining undecided.

Porter is now the choice of 17% of the state's likely voters, unchanged from mid-August, while support for Schiff has declined slightly from 20% in August to 16% at present. Former professional baseball player Republican Steve Garvey, who only announced his candidacy several weeks ago, is now receiving 10% support, while Democratic Congresswoman Barbara Lee stands at 9%. Both appear to have gained support since last August. Another Republican, businessman James Bradley, is in fifth place receiving 7% support, followed by fellow Republican Eric Early at 4%. Two other Democrats, Silicon Valley executive Lexie Reese, and television broadcast Christina Pascucci, poll just 1% support.

Table 1
Trend of voter preferences in 2024 primary election for U.S. Senate since August
(among likely voters)

	Late October	August
	%	%
Katie Porter, Congresswoman (D)	**17**	17
Adam Schiff, Congressman (D)	**16**	20
Steve Garvey, former professional baseball player (R)	**10**	7
Barbara Lee, Congresswoman (D)	**9**	7
James Bradley, businessman (R)	**7**	7
Eric Early, attorney (R)	**4**	5
Lexie Reese, Silicon Valley executive (D)	**1**	1
Christina Pascucci, television news reporter (D)	**1**	*NA*
Others	**5**	4
Undecided	**30**	32

G. Cristina Mora, IGS Co-Director, notes that "while Garvey's candidacy seems to have made a splash among the state's Republican voters, Porter and Schiff are still neck and neck at this point, and remain ahead of the rest of the field."

Preferences in the Senate race vary across voter subgroups

At this still relatively early stage of the campaign, preferences remain primarily driven by a voter's party registration and political ideology. Democrats Porter, Schiff, and Lee are dividing up most of the preferences of the state's Democratic and liberal voters, while Garvey, Bradley and Early are the favorites of the state's Republican and conservative voters.

Porter holds big leads among voters under age 50 while Schiff is the clear favorite of voters ages 65 or older. Lee dominates among the state's Black voters and runs competitively among voters in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area and the state's North Coast/Sierras region.

Table 2
Voter preferences in the 2024 primary election for U.S. Senate across major subgroups of the state's likely voter population

	Katie Porter (D) %	Adam Schiff (D) %	Steve Garvey (R) %	Barbara Lee (D) %	James Bradley (R) %	Eric Early(R) %	Un decided %
Total statewide	**17**	**16**	**10**	**9**	**7**	**4**	**30**
Party registration							
Democrats	26	26	1	14	2	*	25
Republicans	1	2	27	1	16	12	34
No party preference/others	17	13	8	9	7	3	34
Region							
Los Angeles County	22	18	7	9	5	4	27
San Diego County	16	17	12	7	5	6	30
Orange County	21	14	15	1	11	6	30
Inland Empire	17	12	13	8	9	5	28
Central Coast	15	17	13	10	6	5	30
Central Valley	12	14	12	4	10	5	33
San Francisco Bay Area	16	19	4	18	5	3	30
North Coast/Sierras	16	16	16	17	3	5	22
Political ideology							
Strongly conservative	1	3	22	2	18	14	33
Somewhat conservative	3	4	22	3	18	8	34
Moderate	14	17	9	7	4	3	36
Somewhat liberal	27	32	1	16	*	1	21
Strongly liberal	36	21	*	17	1	*	21
Age							
18-29	21	6	5	10	5	5	39
30-39	24	8	3	11	10	3	34
40-49	20	10	8	9	8	4	32
50-64	13	16	13	9	6	6	31
65 or older	14	28	13	9	6	4	21
Gender							
Female	19	15	7	10	6	5	33
Male	15	18	12	9	9	4	25
Race/ethnicity							
White non-Hispanic	18	20	13	7	7	4	26
Latino	17	11	6	9	7	5	34
Asian/Pacific Islander	15	16	5	11	6	6	35
Black	14	14	3	33	2	*	29

* less than ½ of 1%. Subgroups of those choosing other candidates or poll less than 2% not shown due to small samples..

Image ratings of the candidates are highly partisan

About half or more of the state's likely voters can offer an opinion of the three leading Democrats -- Porter, Schiff, and Lee -- and each is viewed positively among those offering an opinion. For example, Porter is viewed more favorably than unfavorably by a greater than two-to-one margin (38% to 17%) among the 55% able to rate her. While somewhat more voters can offer an opinion of Schiff (69%) and his image is positive overall, a somewhat larger share of the state's voters view him negatively (29%). About half of the state's likely voters (49%) can rate Lee, with 30% offering a favorable opinion and 19% unfavorable.

Republicans Garvey, Bradley, and Early are not as well-known as the three leading Democrats, although Garvey is better known than the other Republicans. At present 42% of likely voters can offer an opinion of Garvey, with 20% viewing him positively and 22% negatively. Only a quarter of likely voters can rate Bradley and Early; among those who do, opinions are mixed, with about as many holding a favorable opinion as an unfavorable opinion.

Assessments of each of the leading candidates are all highly partisan. Large proportions of Democratic voters offer very favorable assessments of Porter, Schiff, and Lee, while Republicans view each of the Democrats in a negative light, especially with respect to Schiff. The reverse is true for the leading Republican candidates, with Republicans offering generally positive assessments of Garvey, Bradley, and Early, and Democrats viewing each more negatively than positively.

Table 3
Image ratings of the major party candidates for U.S. Senate
(among likely voters)

	Total likely voters		Late October		
	Late October %	August %	Democrats %	Republicans %	No Party Pref./others %
Katie Porter					
Favorable	**38**	38	57	5	33
Unfavorable	**17**	19	6	38	17
No opinion	**45**	43	37	57	50
Adam Schiff					
Favorable	**40**	43	61	7	35
Unfavorable	**29**	32	8	66	28
No opinion	**31**	25	31	27	37
Steve Garvey					
Favorable	**20**	19	7	44	20
Unfavorable	**22**	22	29	10	20
No opinion	**58**	59	64	46	60
Barbara Lee					
Favorable	**30**	29	48	5	22
Unfavorable	**19**	19	7	39	20
No opinion	**51**	52	45	56	58
James Bradley					
Favorable	**13**	13	6	27	12
Unfavorable	**12**	13	13	9	10
No opinion	**75**	74	81	64	78
Eric Early					
Favorable	**13**	12	5	29	13
Unfavorable	**12**	11	12	10	11
No opinion	**75**	74	83	61	76
Christina Pascucci					
Favorable	**8**		10	4	7
Unfavorable	**15**	*NA*	10	25	15
No opinion	**77**		80	71	78
Lexie Reese					
Favorable	**6**	5	8	1	4
Unfavorable	**14**	15	9	25	14
No opinion	**80**	80	83	74	82

NA: Not measured in August survey.

Impact of candidate attributes on voter preferences
The survey also asked likely voters to indicate whether they considered each of six candidate attributes as being a positive factor, a negative factor, or not a factor to them when making their decisions about which candidate to support for U.S. Senate. Four of the six attributes are seen as being positive factors by majorities of the state's likely voters when making voting decisions about the candidates. These include:

- "Would fight uncompromisingly for what they believe in." (64% positive vs. 15% negative)
- "Has extensive experience in government." (55% positive vs. 10% negative)
- "Is a strong opponent of Donald Trump." (54% positive vs. 22% negative)
- "Is progressive in politics." (54% positive vs. 25% negative)

Voters currently supporting the three leading Democratic candidates overwhelming view each of these four attributes as positive factors when assessing the candidates. However, there are some differences in the levels of positive impact that each attribute has among their supporters. For example, slightly larger majorities of voters supporting Schiff than Porter or Lee rate the attribute, "has extensive experience in government" as being a positive factor to them, while slightly more Porter and Lee supporters than Schiff supporters consider the attribute "is progressive in politics" as a positive factor.

Most supporters of the three leading Republican candidates also consider the attribute "would fight uncompromisingly for what they believe in" as a positive factor to them when making their voting decisions. On the other hand, majorities of the voters backing the three leading GOP Senate candidates view the attributes "is a strong opponent of Donald Trump" and "is progressive in politics" as negative factors.

The candidate attribute, "is strongly conservative in politics," is considered as being more of a negative than positive factor by the overall likely voter electorate (47% negative vs. 33% positive). Yet this attribute is considered to be a very positive factor to voters currently supporting the three leading Republican candidates.

A sixth attribute, "is a political outsider," is considered to be less of a factor to voters, with relatively small proportions of the state's likely voters rating it as a positive or negative factor (26% positive vs. 17% negative). The exceptions are voters supporting Garvey and Bradley, as a majority of Garvey voters and a plurality of Bradley backers consider this to be a positive factor to them when deciding whom to support for the Senate.

Table 4

Table 4
Impact that candidate attributes have the preferences of the state's likely voters and
among supporters of the major candidates

	Total likely voters %	Porter voters %	Schiff voters %	Garvey voters %	Lee voters %	Bradley voters %	Early voters %	Undec-ided voters %
Would fight uncompromisingly for what they believe in								
Positive factor	64	66	63	72	68	70	68	59
Negative factor	15	18	19	9	14	7	11	16
Not a factor/no opinion	21	16	18	19	18	23	21	25
Has extensive experience in government								
Positive factor	55	72	84	23	74	25	34	47
Negative factor	10	4	2	25	4	27	17	11
Not a factor/no opinion	35	24	14	52	22	48	49	42
Is a strong opponent of Donald Trump								
Positive factor	54	85	87	15	76	11	17	44
Negative factor	22	6	6	54	9	54	42	24
Not a factor/no opinion	24	9	7	31	15	35	41	32
Is progressive in politics								
Positive factor	54	84	75	15	82	21	22	46
Negative factor	25	2	7	64	6	59	51	27
Not a factor/no opinion	21	14	18	21	12	20	27	27
Is a political outsider								
Positive factor	26	14	8	55	16	48	45	27
Negative factor	17	24	33	4	22	9	7	11
Not a factor/no opinion	57	62	59	41	62	43	48	62
Is strongly conservative in politics								
Positive factor	33	5	7	78	11	76	79	37
Negative factor	47	82	76	4	71	3	1	37
Not a factor/no opinion	20	13	17	28	18	21	20	26

Note: Impact of attributes for candidates receiving less than 4% not shown due to small sample bases.

News sources that likely voters turn to get news and information about the Senate race

Voters offer a wide range of news sources when asked to indicate their main sources of news and information about the candidates and issues in next year's U.S. Senate race. Table 5 below lists the news sources presented to voters in the survey and the distributions of voters identifying each as one of the main news sources they would turn to when seeking information about the candidates and issues in the Senate election.

One news source – local television and radio news – is considered to be a major news source by nearly all voters, regardless of party loyalties. Statewide 85% of likely voters identify it as one of their major news sources in the Senate election, including over eight in ten Democrats, Republicans and No Party Preference voters.

The other news sources that many of the state's likely voters say they turn to obtain news about the candidates and issues in the Senate election include: CNN or MSNBC (58%), online searches on Google or other search engines (43%), local or regional newspapers either online or in print (38%), the state's official voter guide and government websites (37%), podcasts or online stream sources like YouTube (31%), social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, or Instagram (30%), and family friends, neighbors or co-workers (28%).

There are some significant differences in the news sources that Democratic and Republican voters turn to for news and information about the Senate election. For example, Democratic voters are more likely than Republicans to cite CNN or MSNBC, local or regional newspapers, and the state's official voter guide as news sources that they use. By contrast, the state's Republican voters are much more likely than Democratic voters to turn to Fox News or to conservative news media like Newsmax or OAN.

Table 5
Main sources of news and information about candidates and issues in the U.S. Senate race
(among likely voters)

	Total likely voters %	Democrats %	Republicans %	No Party Pref./others %
Local TV and radio news	**85**	84	82	86
CNN or MSNBC	**58**	65	45	60
Online searches on Google or other search engines	**43**	44	39	44
Local or regional newspapers, either online or in print	**38**	42	29	35
The state's official voter guide/ government websites	**37**	42	29	35
Podcasts or online streaming services, like YouTube	**31**	28	32	34
Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, Instagram	**30**	31	26	35
Family, friends, neighbors, or co-workers	**28**	26	28	29
Fox News	**19**	6	43	17
Conservative news media like Newsmax, and OAN	**12**	1	33	8
Campaign advertisements/ information from candidates	**12**	12	11	10
Other news sources	**36**	34	36	38
No answer	**2**	1	3	2

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 October 24-30, 2023, among 6,342 California registered voters, including a weighted subsample of 4,506 likely voters. Funding for the poll was provided in part by the *Los Angeles Times.*

The poll was conducted by distributing 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 California registered voters with email addresses were derived from information contained on the official voter registration rolls and provided to IGS by Political Data, Inc. 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 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, after the completion of data collection, post-stratification weights were applied to the survey data file to align the sample of registered voters to population characteristics of the registered voters statewide and within major regions of the state.

The sampling error associated with the survey results is difficult to calculate precisely because of sample stratification and post-stratification weighting. Nevertheless, it is likely that findings based on the sample of likely voters are subject to an estimated sampling error of approximately +/-2.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

Question wording
Suppose you were voting in next year's full-term election for U.S. Senate. If you were voting today from among the following candidates, for whom would you vote?

Please indicate whether your opinion of each of the announced or potential Senate candidates is favorable or unfavorable, or whether you don't yet know enough about him or her to offer an opinion?

For each of the following attributes please indicate whether you consider it to be a positive factor, a negative factor, or not a factor in your decision about which candidate to support for U.S. Senate? (**SEE RELEASE FOR ATTRIBUTES LISTED, ORDER RANDOMIZED)**

What are your main sources of news and information about the candidates and issues in the election for U.S. Senate? (**SEE RELEASE FOR NEWS SOURCES LISTED, ORDER RANDOMIZED)**

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 all past poll reports issued by the *Berkeley IGS Poll,* please visit the poll's website at https://www.igs.berkeley.edu/research/berkeley-igs-poll.