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***While Feinstein holds big lead in California's U.S. Senate primary,
the race for second place remains close.***

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Incumbent Democrat Dianne Feinstein continues to hold a very large lead in Tuesday's low profile primary election for the U.S. Senate. However, according to the latest *Berkeley IGS Poll*, the race to determine who will face off against Feinstein in the fall general election remains close.

The poll finds Feinstein the choice of 36% when likely voters are presented with the complete list of all thirty-two candidates running in the U.S. primary. In this setting State Senator Kevin de Leon places a distant second at 11%, with little known Republican chief financial officer James P. Bradley within striking distance, at 7%. Another 4% are supporting GOP small business owner Paul A. Taylor, while 13% scatter their votes among nine other Republicans, and 6% choose one of the nine other Democratic candidates in the race. An unusually large 25% of likely voters were still undecided in the final week.

The closeness of the race for second place is also seen in the preferences of those polled who report having already voted in the primary. A Political Data, Inc. (PDI) analysis of the poll's participants finds that 23% of the sample of likely voters had already voted according to official county records. Among these voters, the poll finds 37% saying they had voted for Feinstein, 12% voted for de Leon, while an equal proportion (12%) chose Bradley.

Preferences in the Senate race are closely linked to a voter's party registration. According to the poll, Democratic candidates are receiving an aggregate 78% of the preferences of likely Democratic voters, while just 2% are supporting Republican candidates. The remaining 20% were undecided. Similarly, very few Republican voters (7%) are backing any of the Democratic candidates, with most (55%) selecting one of the eleven Republican candidates. However, a huge 38% of GOP likely voters remained undecided one week before the primary.

The highly partisan nature of voter preferences and the fact that nearly twice as many Republicans as Democrats are still undecided, could work to Bradley’s advantage since it offers him greater opportunities than de Leon to expand his support base in the closing days.

These are the findings from the latest *Berkeley IGS Poll* completed online in English and Spanish May 22-28, 2018 among 2,106 likely voters in the primary election. Voters were randomly sampled from the state voter rolls by PDI, which is partnering with the *Berkeley IGS Poll* in its pre-election polling this year.

Feinstein holds a big lead in voter preferences in the Senate primary, but the race for second place remains close

When likely voters in the primary are presented with the complete list of all thirty-two candidates listed on the U.S. Senate election ballot, 36% say they will be backing Feinstein, up from 28% last month.

The poll finds voter support for de Leon at 11%, unchanged from April. And, similar to last month’s *Berkeley IGS Poll*, de Leon’s leading challenger continues to be the relatively unknown Bradley, who receives 7% in the latest poll, down slightly from 10% in April.

An unusually large 25% of likely voters were undecided in the Senate race in the final week.

Table 1
Trend of voter preferences in California’s top two primary election for U.S. Senate
(among likely voters)

	Late May 2018 %	April 2018 %
Dianne Feinstein, U.S. Senator (D)	36	28
Kevin de Leon, California Senator (D)	11	11
James P. Bradley, chief financial officer (R)	7	10
Paul A. Taylor, small business owner (R)	4	2
Other Republican candidates	9*	6
Other Democratic candidates	6*	5
All other candidates	2*	1
Undecided	25	37

(D) denotes Democrat, (R) denotes Republican

* Aggregate voting preferences for 9 other Republican candidates, 9 other Democrat candidates, and 10 candidates affiliated with other parties or are running as non-partisans, whose names will also appear on the primary election ballot for U.S. Senate, none of whom individually receive more than 2% support in the latest poll.

Voters making their choices primarily from among the candidates within their own parties

Given the low familiarity that voters have with the large field of candidates challenging Feinstein in the Senate primary, most voters appear to making their selections from the ranks of the candidates running within their own respective parties.

In the current poll Democratic candidates received an aggregate of 78% of the preferences of likely Democratic voters, with only 2% crossing party lines to vote for one of the GOP candidates. Most of the rest were undecided.

Similarly, the poll finds that very few GOP voters (7%) are backing any of the Democratic candidates, with most of the rest either supporting one of the relatively unknown Republicans or were undecided.

The preferences of voters in the poll who had already cast their ballots also demonstrate the closeness of the race for second. A Political Data, Inc. (PDI) analysis of the poll's participants finds that 23% of the likely voters surveyed had already voted according to official county records. Among these voters, Feinstein was way out ahead receiving 37% of the preferences. Another 12% chose de Leon, but an equal proportion of early voters (12%) said they voted for Bradley.

Feinstein polls particularly well among Democrats, political moderates and liberals, women, and among voters living in the state's most populous regions, Los Angeles County and the San Francisco Bay Area.

A voter's age is also related to voting preferences for Feinstein. The latest poll finds the incumbent receiving twice as much support from voters age 65 or older (45%) than from voters under age 40 (22%). Feinstein is the oldest of the nation's U.S. Senators and will turn 85 shortly after the primary.

De Leon's strongest base of support comes from Democrats, liberals and Latino voters. However, in each case he was receiving no more than 18% of their preferences.

Bradley does best among fellow Republicans, as well as among conservatives, although he too receives just 19% and 20%, respectively, from each group. One factor working in Bradley's favor is that nearly twice as many Republicans and conservatives as Democrats and liberals remained undecided in the final week. This offers him greater opportunities than de Leon for expanding his base in the final days of the campaign.

Table 2
Likely voter preferences in the top two primary election for U.S. Senate
across major subgroups of the likely voter population in late May

	Feinstein (D) %	de Leon (D) %	Bradley (R) %	Other Reps %	Other Dems %	Other/ Und. %
Total likely voters	36	11	7	13	6	27
Voting method						
Already voted	37	12	12	12	3	24
Will vote by mail	37	10	5	13	6	29
Will vote at voting precinct	33	10	5	14	6	32
Party registration						
Democrats	53	18	*	2	7	20
Republicans	5	1	20	35	1	38
No Party Preference/other	37	7	5	11	7	33
Political ideology						
Conservative	7	2	19	34	2	36
Moderate	45	9	5	12	3	26
Liberal	53	18	*	*	10	19
Area						
Coastal counties	37	13	5	12	5	28
Inland counties	32	6	10	16	8	28
Region						
Los Angeles County	41	14	5	13	3	24
South Coast	30	11	9	15	5	30
Other Southern California	32	7	10	15	7	29
Central Valley	31	7	10	16	9	27
San Francisco Bay Area	41	12	3	8	5	31
Other Northern California	32	14	3	20	5	26
Gender						
Male	29	12	11	14	5	29
Female	42	9	3	13	6	27
Race/ethnicity						
White non-Hispanic	38	10	8	14	5	25
Latino	30	18	6	10	7	29
All others	31	7	4	12	5	41
Age						
18-39	22	15	4	9	11	39
40-49	29	16	6	10	7	32
50-64	39	9	6	16	5	25
65 or older	45	7	10	15	2	21

* less than ½ of 1% (D) denotes Democrat, (R) denotes Republican

Comparing likely voter image ratings of Feinstein and de Leon

Nearly nine in ten of the likely voters polled offer an opinion of Feinstein, with 47% holding a favorable view and 41% an unfavorable opinion. Voter assessments of Feinstein are polarized by party, with greater than seven in ten Democrats (71%) viewing her positively, while eight in ten Republicans (80%) offer a negative evaluation. Non-partisans are evenly divided.

By contrast, fewer than half of likely voters (44%) can offer an opinion of de Leon, and their opinions are evenly split 22% favorable and 22% unfavorable. Views about de Leon are also highly partisan, with four times as many of the Democrats with an opinion rating him favorably (34%) as unfavorably (8%). On the other hand, Republicans are almost uniformly negative in their evaluations of the State Senator (4% positive vs. 43% negative).

Table 3
Image ratings of the two leading candidates for U.S. Senate
among likely voters in late May

	Total	Democrats	Republicans	No Party
	%	%	%	Pref/others
				%
Dianne Feinstein, United States Senator				
Favorable	47	71	9	44
Unfavorable	41	16	80	44
No opinion	12	13	11	12
Kevin de Leon, California Senator				
Favorable	22	34	4	20
Unfavorable	22	8	43	27
No opinion	56	58	53	53

Note: Identification and image ratings of Bradley and the other candidates in the U.S. Senate race were not measured.

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 completed online among 2,106 likely voters May 22-28, 2018 in English and Spanish by distributing email invitations to stratified random samples of registered voters throughout California. Each email invitation asked the randomly selected voter to participate in a short non-partisan survey conducted by IGS, and were provided with a link to the IGS website where the survey questionnaire was housed. The sample listings of voters and their email addresses were drawn from the state voter rolls by Political Data, Inc., which is collaborating with IGS in its pre-election polling.

During the data processing phase, post-stratification weights were applied to align the larger registered voter sample to a wide range of political and demographic characteristics of the state's overall registered voter population. Likely voters were then identified from the overall sample of registered voters, based on their stated intentions about voting in the June primary and their history of voting in past primary elections.

The IGS study director was responsible for overseeing all phases of the research, including the development of the survey questionnaire and email scripts, their translation into Spanish, sample selection, oversight of data collection and processing, the development of the post-stratification weights and the determination of which voters were most likely to vote.

Sampling error estimates applicable to the results of any probability-based survey depend on sample size, the percentage distributions being examined and design effects relating to how the sample was drawn. While estimates of the overall sampling error applicable to the results in this survey are not exact, it is estimated that the maximum sampling error applicable to the results from the likely voter sample is approximately +/- 3.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

Questions Asked

A total of 32 candidates are listed on the state's primary election ballot for U.S. Senate.

IF ALREADY VOTED IN THE PRIMARY: For whom did you vote for U.S. Senate? **IF LIKELY TO VOTE:** If the election were held today, for whom would you vote for U.S. Senate? **(NAMES, TITLES, AND PARTY AFFILIATIONS OF THE 32 U.S. SENATE CANDIDATES DISPLAYED TO VOTERS IN RANDOM ORDER)**

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 (UC) system's flagship Berkeley campus, it is the oldest organized research unit in the UC system and the oldest public policy research center in the state. IGS conducts periodic surveys of California public opinion on matters of politics, public policy and public issues through its *Berkeley IGS Poll*, housed within its newly established Jack Citrin Center for Public Opinion Research. For a complete listing of stories issued by the poll go to <https://igs.berkeley.edu/igs-poll/berkeley-igs-poll>.