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Biden and Harris approval ratings decline in California.
-- Voter appraisals of Senator Feinstein now at an all-time low --

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Californians' job approval ratings of both President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris have declined over the past six months. Voters here are now about evenly divided in their assessments of the job Biden is doing as President, with 47% approving and 48% disapproving. Last summer Biden's approval ratings in the state were 59% to 37%.

The job ratings that Californians now give to home state Vice President Harris are even lower than the President's, with 38% rating her performance positively and 46% negatively, down from a 49% to 38% positive assessment last July.

Generally speaking, the voter subgroups who approve or disapprove of Biden are the same subgroups viewing Harris positively or negatively. Republicans and strong conservatives overwhelmingly disapprove of the job that each is doing, with about nine in ten offering a negative assessment. On the other hand, while the state's Democratic and liberal voters view each more positively than negatively, their assessments are not nearly as one-sided, with about seven in ten of the state's Democrats and liberals approving of Biden's performance, and about six in ten saying this about Harris.

In addition, the poll finds that U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein's job ratings are now at an all-time low. At present, just 30% of the state's registered voters approve, while 49% disapprove of her performance in office. A major contributor to Feinstein's negative standing is that she is falling out of favor among many of the state's traditionally Democratic voting constituencies. The five-term Senator now receives more negative than positive job ratings from strong liberals, women, voters of color, younger voters, as well as voters in Los Angeles County or the San Francisco Bay Area.

California's other U.S. Senator, Alex Padilla, while less well known than Feinstein, receives more positive than negative job marks across these constituencies, and possesses a 34%-26% approval rating among the overall electorate, although many voters (40%) have no opinion.

Voters are also taking a dim view of the job the U.S. Congress is doing overall, with just 20% approving and 72% disapproving.

<u>Californians' views of the job performance of President Biden and Vice President Harris</u>
California voter assessments of the job that Biden is doing as President have declined since last summer, as about as many voters disapprove (48%) as approve (47%) of his overall performance. Last July Biden's approval rating was positive, 59% to 37%.

The poll also finds Harris receiving even lower marks than the President in her home state. At present, just 38% approve and 46% disapprove of her performance as Vice President, a reversal from the 49% positive and 38% negative job marks she received last July. It is also noteworthy that most of the increase in the disapproval ratings of each officeholder is made up of those who strongly disapprove.

Table 1a
Trend of California voter appraisals of the job performance of
President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris

	Approve (total) %	Approve strongly %	Approve somewhat %	Disapprove (total) %	Disapprove somewhat %	Disapprove strongly %	No opinion %
<u>President Biden</u>							
February 2022	**47**	**17**	**30**	**48**	**14**	**34**	**5**
July 2021	59	30	29	37	10	27	4
April 2021	62	39	23	34	8	26	4
<u>Vice President Harris</u>							
February 2022	**38**	**15**	**23**	**46**	**11**	**35**	**16**
July 2021	49	24	25	38	8	30	13
April 2021	53	35	18	33	6	27	14

<u>Biden and Harris share generally the same profile of supporters and detractors</u>
Biden's and Harris's approval ratings remain above water among voters living in the Democratic strongholds of Los Angeles County and the San Francisco Bay Area, but are more negative than positive in nearly every other region of the state.

A gender gap is also seen in the voter assessments of both officials, with majorities of men disapproving and pluralities of women approving. There are also differences in their approval ratings by age, with fewer younger voters than older voters tending to approve of each officeholder.

In addition, both receive lower job marks among white voters than among voters of color. Blacks also offer more positive assessments than do the state's Latino and Asian American voters.

2

Comparing the current job ratings of President Biden and Vice President Harris across major subgroups of the California registered voter population

	Biden			Harris		
	Approve %	Disapprove %	No opinion %	Approve %	Disapprove %	No opinion %
Total registered voters	**47**	**48**	**5**	**38**	**46**	**16**
Party registration						
Democrats	72	23	5	61	21	17
Republicans	6	93	1	5	92	3
No party preference/other	40	52	8	31	50	19
Political ideology						
Strongly conservative	9	90	1	11	87	2
Somewhat conservative	18	80	2	16	77	7
Moderate	48	44	8	37	43	20
Somewhat liberal	73	23	4	58	22	20
Strongly liberal	72	24	4	60	22	18
Region						
Los Angeles County	50	45	5	43	41	16
San Diego County	46	49	5	37	48	15
Orange County	39	55	6	31	57	12
Inland Empire	42	54	4	36	50	14
Central Coast	52	45	3	40	43	17
Central Valley	39	58	3	32	55	13
San Francisco Bay Area	56	39	5	43	38	19
North Coast/Sierras	41	59	*	40	53	7
Gender						
Male	43	54	3	33	53	14
Female	51	43	6	44	41	15
Age						
18-29	34	53	13	30	46	24
30-39	43	51	6	36	47	17
40-49	47	50	3	39	48	13
50-64	51	47	2	41	47	12
65 or older	57	42	1	44	44	12
Race/ethnicity						
White non-Hispanic	46	52	2	34	52	14
Latino	49	44	7	45	40	15
Asian/Pacific Islander	49	43	8	39	41	20
Black	54	39	7	54	27	19

* less than ½ of 1%.

Feinstein's approval ratings are very much underwater, while Padilla receives more positive than negative job marks

California's two U.S. Senators, Dianne Feinstein, and Alex Padilla, receive very different job marks from the state's voters. While more voters can offer an opinion of Feinstein, now serving her fifth full term in the Senate, than can rate Padilla, fewer approve of her performance than Padilla, and nearly twice as many disapprove. Overall, Feinstein's job ratings are 49% disapprove and 30% approve. For Padilla, 34% approve and 26% disapprove, with 40% of voters not able to offer an assessment.

Table 2a
Comparing California voter assessments of the job performance of
U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Alex Padilla

	Feinstein	Padilla
	%	%
Approve	30	34
Approve strongly	9	13
Approve somewhat	21	21
Disapprove	49	26
Disapprove somewhat	17	8
Disapprove strongly	32	18
No opinion	21	40

Feinstein's job marks are now at an all-time low

Feinstein was first elected to the Senate in 1992, the so-called "year of the woman" in California politics, when both she and fellow Democrat Barbara Boxer won election as the first women ever to represent California in that body.

Throughout her long tenure Feinstein has generally received positive job performance marks from the statewide electorate, and in some years was rated positively by greater than two-to-one margins. However, in recent years she has been receiving increasing criticism from voters.

About a year ago in January 2021 the *Berkeley IGS Poll* reported that for the first time more Californians disapproved of the job Feinstein was doing than approved by a 45% to 35% margin. The latest poll finds her job ratings continuing to slide, with just 30% of the state's voters now approving of her performance in office and 49% disapproving.

Table 3
Trend of Dianne Feinstein's job approval ratings as U.S. Senator
(1993-present)

	Approve %	Disapprove %	No opinion %
February 2022	**30**	**49**	**21**
May 2021	35	46	19
January 2021	35	45	20
December 2017	48	37	15
2015 (average)	44	29	27
2014 (average)	44	35	21
2013 (average)	47	33	20
2012 (average)	49	30	21
2011 (average)	45	34	21
2010 (average)	46	37	17
2009 (average)	46	35	19
2008 (average)	48	32	20
2007 (average)	54	30	16
2006 (average)	51	31	18
2005 (average)	52	27	21
2004 (average)	54	26	20
2003 (average)	52	32	16
2002 (average)	49	26	25
2001 (average)	57	27	16
2000 (average)	57	27	16
1999 (average)	51	28	21
1998 (average)	56	27	17
1997 (average)	47	35	18
1996 (average)	46	36	18
1995 (average)	50	40	10
1994 (average)	47	39	14
1993 (average)	47	32	21

Note: February 2022, May 2021, January 2021, and December 2017 surveys conducted by the Berkeley IGS Poll. Earlier measures conducted by The Field Poll, as reported in release #2519, published October 14, 2015, by Field Research Corporation.

Feinstein falling out of favor across traditionally Democratic-voting constituencies

A key factor contributing to Feinstein's negative standing with the voters is that she is now falling out of favor among many of the state's traditional Democratic-voting constituencies. For example, the proportion disapproving of her performance now outnumbers those approving among voters in both Los Angeles County and the San Francisco Bay Area, her home region, as well as among voters who describe themselves as strongly liberal in politics. Feinstein's job marks are also underwater among other Democratic-leaning voting blocs including women, Latinos and Asian Americans, and voters under age 40.

Padilla, on the other hand, holds more positive than negative job marks across each of these constituencies, and does very well among liberals, fellow Latinos, and Blacks.

Table 2b

Comparing the job ratings of Senator Feinstein and Senator Padilla across major subgroups of the California registered voter population

	Feinstein			Padilla		
	Approve %	Disapprove %	No opinion %	Approve %	Disapprove %	No opinion %
Total registered voters	**30**	**49**	**21**	**34**	**26**	**40**
Party registration						
Democrats	45	33	22	53	7	40
Republicans	7	83	10	6	63	31
No party preference/other	25	48	27	27	26	47
Political ideology						
Strongly conservative	11	83	6	12	70	18
Somewhat conservative	17	69	14	18	47	35
Moderate	32	42	26	33	22	45
Somewhat liberal	44	32	24	48	8	44
Strongly liberal	38	43	19	54	7	39
Region						
Los Angeles County	33	44	23	39	22	39
San Diego County	29	49	22	33	26	41
Orange County	27	51	22	26	34	40
Inland Empire	26	50	24	33	29	38
Central Coast	37	48	15	37	29	34
Central Valley	23	56	21	30	34	36
San Francisco Bay Area	35	47	18	36	19	45
North Coast/Sierras	25	70	5	34	33	34
Gender						
Male	27	57	16	32	31	37
Female	33	42	25	36	22	42
Age						
18-29	20	38	42	27	22	51
30-39	24	52	24	31	28	41
40-49	30	51	19	35	27	38
50-64	34	55	11	37	28	35
65 or older	40	51	9	40	27	33
Race/ethnicity						
White	26	59	15	30	31	39
Latino	35	40	25	45	24	31
Asian/Pacific Islander	32	38	30	28	19	53

6

Black	47	27	26	48	11	41

Over seven in ten Californians disapprove of the job the Congress is doing

The poll also finds Californians holding a dismal opinion of the job the U.S. Congress is doing. Just 20% say they approve of its performance overall, while 72% disapprove.

As poor as these findings are, they represent a slight improvement from September 2019, the last time the *Berkeley IGS Poll* measured the job performance of the U.S. Congress. In that poll 82% of the state's voters disapproved of its performance, while 18% approved. Yet, in every statewide poll assessment made of the Congress over the past twelve years, greater than seven in ten Californians have given the Congress a negative overall job rating.

Table 4
Trend of Californians' voter views of the overall job performance
of the U.S. Congress (1992-present)

	Approve %	Disapprove %	No opinion %
February 2022	**20**	**72**	**8**
September 2019	18	82	*
December 2017	15	76	9
April 2016	15	80	5
2015 (average)	18	73	9
2014 (average)	13	74	3
2013 (average)	16	77	7
2012 (average)	14	79	7
2011 (average)	12	80	8
2010 (average)	19	72	9
2009 (average)	29	60	21
2004-2008 (average)	25	61	14
2000-2003 (average)	50	38	12
1996-1999 (average)	37	53	10
1992-1995 (average)	34	62	4

Note: February 2022, September 2019 and December 2017 surveys conducted by the Berkeley IGS Poll. Earlier measures conducted by The Field Poll, as reported in release #2533, published April 12, 2016, by Field Research Corporation.
* less than ½ of 1%.

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 February 3-10, 2022, among 8,937 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 the City of Los Angeles, administered using the same methods, to enable the poll to examine specific issues of interest to voters in that City and to the *Times*. After the completion of data collection, the \results were weighted to realign the Los Angeles City sample to its actual share of the statewide 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.

Detailed tabulations reporting the results to each question can be found at the *Berkeley IGS Poll* website at https://www.igs.berkeley.edu/research/berkeley-igs-poll.

<u>**Question wording**</u>

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?

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is doing its job?

Dianne Feinstein is now serving in her fifth term as U.S. Senator. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Dianne Feinstein is handling her job as U.S. Senator?

Last year Governor Gavin Newsom appointed Alex Padilla to serve as U.S. Senator to complete the term of Kamala Harris after she became Vice President. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Alex Padilla is handling his job as U.S. Senator?

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.