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Author

DiCamillo, Mark

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Institute of Governmental Studies
102 Philosophy Hall, #2370
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720-2370
Tel: 510-642-1473
Email: igs@berkeley.edu

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California voters express confidence in local election officials conducting today's primary fairly and will retrieve an accurate vote count.

-- Recent history of gubernatorial primary elections suggests another low turnout --

by Mark DiCamillo
Director, *Berkeley IGS Poll*

The latest *Berkeley IGS Poll* finds that by a greater than two-to-one margin (65% to 31%) the state's registered voters express confidence in local election officials to conduct today's primary election fairly and securely and that the vote counts will be accurate.

In addition, recent history of voting in California gubernatorial primary elections have been relatively low turnout affairs, with only about a third of the state's electorate participating on average in the past six elections. All indications are that this year's primary election turnout will be no different.

The survey also finds that a voter's partisanship and political ideology impacts the levels of confidence that voters have regarding the veracity of the state's elections. For example, about twice as many Democrats (79%) as Republicans (42%) say they are confident that local election officials will conduct today's primary fairly and securely and that the vote count will be accurate. Similarly, while eight in ten liberal voters express confidence in the election process, this declines to just 38% among voters who say they are strongly conservative in politics.

There are only modest variations in voter confidence across major regions of the state. Confidence in the veracity of the election process is highest in the San Francisco Bay Area, at 73%, and lowest in the Inland Empire, at 55%, which includes Riverside County, where Chad Bianco serves as Sheriff and where he attempted to impound the ballots from the last election to force a recount but was prevented from doing so by the courts.

Older voters, whites and those with higher levels of education are also somewhat more likely than younger voters, Latinos and those with fewer years of formal education to express confidence, although majorities across all subgroups say they have confidence in the process.

When asked to comment on the findings, Jesse Salinas, President of the California Association of Clerks and Elections Officials and Yolo County Registrar of Voters said, "With about two-thirds expressing confidence in local officials to conduct fair, secure and accurate elections, we're proud to be a steady source of trust at a consequential moment. As local election officials, we stand ready to partner with state leaders – and to open our doors to any voter who wants so see firsthand how our elections work and to answer any questions they may have. Together, we can make California a model of trusted democracy for the entire nation."

Table 1

**Voter confidence in local election officials to conduct the June primary election
fairly and securely and that the vote count will be accurate – by voter subgroup**

	Confident (net) %	Very confident %	Somewhat Confident %	Not confident (net) %	Not too confident %	Not at all confident %	No opinion %
Total registered voters	65	33	32	31	18	13	4
<u>Party registration</u>							
Democrats	79	45	34	18	14	4	3
Republicans	42	16	26	55	25	29	4
No Party Pref./other	62	29	33	31	17	14	7
<u>Political ideology</u>							
Strongly conservative	38	18	21	57	25	32	5
Somewhat conservative	46	18	27	49	24	25	5
Moderate	61	31	30	32	18	14	7
Somewhat liberal	79	41	38	17	14	3	4
Strongly liberal	82	46	35	17	12	5	2
<u>Region</u>							
Los Angeles County	66	31	34	29	17	12	5
San Diego County	64	32	34	31	17	14	4
Orange County	62	31	31	33	18	16	4
Inland Empire	55	25	31	39	24	15	5
Central Coast	68	33	34	27	16	11	5
Central Valley	60	28	32	37	20	18	3
San Francisco Bay Area	73	47	26	23	14	9	4
North Coast/Sierras	63	35	28	30	17	13	7
<u>Age</u>							
18-29	58	22	36	34	21	12	9
30-39	59	27	32	35	19	17	5
40-49	58	29	30	36	20	16	6
50-64	66	36	30	30	18	12	4
65 or older	75	45	30	24	13	11	1
<u>Gender</u>							
Male	66	37	39	30	17	14	3
Female	63	29	34	32	18	13	6
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>							
White	71	40	32	26	14	12	2
Latino	55	25	30	39	23	16	6
Asian/Pacific Isle	64	29	34	29	20	10	7
Black/African Amer.	62	26	35	32	16	16	6
<u>Education</u>							
High school grad or less	54	25	29	37	21	16	9
Some college/trade school	56	25	32	39	23	27	4
College graduate (B.A.)	72	38	34	24	14	10	4
Post graduate degree	79	49	29	19	10	9	3

Voting participation in California gubernatorial primary elections since 1986

Table 2 below tracks the growth in the state's citizen-eligible adult population and its registered voters over the past 40 years and the number of Californians who have participated in statewide gubernatorial primary elections over this period.

This shows that most recent gubernatorial primary elections have been relatively low turnout affairs, with fewer than half of the state's registered voters participating. In addition, in each of the six gubernatorial primary elections held since 2002 only about a third of the state's electorate on average have voted, with turnout ranging from a low of 25% in 2014 to a high of 37.5% in 2018. Vote counts of the number of voters voting early in this year's primary appear to suggest another low turnout election.

Table 2
**The numbers of California citizen-eligible adults, registered voters,
and votes cast in statewide gubernatorial primary elections since 1986**
(figures in thousands)

Election year	<u>Eligible to vote</u>	<u>Registration</u>		<u>Voting participation</u>		
	Total citizen-eligible adults (in 000's)	Total registered (in 000's)	% of citizen- eligibles	Total votes cast (in 000's)	% of registered voters	% of citizen- eligibles
2026	27,254	23,155¹	85.0	-----	-----	-----
2022	26,912	21,941	81.5	7,285	33.2	27.1
2018	25,199	19,023	75.5	7,142	37.5	28.3
2014	24,193	17,772	73.5	4,461	25.1	18.4
2010	23,454	16,977	72.1	5,655	33.3	24.1
2006	22,543	15,668	69.5	5,269	33.6	23.4
2002	21,507	15,281	71.1	5,286	34.6	24.6
1998	20,653	14,606	70.7	6,207	42.5	30.1
1994	18,946	14,171	74.8	4,967	35.1	26.2
1990	19,133	12,981	67.9	5,387	41.5	28.2
1986	17,357	12,207	70.3	4,938	40.5	28.5

¹ May 2026 Report of Registration, California Secretary of State. All other figures come from official estimates from California Secretary of State Statement of Vote., Figures rounded.

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 conducted online in English and Spanish May 19-25, 2026, among 8,578 registered voters in California. To enable the survey to also obtain voter preferences in the Los Angeles mayoral primary election, the survey also included an oversampling of registered voters in the city of Los Angeles. After the conclusion of data collection, the survey results were weighted to return the disproportionate sampling of L.A. City voters to its actual share of the state's registered voter population. Funding for the poll was provided in part by the *Los Angeles Times*.

Data collection for the poll was completed by distributing email and text message invitations to stratified random samples of the state's registered voters. Each email or text 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. Reminders were distributed to non-responding voters and an opt out link was provided for voters not wishing to receive further invitations.

Samples of the state's registered voters 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 voter registration rolls, which is a public document. The samples were stratified by age and gender to obtain a proper balance of survey respondents. A separate random sample of Spanish-speakers was drawn from the pool of registered voters requested that their official voting materials be sent to them in Spanish was also included to enable the survey assess voter opinions among the state's Spanish-speaking voters.

To protect the anonymity of respondents, the personally identifiable information of each voter that was listed on their voting record was 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 data file to align the overall sample to population characteristics of registered voters both 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 from the overall registered voter sample have a sampling error of about +/- 2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

Question wording

How confident are you that your local election officials will conduct the June primary election fairly and securely and that the vote count will be accurate? *NOTE: This question was added to the poll at the request of the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund.*

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 Professor G. 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. Veteran pollster Mark DiCamillo serves as director of the *Berkeley IGS Poll*. For a complete listing of stories issued by the *Berkeley IGS Poll* go to <https://www.igs.berkeley.edu/research/berkeley-igs-poll>.