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## IGS Poll

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***Californians broadly disapprove of President Trump's job performance overall and in twelve specific policy areas. Increasing proportion considers the Mueller investigation very important to the nation and two in three feel he should pursue it "wherever it leads."***

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In its latest survey, the *Berkeley IGS Poll* updated California voter opinions of the job that Donald Trump is doing as President overall, and assessed Trump's record in twelve specific policy areas.

The results continue to paint a highly negative picture of the President's performance among registered voters in the Golden State. Two in three voters (67%) disapprove of the job Trump is doing overall, while just 31% approve. In addition, the level of animosity toward the President among those who disapprove is high, with 59% strongly disapproving.

The current poll finds that majorities of Californians disapprove of Trump's performance in twelve specific policy areas, albeit by varying margins. The policy areas where the President receives the lowest marks relate to his handling of the environment (73% disapprove) and race relations (72%). The areas where criticism of the President's performance is proportionately less concerns his handling of the economy (52% disapprove) and dealings with North Korea (53%).

Most Californians (53%) consider the investigation led by special counsel Robert Mueller into allegations of Russian intervention in the 2016 presidential election very important to the nation, up from 47% who said this one year ago. And, when asked about the scope of the Mueller investigation, two in three voters (65%) believe he should be allowed to pursue it "wherever it leads," while 34% favor either scaling it back or shutting it down.

As has been true with virtually all polls about the President, opinions are extremely partisan. While greater than nine in ten registered Democrats disapprove of Trump's performance overall, large majorities of Republicans approve. The same partisan differences are seen in voter opinions of the Mueller investigation. Democrats overwhelmingly consider the investigation very important to the nation and believe it needs to be pursued wherever it leads. By contrast, majorities of Republicans feel it is of less importance and should be scaled back or shut down.

### **Trend of the President’s overall job performance in office**

California voters’ overall assessment of the job being done by President Trump is very similar to what was last December. In both surveys two in three voters disapprove of Trump’s performance overall, while only about three in ten approve. And, similar to four months ago, the level of animosity toward the President among those who disapprove is high, with 59% strongly disapproving of his performance.

**Table 1**  
**Trend of the job performance rating of President Donald Trump**  
**(among California registered voters)**

	<b>Late April 2018</b>	<b>December 2017</b>	<b>May 2017</b>	<b>March 2017</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Approve</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>39</b>
Strongly	18	18	NA	NA
Somewhat	13	12	NA	N/A
<b>Disapprove</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>61</b>
Somewhat	8	9	NA	NA
Strongly	59	57	NA	NA
<b>No opinion</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>NA</b>

*NA: Not measured*

### **Views of Trump remain extremely partisan**

Voter perceptions of Trump, both throughout his presidential campaign and during his first fifteen months in office, have consistently been extremely partisan. In the latest poll, 91% of Democrats disapprove, while 80% of Republicans approve of the President overall.

The hyper-partisan nature of voter perceptions of the President characterize many of the other demographic segments of the electorate. Geographically, Trump’s lowest ratings come from voters living in the state’s populous coastal counties, and especially among voters in the heavily Democratic Los Angeles County and San Francisco Bay Area regions.

Similarly, Trump fares poorer among women, who comprise 57% of the state’s registered Democrats, than he does among men. Latino voters and African Americans, who are also strongly Democratic constituencies, offer a more negative assessment of the President than white non-Hispanics and Asian Americans.

Trump’s job ratings are also lower among voters living in congressional districts represented by Democrats than in Republican-held districts. When examining the Republican-held districts in greater detail, the President’s job marks are lower in districts rated by independent observers as competitive to Democratic challenges this year than in GOP-held districts considered safe for Republican incumbents.

**Table 2**  
**Overall job performance rating of President Donald Trump across major subgroups of the California registered voter population**

<i>% of all registered voters</i>	<b>Approve %</b>	<b>Disapprove %</b>	<b>No opinion %</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>2</b>
<u>Party registration</u>			
(46) Democrats	7	91	2
(25) Republicans	80	19	1
(29) No party preference/other	27	69	4
<u>Area</u>			
(72) Coastal counties	27	71	2
(28) Inland counties	42	56	2
<u>Region</u>			
(26) Los Angeles County	25	71	4
(9) San Diego County	29	70	1
(8) Orange County	38	61	1
(13) Other Southern California	41	58	1
(18) Central Valley	38	61	1
(21) San Francisco Bay Area	24	75	1
(4) Other Northern California	41	54	5
<u>Gender</u>			
(47) Male	37	61	2
(53) Female	26	72	2
<u>Age</u>			
(17) 18-29	16	80	4
(17) 30-39	20	77	3
(16) 40-49	33	64	3
(26) 50-64	38	60	2
(24) 65 or older	40	59	1
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
(59) White non-Hispanic	36	63	1
(24) Latino	18	79	3
(6) African American	23	70	7
(11) Asian American/other	36	61	3
<u>Congressional Districts</u>			
(71) Democratic-held districts	26	71	3
(15) Republican-held districts considered safe*	48	50	2
(13) Republican-held districts-competitive **	41	59	***

\* "Safe" Republican-held seats are those rated "solid Republican" or "likely Republican" by the Cook Political Report and include CD-01 (LaMalfa), CD-04 (McClintock), CD-08 (Cook), CD-22 (Nunes), CD-23 (McCarthy), CD-42 (Calvert) and CD-50 (Hunter).

\*\* "Competitive" Republican-held seats are those rated "toss-up" or "leans Republican" and include CD-10 (Denham), CD-21 (Valadao), CD-25 (Knight), CD-39 (open), CD-45 (Walters), CD-48 (Rohrabacher), and CD-49 (open).

\*\*\* less than 1/2 of 1%.

### **Majorities disapprove of Trump's performance in each of twelve policy areas**

Majorities of the state's voters disapprove of Trump's job performance in each of twelve policy areas, by albeit by varying margins.

The policy areas about which Californians are most critical are the environment (73% disapprove), race relations (72%), health care (70%) and dealing with Russia (68%). The areas where criticism of Trump is proportionately less includes his handling of jobs and the economy (52% disapproval) and dealing with North Korea (53%).

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**Table 3**  
**Assessments of President Trump's job performance in 12 policy areas**  
**(among California registered voters)**

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	<b>Approve</b>	<b>Disapprove</b>	<b>No</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>opinion</b>
			<b>%</b>
Jobs and the economy	42	52	6
Dealing with North Korea	41	53	6
Immigration policies	37	60	3
National security	34	63	3
Dealing with gun violence	33	62	5
Managing the nation's foreign affairs	33	64	3
Trade policies	33	59	8
Tax policies	32	63	5
Health care	26	70	4
Dealing with Russia	26	68	6
Race relations	23	72	5
The environment	22	73	5

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### **Wide partisan differences in voter assessments across twelve policy areas**

The state's Democrats and Republicans also hold widely divergent views of the job Trump is doing in each of the twelve policy areas. In no single area does more than 18% of Democratic voters offer a positive assessment of the President's performance. Conversely, Republicans rate the President's performance positively by wide margins in each area.

**Table 4**  
**Comparing Democratic and Republican assessments**  
**of President Trump’s performance in 12 policy areas**  
**(among California registered voters)**

	<b>Democrats</b>		<b>Republicans</b>	
	Approve %	Disapprove %	Approve %	Disapprove %
Jobs and the economy	18	77	90	6
Dealing with North Korea	17	77	86	11
Immigration policies	8	88	86	12
National security	9	88	78	20
Dealing with gun violence	7	90	83	13
Managing the nation’s foreign affairs	9	88	80	17
Trade policies	9	84	81	14
Tax policies	7	88	80	17
Health care	5	92	71	25
Dealing with Russia	5	89	69	26
Race relations	3	95	61	32
The environment	2	95	64	29

*Note: Difference between 100% and the sum of percentages among voters within each party equals the proportion of voters with no opinion.*

**Increasing proportion considers the Mueller investigation “very important” to the nation**

The latest poll repeated a question posed by the *Berkeley IGS Poll* last year in May 2017, which asked voters how important they felt the government investigation into Russian involvement in the 2016 presidential election, was to the country. Last year 47% of the state’s registered voters felt the investigation was very important. In the latest poll, this has risen to 53%.

Now as then, Democrats are much more likely than Republicans to believe the investigation is important to the nation.

**Table 5**  
**Importance of the government investigation into Russia’s possible**  
**involvement in the 2016 presidential election**  
**(among California registered voters)**

	<b>Party Registration</b>							
	Late April 2018 %	May 2017 %	Democrats		Republicans		No party pref/other	
			Apr '18 %	May '17 %	Apr '18 %	May '17 %	Apr '18 %	May '17 %
Very important	53	47	76	75	15	13	51	43
Somewhat important	13	22	11	21	15	22	15	25
Not important	30	26	10	4	67	60	31	21
No opinion	4	5	3	*	3	5	3	11

\* less than ½ of 1%.

**Majority of Californians are confident that the Mueller probe will be fair, although opinions are highly partisan**

By a 56% to 33% margin voters also express confidence that the investigation that Mueller is conducting will be fair. However, opinions about this are highly partisan. Among Democrats three in four (75%) are confident that the investigation will be fair and just 15% are not. Among Republicans 65% are not confident about this, while just 24% are.

**Table 6**  
**Confidence that the Mueller investigation will be conducted fairly**  
**(among California registered voters)**

	<b>Total registered voters</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Republicans</b>	<b>No party pref/other</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Very/somewhat confident	56	75	24	55
Not too/not at all confident	33	15	65	31
No opinion	11	10	11	14

**Two in three believe that the Mueller probe should be pursued “wherever it leads”**

When voters are asked about the scope of the Mueller investigation, a large majority of voters statewide (65%) believes it should be pursued “wherever it leads.” This compares to 18% who feel the investigation has expanded beyond its original mission and should be scaled back, while another 16%, mostly Republicans, feel it should be shut down.

**Table 7**  
**Views about the scope of the Mueller investigation**  
**(among California registered voters)**

	<b>Total registered voters</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Republicans</b>	<b>No party pref/other</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>The investigation . . .</i>				
Should be pursued wherever it leads	65	88	24	64
Should be scaled back	18	6	35	21
Should be shut down	16	5	40	13
No opinion	1	1	1	2

## **About the Survey**

The findings in this report are based on a survey of 4,038 registered voters by the Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) at the University of California, Berkeley. For some of the questions in this report, the overall sample was subdivided into two random subsamples of 2,034 and 2,004 registered voters each.

The survey was completed online by distributing emails to stratified random samples of registered voters throughout California April 16-22, 2018 in English and Spanish. Each email invitation asked voters to participate in a short non-partisan survey, and were provided with a link to the IGS website where the survey was housed. The sample listings of voters and their email addresses were derived from information contained on the state's official voter rolls. The voter lists were provided by Political Data Inc., which is collaborating with IGS in its 2018 pre-election polling.

During the data processing phase, post-stratification weights were applied to align the overall sample of registered voters responding to the survey to the political and demographic characteristics of the state's overall registered voter population.

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, the rules of sample selection, development of the post-stratification weights, oversight of data processing, and the analysis of the data.

Sampling error estimates applicable to the results of any probability-based survey depend on sample size, the percentage distributions being examined and the 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 likely that the maximum sampling error applicable to the results from the overall sample of registered voter is about +/- 3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

### **Questions Asked**

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as President?

Do you approve or disapprove of the job President Trump is doing in handling each of the following issues:

(ASKED OF A RANDOM SUBSAMPLE OF 2,034 REGISTERED VOTERS): jobs and the economy, dealing with North Korea, immigration policies, dealing with gun violence, managing the nation's foreign relations, trade policies. (THE ORDERING OF THE ISSUES WAS RANDOMIZED TO AVOID POSSIBLE SEQUENCE BIAS)

(ASKED OF A RANDOM SUBSAMPLE OF 2,004 REGISTERED VOTERS): tax policies, national security, race relations, health care, dealing with Russia, the environment. (THE ORDERING OF THE ISSUES WAS RANDOMIZED TO AVOID POSSIBLE SEQUENCE BIAS)

How important do you feel the government investigation into Russia's possible involvement in the 2016 presidential election is to this country?



Former FBI Director Robert Mueller was appointed as special counsel to oversee the investigation. How confident are you that special counsel Robert Mueller is conducting a fair investigation?

Which comes closest to your view about the scope of the Mueller investigation?

- (1) Mueller should be allowed to pursue the investigation wherever it leads
- (2) Mueller's investigation has expanded beyond its original mission and should be scaled back
- (3) Mueller's investigation should be completely shut down

**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 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>.