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Two in Three Say Legalizing Marijuana in California was a Good Thing
Most Support Allowing Retail Marijuana Dispensaries in the own Community

by Mark DiCamillo, Director, *Berkeley IGS Poll*
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Two in three registered voters in California (68%) believe that the passage of Proposition 64 in 2016 legalizing the possession, sale and personal use of marijuana among adults was a good thing. Just 30% of voters feel it was as a bad thing.

In addition, by a 63% to 36% margin voters say they favor allowing retail dispensaries to sell cannabis products in the communities where they live.

There are significant differences in views about these matters with regard to voters' political ideology and party registration. Democrats and political liberals are the most likely subgroups to both view the law as a good thing and to support allowing retail marijuana dispensaries to operate in their local communities. Republicans and conservatives, especially strong conservatives, are the least supportive.

While majorities of voters across other major demographic and regional subgroups both concur that the passage of Prop. 64 was a good thing and support allowing marijuana dispensaries to operating in their communities, there are some generational and regional variations in voter opinions.

For example, larger majorities of voters under age 40 than voters age 50 or older view both the legalization of marijuana positively and support permitting marijuana dispensaries to operate. In addition, a larger majority of voters living in areas of Northern California outside the San Francisco Bay Area favors allowing retail marijuana dispensaries to operate in their communities than feel this way among voters in the Inland Empire and Orange County.

These findings come from a statewide *Berkeley IGS Poll* conducted online in English and Spanish among a random sample of 4,527 of the state's registered voters between September 13 - 18.

Two-thirds of voters believe legalizing marijuana in California was a good thing

By a greater than two-to-one margin California voters believe the passage of Proposition 64 in 2016 that legalized the possession, sale and personal use of marijuana among adults was a good thing. The poll finds 68% of the state's registered voters holding to this view, while 30% feel its passage was a bad thing.

There are significant differences in views about the law by voters' self-described political ideology and party registration. For example, 92% of voters who describe themselves as very liberal in politics believe that the marijuana legalization law was a good thing. By contrast, just 34% of voters describing themselves as very conservative say this.

In addition, while greater than seven registered Democrats (78%) and No Party Preference voters (71%) see the state's legalization of marijuana as a good thing, fewer than half of registered Republicans (48%) feel this way.

Larger majorities of voters under age 40 than voters age 50 or older also see the passage of Proposition 64 legalizing marijuana as being a good thing for the state.

Table 1
Californians' opinion of the passage of Proposition 64 in 2016 that
legalized the possession, sale and personal use of marijuana among adults
(among registered voters)

	<u>Good</u> <u>thing</u> %	<u>Bad</u> <u>thing</u> %	<u>No</u> <u>opinion</u> %
Total registered voters	68	30	2
Party registration			
Democrats	78	20	2
Republicans	48	50	2
No Party Preference/other	71	28	1
Political ideology			
Very conservative	34	65	1
Somewhat conservative	51	47	2
Moderate	62	35	3
Somewhat liberal	83	16	1
Very liberal	92	8	--
Region			
Los Angeles County	69	28	3
San Diego County	70	29	1
Orange County	66	33	1
Inland Empire	61	39	--
Other Southern California	67	32	1
Central Valley	67	32	1
San Francisco Bay Area	71	27	2
Other Northern California	71	28	1
Gender			
Male	69	29	2
Female	68	31	1
Age			
18-29	79	21	--
30-39	81	19	--
40-49	68	30	2
50-64	62	36	2
65 or older	58	39	3
Race/ethnicity			
White non-Hispanic	72	27	1
Latino	63	36	1
Asian American	62	35	3
African American	77	21	2

Greater than six in ten favor allowing retail marijuana dispensaries to operate in their own communities

Voters in the survey were also asked whether they feel their own city or town should allow retail marijuana stores to sell marijuana and cannabis products in the community where they live.

Replies to this question generally mirror voter sentiments about the legalization of marijuana overall, with 63% of the state's registered voter favoring allowing such dispensaries to operate, while 36% are opposed.

Democrats and liberals are again the subgroups most likely to be supportive of allowing retail dispensaries to sell cannabis products in their own communities, while Republicans and conservatives are most opposed.

There is also some variation in the size of the majorities who support allowing marijuana dispensaries to operate in their communities by age and region. Younger voters under the age of 40, for example, are also somewhat more supportive of this than older voters. In addition, a larger majority of voters living in areas of Northern California outside the San Francisco Bay Area, while smaller majorities of voters in the Inland Empire and Orange County hold this view.

Table 2
Californians' opinion about their city or town allowing retail marijuana stores to sell marijuana and cannabis products in their community
(among registered voters)

	<u>Favor</u> %	<u>Oppose</u> %	<u>No opinion</u> %
Total registered voters	63	36	1
Party registration			
Democrats	72	27	2
Republicans	46	54	--
No party preference/other	65	34	1
Political ideology			
Very conservative	34	65	1
Somewhat conservative	49	50	1
Moderate	57	41	2
Somewhat liberal	76	24	--
Very liberal	85	14	1
Region			
Los Angeles County	65	33	2
San Diego County	62	38	--
Orange County	59	40	1
Inland Empire	55	45	--
Other Southern California	62	35	3
Central Valley	66	34	--
San Francisco Bay Area	64	34	2
Other Northern California	72	28	--
Gender			
Male	63	35	2
Female	64	36	--
Age			
18-29	72	28	--
30-39	74	25	1
40-49	64	34	2
50-64	59	40	1
65 or older	53	44	3
Race/ethnicity			
White non-Hispanic	67	32	1
Latino	57	41	2
Asian American	54	44	2
African American	73	27	--

Questions Asked

In 2016 California voters approved Proposition 64 legalizing the personal use and possession of marijuana by adults and allowing the sale of marijuana in communities where local officials approve. Do you think the new law legalizing the possession, sale and use of marijuana in California is a good thing or bad thing?

Since Proposition 64 was approved, about two-thirds of the cities and towns across California have passed laws to ban retail stores from selling marijuana and cannabis products in their communities. What marijuana policy do you support your local city or town adopting? Do you favor or oppose your city or town allowing retail marijuana dispensary stores to sell marijuana and cannabis products in the community where you live?

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 September 13-18, 2019 among 4,527 registered voters statewide.

The survey was administered by distributing email invitations to stratified random samples of the state's registered voters. Once the questionnaire and email invitations had been finalized, they were translated into the Spanish and reviewed for cultural appropriateness. Each email invited voters to participate in a non-partisan survey conducted by IGS and provided a link to the IGS website where the survey was housed. Reminder emails were distributed to non-responding voters over the data collection period. An opt out link was provided at the bottom of each invitation for voters not wishing to participate or not wanting to receive future emails from IGS about the survey.

Samples of registered voters with email addresses were provided to IGS by Political Data, Inc., a leading supplier of registered voter lists in California. The email addresses of voters were derived from information contained on the state's official voter registration rolls. The overall sample of registered voters with email addresses was stratified in an attempt to obtain a proper balance of survey respondents across major segments of the registered voter population by age, gender and race/ethnicity.

To protect the anonymity of survey respondents, voters' email addresses and all other personally identifiable information were purged from the data file and replaced with a unique and anonymous identification number during data processing. At the conclusion of the data processing phase, post-stratification weights were applied to align the sample to population characteristics of the state's overall registered voter population.

The sampling error associated with the results from the survey are difficult to calculate precisely due to the effects of sample stratification and the post-stratification weighting. Nevertheless, it is likely that the results from the overall registered voter sample are subject

to a sampling error of approximately +/- 2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Results based on subgroups of this population would be subject to larger margins of sampling error.

Detailed tabulations reporting the results to each question in this report can be found at the *Berkeley IGS Poll* website at <https://igs.berkeley.edu/igs-poll/berkeley-igs-poll>.

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, IGS is the oldest organized research unit in the UC system and the oldest public policy research center in the state. The co-directors of the Institute of Governmental Studies 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 complete listing of stories issued by the *Berkeley IGS Poll* go to <https://igs.berkeley.edu/igs-poll/berkeley-igs-poll>.