

## **California Democrats Maintain Slight Lead, Though with 4 Months to Go...**

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*Boxer and Brown currently lead their opponents by small margins, suggesting that the races are still wide open with four months to go until the midterms. High levels of voter dissatisfaction with the State government paired with concern about the economy mean the California races will prove a challenge for all candidates, both Republican and Democratic*

**Political Polling undertaken for Thomson Reuters**

by



**Ipsos Public Affairs**

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## California Democrats Maintain Slight Lead, Though with 4 Months to Go...

*... the Republican base is more energized and more likely to vote than the Democratic base, and voters of all political stripes are highly dissatisfied with California politics.*

**Washington, DC** – Ipsos' recent poll of 600 registered voters in California shows that the Democratic candidates for US Senator and for Governor of California maintain small leads over their Republican opponents. However, it is still early enough in the election cycle that many voters remain unsure<sup>1</sup>.

- Barbara Boxer is polling on 45% compared to Carly Fiorina's 41%, with 1% planning to vote for another party and 13% refusing or unsure
- Jerry Brown is polling on 45% compared to Meg Whitman's 39%, with 3% planning to vote for another party and 14% refusing or unsure

The Republican base appears to be more enthusiastic about the races than the Democrats, with 73% of Republicans saying they are 'completely certain' they will vote this November, compared to 60% of Democrats and Independents.

Interest in the campaign and campaign coverage is fairly high, with 59% saying they have a 'great deal' or 'quite a bit' of interest in following news about the midterm campaigns; again, this figure is highest among Republicans (64%), slightly lower among Democrats (57%), and lowest among Independents (45%).

Californians are fairly unhappy with the direction in which their State is heading: more than three-quarters (78%) feel things in California are on the 'wrong track', and just 16% think they're heading in the right direction. Democrats are the most optimistic, with 21% believing things are heading in the right direction, compared to just 12% of Republicans and 5% of Independents who think the same.

The survey contained a question asking about the biggest problems currently facing California:

- Over half (52%) feel that the **economy and jobs** is among California's biggest problems, and many cite issues around the budget and deficit
- Just under one in five (18%) name issues around the **Government, politics and politicians** generally – which includes both state and national level concerns
- **Education** (15%), **immigration** (14%) and **taxes** generally (11%) are also listed as key concerns

Residents are unhappy with the way Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling his job as Governor of California: a quarter (27%) approve and seven in ten (69%) disapprove, with Republicans more approving (33%) than Democrats (22%).

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<sup>1</sup> Neither of the above support measures includes the 'leaners' question often asked of those who are unsure; while we did ask the question in this survey, Ipsos does not allocate 'leaners' at this stage of the electoral cycle



When asked about California's regulations regarding climate change, half of registered voters say they believe that the new regulations drive investment in green technology and create green jobs, while 38% believe the regulations will create higher energy costs and lead to cuts in traditional jobs.

Californians are equally divided on the ballot initiative regarding the legalization of marijuana, with half thinking the use of marijuana should be made illegal (50%) and half thinking it should be made legal (48%). Support for its legalization is highest among Democrats (62%), and far lower among Republicans (32%).

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