

THE FIELD POLL

THE INDEPENDENT AND NON-PARTISAN SURVEY
OF PUBLIC OPINION ESTABLISHED IN 1947 AS
THE CALIFORNIA POLL BY MERVIN FIELD

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**JONES HOLDS BIG LEAD IN GOP
SENATORIAL PRIMARY, ALTHOUGH FOUR
IN TEN VOTERS REMAIN UNDECIDED.
BOXER LEADS GOP CANDIDATES IN
GENERAL ELECTION MATCH-UPS.**

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by Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

The latest *Field Poll* of California voter preferences in the Republican primary election for U.S. Senate finds former Secretary of State Bill Jones continuing to hold a big lead over his GOP rivals, although an unusually large proportion of voters remains undecided.

In this survey Jones is receiving 31% support among voters likely to cast ballots in next Tuesday's Republican Senatorial primary. This compares to 9% favoring former U.S. Treasurer Rosario Marin, 8% backing former Assemblyman Howard Kaloogian and 6% supporting businesswoman Toni Casey. Another 5% back other candidates, while the largest proportion (41%) have yet to make up their minds.

When each of the leading Republicans is paired against incumbent Senator Democrat Barbara Boxer in simulated general election match-ups, they trail by margins ranging from 10 to 20 percentage points.

These results come from a statewide *Field Poll* survey of California voters conducted February 18-22, including 345 voters who are likely to vote in the March 2 Republican primary election.

Trends in the GOP Senate primary

The line-up of GOP candidates in the Senate race has been known for some time. Yet, the contest hasn't been receiving the usual level of voter interest and attention. As a result, there has not been much change in voter preferences and large proportions have remained undecided. Jones' current 31% level of preference is up from 28% found last month and 24% in October. The other candidates have also been fairly slow in increasing their bases of support. Marin's current 9% support is up from 6% in January and 3% in October, while Kaloogian's 8% is up from 3% last month.

Over four in ten (41%) reporting being undecided in the current survey, down from 53% last month and 71% in October.

Table 1
Trend of voter preferences in the March 2 Republican primary for U.S. Senate
(among likely voters in the Republican primary)

	Bill Jones	Rosario Marin	Howard Kaloogian	Toni Casey	Others	Undecided
February 2004	31%	9	8	6	5	41
January 2004	28%	6	3	6	4	53
October 2003*	24%	3	N/A	2	N/A	71

N/A: Not asked

* October survey conducted among registered Republicans

Voter preferences by subgroup

Jones receives his greatest levels of vote support in the primary among GOP primary voters in Los Angeles County and the Central Valley than in other parts of the state. Marin also does better in her home county of Los Angeles (16%) than elsewhere.

Kaloogian's support is significantly greater among conservatives (12%) than moderates or liberals (3%) within the GOP electorate.

Table 2
Voter preferences in the GOP primary for U.S. Senate – by subgroup
(among likely voters in the Republican primary)

	Jones	Marin	Kaloogian	Casey	Others/ Undecided
Statewide	31%	9	8	6	46
<u>Region</u>					
(.18) Los Angeles County*	37%	16	4	5	38
(.43) Other Southern California	28%	8	10	5	49
(.19) Central Valley*	39%	9	9	4	39
(.20) Northern California*	26%	6	11	8	49
<u>Political ideology</u>					
(.57) Conservative	32%	9	12	6	41
(.43) Moderate/liberal	29%	9	3	5	54

* Relatively small sample sizes.

Low levels of familiarity with the candidates

One of the reasons that large proportion of voters remain undecided in this year's GOP Senate primary is that the candidates are unfamiliar to large segments of the probable electorate.

While Jones is the best known of the candidates, 47% of likely voters still report not knowing enough about the former Secretary of State to have an opinion. Among those voters who have an opinion, Jones's image is highly positive, with 42% holding a favorable view and 11% having an unfavorable opinion.

An unusually large proportion – about three in four – of Republican primary voters have no opinion of Marin, Kaloogian and Casey. Among those voters who know something about these candidates, Marin and Kaloogian are seen in a more favorable than unfavorable light. A slightly larger proportion of GOP primary voters has an unfavorable view of Casey.

Table 3
Trend of voter impressions of the leading
Republican candidates running for U.S. Senate
(among likely voters in the Republican primary)

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
<u>Bill Jones</u>			
February 2004	42%	11	47
January 2004	30%	6	64
<u>Rosario Marin</u>			
February 2004	16%	11	73
January 2004	14%	7	79
<u>Howard Kaloogian</u>			
February 2004	16%	9	75
January 2004	8%	5	87
<u>Toni Casey</u>			
February 2004	9%	12	79
January 2004	7%	4	89

Boxer leads in general election pairings

Boxer, seeking her third term to the U.S. Senate, continues to be preferred over each of her likely GOP opponents in simulated general election pairings. Boxer's lead is smallest in a fall contest against Jones than the other candidates (48% to 38%).

Against Marin, Boxer is preferred by 50% to Marin's 33%. Against Kaloogian, she leads 51% to 35%. Against Casey the incumbent's lead is twenty points (52% to 32%).

In each case, greater than eight in ten Democrats support the Senator in her re-election bid, while seven in ten or more Republicans favor her opponent. Non-partisan voters currently prefer Boxer in each case.

Table 4
Voter preferences for U.S. Senate in the November general election
(among registered voters)

	February 2004	January 2004	February 2004		
			Democrats	Republicans	Non-partisans/ others*
Boxer (D)	48%	48%	84%	8%	42%
Jones (R)	38	35	8	78	33
Undecided	14	17	8	14	25
Boxer (D)	50%	49%	81%	16%	46%
Marin (R)	33	32	7	70	20
Undecided	17	19	12	14	34
Boxer (D)	51%	50%	85%	11%	47%
Kaloogian (R)	35	30	5	72	31
Undecided	14	20	10	17	22
Boxer (D)	52%	50%	84%	17%	46%
Casey (R)	32	37	6	70	21
Undecided	16	23	10	13	33

(D) denotes Democrat.

(R) denotes Republican.

* Relatively small sample sizes

Information About the Survey

Sample Details

The findings in this report are based on a telephone survey conducted February 18-22, 2004 in English and Spanish among a random sample of 958 registered voters in California. Preferences in the March Republican primary are based on 345 Republicans and non-partisans likely to vote in that election.

In order to cover a broad range of issues and still minimize respondent fatigue, the overall sample of registered voters was divided into two approximately equal-sized subsamples of 473 and 485 voters each when asking for preferences in the simulated general election pairings.

According to statistical theory the findings from likely voters in the March Republican primary election have a sampling error of plus or minus 5.8 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. General election match-ups between Boxer and each GOP opponent have a sampling error of +/- 4.6 percentage points.

There are other possible sources of error in any survey in addition to sampling variability. Different results could occur because of differences in question wording, sequencing or through omission or errors in sampling, interviewing or data processing. Extensive efforts were made to minimize these potential errors.

Questions Asked

(ASKED OF VOTERS LIKELY TO VOTE IN THE REPUBLICAN PRIMARY)

I am going to read the names of some people who are candidates for the Republican nomination for U.S. Senator this year. For each, please tell me whether your opinion of that person is favorable, unfavorable, or whether you don't know enough about that person to have an opinion. Is your opinion of (NAME AND TITLE) favorable or unfavorable? (NAME AND TITLE OF CANDIDATES READ IN RANDOM ORDER)?

In the March 2nd Republican primary for U.S. Senate, the candidates include (NAMES OF CANDIDATES READ IN RANDOM ORDER). If the Republican primary for U.S. Senate were being held today, for whom would you vote – (REPEAT LAST NAMES)?

(ASKED OF ALL REGISTERED VOTERS)

I am going to read some possible match-ups between Democratic and Republican candidates for U.S. Senate in the November general election in California. For each pairing, please tell me which candidate you would choose if the election for U.S. Senate were being held today. What about... (READ PAIR). If the election were being held today and these were the candidates for U.S. Senate, who would you prefer? (PAIRINGS READ IN RANDOM ORDER)