

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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VOTERS NOT VERY CONFIDENT ABOUT THE STATE'S NEW ELECTRONIC VOTING SYSTEMS. MANY FORESEE VOTING PROBLEMS IN OTHER STATES THAT COULD MAKE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RESULTS SUSPECT.

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by Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

California voters are approaching tomorrow's election not very confident that the electronic voting systems that will be used for the first time in many parts of the state are trustworthy enough to insure that all voters are properly counted.

In addition, a majority of voters here think it is likely that there will be problems at the polls in some states which could call into question the presidential election results, and 18% say they are not confident that whoever is declared the winner in the presidential election will have won fairly.

These rather somber views of the integrity of the election process are the main results of a statewide *Field Poll* survey completed last week.

Confidence in electronic voting systems

Less than one in four of California's registered voters (23%) reports being very confident that the electronic voting systems to be used in parts of the state, will insure that the votes are counted properly. About four in ten (39%) are somewhat confident, while 35% are not confident in the integrity of the new electronic voting process.

Democratic and non-partisan voters express less confidence in the electronic voting systems than Republicans, but even among GOP voters 25% express little confidence in them.

Table 1
**Confidence in electronic voting systems to insure that
these votes are counted properly**
(among California registered voters)

	<u>Very confident</u>	<u>Somewhat confident</u>	<u>Not confident</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
Total Statewide	23%	39	35	3
<u>Party</u>				
Democrats	15%	42	41	2
Republicans	33%	38	25	4
Non-partisans/others	27%	35	40	3

Polling problems in other states?

Two-thirds of voters (67%) believe it is very likely (30%) or somewhat likely (37%) that problems will occur at the polls in other states that could call into question the presidential election results this year.

There are some relatively minor differences in the opinions on this issue across the different partisan subgroups.

Table 2
**How likely are problems at the polls on Election Day in some states
that could call into question the presidential election results?**
(among California registered voters)

	<u>Very likely</u>	<u>Somewhat likely</u>	<u>Not likely</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
Total Statewide	30%	37	29	4
<u>Party</u>				
Democrats	30%	41	26	3
Republicans	28%	33	35	4
Non-partisans/others	35%	35	25	5

Will the winner in the presidential election have won fairly?

Significant proportions of the California electorate express reservations about whether the declared winner in Tuesday's presidential election will have won fairly.

Just one third (35%) say they are very confident that the election result will be fair, while about four in ten (42%) have some confidence. However, one in five (18%) indicate having little confidence that the declared winner will have won fairly.

Somewhat larger proportions of Democrats and non-partisans than Republicans are not confident that the winning presidential election candidate will have won fairly.

Skepticism about the fairness of this year's presidential election outcome is also related to whether a voter supported Al Gore or George W. Bush in the 2000 election, with Gore supporters expressing much less confidence than Bush voters.

Table 3				
How confident are you that whoever is declared the winner in the presidential election will have won fairly? (among California registered voters)				
	<u>Very confident</u>	<u>Somewhat confident</u>	<u>Not confident</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
Total Statewide	35%	42	18	5
<u>Party</u>				
Democrats	24%	47	25	4
Republicans	55%	35	7	3
Non-partisans/others	26%	42	24	8
<u>2000 vote for President</u>				
Gore voter	19%	48	26	7
Bush voter	58%	33	6	3
Didn't vote	28%	47	23	2

Information About The Survey

Sample Details

The findings in this report are based on interviews conducted among a random sample of 1,216 registered voters in California. Interviews were conducted by telephone in English and Spanish October 21-27, 2004. Sampling was carried out using random digit dial methodology which gives all voters, including those whose phone number is listed and unlisted, an equal chance of being contacted. Up to six attempts were made to reach a randomly selected voter at each number dialed. After the completion of interviewing the registered voter sample was weighted to Field Poll estimates of the state's total registered voter population.

According to statistical theory, the overall results for each proposition have a sampling error of +/- 2.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. These 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 omissions or errors in sampling, interviewing or data processing. Extensive efforts were made to minimize such potential errors.

Questions Asked

Many polling places across California and the rest of the country have been converted to electronic voting systems with computer screens, similar to bank ATMs. How much confidence do you have in the security of these new electronic voting systems to insure that all votes are counted properly – very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident or not at all confident?

There has been reports in the media saying that there could be problems at the polls on Election Day in some of the states that could call into question the presidential election results. How likely do you think it is that this will occur in this year's election – very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely or not at all likely?

How confident are you that whoever is declared the winner in this year's presidential election will have won the election fairly – very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?