

# THE FIELD POLL

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

**Field Research Corporation**

222 Sutter Street, Suite 700  
San Francisco, CA 94108-4411  
(415) 392-5763 FAX: (415) 434-2541  
EMAIL: [fieldpoll@field.com](mailto:fieldpoll@field.com)  
[www.field.com/fieldpollonline](http://www.field.com/fieldpollonline)

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**FAVORABLE JOB RATINGS  
FOR FEINSTEIN AND BOXER.  
MAJORITY INCLINED TO  
RE-ELECT FEINSTEIN NEXT YEAR.**

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by Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

Both of California's U.S. Senators – Democrats Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer – continue to achieve favorable job approval ratings from California voters.

Feinstein's current job rating is 50% approve and 29% disapprove. For Boxer it is 49% to 36%. Feinstein's approval rating has been 50% or more for most of the last two years. Boxer's 49% approval rating has been matched a few times during the past four years.

While the two Senators have similar overall ratings, there are differences in how the two are viewed by Democrats and Republicans. Boxer gets a higher approval rating (76%) from Democrats than Feinstein (64%). However, Feinstein's approval percentage among Republicans is almost twice as great as that given to Boxer – 36% to 19%. Among non-partisans, both Senators receive similar approval ratings.

**Table 1**  
**Trend of Dianne Feinstein's job performance ratings as U.S. Senator**  
**(among registered voters)**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
February 2005	50%	29	21
August 2004	55%	29	16
May 2004	53%	23	24
July 2003	55%	31	14
April 2003	49%	34	17
2002 (Average)	49%	26	25
2001 (Average)	57%	27	16
2000 (Average)	57%	27	16
1999 (Average)	51%	28	21
1998 (Average)	56%	27	17
1997 (Average)	47%	35	18
<u>Party (February 2005)</u>			
Democrats	64%	14	22
Republicans	36%	48	16
Non-partisans/others	44%	25	31

**Table 2**  
**Trend of Barbara Boxer's job performance ratings as U.S. Senator**  
**(among registered voters)**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
February 2005	49%	36	15
August 2004	49%	36	15
May 2004	44%	33	23
July 2003	49%	35	16
April 2003	43%	35	22
2002 (Average)	45%	29	26
2001 (Average)	49%	31	20
2000 (Average)	50%	30	20
1999 (Average)	45%	35	20
1998 (Average)	45%	29	26
1997 (Average)	41%	35	24
<u>Party (February 2005)</u>			
Democrats	76%	10	14
Republicans	19%	68	13
Non-partisans/others	46%	33	21

### **Feinstein up for re-election next year**

Feinstein (71) will be up for re-election next year. While she has not formally announced that she will be seeking another term, most of the political speculation is that she will run again.

Today's survey finds that 53% of voters say they are inclined to re-elect Feinstein, while 39% are not. Opinions are highly partisan, with three out of four Democrats (73%) ready to re-elect her, compared to 33% of Republicans. Almost one-half (48%) of non-partisans are inclined to support her bid for another term.

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**Table 3**  
**Voter inclination to re-elect Dianne Feinstein to the U.S. Senate**  
**(among registered voters)**

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	<b><u>Inclined</u></b>	<b><u>Not inclined</u></b>	<b><u>No opinion</u></b>
<b>Statewide (February 2005)</b>	53%	39	8
<b><u>Party registration</u></b>			
Democrats	73%	23	4
Republicans	33%	59	8
Non-partisans/others	48%	37	15

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### **Feinstein and Boxer big vote getters**

Feinstein's first run for U.S. Senate was in 1992 when she ran to fill the unexpired term of Republican Pete Wilson, who resigned from the Senate following his 1990 election as Governor. Feinstein handily defeated Wilson's self-appointed successor, Republican John Seymour, 54% to 38%, in that election.

However, in 1994 Feinstein, running for her own full six-year term, only narrowly defeated Republican Michael Huffington 47% to 45%. Six years later in 2000 Feinstein won re-election overwhelmingly (56% to 37%) against Tom Campbell (R). In that election, Feinstein polled over 5.9 million votes, which at the time was the most votes received in any U.S. senatorial election in American history.

Boxer (64) was also first elected to the Senate in 1992, when she narrowly defeated Republican Bruce Herschensohn 48% to 43%. In 1998 Boxer increased her winning margin when she defeated Republican Matt Fong 53% to 43%. In last November's election, Boxer's support reached a new high, when she defeated Republican Bill Jones by a 58% to 38% margin. In that election she surpassed Feinstein's previous record high vote total for election to the U.S. Senate, when 6.95 million Californians cast ballots for her.

### **Comparison of voter images**

The image that California voters have of Feinstein is two to one positive (58% favorable and 29% unfavorable) and is about on a par with that of Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger (60% to 33%). Boxer's image rating is also quite favorable – 54% to 37% - although it is slightly lower than that of Feinstein and Schwarzenegger.

By contrast, the image that California voters have of President George W. Bush is more unfavorable (53%) than favorable (46%).

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**Table 4**  
**Voter image ratings of Feinstein and Boxer compared to**  
**other political figures – February 2005**  
**(among registered voters)**

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	<b><u>Favorable</u></b>	<b><u>Unfavorable</u></b>	<b><u>No opinion</u></b>
Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor	60%	33	7
Dianne Feinstein, U.S. Senator	58%	29	13
Barbara Boxer, U.S. Senator	54%	37	9
George W. Bush, President	46%	53	1

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## **Information About The Survey**

### **Sample Details**

The findings in this report are based on a telephone survey of Californians conducted in English and Spanish. Interviews were completed during the period February 8 – 17, 2005 among a representative sample of 800 Californians registered to vote. In order to cover a broad range of issues, the overall voter sample was divided into two approximately equal sized subsamples for some issues.

Households were sampled using a random digit dial methodology, which includes all operating telephone exchanges within all area codes serving California households in proportion to population. Within each exchange a random sample of telephone numbers are created by adding random digits to the selected telephone exchange. This permits access to all landline telephone numbers both listed and unlisted.

According to statistical theory, 95% of the time results from the overall voter sample have a sampling error of +/- 3.5 percentage points, while findings from each subsample have a sampling error of +/- 5 points.

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

### **Questions Asked**

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Dianne Feinstein is handling her job as U.S. Senator?

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barbara Boxer is handling her job as U.S. Senator?

I am going to read the names of some elected officials. For each, please tell me whether you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of that person or whether you don't know enough about him or her to have an opinion. (NAMES AND TITLES OF EACH PERSON READ IN RANDOM ORDER, ASKING:) Is your opinion of \_\_\_\_\_ favorable or unfavorable? (SEE RELEASE FOR NAMES READ)

Suppose that U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein runs for re-election next year. As things stand now, how inclined are you to vote to re-elect Feinstein as U.S. Senator – very inclined, somewhat inclined, not too inclined or not at all inclined?