

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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PROP. 75 CONTINUES TO LEAD BY BIG MARGIN. STRONG TIDE RUNNING AGAINST PROP. 76. YES VOTE DROPPING ON PROP. 74. NARROW SENTIMENT AGAINST PROP. 77. DIVIDED VOTE ON PROP. 80.

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by Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

The statewide ballot proposition likely to engender the greatest amount of partisan rancor in the November special election is Prop. 75 (Public Employee Union Dues). The election also features three initiatives backed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger: Prop. 76 ("State Spending and School Funding Limits), Prop. 74, (Public School Teachers), and Prop. 77 ("Redistricting").

In its latest statewide survey, *The Field Poll* finds the Yes side on Prop. 75 maintaining a large twenty-three point lead, unchanged from an earlier poll in June. On the other hand, the three initiatives backed by the Governor are not faring as well. Prop. 76 is generating an increasingly negative reaction from those likely to vote in November. Last June, 42% were inclined to vote No and 35% supported the measure. Now, the No proportion has soared to 65%, while the Yes vote has declined to 19%.

In addition, while the Yes side on Prop. 74 continues to lead by nine points (46% to 37%), its preference margin is down from a twenty-nine point lead in June.

There has been no significant change in the voter preferences on Prop. 77 over the past two months. The No side is leading 46% to 32%, about where it was in June.

The poll also measured voter preferences regarding Prop. 80 (Electric Service Providers Regulation). The survey reveals voters evenly split, with about one-third inclined to vote Yes, another third No and the remaining third undecided.

The following table compares the findings of the June and late August *Field Polls* on these initiatives.

Table 1
Voter support/opposition regarding five statewide propositions
to be voted on in the November special election
(among likely voters)

	<u>Late August</u>	<u>June</u>
<hr/>		
Prop. 75: Public Employee Union Dues		
Yes	55%	57%
No	32	34
Undecided	13	9
Prop. 76: State Spending and School Funding Limits		
Yes	19%	35%
No	65	42
Undecided	16	23
Prop. 74: Public School Teachers		
Yes	46%	61%
No	37	32
Undecided	17	7
Prop. 77: Redistricting		
Yes	32%	35%
No	46	46
Undecided	22	19
Prop. 80: Electric Service Providers Regulation		
Yes	33%	N/A
No	35	N/A
Undecided	32	N/A

N/A: Not asked in June survey.

Prop. 75 (Public Employee Union Dues)

This measure would prohibit public employee labor organizations from using dues or fees from its members for political contributions unless the employee provides prior written consent.

Currently, 55% of likely voters favor the measure, while 32% are on the No side. This division of sentiment is virtually the same as was found in June, when it was 57% Yes and 34% No.

Democrats and non-partisans are only narrowly supporting Prop. 75, while Republicans are overwhelmingly in favor 71% to 22%. Men and women, as well as voters in Southern and Northern California, currently favor Prop. 75.

Table 2
Comparing June and Late August voter preferences regarding Prop. 75
(Union Dues) – by subgroup
(among likely voters)

	Late August 2005			June 2004		
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Total likely voters	55%	32	13	57%	34	9
<u>Prior awareness of initiative</u>						
Yes, have heard	55%	38	7	49%	45	6
No, have not heard	55%	30	15	60%	25	15
<u>Party</u>						
Democrats	45%	37	18	46%	46	8
Republicans	71%	22	7	70%	19	11
Non-partisans/others*	47%	42	11	51%	37	12
<u>Gender</u>						
Male	59%	33	8	55%	38	7
Female	52%	31	17	59%	29	12
<u>Region</u>						
Southern California	59%	28	13	61%	32	7
Northern California	50%	37	13	51%	36	13

* Small sample base

Prop. 76 (State Spending and School Funding Limits)

The measure which is reportedly the linchpin of the government reform measures being backed by Governor Schwarzenegger is Prop. 76, the “School Spending and State Spending” initiative. According to its official ballot summary, Prop. 76 would limit state spending to prior year levels plus the average revenue growth of the three previous years. It would also change the minimum school funding requirements under Prop. 98 and permits the Governor to reduce state budgets under certain circumstances.

After being read this summary, the likely voters interviewed in this survey were asked how they would vote if the election were being held today. Statewide, 65% say they would vote No, 19% would vote Yes and 16% are undecided.

This represents a big increase in opposition to Prop. 76 from what was found in an earlier June *Field Poll*, when its lead was only seven points (42% to 35%).

Remarkably, majorities or pluralities across all voter subgroups, Democrats, Republicans, non-partisans, men, women, Southern and Northern California, say they are disposed to vote No on Prop. 76.

Table 3
Comparing June and Late August voter preferences regarding Prop. 76
(State Spending and School Funding Limits) – by subgroup
(among likely voters)

	Late August 2005			June 2004		
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Total likely voters	19%	65	16	35%	42	23
<u>Prior awareness of initiative</u>						
Yes, have heard	22%	67	11	36%	49	15
No, have not heard	18%	63	19	31%	27	42
<u>Party</u>						
Democrats	5%	82	13	24%	57	19
Republicans	39%	42	19	53%	27	20
Non-partisans/others*	14%	68	18	20%	42	38
<u>Gender</u>						
Male	29%	57	14	36%	42	22
Female	10%	71	19	33%	42	25
<u>Region</u>						
Southern California	17%	64	19	42%	39	19
Northern California	22%	65	13	25%	47	28

* Small sample base

Prop. 74 (Public School Teachers)

Prop. 74 is a measure called the “Public School Teachers: Waiting Period for Permanent Status; Dismissal” initiative. It would increase the probationary period for public school teachers from two to five years and modifies the process by which school boards can dismiss teaching employees who have received two consecutive unsatisfactory performance evaluations.

The current poll shows that there has also been a big change in voter sentiment on this proposition. In June the Yes side had a large two-to-one lead – 61% to 32%. Now, Prop. 74 leads only narrowly, 46% Yes to 37% No.

While the Yes side maintains the lead overall, the poll shows that shifts in the opinion away from Yes to No have among all voter sub-groups.

Table 4
Comparing June and Late August voter preferences regarding Prop. 74
(Public School Teachers) – by subgroup
(among likely voters)

	Late August 2005			June 2004		
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Total likely voters	46%	37	17	61%	32	7
<u>Prior awareness of initiative</u>						
Yes, have heard	45%	44	11	60%	37	3
No, have not heard	48%	29	23	64%	25	11
<u>Party</u>						
Democrats	32%	49	19	43%	51	6
Republicans	64%	26	10	83%	12	5
Non-partisans/others*	47%	31	22	55%	34	11
<u>Gender</u>						
Male	50%	36	14	58%	37	5
Female	43%	38	19	65%	27	8
<u>Region</u>						
Southern California	51%	33	16	63%	33	4
Northern California	41%	42	17	59%	31	10

* Small sample base

Prop. 77 (Redistricting)

Prop. 77 amends the state constitution's process for redistricting California's Senate, Assembly, Congressional and Board of Equalization districts.

In both the June and late August surveys more voters were inclined to vote No than Yes by margins of eleven to fourteen points. Democrats and non-partisans are strongly opposed to Prop. 77, while Republicans are supporting it.

Women are strongly opposed 47% to 23%, while men only slightly so (45% to 42%).

Opposition to the initiative is somewhat less among voters who had some prior knowledge of the initiative prior to their being surveyed than among voters who had not heard of the measure.

Table 5
Comparing June and Late August voter preferences regarding Prop. 77
(Redistricting) – by subgroup
(among likely voters)

	Late August 2005			June 2004		
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Total likely voters	32%	46	22	35%	46	19
<u>Prior awareness of initiative</u>						
Yes, have heard	42%	50	8	47%	43	10
No, have not heard	24%	42	34	17%	50	33
<u>Party</u>						
Democrats	20%	57	23	22%	57	21
Republicans	47%	30	23	45%	38	17
Non-partisans/others*	31%	49	20	42%	41	17
<u>Gender</u>						
Male	42%	45	13	41%	44	15
Female	23%	47	30	29%	48	23
<u>Region</u>						
Southern California	32%	47	21	39%	42	19
Northern California	33%	44	23	30%	51	19

* Small sample base

Prop. 80 (Electric Service Providers Regulation)

Prop. 80 subjects electric service providers to regulation by the California Public Utilities Commission, restricts consumers' ability to switch from private utilities to other providers, and requires that all retail suppliers of electricity increase their renewable energy resource purchases by 2010.

Only a relatively small proportion (17%) of voters were aware of this initiative, which has not been getting as much media attention as the other propositions.

Voter sentiment at this time divides almost evenly into three groups: 33% Yes, 35% No and 32% undecided.

Table 6
Late August voter preferences regarding Prop. 80
(Electric Services Providers Regulation) – by subgroup
(among likely voters)

	Late August 2005		
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Total likely voters	33%	35	32
<u>Prior awareness of initiative</u>			
Yes, have heard*	44%	27	29
No, have not heard	31%	37	32
<u>Party</u>			
Democrats	38%	30	32
Republicans	30%	36	34
Non-partisans/others*	28%	45	27
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	35%	33	32
Female	31%	37	32
<u>Region</u>			
Southern California	32%	37	31
Northern California	35%	32	33

Note: No prior measures were made on Prop. 80.

* Small sample base

Information About The Survey

Sample Details

The findings in this report are based on a survey of a random sample of 615 California adults contacted by telephone August 19-29, 2005 in English and Spanish. The survey included 426 registered voters, of whom 314 were considered likely voters in the November 2005 special election.

Samples of households were selected using a random digit dial methodology, which randomly selects operating telephone exchanges within all areas codes serving California households in proportion to population. Within each exchange, telephone numbers are created by adding random digits to the selected telephone exchange. This method permits access to all landline telephone numbers statewide, both listed and unlisted, and gives each residential phone listing an equal chance of being selected.

According to statistical theory, 95% of the time preferences regarding each ballot initiative have a sampling error of +/- 5.8 percentage points.

Questions Asked

Have you seen, read or heard anything about Proposition 74, an initiative on the November statewide special election having to do with tenure for public school teachers?

(As you know) Prop. 74 is the "Public School Teachers; Waiting Period for Permanent Status; Dismissal" initiative. It increases the probationary period for public school teachers from two to five years and modifies the process by which school boards can dismiss a teaching employee who receives two consecutive unsatisfactory performance evaluations. If the election were being held today, would you vote YES or NO on Prop. 74?

Have you seen, read or heard anything about Proposition 75, an initiative on the November statewide special election having to do with government employee union dues?

(As you know) Prop. 75 is the "Public Employee Union Dues; Restrictions on Political Contributions, Employee Consent Requirement" initiative. It prohibits using public employee union dues for political contributions without individual employees' prior consent. It excludes contributions benefiting charities or employees and requires unions to report political contributions to the state's Fair Political Practices Commission. If the election were being held today, would you vote YES or NO on Prop. 75?

Have you seen, read or heard anything about Proposition 76, an initiative on the November statewide special election having to do with state spending and school funding limits?

(As you know) Prop. 76 is the "State Spending and School Funding Limits" initiative. It limits state spending to prior year's levels plus the average revenue growth of the three previous years. It also changes the minimum school funding requirements under Proposition 98 and permits the Governor, under specified circumstances, to reduce budget appropriations of the Governor's choosing. Fiscal Impact: State spending would likely be reduced, due to the additional spending limit and the Governor's new powers. Reductions could apply to schools and shift costs to other local governments. If the election were being held today, would you vote YES or NO on Prop. 76?

Have you seen, read or heard anything about Proposition 80, an initiative on the November statewide special election having to do with the regulation of electric service?

Prop. 80 is called the "Electric Service Providers. Regulation" initiative. It subjects electric service providers to regulation by the California Public Utilities Commission. It restricts electricity customers' ability to switch from private utilities to other providers and requires all retail electric sellers to increase their renewable energy resource procurements by 2010. If the election were being held today, would you vote YES or NO on Prop. 80?

Have you seen, read or heard anything about Proposition 77, an initiative on the November statewide special election having to do with how election district boundary lines are drawn?

(As you know) Prop. 77 is the Redistricting initiative. It amends the state constitution's process for redistricting California's Senate, Assembly, Congressional and Board of Equalization districts. It requires a three-member panel of retired judges, selected by legislative leaders. If the election were being held today, would you vote YES or NO on Prop. 77?