

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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**SMALLER MAJORITY NOW FAVORING
PROP. 93, THE TERM LIMITS
INITIATIVE. VOTERS IN FAVOR OF
APPROVING FOUR INDIAN GAMING
COMPACTS.**

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By Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

Next February 5, in addition to making choices about the candidates running for the Democratic and Republican presidential nominations, Californians will be asked to vote on a number of important ballot propositions.

One of them, Proposition 93, is designed to modify the state's term limits law. Results from the latest *Field Poll* show the initiative is running ahead, but by a smaller margin than found two months ago. However, among that segment of the voting electorate who had some prior awareness of the initiative, opinions are more evenly divided.

Primary election voters may also be asked to approve or overturn four Indian casino compacts passed by the state legislature and the Governor that allow for an expansion in the number of slot machines in four Southern California casinos. When asked about these referenda at this time, voters say they are inclined to approve them by a 52% to 35% margin.

These are the results of the latest *Field Poll* of likely voters in the upcoming February 5th primary.

Support for Proposition 93 declines some

Ever since California voters approved legislative term limits in the 1992 election, polls have shown that voters have remained strongly supportive of the idea of term limits.

On next February's statewide primary election ballot, there will be an initiative, Proposition 93, designed to modify the state's term limits law. The measure calls for reducing the total years a state legislator can serve in both the Assembly and State Senate from 14 to 12 years, but also allows a legislator to serve his or her entire 12 years in either house.

Last August, *The Field Poll* found a two-to-one majority (59% to 30%) saying they would be inclined to support this term limits modification. The current survey finds that the 29-point Yes side lead has dropped to 18 points – 49% Yes and 31% No, with a growing proportion (20%) undecided.

Table 1
Trend of voter preferences toward Proposition 93, the "Limit on
Legislators' Terms in Office" initiative
(among likely voters in the February 2008 primary)

	<u>October 2007</u>	<u>August 2007</u>
Would vote YES	49%	59%
Would vote NO	31	30
Undecided	20	11

Sub-group preferences

Support for Prop. 93 currently includes pluralities of voters in all regions of the state and across all party lines, with Republicans favoring it by the biggest margin.

However, among the relative small segment of voters (19%) who had some prior awareness of the initiative, opinions toward the initiative are almost evenly divided, with 47% intending to vote Yes and 44% No.

Table 2
Current voter preferences toward Proposition 93, the "Limits on Legislators' Terms in Office" initiative – by subgroup (among likely voters in the February 2008 primary)

	<u>Inclined to vote...</u>		
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Statewide	49%	31	20
<u>Party</u>			
(.44) Democrats	44%	34	22
(.36) Republicans	57%	29	14
(.20) Non-partisans/others	47%	28	25
<u>Region</u>			
(.23) Los Angeles County	44%	34	22
(.18) Orange/San Diego	58%	24	18
(.15) Other Southern California	58%	25	17
(.16) Central Valley	49%	31	20
(.23) San Francisco Bay Area	40%	39	21
(.05) Other Northern California*	60%	22	18
<u>Political ideology</u>			
(.31) Conservative	51%	29	20
(.42) Middle-of-the-road	52%	29	19
(.27) Liberal	43%	36	21
<u>Prior awareness of Prop. 93</u>			
(.19) Had heard	47%	44	9
(.81) Had not heard	50%	28	22

* Small sample base.

Impact of allowing legislative leaders to avoid being termed out

Should Prop. 93 pass, one consequence is that many current legislators – including the present leaders in the Senate and Assembly – would avoid being termed out of office next year. This is because of the initiative's provision to allow legislators to serve up to 12 years in the legislative body in which they are currently serving.

After voters are informed of this and asked what effect this would have on their support or opposition to the initiative, 63% say this would have no effect on their voting preferences. This compares to one in seven (15%) who say this information makes them less inclined to support Prop. 93, while as many (12%) say it makes them more inclined to support it.

Table 3				
Impact that Prop. 93's "transition period" (allowing current legislators including State Senate President Don Perata and Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez to avoid being termed out of office) has on support for the initiative (among likely voters in the February 2008 primary)				
	More inclined to support	No effect	Less inclined to support	No opinion
October 2007	12%	63	15	10
August 2007	14%	68	13	5
<u>Preferences toward the initiative</u>				
Yes voters	17%	64	12	7
No voters	8%	65	22	5
Undecided	7%	57	9	27

Indian gaming

In 1988, Congress allowed Indian tribes in the U.S. to build and operate gambling casinos on tribal lands. Soon after, California voters allowed the establishment of Indian casinos here, and many are now operating and flourishing throughout the state.

When Californians are asked about the expansion of Indian gaming casinos in the state, voters are about evenly divided, with 40% supporting further expansion and 43% opposed. By comparison, last year when *The Field Poll* asked an identical question, 50% were opposed, while 39% were in favor.

Table 4		
Do you favor or oppose expanding the number of casino gaming establishments on Indian tribal lands in California? (among likely voters in the February 2008 primary)		
	October 2007	September 2006*
Oppose	43%	50%
Favor	40	39
Depends	10	6
No opinion	7	5

* September 2006 survey asked of all registered voters.

Voter preferences on referenda to overturn four Indian gaming compacts

Four separate referenda to approve or overturn the new Indian gaming compacts approved by the legislature and signed by the governor earlier this year may also appear on the February 5th primary ballot. After a description of the proposed referenda was read, voters were asked how they would be inclined to vote. A majority (52%) say they'd vote Yes to approve them and 35% said they'd vote No to overturn the compacts.

Voters in the Central Valley and the San Francisco Bay Area are closely divided in their opinions toward these referenda, with the compacts only slightly ahead. However, in all other areas of the state, there is significant support for approving the compacts.

Those who favor expanded Indian gaming approve of the referenda by an overwhelming 86% to 8% margin. However, among those opposed, about two-thirds (64%) want the new Indian gaming compacts overturned.

Table 5			
Initial voter preferences regarding four statewide referenda seeking a public vote on four Southern California Indian gaming compacts approved by the legislature and signed by the governor earlier this year (among likely voters in the February 2008 primary)			
	<u>Inclined to vote...</u>		
	<u>Yes, to approve these compacts</u>	<u>No, to overturn these compacts</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Statewide	52%	35	13
<u>Region</u>			
Los Angeles County	58%	28	14
Orange/San Diego	56%	34	10
Other Southern California	55%	31	14
Central Valley	45%	44	11
San Francisco Bay Area	45%	40	15
Other Northern California*	59%	34	7
<u>Opinion of expanding Indian gaming</u>			
Favor	86%	8	6
Oppose	23%	64	13
Depends/no opinion	47%	25	28

* Small sample base.

Information About The Survey

Sample Details

The findings in this report are based on a random sample survey of 1,201 registered voters statewide, of whom 834 can be considered likely voters in the upcoming February 5th primary election. Interviewing was conducted by telephone in English and Spanish October 11-21, 2007. Up to eight attempts were made to reach and interview each randomly selected voter on different days and times of day during the interviewing period.

The sample was developed from telephone listings of individual voters selected at random from a statewide list of registered voters in California. Once a voter's name and telephone number has been selected, interviews are attempted only with the specified voter. Interviews can be conducted on either the voter's landline or cell phone, depending on the source of the telephone listing from the voter file. After the completion of interviewing, the results are weighted slightly to *Field Poll* estimates of the demographic and regional characteristics of the state's registered voter population.

Sampling error estimates applicable to any probability-based survey depend on sample size. According to statistical theory, 95% of the time results from findings based on the overall sample of 834 registered voters are subject to a sampling error of +/- 3.5 percentage 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, the sequencing of questions, the rigor with which sampling procedures are implemented, as well as other factors.

Questions Asked

Have you seen, read or heard anything about Proposition 93, a statewide ballot proposition having to do with term limits that will appear on the February 2008 primary election ballot?

(As you know) Proposition 93 is called the "Limits on Legislators' Terms in Office" initiative. It reduces the total amount of time a person may serve in the state legislature from 14 years to 12 years and allows a person to serve a total of 12 years either in the Assembly, the Senate or a combination of both. It provides a transition period to allow current members to serve a total of 12 consecutive years in the house in which they are currently serving, regardless of any prior service in another house. If the election were being held today, would you vote YES or NO on Proposition 93?

Because Prop. 93 permits a transition period for current members, many of the leaders in the State Senate and Assembly, including Senate President Don Perata and Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez would avoid being termed out of office next year if the term limits initiative passes. Does this make you more inclined to support Prop. 93, less inclined to support it or does it have no effect on you?

As you know, the state of California allows legal casino gaming, such as playing slot machines, dice, blackjack, and roulette, at casinos located on Indian tribal lands. Tax proceeds from these casinos are shared between the state government and the local governments where they are located.

In general, do you favor or oppose expanding the number of casino gaming establishments on Indian tribal lands in California?

Have you seen, read or heard anything about four separate referenda relating to Indian gaming that voters may be asked to vote on in the February 2008 statewide election?

(As you know) these referenda call for a public vote on four Indian gaming compacts that were approved by the state legislature and signed into law by the governor earlier this year. These compacts allow four Southern California Indian tribes to increase the number of slot machines at their casinos in return for their paying more taxes to the state. Each referendum directs voters to vote Yes if they approve of the new compacts or No if they disapprove and want to overturn them. If you were voting today on these four proposed referenda, would you be inclined to vote YES to approve them or NO to overturn them?