

THE FIELD POLL

THE INDEPENDENT AND NON-PARTISAN SURVEY
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THE CALIFORNIA POLL BY MERVIN FIELD

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CLINTON LEADS OBAMA BY 12 POINTS IN CALIFORNIA. BIG DIFFERENCES IN PREFERENCES ACROSS VOTER SUBGROUPS.

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By Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

Hillary Clinton's lead over Barack Obama in California now stands at 12 percentage points – 39% to 27%, with 14% preferring other candidates and a relatively large proportion (20%) of likely voters undecided.

Clinton's lead is largest among women, Latinos, lower income voters, non-college graduates, and seniors. Conversely, Obama is preferred among blacks, college graduates and Democratic primary voters with household incomes of \$80,000 or more. Clinton and Obama run about even among men, liberals, and white non-Hispanics.

Both of the leading candidates are viewed by likely Democratic primary voters in a very positive light. Yet, Clinton is perceived by voters as holding a big advantage over Obama as being the candidate with the right experience and who has the best chance of winning in the November general election. Obama, on the other hand, is viewed by more voters as being the candidate who best represents change.

Clinton voters are much more likely to consider jobs/the economy as being the most important issue to them when deciding whom to support for President. By contrast, Obama supporters are more likely to view the war in Iraq and foreign policy as their top concerns.

These are the main findings from the latest *Field Poll* of 377 likely voters in California's February 5th Democratic primary conducted January 14-20.

Democratic voter trend

Clinton is now the choice of 39% of likely voters in California's February 5th Democratic primary, up three points from December. Support for Obama has increased five percentage points to 27%. In third position is John Edwards at 10%, with a combined 4% going to other candidates.

A relatively large proportion (20%) of likely Democratic primary voters remains undecided.

Table 1
Trend of voter preferences in the California Democratic primary for president
(among likely voters in the CA Democratic primary)

	Mid- January 2008	December 2007	October 2007	August 2007	March 2007
Hillary Clinton	39%	36%	45%	49%	41%
Barack Obama	27	22	20	19	28
John Edwards	10	13	11	10	13
Others	4	9	10	10	9
Undecided	20	20	14	12	9

Big demographic sub-group differences in preference

There are large differences in voter preferences across subgroups of the likely Democratic primary electorate. Clinton leads by wide margins among women, Latinos, seniors, non-college graduates, and those with annual household incomes of less than \$40,000. Obama is preferred by blacks, college graduates and those with household incomes exceeding \$80,000. He runs nearly even with Clinton among liberals, men, and white non-Hispanics.

Clinton holds a thirteen percentage-point lead among registered Democrats, and a narrower four-point lead among those non-partisans who say they will vote in the Democratic primary.

Clinton is ahead of Obama in each of the four major regions of the state, although her lead in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area is just seven points.

Table 2
Likely voter preferences in the California Democratic primary for president
– by subgroup

	<u>Clinton</u>	<u>Obama</u>	<u>Edwards</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Statewide	39%	27	10	4	20
<u>Party</u>					
(.88) Democrat	40%	27	11	4	18
(.12) Non-partisan*	37%	33	4	4	22
<u>Region</u>					
(.31) Los Angeles County	44%	28	9	4	15
(.26) Other Southern California	37%	24	10	2	27
(.27) San Francisco Bay Area	38%	31	8	6	17
(.16) Other Northern California*	36%	25	19	**	20
<u>Gender</u>					
(.43) Men	34%	32	11	4	19
(.57) Women	43%	24	10	3	20
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>					
(.56) White non-Hispanic	32%	30	14	4	20
(.26) Latino	59%	19	3	1	18
(.07) Black*	24%	58	5	**	13
(.10) Asian/other*	41%	22	10	10	17
<u>Age</u>					
(.28) 18 – 39	43%	34	7	3	13
(.52) 40 – 64	37%	28	12	4	19
(.20) 65 or older	40%	18	11	3	28
<u>Political ideology</u>					
(.39) Liberal	34%	30	10	5	21
(.47) Middle-of-the-road	43%	28	9	2	18
(.14) Conservative*	44%	17	14	3	22
<u>Education</u>					
(.21) High school or less*	58%	16	7	4	15
(.30) Some college/trade school	46%	21	12	2	19
(.49) College graduate	29%	36	10	4	21
<u>Household income</u>					
(.28) Less than \$40,000*	49%	22	10	5	14
(.30) \$40,000 – \$79,999	49%	20	8	3	20
(.42) \$80,000 or more	30%	37	12	2	19
<u>Voting method</u>					
(.57) Precinct voter	45%	27	7	1	20
(.43) Mail ballot voter	32%	27	15	7	19

* Small sample base. ** Less than 1/2 of 1%.

Edwards supporters favor Obama

If Edwards, who is running a distant third with 10% of voter preferences, were to drop out of the race, more than twice as many of his supporters say they would prefer Obama (29%) than Clinton (11%). Another 12% would favor other candidates, while nearly half (48%) are undecided.

Both leading candidates are highly regarded by Democratic primary voters

Democrats have a high regard for both Clinton and Obama. About three in four likely Democratic primary voters hold a favorable impression of Clinton (77%) and Obama (74%). Very few have an unfavorable impression of either Clinton (15%) or Obama (13%). There has been a small yet significant improvement in the regard Democratic voters have of Clinton since October.

Table 3
Trend of Democratic voter impressions
of Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama
(among likely voters in the CA Democratic primary)

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
<u>Clinton</u>			
Mid-January 2008	77%	15	8
December 2007	76%	18	8
October 2007	67%	21	12
<u>Obama</u>			
Mid-January 2008	74%	13	13
December 2007	76%	13	11

Note: Previous measures asked of registered Democrats only. Obama not measured in October 2007.

Appraisal of candidates on personal attributes

In this survey voters deemed likely to participate in the Democratic primary were asked to make an appraisal between Clinton and Obama on six different personal attributes.

Of the six, Clinton holds the biggest advantage over Obama on having “the right experience” (58% to 12%). Clinton also edges Obama on having the best chance of winning the November general election (45% to 20%). She also holds somewhat smaller advantages as the candidate “best representing what the Democratic party stands for (37% to 24%), “will be able to unite the U.S.” (35% to 28%), and “cares about people like you” (32% to 20%), although fairly large proportions say these descriptions apply to both candidates.

Obama holds a significant advantage over Clinton as the candidate that “best represents change” – 44% to 26%.

Table 4
Comparing voter perceptions of Clinton and Obama on six personal attributes
(among likely voters in the CA Democratic primary)

	<u>Clinton</u>	<u>Obama</u>	<u>Both</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
Has the right experience	58%	12	12	12	6
Has the best chance of winning the November general election	45%	20	11	5	19
Best represents what the Democratic Party stands for	37%	24	20	9	10
Will be able to unite the U.S.	35%	28	14	14	9
Cares about people like you	32%	20	27	11	10
Best represents change	26%	44	14	9	7

Most important issues to Democratic primary voters

Three issues are rated about equally as being most important to this state's Democratic primary electorate: health care (43%), jobs and the economy (42%), and the war in Iraq (42%). Rated next in importance is foreign policy (30%), followed by illegal immigration at 26%. Somewhat smaller proportions rate taxes (19%) or the terrorist threat (17%) as being among the most important issues when deciding whom to support for President.

Clinton voters are much more likely than other voters to consider jobs and the economy as being the issue most important to them. By contrast, more Obama supporters than voters favoring other candidates view the war in Iraq and foreign policy as being among their most important issues.

Table 5
Matters rated among "the most important" issues to Democratic primary voters when deciding whom to support for President
(among likely voters in the CA Democratic primary)

	<u>Total Dem. primary voters</u>	<u>Clinton voters*</u>	<u>Obama voters*</u>	<u>All others*</u>
Health care	43%	48%	42%	39%
The war in Iraq	42	38	47	43
Jobs and the economy	42	61	29	38
Foreign policy	30	19	44	23
Illegal immigration	26	25	22	32
Taxes	19	26	14	18
The terrorist threat	17	27	15	7

* Relatively small sample bases.

Information About The Survey

Sample Details

The findings in this report are based on a random sample survey of 1,023 registered voters in California, including 377 voters deemed likely to vote in the Democratic primary election.

Interviewing was conducted by telephone in English and Spanish January 14-20, 2008. Up to six 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 were 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 the sample size. The maximum sampling error for results based on the overall sample of 377 likely voters is +/- 5.2 percentage points. The maximum sampling error is based on percentages +/- in the middle of the sampling distribution (percentages around 50%). Percentages at either end of the distribution (percentages around 10% or around 90%) have a smaller margin of error. While there are other potential sources of error in surveys besides sampling error, the overall design and execution of the survey minimized the potential for these other sources of error. The maximum sampling error will be larger for analyses based on subgroups of the overall sample.

Questions Asked

(IF HAVE NOT ALREADY VOTED, ASK:)

I am going to read the names of some Democrats who are running for the Democratic presidential nomination this year. For each, please tell me whether there would be a good chance, some chance or no chance that you would vote for that person in California's presidential primary election. You may name as many or as few persons as you like as people you would be inclined to vote for. (NAMES AND TITLES OF CANDIDATES READ IN RANDOM ORDER) I am going to read back the names of the candidates you said you would have at least some chance of voting for. (NAMES OF CANDIDATES READ BACK) Of these persons, who would be your first choice if the California Democratic primary election for President were being held today? (IF FIRST CHOICE GIVEN) Who would be your second choice?

(IF ALREADY VOTED, ASK:)

For whom did you vote in the Democratic presidential primary election? (NAMES READ IN RANDOM ORDER)

Which of the two leading Democratic candidates do you think (READ PERSONAL CHARACTERISTIC) – Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama? (ITEMS READ IN RANDOM ORDER; SEE RELEASE FOR ITEMS)

When considering this year's election for President, how important (are) (were) the candidates' position on each of the following issues to you in deciding whom to support? (ITEMS READ IN RANDOM ORDER) (Is) (Was) this the most important issue, an important issue but not the most important issue, or not an important issue in your vote for President? (SEE RELEASE FOR ISSUES READ)

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of (Hillary Clinton) (Barack Obama)? (ITEMS READ IN RANDOM ORDER)