



To: Tom Steyer for Governor

From: Global Strategy Group

Date: May 22, 2026

Re: Tom Steyer Surges into Tie for First Among Democrats in Race for California Governor

A new statewide survey of likely California primary voters shows Tom Steyer gaining clear momentum in the final weeks of the primary campaign for Governor, rising to 19% and matching Xavier Becerra for the lead among Democratic candidates.

Key Findings

Steyer has gained four points since late April, while Becerra has slipped from 21% to 19%. The race is coming into focus in its final weeks: over this period Matt Mahan has fallen by three points and Katie Porter has fallen by one, making Steyer the sole Democratic candidate gaining ground. With Republican Chad Bianco failing to gain traction, there is now a clear three-person race between Hilton, Steyer, and Becerra for the top two spots for the November general election.

	May 18-21	Apr. 26-29	Change
Steve Hilton (R)	22%	20%	+2
Tom Steyer (D)	19%	15%	+4
Xavier Becerra (D)	19%	21%	-2
Chad Bianco (R)	12%	15%	-3
Katie Porter (D)	8%	9%	-1
Matt Mahan (D)	8%	11%	-3
Antonio Villaraigosa (D)	2%	2%	0
Tony Thurmond (D)	1%	1%	0
Undecided	7%	6%	+1

The survey also shows Becerra's image weakening over the same period. Since the April survey, Becerra's favorability has moved from net positive to net negative, falling from 40% favorable / 35% unfavorable to 37% favorable / 43% unfavorable among primary voters statewide.

Open-ended responses help explain the shift. When voters were asked what negative things they had seen or heard recently about Becerra, the most prominent responses centered on "lost children," "takes money," "Chevron," "Big Oil," and "corporate." Those responses suggest Becerra is being hurt by a combination of concerns about his record at HHS and his decision to take major donations from corporate interests responsible for making California more expensive.

Question: In a few words, what negative things have you seen or heard recently about Xavier Becerra?
Responses among non-Republicans only; asked among voters who had heard negative information recently.



ABOUT THIS POLL

Global Strategy Group conducted a phone and text-to-web survey of 1,050 likely primary voters in California, including a base of 800 likely voters and an oversample of 250 registered Democrats and NPP/Other voters. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 3.5%. Care has been taken to ensure the geographic, political, and demographic divisions of the population of likely primary voters are properly represented. Candidates were listed with party and full ballot designation.