

California Elections and Policy Poll (CEPP)

For Release June 1, 2026

The CSU Long Beach-USC-Cal Poly Pomona California Elections and Policy Poll (CEPP) is a representative survey of likely California voters prior to the June 2, 2026 primary. The poll is conducted by the CSU Long Beach Center for Urban Politics and Policy in partnership with USC and Cal Poly Pomona. The survey was fielded from May 23 to May 26, 2026. These survey results are a snapshot of the California electorate's attitudes on the days in which the poll was fielded and may not reflect changes to voter attitudes that occur between the poll's dates and Election Day, especially as a number of respondents indicated they may change their mind. The survey asked about vote choices in the primary for Governor; other statewide races such as Lt. Governor, Attorney General; and more.

Results of topline and crosstabs may sum to slightly more or less than 100 due to rounding. The poll is conducted by Dr. Matthew Mendez Garcia (CSU, Long Beach, Lead CEPP Pollster); Dr. Christian Grose (University of Southern California, Co-Lead CEPP Pollster); Dr. Raquel Centeno (Caltech); Dr. Jarred Cuellar (Cal Poly Pomona); Dr. Jose Javier Alcocer (Harvard); and Alex Wong (University of Southern California).

Survey methodology: The survey of 735 California voters is representative of the California likely voter electorate. The overall poll has a margin of error of +/- 3.6% points; with larger margins of error for subgroups and crosstabs. Voters were randomly sampled from the California voter file, ensuring equal probability of participation for all voters; and to provide representativeness of the state's voters. Then, voters were screened for those who said they were "very likely" or "somewhat likely" to vote; or who stated they had already voted. Survey weights that are standard in the field were used to adjust the full sample, so the final results are representative of the likely California primary electorate. The survey weights included demographic variables such as party, race/ethnicity, income, and age. A raking procedure using the anesrake method in the statistical program R was conducted. The survey was offered in English or respondents had the option to take the survey in Spanish, Chinese/Mandarin, Korean, and Vietnamese. The CEPP poll in 2024 was the most accurate in the state of California with the lowest error in predicting the margin of victory between candidates across multiple statewide elections, and the CEPP poll has been fielded in every primary and general election since 2022.

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California Governor: Primary Election Toplines and Soft Support for Democratic Candidates

1. The top four-polling candidates for Governor are Democrat Xavier Becerra, Republican Steve Hilton, Democrat Tom Steyer, and Republican Chad Bianco. When undecided voters are pushed to choose a candidate, Becerra receives 29% of the vote, Hilton is at 23%, Steyer is at 18%, and Bianco is at 11%. With a margin of error of +/- 3.6, Hilton and Steyer are close enough that either Hilton or Steyer could land in the top two alongside Becerra but with Hilton having a marginally higher chance. Further back are Katie Porter at 8%, Matt Mahan at 4%, Antonio Villaraigosa at 3%, and all other candidates at $\leq 1\%$, when undecideds are pushed.

2. Republican voters may have made up their minds, but some Democrats are still deciding. When undecided voters are pushed to choose, Hilton did not gain and Bianco only marginally gained, suggesting Republican voters have consolidated around their candidates already. When undecideds were pushed, both Becerra and Steyer gained points in the overall toplines.

3. Becerra's first-place position is strengthened by the fact that he is also a leading second choice among some voters currently supporting other Democratic candidates. Unlike most other recent polls in the California Governor's race, we also asked voters to choose their second choice candidate and asked about enthusiasm levels among voters in support of their first-choice candidate. Becerra is a second choice for voters who currently support other Democrats. Among Porter voters, 17% name Becerra as their second choice. Among Mahan voters, 18% say Becerra is their second choice (though the largest second choice of Mahan voters is Republican Steve Hilton). This means Becerra could benefit if support for Mahan, Porter, or even Steyer weakens, causing voters to strategically shift away from their first choice though he is not always the top beneficiary of those shifts.

4. Tom Steyer may have a path to gaining from consolidation among Democratic voters in the waning days prior to Election Day because he is the leading second choice of a plurality of Porter voters, but only if the existing vote for Porter collapses. Among Porter voters, 33% name Steyer as their second choice, ahead of Becerra at 17%. If Porter voters decide to strategically move to their second choice, both Steyer and to a lesser extent Becerra would surge higher. This matters because Steyer is in third place in the topline but close enough to Hilton that he could move into second if he gained from any decline in soft Porter support or even some soft Becerra support. Steyer's position may be marginally better than his first-choice number alone suggests, but only if supporters of lower-tier Democrats choose to strategically abandon their first-choice picks in the waning days of the election.

5. If Democratic voters stick to their first choices and do not strategically dump their top choices for a better-polling Democrat, then Xavier Becerra and Steve Hilton are likely to advance in the top-two general election. Hilton has consolidated more Republican voter support following Trump's endorsement than Bianco though Bianco retains a core group of voters. Becerra has consolidated Democratic support following the implosion of Eric Swalwell's campaign, going from the low single digits in other polls less than 2 months ago to leading the field. Steyer has also been the primary beneficiary of Democratic consolidation other than Becerra.

6. Steyer's support is softer than Becerra's, Hilton's, and Bianco's. Among Steyer voters, fewer than 1% say they are very likely to change their mind, but 34% say they are somewhat likely to change their mind. Another 25% say they are somewhat unlikely to change, and 39% say they are very unlikely to change. This means Steyer has a substantial bloc of voters who support him but remain persuadable. If Steyer holds these voters and gains from soft Porter voters, he could compete more strongly with Hilton for second place. But if Steyer's softer voters move, Becerra and Porter are positioned to benefit: 34% of Steyer voters name Becerra as their second choice and 29% name Porter as their second choice.

7. Porter's voters are among the most movable in the race, and that matters because Porter is a key potential source of strategic votes for Steyer and Becerra. Among Porter voters, 6% say they are very likely to change their mind and 34% say they are somewhat likely to change their mind. That means 40% of Porter voters say they are at least somewhat likely to move to another candidate.

8. Becerra's voters are more stable than Steyer's or Porter's voters, but some of them are not completely locked in. Among Becerra voters, 3% say they are very likely to change their mind and 18% say they are somewhat likely to change their mind. A much larger 48% say they are very unlikely to change their mind.

9. Republican enthusiasm and Democratic malaise in the choice for Governor: Voters choosing the Republican candidates are enthusiastic about their preferred candidates, but Democratic voters are not very excited about their choices. When voters are asked if they are excited about voting for their preferred candidate, Bianco's supporters are the most excited of all candidates in the Governor's contest: 52% are very excited to vote for him. Similarly, 48% of Hilton voters are very excited to vote for him. Only 19% of Becerra voters are very excited to vote for him, and only 11% of Steyer voters are very excited to vote for him. Twenty-eight percent of Porter voters are very excited to vote for her.

10. Why did voters take their time to cast ballots in the June primary? Just a week before Election day, 58% of voters say they were waiting until closer to Election Day to cast their ballot. Among these voters, 30% say the main reason is that they need to learn more about the candidates for Governor. Another 26% say they want to support a candidate who can win. Thirteen percent say they like more than one candidate for Governor and cannot decide and about 5% say that they wanted to wait to see if a scandal would occur. These responses suggest Democratic voters are holding their ballots and thinking strategically about electability.

Governor Primary: Which Messages Broke Through?

11. Xavier Becerra's message of experience broke through to Democratic voters. His image is mixed among independent voters, and negative among Republican voters. In an open-ended survey question, we asked voters to name one word or phrase to describe several of the candidates. **Among Democrats, the most common open-ended description of Becerra is "experienced/qualified" at 28%; and 9% of Democrats described him as "establishment" or a "career politician."** Among Independents, Becerra is also most commonly described as "experienced/qualified" at 17%, but 13% call him a "career politician" or "establishment" and 11% said he was "corrupt/untrustworthy." Among

Republicans, Becerra is most often described as “corrupt/untrustworthy” at 16%, “extreme/radical” at 12%, and “incompetent/failed” at 11%. If Becerra advances out of the primary, his image of experience crafted toward Democratic voters in the face of the Eric Swalwell implosion will be a key reason.

12. Tom Steyer’s message of ideological progressivism broke through to Democratic voters, but he could not shake the “billionaire” label among voters of all partisan stripes. If Steyer loses the election, it will be due in part to the fact he was not able to define himself beyond that image of wealth. When voters were asked to name one word or phrase that described Steyer, 36% of Democrats, 25% of Independents, and 16% of Republicans chose “billionaire” or “rich/wealthy.” The second- and third-most used descriptors of Steyer among Democratic voters are “progressive” and “strong on environment/climate,” respectively, suggesting his message broke through to some Democrats. Among Independents, 25% describe him as “billionaire/rich/wealthy,” followed by “corrupt/untrustworthy” at 9% and “has good intentions” at 5%.

13. Republican Steve Hilton and Republican Chad Bianco have very polarized images, quite different among the state’s majority of Democratic voters and the state’s Republican minority. When asked to choose one word to describe Hilton, among both Democrats and Independents, they chose “MAGA/Trump” and variants of “British/foreign/not American” for Steve Hilton. Among Democrats, the most common descriptions of Bianco are “MAGA/Trump/Trumpist” at 12%, “Oath Keeper/Proud Boy/Nazi” at 10%, and “crazy/nutjob/unhinged” at 9%. Among Republicans, Bianco is described as “strong” at 20%, “law and order sheriff/tough on crime” at 17%, and “conservative” at 7%. Republicans have more positive views of Hilton, using words like hopeful, change, and optimistic.

14. The temperament brouhaha harmed Democrat Katie Porter’s campaign. When voters were asked to describe Porter in one word or phrase, Democrats say she is smart and progressive, but Independents, Republicans, and some Democrats frequently described her as angry and rude. Among Democrats, 24% describe Porter as “smart/competent/wonky,” 15% as “progressive,” and 10% as “angry/abrasive/rude/mean.” Among Independents, however, her most common description is “angry/abrasive/rude/mean” at 25%, followed by “smart/competent/wonky” at 20% and “progressive” at 7%. Among Republicans, 17% describe her as “unhinged/crazy,” 12% as “angry/abrasive/rude/mean,” and 9% as “awful/terrible.”

15. Democrat Matt Mahan is not well-defined statewide, even as the gubernatorial primary campaign nears its end. When asked to name one word or phrase to describe Mahan, Democrats, Independents, and Republicans often said “young, new, or inexperienced.” Among Democrats, the top descriptions of Mahan are “Silicon Valley/corporate/tech bro” at 16%, “promising/likeable/hopeful” at 12%, and “young/new/inexperienced” at 10%. Among Independents, he is described as “young/new/inexperienced” at 13%, “moderate/centrist/pragmatic” at 12%, and “smart/competent” at 11%. Among Republicans, the top descriptions are “young/new/inexperienced” at 12%, “boring/bland” at 10%, and “moderate/centrist/pragmatic” at 10%.

16. Democrat Antonio Villaraigosa’s image at the close of the 2026 primary was a candidate that is “past his prime.” When asked in an open-ended question to use one word or phrase to describe Villaraigosa, Democratic, Independent, and Republican voters frequently said he was a “has-been” or “old” and stated he is “past his prime.” Democrats, though, also described him more positively as being

“experienced” and more factually as “former mayor of L.A.” Independents described him as a “career politician,” and Republicans described him as “corrupt” and “untrustworthy.”

California Governor: November General Election

17. Head-to-head matchups for the general election for Governor were tested for several candidates. Democrat Becerra polls slightly better than Democrat Steyer in a head-to-head matchup with a Republican, though either Democrat leads by large margins in a hypothetical Democrat-versus-Republican general election matchup. For example, in a Steyer-Hilton matchup, Steyer leads Hilton 55% to 34%. In a Becerra-Hilton matchup, Becerra leads Hilton 58% to 35%.

18. A same-party general election between Xavier Becerra and Tom Steyer would be much more competitive than a Democrat-versus-Republican general election, though Becerra has the early edge with many undecided if the general were between these two Democrats. In a Democrat-versus-Democrat hypothetical general election matchup, Becerra leads Steyer 37% to 26%, with 18% undecided and 19% saying they would not vote (mostly Republicans opting to not cast a ballot). Testing an all Republican Hilton-Bianco matchup, Hilton receives 34%, Bianco receives 15%, 26% are undecided, and 25% say they would not vote. We also tested scenarios involving Katie Porter in the general election, with Becerra besting her 42% to 22% in a Democrat-versus-Democrat matchup.

Down-ballot statewide elections:

19. Lieutenant Governor: The race for Lieutenant Governor is wide open, with Fiona Ma leading but several candidates clustered close behind her. The reticence for some Democratic voters to return their mail-in ballots may be due to their uncertainty around this and other down-ballot elections. Fiona Ma receives 15% of the vote, putting her in first place. Republican Gloria Romero is second at 11%, followed by Democrat Michael Tubbs at 8%, Democrat Josh Fryday at 7%. The second through fourth place candidates are all statistically tied, considering the margin of error. Even though the survey was fielded just before the election, a large 31% of voters remain undecided.

20. State Treasurer: Does Kounalakis regret not running for Governor? Eleni Kounalakis leads the race for Treasurer, well outside of the margin of error, and is the strongest non-incumbent running for any downballot statewide office. The race for second place to advance to the general election in the Treasurer’s race is competitive. Kounalakis is polling at 30%, followed by Republican Jennifer Hawks at 15%, Republican David Serpa at 12%, and Democrat Anna Caballero at 9%. Other candidates are lower and 24% are undecided. Given the margin of error, Hawks and Serpa could be treated as effectively close to tied, and Caballero is not far behind that second-place Republican cluster. Kounalakis’s lead is large and well outside the margin of error, which puts Kounalakis in a clearly stronger position than any other candidate in the Treasurer race. Her solid outperformance over the other candidates for Treasurer makes one wonder how she may have performed after the Swalwell implosion had she opted to stay in the Governor’s race.

21. Attorney General, Secretary of State, Controller primary contests: Democratic incumbents Rob Bonta for Attorney General, Shirley Weber for Secretary of State, and Malia Cohen for Controller

enjoy large leads over their second-place Republican opponents and are cruising into first place going into the June 2 primary. Rob Bonta leads Michael Gates by 13 points in the Attorney General race. Shirley Weber leads Don Wagner in the Secretary of State race by 14 points. Malia Cohen leads Herb Morgan by 14 points in the Controller race.. These leads are all well outside the margin of error. However, roughly one-fifth of voters are undecided in each contest.

22. Insurance Commissioner: The race for Insurance Commissioner is one of the most unsettled statewide contests in the poll with a possibility of a Republican lockout and two Democrats on the November ballot; or a Democrat-versus-Republican contest in November. Democrat Jane Kim leads with 14%, Democrat Ben Allen is at 12%, and Republican Stacy Korsgaden receives 10%. These three are all statistically tied when one considers the margin of error and the high number of undecided voters. Other candidates are polling close behind but lower. Thirty-four percent of voters are undecided, which is more than twice Kim's first-place vote share. In this low-information contest for Insurance Commissioner with that many undecideds, the role of candidate endorsements, ballot designations, and late campaign communications will be influential.

TOPLINE RESULTS CALIFORNIA LIKELY VOTERS

POLL CONDUCTED,
May 23-26, 2026

CROSSTABS OF DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS ARE
PRESENTED AT THE END OF THIS REPORT AFTER
THIS SECTION ON TOPLINES

In 2026, there will be an election for the Governor of California. If the election were held today, which candidate would you vote for in the 2026 primary election? [includes push on undecideds]

29% Xavier Becerra (Voting Rights Advocate - Democratic)
23% Steve Hilton (Small Business Owner - Republican)
18% Tom Steyer (Climate Advocate - Democratic)
11% Chad Bianco (Riverside County Sheriff - Republican)
8% Katie Porter (Consumer Protection Advocate - Democratic)
4% Matt Mahan (Mayor, San Jose - Democratic)
3% Antonio Villaraigosa (Housing Affordability Advocate - Democratic)
3% other candidates (each individually <2%)
1% won't vote in this contest/still don't know

In 2026, there will be an election for the Governor of California. If the election were held today, which candidate would you vote for in the 2026 primary election? [no push on undecideds]

27% Xavier Becerra (Voting Rights Advocate - Democratic)
23% Steve Hilton (Small Business Owner - Republican)
15% Tom Steyer (Climate Advocate - Democratic)
11% Chad Bianco (Riverside County Sheriff - Republican)
7% Katie Porter (Consumer Protection Advocate - Democratic)
4% Matt Mahan (Mayor, San Jose - Democratic)
5% other candidates (each individually <2%)
8% won't vote in this contest/don't know

Which of the following candidates is your second choice for Governor?

20% Chad Bianco (Riverside County Sheriff - Republican)
15% Katie Porter (Consumer Protection Advocate - Democratic)
14% Tom Steyer (Climate Advocate - Democratic)
10% Xavier Becerra (Voting Rights Advocate - Democratic)
10% Steve Hilton (Small Business Owner - Republican)
8% Matt Mahan (Mayor, San Jose - Democratic)
4% Antonio Villaraigosa (Housing Affordability Advocate - Democratic)
7% Other candidates (each individually <2%)
10% Don't know/undecided on 2nd choice

Second Choice for Governor cross-tabulated by First Choice Candidate

	Becerra (1st choice)	Bianco (1st choice)	Hilton (1st choice)	Mahan (1st choice)	Porter (1st choice)	Steyer (1st choice)	Villaraigosa (1st choice)
Becerra (2nd choice)	—	2%	2%	18%	17%	34%	19%
Bianco (2nd choice)	≤1%	—	81%	≤1%	2%	≤1%	≤1%
Hilton (2nd choice)	≤1%	73%	—	32%	≤1%	≤1%	8%
Mahan (2nd choice)	14%	≤1%	4%	—	9%	13%	≤1%
Porter (2nd choice)	29%	≤1%	≤1%	17%	—	29%	18%
Steyer (2nd choice)	34%	≤1%	≤1%	8%	33%	—	21%
Villaraigosa (2nd choice)	5%	≤1%	≤1%	≤1%	12%	3%	—
Other (2nd choice)	8%	3%	2%	14%	10%	11%	20%
Undecided (2nd choice)	8%	11%	8%	11%	12%	9%	6%
Won't Vote (2nd choice)	2%	11%	2%	≤1%	≤1%	≤1%	8%

Which of the following candidates is your third choice for Governor?

12% Katie Porter (Consumer Protection Advocate - Democratic)

9% Tom Steyer (Climate Advocate - Democratic)

9% Matt Mahan (Mayor, San Jose - Democratic)

7% Xavier Becerra (Voting Rights Advocate - Democratic)

7% Antonio Villaraigosa (Housing Affordability Advocate - Democratic)

3% Chad Bianco (Riverside County Sheriff - Republican)

2% Steve Hilton (Small Business Owner - Republican)

14% Other candidates (each individually <2%)

34% Don't know/undecided on 3rd choice

How excited are you to vote for this person for Governor? [branch asked only of those who said they were voting for the individual candidates listed below]

Level of Excitement	Very Excited	Somewhat Excited	Somewhat not excited	Not very excited	Don't know
Tom Steyer	11%	44%	28%	14%	2%
Xavier Becerra	19%	41%	22%	16%	≤1%
Steve Hilton	48%	30%	16%	12%	≤1%
Chad Bianco	52%	39%	3%	5%	≤1%
Katie Porter	28%	41%	14%	13%	5%
Matt Mahan	5%	59%	16%	18%	2%

How likely are you to change your mind and support a different candidate for Governor? [branch asked only of those who said they were voting for the individual candidates listed below]

Likelihood to change mind	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely
Tom Steyer	≤1%	34%	25%	39%
Xavier Becerra	3%	18%	30%	48%
Steve Hilton	≤1%	10%	23%	66%
Chad Bianco	2%	15%	29%	53%
Katie Porter	6%	34%	26%	33%
Matt Mahan	5%	39%	24%	32%

Are you waiting to cast your ballot until closer to Election Day?

58% Yes

40% No

2% Don't know

What is the main reason you are waiting to cast your ballot? [only to those answering Yes to above]

30% I need to learn more about the candidates for Governor

26% I want to support a candidate who can win

13% I like more than one candidate for Governor and can't decide

8% I'm dissatisfied with the choices for Governor

5% Worried a scandal will break for a candidate for Governor who I might otherwise vote for

18% Other

Would you say national economic conditions are getting better or worse?

13% Better

71% Worse

13% About the same

2% I'm not sure / Don't know

Would you say California's economic conditions are getting better or worse?

14% Better

82% Worse

3% About the same

≤1% I'm not sure / Don't know

Would you say local economic conditions in your area are getting better or worse?

28% Better

68% Worse

2% About the same

2% I'm not sure / Don't know

We asked each respondent open-ended questions about a number of the leading candidates for Governor. The order of these questions were randomized when presented to respondents. The results of these questions are displayed below, separated by party of the respondent. We display only the top three most frequently mentioned clusters of words/phrases for each candidate.

Please provide one word or phrase to describe Xavier Becerra.

Democrats only:

28% Experienced/qualified

9% Career politician/establishment

6% For for people/fights for Californians

Independents only:

17% Experienced/qualified

13% Career politician/establishment

11% Corrupt/untrustworthy

Republicans only:

16% Corrupt/untrustworthy

12% Extreme/radical

11% Incompetent/failed

Please provide one word or phrase to describe Tom Steyer.

Democrats only:

36% Billionaire/rich/wealthy

10% Progressive

9% Strong on environment/climate

Independents only:

25% Billionaire/rich/wealthy

9% Corrupt/untrustworthy

5% Has good intentions

Republicans only:

16% Billionaire/rich/wealthy

14% Corrupt/untrustworthy

10% Extreme/radical

Please provide one word or phrase to describe Steve Hilton.

Democrats only:

18% MAGA/Trump/Trumpist

11% British/Foreign/Not American

5% Fox News/Media Commentator

Independents only:

10% MAGA/Trump/Trumpist

10% Pragmatic/Common sense

6% British/Foreign/Not American

Republicans only:

20% Change/hopeful

19% Pragmatic/Common sense

7% Positive/Optimistic

Please provide one word or phrase to describe Chad Bianco.

Democrats only:

12% MAGA/Trump/Trumpist

10% Oath Keeper/Proud Boy/Nazi

9% Crazy/nutjob/unhinged

Independents only:

17% Law and order sheriff/tough on crime

8% Crazy/nutjob/unhinged

6% Oath Keeper/Proud Boy

Republicans only:

20% Strong

17% Law and order sheriff/tough on crime

7% Conservative

Please provide one word or phrase to describe Katie Porter.

Democrats only:

24% Smart/competent/wonky/whiteboard

15% Progressive

10% Angry/abrasive/rude/mean

Independents only:

25% Angry/abrasive/rude/mean

20% Smart/competent/wonky/whiteboard

7% Progressive

Republicans only:

17% Unhinged/crazy

12% Angry/abrasive/rude/mean

9% Awful/terrible

Please provide one word or phrase to describe Matt Mahan.

Democrats only:

16% Silicon Valley/corporate/tech bro

12% Promising/likeable/hopeful

10% Young/new/inexperienced

Independents only:

13% Young/new/inexperienced

12% Moderate/centrist/pragmatic

11% Smart/competent

Republicans only:

12% Young/new/inexperienced

10% Boring/bland

10% Moderate/centrist/pragmatic

Please provide one word or phrase to describe Antonio Villaraigosa.

Democrats only:

15% L.A./former mayor

10% Has-been/old/past his prime

9% Experienced

Independents only:

12% Career politician/establishment

10% Has-been/old/past his prime

9% L.A./former mayor

Republicans only:

8% Corrupt/untrustworthy

7% Failure/inept/poor results

4% Scandal/cheater

We asked each respondent head-to-head matchups for several of the leading candidates for Governor. The order of these questions were randomized when presented to respondents.

If the November general election were held today, and the following two candidates were your only options, who would you vote for?

34% Steve Hilton (Republican)
15% Chad Bianco (Republican)
26% Don't know
25% I will not vote in this election for Governor

If the November general election were held today, and the following two candidates were your only options, who would you vote for?

55% Tom Steyer (Democrat)
34% Steve Hilton (Republican)
8% Don't know
4% I will not vote in this election for Governor

If the November general election were held today, and the following two candidates were your only options, who would you vote for?

58% Xavier Becerra (Democrat)
35% Steve Hilton (Republican)
5% Don't know
2% I will not vote in this election for Governor

If the November general election were held today, and the following two candidates were your only options, who would you vote for?

37% Xavier Becerra (Democrat)
26% Tom Steyer (Democrat)
18% Don't know
19% I will not vote in this election for Governor

If the November general election were held today, and the following two candidates were your only options, who would you vote for?

42% Xavier Becerra (Democrat)
22% Katie Porter (Democrat)

16% Don't know

20% I will not vote in this election for Governor

If the November general election were held today, and the following two candidates were your only options, who would you vote for?

31% Tom Steyer (Democrat)

30% Katie Porter (Democrat)

21% Don't know

19% I will not vote in this election for Governor

When you think about the Governor candidates' positions on public policy, which of the following best describes them?

Ideology	Very Liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative	Don't know
Antonio Villaraigosa	26%	26%	18%	3%	≤1%	27%
Xavier Becerra	35%	29%	19%	3%	≤1%	14%
Steve Hilton	≤1%	≤1%	5%	23%	50%	20%
Matt Mahan	18%	21%	22%	5%	≤1%	34%
Tom Steyer	40%	28%	12%	3%	≤1%	15%
Chad Bianco	≤1%	≤1%	5%	15%	60%	20%
Tony Thurmond	25%	19%	10%	≤1%	≤1%	44%
Katie Porter	46%	29%	8%	≤1%	≤1%	15%

What is the most important issue facing California? [open-ended question]

20% Cost of living/affordability/prices

15% Housing/rent/home ownership

6% Economy/jobs

6% Taxes

5% Homelessness/poverty/unhoused

5% Climate/environment

5% Fraud/corruption/mismanagement

4% Democracy/civil rights/voting rights

4% Leadership/governance

4% Newsom/Democrats/one-party rule

4% ICE/immigrants' rights

3% Trump
3% Spending/budget/fiscal responsibility
3% Crime/drugs/public safety
3% Health care
2% Business climate/regulation
≤1% All other issues each

What is the most important issue facing California? [open-ended question, cross-tabulated by respondents' preferred candidates for Governor]

Becerra voters' most important issue

26% Cost of living/affordability/prices
17% Housing/rent/home ownership
7% Economy/jobs
7% Trump
6% Health care
6% Homelessness/poverty/unhoused
≤4% All other issues each

Steyer voters' most important issue

26% Cost of living/affordability/prices
19% Housing/rent/home ownership
9% Climate/environment
7% Economy/jobs
6% Democracy/civil rights/voting rights
5% ICE/immigrant rights
≤4% All other issues each

Hilton voters' most important issue

16% Taxes
14% Cost of living/affordability/prices
12% Fraud/corruption/waste
9% Newsom/Democrats/one-party rule
8% Homelessness/poverty/unhoused
6% Immigration
6% Leadership/governance/trust

6% Spending/budget/fiscal responsibility
5% Crime/drugs/public safety
5% Economy/jobs
5% Business climate/regulation
≤4% All other issues each

Bianco voters' most important issue

17% Fraud/corruption/waste
16% Cost of living/affordability/prices
14% Taxes
11% Newsom/Democrats/one-party rule
7% Leadership/governance/trust
5% Crime/drugs/public safety
5% Economy/jobs
5% Homelessness/poverty/unhoused
5% Immigration
5% Spending/budget/fiscal responsibility
≤4% All other issues each

Porter voters' most important issue

18% Cost of living/affordability/prices
14% Housing/rent/home ownership
11% Economy/jobs
8% Climate/environment
7% Homelessness/poverty/unhoused
7% Trump
6% Health care
5% Taxes
≤4% All other issues each

Mahan voters' most important issue

24% Cost of living/affordability/prices
17% Economy/jobs
10% Spending/budget/fiscal responsibility
7% Crime/drugs/public safety
7% Democracy/civil rights/voting rights

7% Housing/rent/home ownership
7% Taxes
5% Homelessness/poverty/unhoused
5% Newsom/Democrats/one-party rule
5% Trump
≤4% All other issues each

In 2026, there will be an election for the Lieutenant Governor of California. Which candidate would you vote for in the 2026 primary election?

15% Fiona Ma (State Treasurer/CPA - Democratic)
11% Gloria Romero (Educator/Businesswoman - Republican)
8% Michael Tubbs (Anti-Poverty Non-Profit Director - Democratic)
7% Josh Fryday (Governor's Cabinet Member - Democratic)
6% David Collenberg (Farmer/Business Owner - Republican)
6% Oliver Ma (Civil Rights Lawyer - Democratic)
5% David Fennell (Businessman - Republican)
5% Skip Shelton (Defense Technology Executive - Republican)
5% Some other candidate
31% Don't know/undecided
≤1% I probably will not vote in the primary election for Lieutenant Governor

In 2026, there will be an election for the Attorney General of California. Which candidate would you vote for in the 2026 primary election?

45% Rob Bonta (Incumbent - Democratic)
32% Michael Gates (Deputy United States Attorney - Republican)
4% Marjorie Mikels (Attorney/Justice Advocate - Green)
1% Some other candidate
18% Don't know/undecided
≤0% I probably will not vote in the primary election for Attorney General

In 2026, there will be an election for the Secretary of State of California. Which candidate would you vote for in the 2026 primary election?

45% Shirley N. Weber (California Secretary of State - Democratic)
31% Donald P. (Don) Wagner (Orange County Supervisor - Republican)
5% Some other candidate

20% Don't know/undecided

2% I probably will not vote in the primary election for Secretary of State

In 2026, there will be an election for the Treasurer of California. Which candidate would you vote for in the 2026 primary election?

30% Eleni Kounalakis (Lieutenant Governor of California - Democratic)

15% Jennifer Hawks (Retired Businesswoman - Republican)

12% David Serpa (Businessman/Author/Father - Republican)

9% Anna M. Caballero (California State Senator - Democratic)

5% Tony Vazquez (Member, State Board of Equalization - Democratic)

3% Some other candidate

24% Don't know/undecided

≤1% I probably will not vote in the primary election for Treasurer

In 2026, there will be an election for the Controller of California. Which candidate would you vote for in the 2026 primary election?

44% Malia M. Cohen (State Controller/Mother - Democratic)

30% Herb W Morgan (Chief Investment Officer - Republican)

4% Some other candidate

20% Don't know/undecided

≤1% I probably will not vote in the primary election for Controller

In 2026, there will be an election for the Insurance Commissioner of California. Which candidate would you vote for in the 2026 primary election?

14% Jane Kim (Attorney/Consumer Advocate - Democratic)

12% Ben Allen (California State Senator - Democratic)

10% Stacy A. Korsgaden (Licensed Insurance Agent - Republican)

5% Merritt Farren (Consumer Advocate/Attorney - Republican)

5% Robert P Howell (Cybersecurity Company CEO - Republican)

4% Sean Lee (Financial Services Executive - Republican)

4% Patrick Wolff (Financial Analyst - Democratic)

3% Steven Craig Bradford (Education Organization Boardmember - Democratic)

7% Some other candidate

34% Don't know/undecided

≤1% I probably will not vote in the primary election for Insurance Commissioner

In 2026, there will be an election for the Superintendent of Public Instruction of California. Which candidate would you vote for in the 2026 primary election?

10% Richard Barrera (State Superintendent Advisor)

8% Sonja Shaw (School District President)

5% Anthony Rendon (Democracy Advocate/Educator)

4% Nichelle M. Henderson (College Trustee/Teacher)

4% Wendy Castaneda Leal (School District Superintendent)

4% Al Muratsuchi (Assemblymember/Classroom Educator)

4% Josh Newman (Educator/Strategic Advisor)

3% Frank Lara (Teacher/Union VP)

6% Some other candidate

48% Don't know/undecided

3% I probably will not vote in the primary election for Superintendent of Public Instruction

The California Elections and Policy Poll Research Team:

Dr. Matthew Mendez Garcia is the lead pollster of the 2026 California Elections and Policy Poll. He is Executive Director of the Center for Urban Politics and Policy at CSU Long Beach, who is the poll's sponsor. He is Associate Professor of Political Science. The Center's polling of California elections has been remarkably accurate in previous elections, including the 2024 general election poll being the most accurate poll of all statewide elections. He is a native Californian who holds a PhD. in political science from the University of Southern California. Professor Mendez studies American politics, with a focus on representation, legislative behavior, race and ethnicity, political behavior, intersectionality, and immigration. He received the award for Best Dissertation from the American Political Science Association's Organized Section on Race, Ethnicity, and Politics. His research has been published in journals such as *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, *Political Research Quarterly*, and *California Journal of Politics and Policy*.



Dr. Christian R. Grose is co-lead pollster of the 2026 California Elections and Policy Poll. He is Professor of Political Science and Public Policy at the University of Southern California and Director of the USC Democracy and Fair Elections Lab. One of USC's most prolific social scientists, his research strengthens American democracy through a deeper understanding of Congress, representation, and elections. An influential figure in California politics and national policy, Dr. Grose is frequently consulted by advocacy organizations, state and local governments, and policymakers for his expertise on elections and redistricting. He has authored over 60 articles and reports, including in the *American Political Science Review*, the *American Journal of Political Science*, and the *Journal of Politics*. He is the author of the award-winning *Congress in Black and White: Race and Representation in Washington and at Home* and was editor of the book *Local Election Administrators in the United States: The Frontline of Democracy*. He has conducted many polls of the California electorate, other state electorates, and cities within California. Dr. Grose's polling is known for its quality, including the 2024 CEPP poll that was most accurate in predicting the margin of the vote across all statewide elections. He can be reached at drchristiangrose@gmail.com or cgrose@usc.edu.



Dr. Raquel Centeno is a Postdoctoral Scholar Teaching Fellow in Science, Society, and Policy at the California Institute of Technology (CalTech). Raquel specializes in the areas of public opinion, political psychology, and political behavior, and her dissertation focuses on how partisan and racial group identities jointly influence partisan polarization. Her other research is motivated by questions of how voters' various group identities impact their political perceptions and behavior, such as how different primary systems influence political behavior across racial and ethnic subgroups of voters. She has conducted multiple, original surveys as part of her research; and is a native

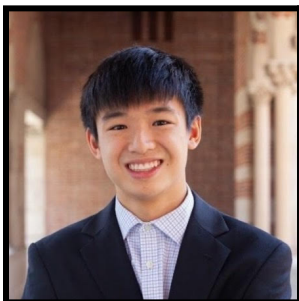
Californian from Oxnard. Raquel holds a PhD in Political Science from the Political Science and International Relations department at the University of Southern California, where she studied American politics. For more information on Raquel, please visit <https://racenteno.github.io/>



Dr. Jarred Cuellar is Associate Professor of Political Science at the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. Dr. Cuellar's research focuses on American politics, specifically Latino political behavior within the United States. His research has included forecasting presidential nominations, and the impact of religion on Latino political behavior. He is a native of Los Angeles County and was raised in Bellflower. His degrees include a BA from UC Irvine, a MA from the University of Arkansas, and a PhD from USC. He has worked on multiple polls and surveys; and recently took his students on an experiential learning visit to the 2024 Iowa caucus.



Dr. Jose Javier Alcocer is an Empirical Researcher with the Empirical Research Services Department at Harvard Law School. His research examines how political institutions structure representation, with particular attention to race and ethnicity and legislative behavior. His related work connects these institutional dynamics to substantive domains including policing, redistricting, and voting rights. His work has been published in the *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics* and the *Journal of Experimental Political Science*. His scholarship combines computational social science with causal inference to study elite political behavior and institutional dynamics. He specializes in machine learning and natural language processing for political text and administrative data, alongside statistical methods for descriptive, predictive, and causal analysis. He holds a Ph.D. in Political Science and International Relations and a Master of Public Policy from the University of Southern California, and a B.A. in Political Science from California State University, Long Beach.



Alex Wong is an undergraduate student at the University of Southern California majoring in Economics and Data Science as well as Political Science. As the youngest member of the California Elections and Policy Poll (CEPP) team, Alex is thrilled to break into and learn more about the world of election statistics. He enjoys everything related to election data, forecasting, and strategy both domestically in the United States as well as internationally around the world. At USC, Alex has worked on primary election reform at the Schwarzenegger Institute and currently serves as Lab Manager for the USC Democracy and Fair Elections Lab with Dr. Christian Grose, studying a variety of polling, redistricting, election forecasting, litigation, and avenues for electoral reform.