

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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AS AWARENESS OF PROP. 54 HAS INCREASED, DISPOSITION TO VOTE YES HAS DECLINED.

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by Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

As awareness of Proposition 54, the so-called Racial Privacy Initiative, has increased, there has been a significant decline in voter disposition to approve the measure.

During the past month, the proportion of likely voters in the upcoming October 7 election who have seen or heard of the initiative that would prevent state and local governments from collecting racial and ethnic data about state residents has increased from 41% to 54%.

As the measure and its provisions have become better known support for it has declined. Two months ago, when only 25% had any prior awareness of the initiative, it was favored by a 50% to 29% margin. In August, as awareness increased to 41%, 46% of likely voters supported it and 35% were opposed.

Now, with a 54% majority cognizant of the initiative, voters are evenly split in their vote intentions – 40% in favor and 40% against, with 20% undecided.

These are the findings from the latest statewide *Field Poll*, conducted September 3-7, among 505 likely voters in the upcoming October 7 special election.

Table 1
Trend of voter awareness of Proposition 54
(among likely voters)

	<u>Have heard</u>	<u>Have not heard</u>
September	54%	46
August	41%	59
July	25%	75
April	26%	74

Table 2
**Trend of voter preferences on Proposition 54, the “Classification
by Race, Ethnicity, Color or National Origin” initiative**
(among likely voters)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
September 2003	40%	40	20
August 2003	46%	35	19
July 2003	50%	29	21
April 2003	48%	33	19
April 2002*	48%	34	18

* Asked of all registered voters

Recall candidates and Prop. 54

Governor Gray Davis has taken a position against Prop. 54. Those intending to vote to keep Davis in office in the upcoming recall election also oppose the initiative 55% to 31%. However, among the 55% majority of voters who say they will be voting Yes to remove Davis from office, supporters outnumber opponents 48% to 30%

As *The Field Poll* reported earlier this week Democrat Lt. Governor Cruz Bustamante and movie actor Republican Arnold Schwarzenegger are locked in a close race to replace Davis, if he is recalled. The two candidates have both taken public positions against the measure. By contrast, Republican State Senator Tom McClintock, who is in third place in the replacement election standings, approves of the initiative.

Voters who currently support Bustamante are taking a No position on Prop. 54 by a margin of 55% to 30%. On the other hand, supporters of both Schwarzenegger and McClintock are more likely to favor than oppose the initiative.

Table 3
Voter preferences on Proposition 54 – by subgroup
(among likely voters)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
Statewide	40%	40	20
<u>Vote on Davis recall</u>			
(.55) Yes voters	48%	30	22
(.40) No voters	31%	55	14
<u>Vote in replacement election</u>			
(.30) Bustamante	30%	55	15
(.25) Schwarzenegger	53%	29	18
(.13) McClintock*	46%	33	21
(.14) Others*	32%	54	14
(.18) Undecided/none*	40%	26	34
<u>Party registration</u>			
(.43) Democrats	35%	50	15
(.39) Republicans	47%	29	24
(.18) Non-partisan/others*	38%	43	19
<u>Political ideology</u>			
(.32) Conservative	47%	33	20
(.43) Middle-of-the-road	43%	36	21
(.25) Liberal	27%	58	15
<u>Region</u>			
(.25) Los Angeles County	44%	38	18
(.32) Other Southern California	42%	36	22
(.25) San Francisco Bay Area	32%	46	22
(.18) Other Northern California*	42%	45	13
<u>Gender</u>			
(.52) Men	41%	41	18
(.48) Women	39%	40	21
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
(.73) White non-Hispanic	40%	38	22
(.14) Latino*	23%	58	19
(.06) Black/African-American*	44%	50	6
(.07) Asian/other*	50%	37	13
<u>Age</u>			
(.12) 18-29*	39%	41	20
(.21) 30-39	38%	41	21
(.22) 40-49	47%	36	17
(.27) 50-64	35%	48	17
(.18) 65 and older*	45%	33	22
<u>Familiarity with the initiative</u>			
(.54) Yes, have heard	40%	44	16
(.46) No, have not heard	41%	35	24

* Relatively small sample size.

Information About the Survey

Sample Details

The findings in this report are based on a telephone survey conducted September 3-7, 2003 in English and Spanish among a random sample of Californians likely to vote in the October 7 recall election. A representative sample of 1,014 California adults were initially screened yielding interviews with 649 registered voters, of whom 505 were deemed likely voters.

Sampling was conducted by means of random digit dialing, which selects telephone exchanges within all area codes serving California in proportion to the population. From each exchange a random sample of telephone numbers was created by adding random digits to the telephone exchange selected, permitting access to both listed and unlisted telephones. After the completion of interviewing, the survey results were weighted slightly to *Field Poll* estimates of the state's total registered voter population.

According to statistical theory, results from the overall likely voter sample have a sampling error of +/- 4.5 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. Results from subgroups have somewhat larger sampling error ranges.

There are other possible sources of error in any survey in addition to sampling variability. Different results could occur because of differences in question wording, sampling, sequencing or through omissions or errors in interviewing or data processing. Extensive efforts were made to minimize such potential errors.

Questions Asked

Have you seen, read or heard anything about an initiative, Proposition 54, also known as the "Racial Privacy Initiative," that will appear on the October 7 recall election ballot having to do with the classification of people by race or ethnicity?

(As you know) Prop. 54 is the "Classification by Race, Ethnicity, Color or National Origin" initiative. It prohibits state and local governments from classifying any person by race, ethnicity, color or national origin. Various exemptions apply. If the election were being held today, and you were voting on Proposition 54, would you vote **YES** or **NO**?