

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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**VOTERS MOVING TO THE NO SIDE ON
EACH OF THE THREE HEALTH-
RELATED BALLOT INITIATIVES –
PROPOSITIONS 73, 78 AND 79.**

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by Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

Three initiatives that exemplify the highly contentious and controversial nature of the propositions appearing on next week's statewide election ballot relate to health policy issues. They include Proposition 73, the Parental Notification of Teen Abortion initiative, and the two prescription drug discount initiatives, Props. 78 and 79.

The battle over Proposition 73 is another milestone in the decades-long struggle between pro-choice and pro-life forces, while the fight between Props. 78 and 79 is a classic example of modern day counter-initiatives, involving record-setting campaign expenditures and pitting the major pharmaceutical companies against consumer advocacy and labor groups.

Between the period October 18-30, *The Field Poll* conducted two separate, back-to-back statewide surveys of likely voters in the special election. The first was completed October 18-24, while the second was completed October 25-30.

The results indicate that increasingly, voters are moving toward the NO side on each of the three health initiatives. In the poll's final interviewing wave, Prop. 73 was trailing by ten points, while Props. 78 and 79 were losing by nine and six percentage points, respectively.

(Note to Editors: Throughout the 2005 special election campaign, The Field Poll has provided expanded coverage of voter reactions to these health-related propositions through a partnership with the California HealthCare Foundation and its HealthVote initiative. HealthVote is aimed at providing voters with non-partisan information and analysis of each of the health-related ballot propositions included in the 2005 election. More information about HealthVote can be found at www.healthvote.org.)

Proposition 73 trailing for the first time in poll's final interviewing period

With regard to Proposition 73, *The Field Poll* shows voters moving toward the NO side in the poll's final interviewing period, with opponents outnumbering supporters by a 49% to 41% margin.

In three prior *Field Poll* surveys, voters were closely divided in their preferences, with YES side support ranging narrowly between 45% to 48%, while opposition was likewise narrowly ranging between 43% and 45%.

Voter preferences on this issue are highly partisan and ideological, and a big gap exists between men and women. In addition, voters divide sharply by religious affiliation, with the measure favored by Protestants and Catholics, especially those who consider themselves born-again Christians. By contrast, those voters affiliated with non-Christian religions or who have no religious preference are opposed. In addition, married voters are evenly divided, while voters who have never married, as well as those who are separated, divorced, or widowed, are lining up on the NO side.

Table 1
Voter preferences regarding Prop. 73,
the Parental Notification of Teen Abortion initiative
(among likely voters)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
October 25-30	41%	49	10
October 18-24	45%	43	12
Late August	45%	45	10
June	48%	43	9
<u>Voting method</u>			
Absentee ballot voter	46%	48	6
Precinct voter	39%	50	11
<u>Party</u>			
Democrats	21%	68	11
Republicans	64%	26	10
Non-partisans/others*	42%	53	5
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	45%	47	8
Female	38%	51	11
<u>Age</u>			
18-49	41%	50	9
50-64	39%	52	9
65 or older*	46%	44	10
<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>			
White (non-Hispanic)	43%	49	8
Latino/Black/Asian/other*	37%	52	11
<u>Marital status</u>			
Married/living together	45%	45	10
Never married	35%	63	2
Separated/divorced/widowed	35%	52	13
<u>Political ideology</u>			
Conservative	72%	14	14
Moderate	38%	54	8
Liberal	14%	80	6
<u>Religion</u>			
Protestant	48%	38	14
Catholic*	53%	43	4
Other/no preference	27%	67	6
<u>Born-again Christian</u>			
Yes*	55%	32	13
No	37%	55	8

* Small sample size.
 Note: Subgroup preferences from interviewing conducted Oct. 25-30.

Voters shifting to the NO side on Propositions 78 and 79

Prop. 78, sponsored by the pharmaceutical companies, is one of two rival initiatives designed to provide drug discounts to low-income Californians. The other is Prop. 79 and is sponsored by consumer advocacy and labor groups.

Last June, when voters were just beginning to learn about Prop 78, sentiment was quite positive, with 57% of likely voters in favor and 26% opposed. However, support has declined steadily in each of three subsequent polls to where opponents now outnumber supporters by a 45% to 36% margin. Another 19% are undecided.

A similar negative pattern has emerged with regard to Prop. 79. In June the YES vote was leading 48% to 33%. However, this lead margin has declined in each successive poll and now the NO side leads 43% to 37%, with 20% undecided.

Proposition 78 sub-group preferences

Democrats and non-partisans are opposing Prop. 78 by similar three to two margins, while a small plurality of Republicans favors the measure. The initiative is more likely to be opposed by liberals, white non-Hispanics and those living in households earning more than \$80,000 annually. By contrast, conservatives are joined by ethnic voters and those living in households earning less than \$40,000 in supporting Prop. 78.

It is also significant to note that poll respondents who reported some familiarity with the initiative prior to being surveyed, who constituted 79% of all likely voters, are much more likely to oppose Prop. 78 than those who had no prior knowledge of the initiative.

Table 2
Trend of voter preferences regarding Prop. 78,
the Discount Prescription Drugs initiative
(among likely voters)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
October 25-30	36%	45	19
October 18-24	39%	38	23
Late August	49%	31	20
June	57%	26	17
<u>Voting method</u>			
Absentee ballot voter	35%	48	17
Precinct voter	36%	42	22
<u>Party</u>			
Democrats	32%	48	20
Republicans	44%	40	16
Non-partisans/others	30%	47	23
<u>Political ideology</u>			
Conservative	47%	35	18
Moderate	31%	50	19
Liberal	29%	48	23
<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>			
White (non-Hispanic)	33%	50	17
Latino*	46%	34	20
Black/Asian/other	39%	35	26
<u>Household income</u>			
Less than \$40,000	47%	38	15
\$40,000 – \$80,000	39%	42	19
More than \$80,000	28%	51	21
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	38%	45	17
Female	33%	44	23
<u>Prior awareness of Prop. 78</u>			
Yes, have heard	34%	48	18
No, have not heard	43%	33	24

* Small sample size.

** Less than 0.5%.

Proposition 79 sub-group preferences

Democrats are narrowly in favor of Prop. 79, while a plurality of Republicans appear ready to vote NO. Pluralities of men, women, white non-Hispanics, conservatives, moderates and voters living in households earning more than \$80,000 annually are on the NO side. On the other hand, small pluralities of lower income voters, liberals, and ethnic voters are supporting Prop. 79.

Similar to their preferences regarding Prop. 78, those voters who were familiar with Prop. 79 prior to being surveyed are more inclined to oppose Prop. 79 than those unfamiliar with the initiative.

Table 3
Trend of voter preferences regarding Prop. 79, the Prescription Drug Discounts, State-Negotiated Rebates initiative (among likely voters)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
October 25-30	37%	43	20
October 18-24	37%	39	24
Late August	42%	34	24
June	48%	33	19
<u>Voting method</u>			
Absentee ballot voter	38%	46	16
Precinct voter	37%	40	23
<u>Party</u>			
Democrats	41%	38	21
Republicans	32%	52	16
Non-partisans/others	37%	36	27
<u>Political ideology</u>			
Conservative	27%	54	19
Moderate	37%	42	21
Liberal	48%	31	21
<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>			
White (non-Hispanic)	36%	46	18
Latino*	47%	33	20
Black/Asian/other	36%	34	30
<u>Household income</u>			
Less than \$40,000	39%	40	21
\$40,000 – \$80,000	41%	40	19
More than \$80,000	36%	46	18
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	40%	43	17
Female	34%	42	24
<u>Prior awareness of Prop. 79</u>			
Yes, have heard	36%	47	17
No, have not heard	42%	25	33

* Small sample size.

** Less than 0.5%.

Voters negatively impacted by TV and radio ads

After their voting preferences were obtained, likely voters were asked whether they had seen or heard any advertising about either of the two prescription drug discount initiatives, Props. 78 and 79. A large majority (70%) said they had. These voters were then asked whether the ads they saw made them more likely to vote YES or more likely to vote NO with regard to each initiative.

The results show that the overall impact of the ads appears to be making voters more inclined to vote NO than YES on both initiatives. For example, among the 70% of voters aware of the ads,

22% of voters say the ads have made them more likely to vote NO on both Prop. 78 and Prop. 79. This compares to smaller proportions (13% and 12%, respectively) who say the ads made them more likely to vote YES on Props. 78 and 79. Another 29% of those seeing the ads say they have had no effect on their vote preference, and the rest had no opinion.

Table 4
Awareness of TV and radio advertising on Props. 78 and 79
and its perceived impact on a voter's preference
(among likely voters)

	<u>Prop. 78</u>	<u>Prop. 79</u>
Not aware of any TV/radio ads on Props. 78 or 79	30%	30%
Aware of TV/radio ads on Props. 78 or 79	<u>70</u>	<u>70</u>
<u>Ads make voter...</u>		
More likely to vote YES	13%	12%
More likely to vote NO	22	22
No effect	29	29
No opinion	6	7

Note: Results from in the Oct. 25-30 interviewing period.

Voters have incomplete knowledge of each initiative's major backers

Likely voters were then asked about their knowledge of each initiative's major sponsors. Previous surveys conducted by *The Field Poll* have found that large numbers of voters were either confused or unaware of who was backing each initiative. The results show that while the proportion of voters who can correctly identify the sponsors of each proposition is growing, sizeable majorities still could not.

For example, just 32% of likely voters could correctly play back that the major pharmaceutical companies were supporting (rather than opposing) Prop. 78 in the poll's final interviewing period. While this represents an increase in recognition of Prop. 78's major backers from 13% in late August, this compares to 68% who are either uncertain of where the pharmaceutical companies stand on Prop. 78 or mistakenly believe the major drug manufacturers are opposing it.

Similarly, only a small proportion (27%) of likely voters in the poll's final interviewing period were able to correctly play back that consumer advocacy and labor groups were supporting Prop. 79. This compared to 73% who either mistakenly believe consumer and labor groups oppose Prop. 79 or aren't sure where these groups stand on the initiative.

The poll also finds that a voter's knowledge or lack of knowledge of who Prop. 78's and Prop. 79's major backers are is directly related to their voting preferences. For example, in the poll's final interviewing period, among those intending to vote NO on Prop. 78 recognition that the major pharmaceutical companies are sponsoring the initiative reaches 47%. This compares to much lower levels of recognition among YES voters (22%) and those undecided (15%).

Similarly, a much larger proportion of those intending to vote YES on Prop. 79 (43%) can correctly state that consumer advocacy and labor groups are backing it compared to NO voters (21%) or those undecided (10%).

Table 5
Are the major pharmaceutical companies supporting or opposing Prop. 78
(among likely voters)

	<u>Supporting</u>	<u>Opposing</u>	<u>Undecided/ Don't know</u>
October 25-30	32%	20	48
October 18-24	23%	24	53
Late August	13%	33	54
<u>October 25-30 subgroups</u>			
Yes voter on Prop. 78	22%	31	47
No voter on Prop. 78	47%	13	40
Undecided voter on Prop. 78	15%	13	72

Note: Question not asked in June survey.

Table 6
Are consumer advocacy and labor groups supporting or opposing Prop. 79
(among likely voters)

	<u>Supporting</u>	<u>Opposing</u>	<u>Undecided/ Don't know</u>
October 25-30	27%	19	54
October 18-24	25%	17	58
Late August	21%	13	66
<u>October 25-30 subgroups</u>			
Yes voter on Prop. 79	43%	11	46
No voter on Prop. 79	21%	31	48
Undecided voter on Prop. 79	10%	7	83

Note: Question not asked in June survey.

Greater knowledge of Prop. 78's and 79's sponsors has potential impact on voting intentions

The survey also attempted to see how greater knowledge of Prop. 78's and Prop. 79's major backers could influence a voter's preferences toward each initiative.

Voters were told that the major pharmaceutical companies were supporting Prop. 78 and then asked what effect, if any, knowing this might have on their vote. Overall, 15% said this would make them more likely to vote YES, but nearly four times as many (55%) said this information made them more likely to vote NO. Among voters intending to vote YES on Prop. 78, 36% say that knowledge of the pharmaceutical companies' support of Prop. 78 would make them more likely to vote NO. This increases to 50% among undecided voters.

Voters were also told that consumer advocacy and labor groups were supporting Prop. 79 and asked what effect, if any, this would have on their vote. This information tends to have a somewhat positive, but not overwhelming, impact on voter preferences. Overall, 39% say that knowledge of Prop. 79's main backers makes them more likely to vote Yes, while 27% say it makes them more likely to vote NO. Another 25% say it would have no effect on their vote on Prop. 79 and 9% have no opinion.

Knowledge of Prop. 79 major sponsors does not lead to as much potential vote switching among those currently intending to vote NO, although it does influence a significant proportion of undecided voters. For example, just 17% of NO voters reports that knowing that consumer advocacy and labor groups are backing Prop. 79 makes them more inclined to vote YES, although this increases to 42% among voters who are currently undecided in their voting preferences.

Table 7
The potential impact that knowledge of Props 78 and 79’s sponsors has on voter intentions (among likely voters)

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Yes voter</u>	<u>No voter</u>	<u>Not sure/ don’t know</u>
<u>After being told that major pharmaceutical companies are supporting Prop. 78, how would this affect your vote?</u>				
More likely to vote YES	15%	33%	5%	5%
More likely to vote NO	55	36	73	50
No effect	20	21	19	18
No opinion	10	10	3	27
<u>After being told that consumer advocacy and labor groups are supporting Prop. 79, how would this affect your vote?</u>				
More likely to vote YES	39%	63%	17%	42%
More likely to vote NO	27	13	45	15
No effect	25	19	32	22
No opinion	9	5	6	21

** Small sample size.*

Note: Subgroup percentages from interviewing conducted Oct. 25-30.

Props. 78 and 79 – similarities and differences

Under both measures consumers would present a state issued card to pharmacists to received their prescriptions at a reduced rate. The State Department of Health Services would negotiate drug discounts from the industry and pharmacies on behalf of lower income Californians.

Neither measure guarantees which drugs will be discounted and by exactly how much. The key difference between the two measures is that Prop. 79 links negotiated rates on Medi-Cal prices, which are lower than the lowest commercial prices specified in Prop. 78.

It is estimated Prop. 78 would cover from four to six million people, while the estimate of coverage for Prop 79 would be from eight to ten million people.

Information About The Survey

Sample Details

The late October survey findings in this report are based on two separate statewide surveys conducted among random samples of likely voters in California's upcoming statewide special election. Interviewing for the first survey spanned the period October 18-24, 2005, while data collection for the second survey was completed October 25-30, 2005. A total of 1,074 California adults were reached and screened by telephone in English and Spanish during the first survey, of whom 506 were considered likely voters in the statewide special election. For the second survey a total of 1,214 California adults were reached and screened in English and Spanish, of whom 581 were considered likely voters.

Households for both surveys were sampled using a random digit dial methodology, which randomly selects operating telephone exchanges within all area codes serving California households in proportion to population. Within each exchange, telephone numbers are created by adding random digits to each selected telephone exchange. This method permits access to all landline telephone numbers statewide, both listed and unlisted, and gives each residential phone listing an equal chance of being selected.

In order to cover a broad range of issues and still minimize voter fatigue, the questions relating to Prop. 73 were asked of approximately half of the likely voters in each interviewing period.

According to statistical theory, 95% of the time results relating to Props. 78 and 79 have a sampling error of +/-4 percentage points, while findings relating to Prop. 73 have a sampling error of +/-6 percentage points.

Questions Asked

Have you seen, read or heard anything about Proposition 73, having to do with teen abortion and parental notification? (IF YES:) From what you have seen or heard, are you inclined to vote YES or NO on Proposition 73? (As you know) Prop. 73 is the "Waiting Period and Parental Notification Before Termination of Minor's Pregnancy" initiative. It amends the state constitution defining and prohibiting abortion for minors under the age of 18 until 48 hours after a physician notifies the minor's parent or legal guardian, except in cases of a medical emergency or with a parental waiver. It also mandates reporting requirements and authorizes monetary damages against physicians for violation. (After hearing its official ballot summary) If the election were being held today, would you vote YES or NO on Prop. 73?

Have you seen, read or heard anything about either of two initiatives, Propositions 78 and 79, having to do with prescription drug discounts? (IF YES:) From what you have seen or heard, are you inclined to vote YES or NO on (Proposition 78) (Proposition 79).

Prop. 78 is called the "Discount on Prescription Drugs" initiative. It establishes a discount prescription drug program for certain low and moderate income Californians. It authorizes the Department of Health Services to contract for discounts with participating pharmacies and for rebates with participating drug manufacturers. Fiscal impact: State costs in the millions to the low tens of millions of dollars annually. Unknown but potentially significant savings for state and county health programs. (After hearing its official ballot summary) If the election were being held today, would you vote YES or NO on Prop. 78?

Prop. 79 is called the "Prescription Drugs Discounts, State-Negotiated Rebates" initiative. It provides drug discounts to Californians with qualifying incomes funded by state-negotiated drug manufacturer rebates. It prohibits Medi-Cal contracts with manufacturers who do not provide Medicaid best prices. Fiscal impact: State costs in the low tens of millions of dollars annually. Unknown but potentially significant net costs or savings for Medi-Cal, as well as savings for state and county health programs. (After hearing its official ballot summary) If the election were being held today, would you vote YES or NO on Prop. 79?

Have you seen or heard any television or radio ads having to do with Proposition 78 or 79, the prescription drug discount initiatives? (IF YES:) Did seeing or hearing the ads make you more likely to vote YES or more likely to vote NO on Proposition 78? (IF YES:) And, did seeing or hearing the ads make you more likely to vote YES or more likely to vote NO on Proposition 79?

As far as you know, are the major pharmaceutical companies generally supporting or opposing Proposition 78?

It happens that many of the major pharmaceutical companies are supporting Proposition 78. Does their support make you more likely to vote Yes or more likely to vote No on Proposition 78?

As far as you know, are consumer advocacy and labor groups generally supporting or opposing Proposition 79?

It happens that consumer advocacy and labor groups are supporting Proposition 79. Does their support make you more likely to vote Yes or more likely to vote No on Proposition 79?