

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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Release #2192

Release Date: **Thursday, April 13, 2006**

BOTH SCHWARZENEGGER AND THE STATE LEGISLATURE CONTINUE TO RECEIVE POOR JOB RATINGS.

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by Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

California voters remain unhappy with their elected officials in Sacramento. Both Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and the state legislature continue to receive poor job ratings, with just 39% of voters currently approving of the performance of the Governor and 28% saying this with regard to the state legislature.

In addition, a 56% majority of Californians feels the direction of the state is seriously off on the wrong track, twice the proportion (28%) who see the state moving in the right direction.

Voter still favor by a 57% to 30% margin the Governor's proposal to spend \$200 billion over ten years on a wide variety of infrastructure projects, which the legislature failed to enact in time for the June primary election. However, should the Governor and the legislature be at odds over the specifics of the infrastructure bill, voters split sharply along partisan lines over who they'd be inclined to favor.

These are the highlights of the latest *Field Poll* survey conducted among 917 registered voters statewide between the period April 3-10.

Schwarzenegger's job rating remains low

Schwarzenegger's job ratings have remained in a low trough for almost a year now, after receiving very positive assessments throughout his first 16 months in office. At present, just 39% approve of his performance, while 47% disapprove, an appraisal very similar to what he received two months ago.

Views of the Governor are highly partisan, with Democrats disapproving by a 66% to 24% margin, and Republicans viewing him positively 61% to 24%. Non-partisans remain more negative than positive in their assessments of Schwarzenegger by a 46% to 37% margin.

Table 1
Trend of Arnold Schwarzenegger's job performance as Governor
(among registered voters)

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
April 2006	39%	47	14
February 2006	40%	49	11
October 2005	37%	56	7
August 2005	36%	52	12
June 2005	37%	53	10
February 2005	55%	35	10
September 2004	65%	22	13
August 2004	65%	22	13
May 2004	65%	23	12
February 2004	56%	26	18
January 2004	52%	27	21
<u>Party (April 2006)</u>			
Democrats	24%	66	10
Republicans	61%	24	15
Non-partisans/others	37%	46	17

Greater than two to one negative assessment of the state legislature

By a two to one margin (56% to 28%), California voters also disapprove of the job being done by the state legislature. Voters' current appraisal represents a decline over the past two months and a return to the highly negative assessments given that body throughout most of 2005.

Majorities of voters of all political parties register disapproval of the way the state legislature is doing its job.

Table 2
Trend of voter appraisals of the job the state legislature is doing
(among registered voters)

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
April 2006	28%	56	16
February 2006	31%	48	21
October 2005	26%	58	16
Late August 2005	27%	54	19
June 2005	24%	57	19
February 2005	34%	52	14
September 2004	33%	46	21
August 2004	33%	49	18
May 2004	27%	52	21
February 2004	26%	58	16
January 2004	23%	62	15
July 2003	19%	67	14
April 2003	31%	51	18
2002 (average)	40%	40	20
2001 (average)	43%	37	20
2000 (average)	48%	25	27
1999 (average)	45%	28	27
1998 (average)	45%	33	22
1997 (average)	38%	40	22
1996 (average)	41%	49	10
1995 (average)*	34%	59	7
1993 (average)	28%	64	8
1992 (average)	32%	64	4
1990 (average)	45%	48	7
1988 (average)*	57%	36	7
1983 (average)	43%	49	8
<u>Party (April 2006)</u>			
Democrats	28%	56	16
Republicans	25%	58	17
Non-partisan/other	31%	53	16

* Surveys conducted among all California adults, not just registered voters.

Note: Measures prior to 1997 conducted among all adults using a three- or five-point response scale, which was converted to the current two-point approve/disapprove scale for comparative purposes.

Two to one majority believes state is on the wrong track

For many years *The Field Poll* has asked cross-sections of voters whether they felt things in California were generally going in the right direction or were seriously off on the wrong track. In every measurement, save one, over the past five years, majorities have held much more negative than positive appraisal of the state's overall direction. The lone exception was September 2004 during Governor Schwarzenegger's first year in office.

Today's sentiments remain highly negative, with 56% feeling the state is seriously off on the wrong track, and just 28% saying things are moving in the right direction.

Majorities or pluralities of Democrats, Republicans and non-partisans concur that the state is seriously off on the wrong track.

Table 3
Overall direction that California is heading
(among registered voters)

	<u>Right direction</u>	<u>Wrong track</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
April 2006	28%	56	16
February 2006	31%	55	14
October 2005	30%	63	7
August 2005	30%	57	13
June 2005	28%	60	12
February 2005	35%	53	12
September 2004	46%	38	16
May 2004	37%	51	12
February 2004	35%	54	11
August 2003	16%	76	8
July 2003	18%	75	7
April 2003	26%	65	9
September 2002	33%	54	13
January 2002	41%	50	9
2001 (average)	43%	50	7
2000 (average)	58%	35	7
1999 (average)	52%	34	14
1998 (average)	48%	42	10
1997 (average)	36%	54	10
1996 (average)	39%	49	12
1995 (average)*	32%	57	11
1994 (average)*	21%	70	9
1993 (average)	11%	83	6
1992 (average)	7%	90	3
1989 (average)*	50%	42	8
1988 (average)*	52%	43	5
<u>Party (April 2006)</u>			
Democrats	21%	64	15
Republicans	38%	47	15
Non-partisan/other	26%	55	19

* Surveys conducted among all California adults, not just registered adults.

Continuing positive reaction to Governor’s bond proposal

Earlier this year Schwarzenegger proposed spending about \$200 billion over ten years on infrastructure projects for improvements to the state’s roads, water and flood control, educational facilities, prisons and the courts and urged the legislature to place bonds of up to \$70 billion on the June primary election ballot. While the legislature failed to act, voters still express strong support for the Governor’s proposal. Currently, 57% favor and 30% are opposed to the proposal – virtually the same as the 56% to 27% margin of support found in February.

Voters in all areas of the state endorse the proposal. In addition, the Governor’s bond infrastructure proposal is supported by a plurality of Democrats and large majorities of Republicans and non-partisans.

Table 4
Voter reaction to Governor Schwarzenegger’s proposed
infrastructure bond proposal
(among registered voters)

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
Total - April	57%	30	13
February	56%	27	17
<u>Party</u>			
Democrats	49%	38	13
Republicans	66%	21	13
Non-partisan/other	57%	27	16
<u>Region</u>			
Los Angeles County	51%	36	13
Other Southern California	56%	28	16
Central Valley	63%	28	9
San Francisco Bay Area	58%	27	15
Other Northern California*	67%	22	11

* Small sample size

Huge partisan split over who voters would support if the Governor and legislature were at odds on the infrastructure bond bill

When asked whether they would be more inclined to support the Governor or the legislature if the two were at odds over the specifics of the infrastructure bond bill, 41% of voters would side with the legislature, while 38% would favor the Governor. However, this close division masks huge partisan differences on this issue.

Greater than six in ten Democrats say they would side with the legislature by a 61% to 19% margin in disputes involving the infrastructure bond package, while Republicans would line up with Schwarzenegger by a similar three to one margin (62% to 20%). Non-partisans are about evenly divided.

Table 5
Who voters would be more inclined to support if the Governor and the state legislature were at odds over the infrastructure bonds bill (among registered voters)

	<u>State legislature</u>	<u>Governor Schwarzenegger</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
Total statewide	41%	38	5	16
<u>Party</u>				
Democrats	61%	19	5	15
Republicans	20%	62	3	15
Non-partisans/others	37%	41	8	14

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Information About The Survey

Sample Details

The findings in this report are based on a random sample survey of Californians registered to vote. Interviewing was conducted by telephone in English and Spanish between the period April 3- 10, 2006. A total of 1,431 California adults were reached and screened by telephone, of whom 917 reported being registered to vote. In order to cover a broad range of issues and still minimize possible voter fatigue the overall registered voter sample was divided into two roughly equivalent sized subsamples of 462 and 455 voters each on some questions. Questions about the direction of the state and the job performance rating of the governor and state legislature reported in this release were asked of 455 voters each.

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

According to statistical theory, 95% of the time results from the overall registered voter sample have a sampling error of +/- 3.3 percentage points while findings from each random subsample have a sampling error of +/- 4.8 percentage points. There are other possible sources of error in any survey other than sampling variability. Different results could occur because of differences in question wording, sampling, or sequencing or through undetected omissions or errors in interviewing or data processing. Extensive efforts were made to minimize such potential errors.

Questions Asked

Thinking about the state, do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things are seriously off on the wrong track?

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling his job as Governor of California?

Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way the California state legislature is doing its job?

Governor Schwarzenegger has proposed spending over \$200 billion dollars over 10 years on infrastructure projects, including up to \$70 billion dollars in new state bonds, to fund improvements to roads, water and flood control, educational facilities, prisons, and the courts. Generally speaking, do you favor or oppose the Governor's infrastructure improvement proposal?

Suppose that during negotiations on the infrastructure improvement package in Sacramento, Governor Schwarzenegger and the state legislature were at odds about the specifics of the package. If you did not know anything more about the matter, whose position would you be more inclined to support on this issue - Governor Schwarzenegger or the state legislature?