

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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**SCHWARZENEGGER LEADS
ANGELIDES BY 8 POINTS. BOTH
GOVERNOR'S IMAGE AND JOB RATING
HAVE IMPROVED. BIG DIFFERENCES
IN HOW EACH CANDIDATE'S
SUPPORTERS VIEW THE ISSUES.**

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by Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

The latest statewide *Field Poll* updates voter preferences in the November gubernatorial election. Among the survey's main findings are these:

- Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger continues to lead Democratic State Treasurer Phil Angelides in voter preferences. The survey shows Schwarzenegger to be the choice of 45% of likely voters. Angelides receives 37% support, 3% favor other candidates and 15% are undecided.
- Republicans are rallying strongly behind Schwarzenegger, with 85% supporting the Governor. On the other hand, Angelides has not yet achieved the high level of support that successful Democratic candidates typically receive among their party's rank-and-file, with less than two in three (63%) currently backing his candidacy.
- Most voters are basing their voting preferences on how they regard Schwarzenegger. About two thirds of Schwarzenegger's voters (65%) say their vote is more an endorsement of the Governor than a vote against Angelides. On the other hand, two-thirds of Angelides voters (65%) say their preference is more a vote against the Governor than an endorsement of Angelides.
- The issue of immigration, followed by taxes, are the issues most important to Schwarzenegger's backers in deciding whom they will support for Governor. By contrast, the issues most important to Angelides backers are education and health care.
- For the first time since February of last year, more voters (49%) approve of Schwarzenegger's job performance than disapprove (40%). In addition, voter impressions of the direction the state is heading have become more positive than negative for the first time since September 2004.

Schwarzenegger holding the lead

Throughout the summer and fall of last year, Schwarzenegger trailed Angelides in voter preference. However, by February of this year the Governor drew even with Angelides and, beginning in April, took a small lead. Now he is eight points ahead (45% to 37%) of the State Treasurer. Three percent of voters prefer other candidates and 15% are undecided.

Table 1
Trend of November general election preferences for Governor
(among likely general election voters)

	<u>Schwarzenegger</u>	<u>Angelides</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
July 2006	45%	37	3	15
Late May 2006	46%	39	4	11
April 2006	44%	40	3	13
February 2006	39%	39	2	20
October 2005	41%	47	**	12
August 2005	40%	43	**	17
June 2005	42%	46	**	12
February 2005	52%	35	**	13

** Not measured.

Differences in how voter sub-groups are dividing

Schwarzenegger is the overwhelming choice of registered Republicans in this state, capturing almost 85% of their preferences.

By contrast, Angelides, who narrowly won a bitterly fought Democratic primary election against State Controller Steve Westly, has not yet rallied a high level of support from his own party members. A little less than two in three of Democrats (63%) are currently supporting the State Treasurer, while 16% prefer the Governor, 2% favor other candidates and a sizeable 19% are undecided.

Schwarzenegger holds a 9-point lead (49% to 40%) in the Central Valley and maintains a huge preference margin (61% to 27%) among voters in Southern California outside of Los Angeles County.

Angelides leads the Governor by 10 points in the San Francisco Bay Area (44% to 34%) and by 11 points in Los Angeles County (44% to 33%)

Women are about evenly dividing their preferences and give the Governor a narrow two percent advantage, whereas men prefer Schwarzenegger by 13 points.

White non-Hispanics are lining up heavily for Schwarzenegger 52% to 32%. By contrast, Latinos heavily prefer Angelides (58% to 22%), while other ethnic voters support the Democrat by a 43% to 32% margin.

There are big differences in voter preferences by age. Voters in the 18 to 44 year age bracket prefer Angelides 46% to 34%. However, those voters 45 to 54 are lining up on the side of the Governor, 46% to 40%. Those age 55-64 back Schwarzenegger 51% to 30%, while voters in the 65 and older age group support the Governor by a greater than two to one margin (56% to 26%).

Voters living in union households, who account for about 25% of the likely voters in this survey, prefer Angelides by a 45% to 41% margin. However, among the non-union households representing 75% of the likely electorate, Schwarzenegger is preferred 46% to 35%.

Table 2
Preferences for Governor – by voter subgroup
(among likely general election voters)

	<u>Schwarzenegger</u>	<u>Angelides</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Statewide	45%	37	3	15
<u>Party</u>				
Democrats	16%	63	2	19
Republicans	85%	8	1	6
Non-partisans/others	36%	35	7	22
<u>Region</u>				
Los Angeles County	33%	44	4	19
Other Southern California	61%	27	2	10
Central Valley	49%	40	3	8
San Francisco Bay Area	34%	44	2	20
Other Northern California*	41%	37	3	9
<u>Gender</u>				
Male	47%	34	3	16
Female	43%	41	2	14
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>				
White non-Hispanic	52%	32	2	14
Latino	22%	58	1	19
All others*	32%	43	6	19
<u>Age</u>				
18 – 44	34%	46	2	18
45 – 54	46%	40	1	13
55 – 64	51%	30	5	14
65 or older	56%	26	3	15
<u>Union affiliation</u>				
Union household	41%	45	4	10
Non-union household	46%	35	2	17

* Small sample base.

** Less than 1/2 of 1%.

Voter choices at this stage are mainly about Schwarzenegger

Two thirds of those supporting Schwarzenegger (65%) say their preference is more a vote for the Governor than a vote against Angelides. However, the situation is reversed in the case of Angelides, with 65% of his supporters saying their preference is more a vote against Schwarzenegger than a vote for Angelides.

Table 3		
Is your vote preference more a vote for your candidate or against his opponent? (among likely voters of each candidate)		
	Schwarzenegger voters	Angelides voters
For my candidate	65%	28%
Against his opponent	30	65
No opinion	5	7

Almost three times as many expect Schwarzenegger to win as believe Angelides will win

Apart from whom voters personally prefer, greater than six in ten of the state’s electorate (61%) think the Governor will be re-elected, while just 24% expect Angelides to prevail. Voters currently supporting Schwarzenegger are very confident, with 86% expecting their man to win and just 4% thinking Angelides will win. By contrast, one in three (33%) of those supporting the Democrat think he will lose to the Governor, while 49% think Angelides will win. Undecided voters as well as those supporting other candidates also believe Schwarzenegger will win re-election by a 54% to 21% margin.

Table 4				
Apart from whom you prefer, who do you think is going to win the election for Governor? (among likely general election voters)				
	Total voters	Schwarzenegger voters	Angelides voters	Other/ undecided
Schwarzenegger	61%	86%	33%	54%
Angelides	24	4	49	21
Don’t know	15	10	18	25

Voter impressions of the candidates are more positive than negative

Last October, just before the special election called by the Governor to enact a series of reforms which the voters ultimately rejected, Schwarzenegger’s standing with voters was much more negative than positive, with 54% viewing him unfavorably and 38% holding a favorable view. In two subsequent *Field Poll* surveys taken earlier this year, voter perceptions of the Governor became somewhat less critical, with opinions more evenly divided. Now, for the first time since February of last year, more voters view the Governor in a favorable than unfavorable light (51% to 44%).

Last May, immediately prior to the June election, a relatively large proportion of voters (39%) did not have an opinion of Angelides. Among those who had an impression of the State Treasurer, opinions were more unfavorable than favorable (34% to 27%). Now, following his primary election win, greater than three in four voters have an opinion of Angelides, and more voters regard him in a favorable than unfavorable light (41% to 38%). One in five (21%) currently has no opinion of the State Treasurer.

Table 5
Trend of voter image ratings of the gubernatorial candidates
(among likely general election voters)

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
<u>Schwarzenegger</u>			
July 2006	51%	44	5
Late-May 2006	46%	46	8
February 2006	44%	49	7
October 2005*	38%	54	8
February 2005*	62%	33	5
<u>Angelides</u>			
July 2006	41%	38	21
Late-May 2006	27%	34	39
February 2006	24%	13	63
October 2005*	23%	12	65
February 2005*	24%	14	62

* Survey conducted among all registered voters.

Relative importance of eight issues in the governor’s race

Likely voters in this survey were asked how important they felt each of eight specific issues were to them in making up their minds about whom they will support for governor. Voters were asked to say whether an issue was among the most important, an important issue but not among the most important, or not important.

While each of the eight issues is seen as having some degree of importance to large majorities of voters overall, two issues – illegal immigration (at 44%) and education (at 43%) – are rated as among the most important by the largest proportions of voters. Four other issues – health care (36%), jobs/economy (36%), gasoline prices/energy (32%) and taxes (31%) – receive the next highest proportions. Somewhat smaller proportions of voters rate environmental protection and crime/prisons, at 26% and 24% respectively, as being among the most important.

Table 6
Importance of specific issues in deciding whom voters will support for Governor
(among likely general election voters)

	<u>Among the most important</u>	<u>Important issue, but not among the most important</u>	<u>Not an important issue</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
Illegal immigration	44%	42	12	2
Education	43%	49	7	1
Health care	36%	55	8	1
Jobs/the economy	36%	54	8	2
Gasoline prices/energy	32%	52	15	1
Taxes	31%	55	12	2
Environmental protection	26%	56	16	2
Crime/prisons	24%	59	16	1

Each candidate’s supporters rate the issues differently

There are considerable differences in the way supporters of Schwarzenegger and Angelides rate the importance of these eight issues.

A majority (56%) of those supporting Schwarzenegger considers immigration as among the most important issues in deciding whom they will support in the general election. The issue of taxes receives the next highest proportion (40%) saying it is among the most important issues among voters backing Schwarzenegger.

By contrast, the issue priorities of Angelides supporters are quite different. Two issues – education and health care – are rated by larger proportions of these voters as being among the most important issues to them when deciding whom they will support for governor. Among undecided voters, education stands out as the issue which a majority considers among the most important in the upcoming gubernatorial election.

Table 7
Proportions of voters who consider each issue to be among the MOST important issues in deciding whom to support for Governor – by candidate supported (among likely general election voters)

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Schwarzenegger voter</u>	<u>Angelides voter</u>	<u>Other/ undecided voter</u>
Illegal immigration	44%	56%	32%	30%
Education	43	28	57	53
Health care	36	22	50	37
Jobs/the economy	36	30	42	35
Gasoline prices/energy	32	28	36	32
Taxes	31	40	23	22
Environmental protection	26	8	42	33
Crime/prisons	24	23	22	25

Schwarzenegger’s job performance now viewed positively

For the first time since February 2005, more voters now say they approve (49%) than disapprove (40%) of Schwarzenegger’s job performance. In six prior *Field Poll* surveys conducted between June 2005 and May 2006, pluralities of voters ranging from five to nineteen points had registered disapproval of Schwarzenegger.

Opinions of the governor’s job performance are highly partisan. Republicans give him an overwhelmingly positive rating (80% to 15%), while Democrats are more than two to one negative (60% to 26%) in their appraisals. Non-partisans are more positive than negative of Schwarzenegger’s performance by a 46% to 38% margin.

Table 8
Trend of Arnold Schwarzenegger's job performance as Governor
(among registered voters)

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
July 2006	49%	40	11
Late May 2006	41%	46	13
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</u> (July 2006)			
Democrats	26%	60	14
Republicans	80%	15	5
Non-partisans/others	46%	38	16

Perceptions of the state's overall direction improve

In another significant change in voter mood, 47% now think the state is headed in the right direction while 41% believe it is on the wrong track. In seven prior surveys conducted between February 2005 and May 2006, substantial majorities of voters were more pessimistic than optimistic in their feelings about the direction of the state.

Republicans are considerably more confident that the state is now on the right track than either Democrats or non-partisans. Among Republicans 63% believe the state is moving in the right direction, whereas among Democrats and non-partisans just 40% and 35%, respectively, feel this way.

Table 9
Overall direction that California is heading
(among registered voters)

	<u>Right direction</u>	<u>Wrong track</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
July 2006	47%	41	12
Late May 2006	32%	57	11
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 (July 2006)</u>			
Democrats	40%	45	15
Republicans	63%	31	6
Non-partisan/other	35%	48	17

Note: Surveys prior to 1996 conducted among all California adults, not just registered adults.

Information About The Survey

Sample Details

The findings in this report are based on a random sample survey of 992 Californians registered to vote, of whom 731 can be considered likely voters in the November 7 general election. Interviewing was conducted by telephone in English and Spanish between the period July 10-23, 2006.

Sampling for this survey was divided into two approximately equal sized matching subsamples. About half of the interviews were conducted 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 were created by adding random digits to each selected telephone exchange, giving each phone listing an equal chance of being selected and permitting access to all landline telephone numbers both listed and unlisted.

The other half of the sample was developed from telephone listings of individual voters selected randomly from a statewide list of all registered voters in California. In this sample every *n*th voter was selected from the list at random for inclusion into the sample and interviews were attempted only with the specific voter selected.

In an effort to include "hard to reach" voters into each sample, up to 8 attempts were made to reach a voter at each telephone number dialed in each sample. Results from both samples were combined and weighted to conform to *Field Poll* estimates of the demographic and regional characteristics of the state's registered voter population.

According to statistical theory, 95% of the time results from the sample of likely voters interviewed in this survey, which include all questions except the Governor's job performance rating and the direction the state is heading, have a sampling error of +/- 3.8 percentage points. The latter two questions, were asked of a random subsample of 498 registered voters and have a sampling error of +/- 4.5 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, the sequencing of questions or through undetected omissions or errors in interviewing or data processing. Extensive efforts were made to minimize such potential errors.

Questions Asked

In the election this year for Governor, Republican Arnold Schwarzenegger, incumbent Governor, is running against Democrat Phil Angelides, State Treasurer. If the election were being held today, for whom would you vote for Governor – Arnold Schwarzenegger, the Republican, or Phil Angelides, the Democrat?

IF SCHWARZENEGGER, ASK: Is your preference more a vote for Schwarzenegger or more of a vote against Angelides?

IF ANGELIDES, ASK: Is your preference more a vote for Angelides or more of a vote against Schwarzenegger)?

Apart from whom you prefer in the election for Governor, who do you think is going to win the election - Schwarzenegger or Angelides?

Next, I am going to read some names of people who are running for statewide office this year. As I read each name, please tell me if your opinion of that person is favorable, unfavorable or whether you don't know enough about that person to have an opinion. Is your opinion of (Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor) (Phil Angelides, State Treasurer) favorable or unfavorable?

Thinking about the upcoming November election for Governor, how important will the candidates' positions on each of the following issues be to you in deciding who you would support? How important will the gubernatorial candidates' positions on this be to you – the most important issue, an important issue but not the most important issue, or not an important issue? (SEE RELEASE FOR ISSUES READ) (ISSUES READ IN RANDOM ORDER)

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?