

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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VOTER SUPPORT DIMINSHING FOR TWO HEALTH-RELATED BALLOT MEASURES, PROPOSITIONS 45 AND 46.

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By Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

Voter support has diminished for Propositions 45 and 46, two health-related ballot initiatives on the upcoming California general election. Currently, 41% of likely voters are inclined to vote Yes on Prop. 45, the Health Insurance Rate Changes initiative, 26% are on the No side, while a growing proportion (33%) are undecided. The poll also finds Prop. 46, the Drug Testing of Doctors/Medical Negligence Lawsuits initiative, now trailing by a narrow margin, 37% to 34%, with 29% undecided.

Both initiatives had held comfortable leads earlier this summer.

These are the findings from the latest *Field Poll* conducted among 467 likely voters statewide in the upcoming November general election.

Trend of voter preferences on Props. 45 and 46

Voter support has diminished for each of the two health-related ballot propositions, Propositions 45 and 46. Proposition 45, the Health Insurance Rate Changes initiative, would require the state Insurance Commissioner to approve any rate changes made to health insurance rates by insurance providers. The current poll finds Prop. 45 leading 41% to 26%, with a growing number of voters (33%) are undecided.

The poll also finds voters moving to the No side on Proposition 46, the Drug Testing of Doctors/Medical Negligence Lawsuits initiative. That initiative calls for drug testing of doctors and a review of a statewide prescription drug database before prescribing controlled substances. It would also increase the current \$250,000 cap on pain and suffering damages in medical negligence lawsuits. At present, 34% of likely voters are inclined to vote Yes, 37% are lining up on the No side, and 28% undecided.

A late June/early July *Field Poll* found much greater support for both initiatives.

Table 1			
Trend of voter preferences on two statewide health-related ballot measures: Propositions 45 and 46 (among likely voters)			
	Yes	No	Undecided
Proposition 45 (Health Insurance Rate Changes)			
Late August/Early September	41%	26	33
Late June/Early July	69%	16	15
Proposition 46 (Drug Testing of Doctors/ Medical Negligence Lawsuits)			
Late August/Early September	34%	37	29
Late June/Early July	58%	30	12

Note: Late August/early September poll conducted using a summary of each proposition's official ballot label. The official ballot label for these initiatives had not yet been released by the California Secretary of State at the time of the late June/early July survey.

Prop. 45 preferences across voter subgroups

There are some differences in preferences on Prop. 45 across subgroups of the likely voter population, but they are not particularly large. For example, Democrats are currently supporting the initiative 45% to 24%, as are non-partisans (42% to 25%). Among Republicans the initiative leads, but by a narrower 34% to 29% margin.

The largest differences in vote support toward Prop. 45 relates to a voter's household income. Lower income voters, with annual household incomes of less than \$40,000, are currently backing the health insurance rate changes initiative nearly three to one (49% to 17%). By contrast, upper income voters, with annual household incomes of \$100,000 or more, are evenly split, with 33% in favor, 34% opposed and 33% undecided.

Table 2
Current voter preferences on Proposition 45,
the Health Insurance Rate Changes initiative – by subgroup
(among likely voters)

	Yes	No	Undecided
Total statewide	41%	26	33
<u>Party registration</u>			
(.45) Democrats	45%	24	31
(.34) Republicans	34%	29	37
(.21) No party preference/other	42%	25	33
<u>Political ideology</u>			
(.35) Conservative	37%	32	31
(.39) Middle-of-the-road	37%	28	35
(.26) Liberal	52%	14	34
<u>Tea party identification</u>			
(.36) A lot/some	35%	34	31
(.64) Not at all/other	44%	21	35
<u>Household income</u>			
(.28) Less than \$40,000	49%	17	34
(.33) \$40,000 - \$99,999	45%	28	27
(.27) \$100,000 or more	33%	34	33
<u>Region</u>			
(.23) Los Angeles County	41%	33	26
(.32) Other Southern California	38%	27	45
(.15) Central Valley*	41%	30	29
(.23) San Francisco Bay Area	36%	21	43
<u>Gender</u>			
(.47) Male	40%	26	34
(.53) Female	41%	26	33
<u>Age</u>			
(.25) 18 – 39	44%	28	28
(.43) 40 – 64	35%	31	34
(.32) 65 or older	45%	17	38
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
(.69) White non-Hispanic	38%	26	36
(.17) Latino*	52%	24	24
(.14) African American/Asian American	38%	27	35
<u>Permanent mail ballot registrant</u>			
(.55) Yes	36%	25	39
(.45) No	47%	27	26

* Small sample base.

Prop. 46 preferences across voter subgroups

There are significant partisan differences in voter preferences on Proposition 46, the Drug Testing of Doctors/Medical Negligence Lawsuits initiative. While a plurality of Democrats back the measure, Republicans are lining up against the proposition, 45% to 28%. No party preference voters are about evenly divided.

There are also differences in voter preferences by household income. Voters with incomes of less than \$40,000 are about two-to-one in support of the initiative. By contrast, voters making \$100,000 or more are opposed nearly two to one. A plurality of middle income voters opposes the initiative.

Younger voters under age 40 and the state's ethnic voters are also lining up in favor of Prop. 46, while pluralities of middle age voters and white non-Hispanics are on the No side.

A plurality of voters registered as permanent mail ballot registrants, who will likely comprise a majority of all voters in this election, are also opposing the initiative.

Table 3
**Current voter preferences on Proposition 46, the Drug Testing
 of Doctors/Medical Negligence Lawsuits initiative – by subgroup
 (among likely voters)**

	Yes	No	Undecided
Total statewide	34%	37	29
<u>Party registration</u>			
(.45) Democrats	37%	30	33
(.34) Republicans	28%	45	27
(.21) No party preference/other	38%	40	22
<u>Political ideology</u>			
(.35) Conservative	35%	47	18
(.39) Middle-of-the-road	33%	34	33
(.26) Liberal	35%	30	35
<u>Tea party identification</u>			
(.36) A lot/some	35%	42	23
(.64) Not at all/other	34%	35	31
<u>Household income</u>			
(.28) Less than \$40,000	49%	24	27
(.33) \$40,000 - \$99,999	33%	41	26
(.27) \$100,000 or more	24%	46	30
<u>Region</u>			
(.23) Los Angeles County	42%	36	22
(.32) Other Southern California	33%	45	22
(.15) Central Valley*	36%	34	30
(.23) San Francisco Bay Area	27%	36	37
<u>Gender</u>			
(.47) Male	30%	40	30
(.53) Female	38%	35	27
<u>Age</u>			
(.25) 18 – 39	50%	36	14
(.43) 40 – 64	28%	41	31
(.32) 65 or older	31%	33	36
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
(.69) White non-Hispanic	27%	42	31
(.17) Latino*	52%	28	20
(.14) African American/Asian American	43%	30	27
<u>Permanent mail ballot registrant</u>			
(.55) Yes	32%	38	30
(.45) No	37%	36	27

* Small sample base.

Information About The Survey

Methodological Details

The findings in this report are based on a *Field Poll* completed August 14-28, 2014 among 467 voters considered likely to vote in the November 2014 general election. Interviews were administered by telephone using live interviewers in six languages and dialects – English, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, and Vietnamese.

The overall sample included supplemental interviews conducted among the state's growing ethnic voter population. Funding for the survey's supplemental interviews conducted with Asian American voters was provided by Professor Karthick Ramakrishnan of the University of California, Riverside as part of the National Asian American Survey project.

Individual voters were sampled at random from voters with telephones drawn from the statewide voter registration rolls. The supplemental sample of Asian Americans was developed from voter roll listings targeting Chinese American, Korean American and Vietnamese American voters based primarily on their ethnic surnames. Once a voter's name and telephone number had been selected, interviews are attempted only with the specified voter on either their landline or cell phone, depending on the source of the listing from the voter file. After the completion of interviewing, the overall sample was weighted to align it to the proper distribution of voters by race/ethnicity and other political, demographic and geographic characteristics of the California voter population.

Sampling error estimates applicable to the results of any probability-based survey depend on sample size and the percentage distributions being examined. The maximum sampling error for results from the overall likely voter sample is +/- 4.8 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. The maximum sampling error estimates are based on survey findings in the middle of the sampling distribution (i.e., results at or near 50%). Percentages at either tail of the distributions (i.e., results closer to 10% or 90%) have somewhat smaller margins of error. There are other potential sources of error in surveys of public opinion besides sampling error. However, the overall design and execution of this survey sought to minimize these other possible errors.

The Field Poll was established in 1947 as *The California Poll* by Mervin Field, who is still an active advisor. The *Poll* has operated continuously since then as an independent, non-partisan survey of California public opinion. *The Field Poll* receives financial support from leading California newspapers and television stations, who purchase the rights of first release to *Field Poll* reports in their primary viewer or readership markets. The *Poll* also receives funding from the University of California and California State University systems, who receive the data files from each *Field Poll* survey shortly after its completion for teaching and secondary research purposes, as well as from foundations, non-profit organizations, and others as part of the *Poll's* policy research sponsor program.

Questions Asked

Proposition 45 is the Health Care Insurance; Rate Changes initiative. It requires approval of the state Insurance Commissioner before a health insurer can change its rates or do anything else affecting the charges associated with health insurance. It provides for public notice, disclosure and hearing and subsequent judicial reviews, and exempts employer large group health plans. If the election were being held today, would you vote YES or NO on Proposition 45?

Proposition 46 is the Drug and Alcohol Testing of Doctors; Medical Negligence Lawsuits initiative. It requires drug testing of doctors and review of a statewide prescription database before prescribing controlled substances. It increases the \$250,000 cap on pain and suffering damages in medical negligence lawsuits to account for inflation. Fiscal impact: State and local government costs ranging from tens of millions to several hundred million dollars annually, offset to some extent by saving from requirements on health care providers. If the election were being held today, would you vote YES or NO on Proposition 46?