

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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**FAVORABLE FEINSTEIN JOB RATINGS.
STRONG VOTER INCLINATION TO RE-ELECT
HER NEXT YEAR. DEFEATS RICE AND
SCHWARZENEGGER IN HYPOTHETICAL 2006
TRIAL HEATS FOR U.S. SENATE.**

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by Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

Democratic U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein is up for re-election next year and if the present disposition of California voters continues she would be favored to remain in office for another term.

In its most recent statewide survey, *The Field Poll* finds that among a cross section of all registered voters, 54% approve of her job performance and 56% say they would be inclined to re-elect her in next year's election.

When Feinstein is matched against two individuals whose names have been floated in political circles as possible 2006 GOP Senatorial candidates – Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice – Feinstein runs far ahead of each.

Feinstein's job performance

Ever since Feinstein was first elected to the Senate in 1992 she has always received highly favorable job ratings from voters in the many frequent measurements of her conducted by *The Field Poll*. During the past two years, for example, majorities of voters, ranging from 50% to 55%, have approved of her performance, while those disapproving have included 23% to 29% of the electorate. The current poll finds 54% approving of the job Feinstein is doing, while 26% disapprove.

Table 1
Trend of Dianne Feinstein's job performance ratings as U.S. Senator
(among registered voters)

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
June 2005	54%	26	20
February 2005	50%	29	21
August 2004	55%	29	16
May 2004	53%	23	24
July 2003	55%	31	14
April 2003	49%	34	17
2002 (Average)	49%	26	25
2001 (Average)	57%	27	16
2000 (Average)	57%	27	16
1999 (Average)	51%	28	21
1998 (Average)	56%	27	17
1997 (Average)	47%	35	18
<u>Party (June 2005)</u>			
Democrats	74%	12	14
Republicans	30%	47	23
Non-partisans/others	51%	21	28

Inclination to re-elect Feinstein in 2006

Currently 56% of the state's registered voters say they are inclined to re-elect Feinstein next year. This overall majority stems primarily from the fact that she is heavily endorsed by the state's Democratic voters as well as its non-partisans. In addition, a significant segment (25%) of Republican voters also say they are inclined to re-elect her.

Table 2
Voter inclination to re-elect Dianne Feinstein
to another term as U.S. Senator in 2006
(among registered voters)

	<u>Inclined</u>	<u>Not inclined</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
June 2005	56%	37	7
February 2005	53%	39	8
<u>Party</u>			
Democrat	79%	16	5
Republican	25%	67	8
Non-partisans/others	62%	32	6
<u>Region</u>			
Los Angeles County	63%	29	8
Other Southern California	47%	45	8
Central Valley	53%	40	7
San Francisco Bay Area	65%	31	4
Other*	49%	49	2
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	53%	42	5
Female	59%	33	8
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
White (non-Hispanic)	56%	38	6
Latino	59%	34	7
Other	59%	35	6
<u>Age</u>			
18–39	55%	39	6
40–49	60%	37	3
50–64	54%	38	8
65 or older	56%	34	10
<u>Political ideology</u>			
Conservative	32%	58	10
Moderate	62%	31	7
Liberal	77%	21	2

Note: All subgroups are from the June 2005 survey.

* Small sample.

** Less than 1/2 of 1%.

Hypothetical 2006 U.S. Senate match-ups

Two well-known Republicans – Schwarzenegger and Rice – have been cited in some news reports as possible GOP challengers to Feinstein in next year's Senatorial election.

However, in simulated general elections match-ups, Feinstein leads by comfortable margins against both possibilities. The incumbent Senator currently runs ahead of Rice by a 56% to 38% margin and is even further ahead of Schwarzenegger, 62% to 32%.

Table 3
Simulated general election match-ups for U.S. Senate pairing Feinstein against Republicans Condoleezza Rice/Arnold Schwarzenegger (among registered voters)

	<u>Total Voters</u>	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Non-partisans/ others</u>
Feinstein (D)	56%	89%	19%	53%
Rice (R)	38	10	75	36
Undecided	6	11	6	11
Feinstein (D)	62%	86%	29%	66%
Schwarzenegger (R)	32	10	60	29
Undecided	6	4	11	5

(R) denotes Republican
(D) denotes Democrat

Boxer's approval rating

Similar to Feinstein's job ratings, Senator Barbara Boxer has received more favorable than unfavorable performance measures from voters in past *Field Polls*, particularly in recent years. The current survey finds 47% approving of Boxer and 30% disapproving.

Table 4
Trend of Barbara Boxer's job performance ratings as U.S. Senator (among registered voters)

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
June 2005	47%	30	23
February 2005	49%	36	15
August 2004	49%	36	15
May 2004	44%	33	23
July 2003	49%	35	16
April 2003	43%	35	22
2002 (Average)	45%	29	26
2001 (Average)	49%	31	20
2000 (Average)	50%	30	20
1999 (Average)	45%	35	20
1998 (Average)	45%	29	26
1997 (Average)	41%	35	24
<u>Party (June 2005)</u>			
Democrats	68%	12	20
Republicans	21%	55	24
Non-partisans/others	48%	26	26

Information About The Survey

Sample Details

The findings in this report are based on a random sample survey of 711 registered voters in California conducted by telephone June 13-19, 2005 in English and Spanish. In order to cover a broad range of issues and still minimize respondent fatigue, the overall registered voter sample was divided into two approximately equal sized subsamples on the general election match-ups in this report. The sample sizes of those subgroups included 371 and 340 voters each.

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

According to statistical theory, 95% of the time results from the overall sample have a sampling error of +/- 3.6 percentage points, while the general election trial heats have a sampling error of +/- 5.5 percentage points.

Questions Asked

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barbara Boxer is handling her job as U.S. Senator?

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Dianne Feinstein is handling her job as U.S. Senator?

Would you be inclined or not inclined to vote for Dianne Feinstein for U.S. Senate in next year's statewide election?

(SUBSAMPLE A) Suppose in next year's general election for U.S. Senate, Democratic U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein were running against Republican Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. If these were the candidates and the election for U.S. Senate were being held today, for whom would you vote – Feinstein or Rice?

(SUBSAMPLE B) Suppose in next year's general election for U.S. Senate, Democratic U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein were running against Republican Arnold Schwarzenegger. If these were the candidates and the election for U.S. Senate were being held today, for whom would you vote – Feinstein or Schwarzenegger?