

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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**PROP. 82 (PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION)
LEADS BUT BY A SMALLER MARGIN
THAN TWO MONTHS AGO. FEINSTEIN
RUNNING COMFORTABLY AHEAD IN
U.S. SENATE RACE.**

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by Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

One of the statewide ballot propositions Californians will be voting on in the June primary is Proposition 82, the pre-school education initiative.

While more primary election voters continue to support than oppose Prop. 82, its lead has declined over the past two months. Currently, 52% of likely voters say they would vote Yes on Prop. 82 if they were voting today, while 39% are inclined to vote No. Another 9% are undecided. This 13-point Yes side advantage is down from a 21-point lead found in a February *Field Poll*.

The survey also finds incumbent U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein remaining comfortably ahead of her GOP opponent, former State Senator Richard Mountjoy, in the November general election for U.S. Senate. At present, 59% of likely voters in the general election are favoring Feinstein, while 31% are supporting Mountjoy. Feinstein held a similar 28-point lead in a February *Field Poll*.

These are the findings from the latest *Field Poll* conducted by telephone April 3-10 in English and Spanish among likely voters throughout California.

Prop. 82 remains ahead, but its lead has shrunk

Prop. 82 calls for establishing voluntary pre-school for all four-year olds in California. It would be funded by increasing state income taxes by 1.7% on high income earners, defined as those making over \$400,000 for persons filing an individual return, and over \$800,000 for couples filing joint returns.

Slightly less than half (44%) of the primary election voters surveyed reported having seen or heard something about the initiative, up from 35% who reported this in February. All likely voters, regardless of any prior awareness, were then read Prop. 82's official ballot label, which is the description that voters will see when they go to the polls to vote in June, and asked how they would vote if the election were today. In this setting, a majority (52%) of likely voters say they would vote Yes, 39% say they would vote No, while 9% are undecided.

Prop. 82's current thirteen-point lead is down from a 21-percentage point advantage in February.

There are large differences in voter preferences on Prop. 82 across subgroups of the likely voter population. For example, Democrats favor Prop. 82 by a nearly three to one margin (67% to 24%), while Republicans are opposed 58% to 35%. Non-partisans are supportive, but by a narrower 50% to 39% margin.

Also, compared to other subgroups, larger proportions of political liberals, ethnic voters, and those living in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area currently favor Prop. 82. On the other hand, majorities of conservatives and voters living in Southern California outside of Los Angeles County are opposed.

Voters who had already seen or heard about Prop. 82 prior to being interviewed are about evenly divided on the initiative.

Table 1
Voter preferences about Proposition 82, the
Pre-School Education Initiative
(among likely primary election voters)

	Would vote...		
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Total statewide – April	52%	39	9
– February	55%	34	11
<u>Party</u>			
Democrat	67%	24	9
Republican	35%	58	7
Non-partisans/others	50%	39	11
<u>Political ideology</u>			
Conservative	32%	60	8
Moderate	57%	35	8
Liberal	73%	17	10
<u>Region</u>			
Los Angeles County	53%	33	14
Other Southern California	42%	51	7
Central Valley	53%	41	6
San Francisco Bay Area	64%	29	7
Other Northern California*	56%	32	12
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	51%	41	8
Female	53%	37	10
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
White (non-Hispanic)	50%	42	8
Latino	61%	26	13
Other	64%	27	9
<u>Household income</u>			
Less than \$40,000	59%	33	8
\$40,000 - \$80,000	57%	38	5
More than \$80,000	48%	43	9
<u>Prior awareness of Prop. 82</u>			
Yes, had heard of it	49%	46	5
No, not aware	55%	33	12

* Small sample size.

Feinstein remains comfortably ahead in this year's U.S. Senate race

Feinstein, who was first elected to the U.S. Senate in 1992, has twice won re-election – in 1994 and 2000. She is currently running unopposed in the Democratic primary, as is her Republican opponent, Mountjoy, in the GOP primary.

When likely voters in the general election are asked whom they'd support if the November election were being held today, Feinstein currently leads Mountjoy by twenty-eight points, 59% to 31%. This is similar to the lead she held two months ago in a February *Field Poll*.

Feinstein is the choice of virtually all Democrats (84% to 7%). Feinstein also receives 27% of cross-over votes of likely Republican voters and leads among non-partisans by a greater than two to one margin (61% to 28%).

Regionally, while Feinstein runs strongest among voters in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area (80% to 14%), she leads Mountjoy in all other major areas of the state except in Southern California outside Los Angeles County, where preferences are about evenly divided.

Table 2
November general election preferences between
Feinstein and Mountjoy for U.S. Senate
(among likely general election voters)

	<u>Feinstein (D)</u>	<u>Mountjoy (R)</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Total statewide – April	59%	31	2	8
– February	56%	28	1	15
<u>Party</u>				
Democrats	84%	7	2	7
Republicans	27%	62	1	10
Non-partisans/others	61%	28	2	9
<u>Area</u>				
Coastal counties	64%	28	1	7
Inland counties	48%	38	2	12
<u>Region</u>				
Los Angeles County	69%	25	1	5
Other Southern California	43%	44	2	11
Central Valley	49%	36	3	12
San Francisco Bay Area	80%	14	1	15
Other Northern California*	53%	40	**	7
<u>Political ideology</u>				
Conservative	26%	66	1	7
Moderate	67%	20	2	11
Liberal	89%	6	1	4
<u>Gender</u>				
Male	55%	36	2	7
Female	63%	26	1	10
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>				
White non-Hispanic	56%	34	2	8
Latino	72%	17	2	9
Other	64%	27	1	8

* Small sample base.

** Less than 1/2 of 1%.

Big contrast in image ratings of the Senate candidates

Greater than nine in ten likely voters (91%) have an opinion of Feinstein, with opinions dividing 54% favorable and 37% unfavorable. By contrast, very few voters (18%) hold an opinion of Mountjoy. Among those who are able to rate him, opinions are divided 8% favorable and 10% unfavorable. Among the relatively small proportion of Republicans able to offer an opinion of Mountjoy, impressions are favorable, 13% to 3%. By contrast, Democrats able to rate him view him unfavorably, 15% to 5%.

Table 3
Image ratings of the major party candidates for U.S. Senate
(among likely general election voters)

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
<u>Dianne Feinstein, U.S. Senator</u>			
Total voters	<u>54%</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>9</u>
Democrats	78%	13	9
Republicans	26%	63	11
Non-partisans/others	50%	38	12
<u>Richard Mountjoy, former State Senator</u>			
Total voters	<u>8%</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>82</u>
Democrats	5%	15	80
Republicans	13%	3	84
Non-partisans/others	13%	11	76

Information About The Survey

Sample Details

The findings in this report are based on a random sample survey of California likely voters. 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, including 706 likely voters in the November general election and 612 likely voters in the June primary election.

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 sample of likely voters in the general election have a sampling error of +/- 3.8 percentage points, while findings from the sample of likely voters in the primary election have a sampling error of +/- 4.1 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

ASKED OF LIKELY PRIMARY ELECTION VOTERS:

Have you seen, read or heard anything about Proposition 82, the Pre-School Education initiative, that will appear on the June statewide primary election ballot?

(As you know) Proposition 82 is called the Public Pre-school Education; Tax Increase on Incomes Over \$400,000 for Individuals and \$800,000 for Couples initiative. It establishes voluntary pre-school education for all four-year olds, and is funded by a 1.7% tax on individual income over \$400,000; and for couples' income over \$800,000. Fiscal impact: Increased annual revenues of \$2.1 billion in 2007-2008, growing with the economy in future years. All revenues would be spent on the new pre-school program. If the election were being held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 82?

ASKED OF LIKELY GENERAL ELECTION VOTERS:

Next, I am going to read the names of two of the candidates running for U.S. Senate this year. (NAMES AND TITLES OF CANDIDATES READ IN RANDOM ORDER) Is your opinion of _____ favorable or unfavorable?

If the November general election for U.S. Senate were being held today and the candidates were Republican, former State Senator Richard Mountjoy and Democrat, incumbent U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein, for whom would you vote for U.S. Senate – Mountjoy or Feinstein?