

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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**WESTLY AND ANGELIDES NECK AND
NECK COMING DOWN TO THE WIRE.
UNPRECEDENTED PROPORTION OF
DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY VOTERS
STILL UNDECIDED.**

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by Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

Coming down to the closing days of the intensely bitter battle for the Democratic nomination in this year's gubernatorial election, only a statistically insignificant one percentage point margin separates state Controller Steve Westly and state Treasurer Phil Angelides in voter preferences.

In its sixth and final primary election preference measure conducted over the past twelve months, *The Field Poll* finds Westly to be the choice of 35% of likely Democratic primary voters, Angelides receives 34% support, while 5% are preferring other candidates.

Apart from the virtually even division of support for the two candidates is the remarkable fact that greater than one in four – 26% – of voters who maintain that they are likely to cast a ballot are still undecided. During the sixty-year history of *The Field Poll* there never has been as large a proportion of voters undecided so close to the election in a top-of-the-ticket major party primary.

Preference trend

In three *Field Poll* surveys taken in 2005, voter preferences in the initial stages of the gubernatorial campaign were relatively stable, with about six in ten voters able to offer a preference and Angelides holding the advantage with an average lead of about ten points over Westly.

As voter awareness of the election grew in early 2006, the proportion of undecided voters soared to 54% in February, with Angelides still holding on to an eight-point lead.

However, following the launching of a very sizeable and generally positive wave of initial television advertising introducing the candidates to the electorate, an early April *Field Poll* detected a big turn-around in voter preferences, with Westly vaulting into the lead over Angelides, 37% to 26%.

Now, as the campaigning has moved into its final stages, and with an increasing barrage of mostly negative television advertising about the opposing candidate, the two are in a virtual tie, with Westly holding a statistically insignificant one percentage point lead over Angelides (35% to 34%).

Table 1
Trend of voter preferences in the 2006 Democratic
primary election for Governor
(among likely Democratic primary voters)

	<u>Westly</u>	<u>Angelides</u>	<u>Someone else</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Late May 2006	35%	34	5	26
April 2006	37%	26	3	34
February 2006	18%	26	2	54
October 2005	26%	37	**	37
August 2005	22%	32	**	46
June 2005	28%	37	**	35

** Not measured

Demographic subgroup analysis

There are some clear patterns in voter support for Westly and Angelides across some subgroups of the likely Democratic primary electorate. For example, Angelides holds a solid 45% to 29% lead among voters living in households in which a union member resides. By contrast, Westly leads 37% to 29% among non-union households. Angelides is also preferred by eight points among likely Democratic primary voters who describe themselves as liberal in politics, while Westly leads among moderates by seven points and among the relatively small sample of conservative voters in the Democratic primary by ten points.

In addition, Angelides appears to hold a small advantage among voters who either already have or intend to cast their votes via absentee ballot, while Westly has a small lead among those intending to vote at their precinct polling place on Election Day.

Table 2
Current voter preferences in the Democratic
primary election for Governor
(among likely Democratic primary voters)

	<u>Westly</u>	<u>Angelides</u>	<u>Someone else</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Total statewide	35%	34	5	26
<u>Region</u>				
(.53) Southern California	33%	33	5	29
(.47) Northern California	37%	35	4	24
<u>Gender</u>				
(.44) Male	38%	33	5	24
(.56) Female	33%	34	5	28
<u>Age</u>				
(.20) 18-39*	38%	28	2	32
(.22) 40-49	37%	26	3	34
(.33) 50-64	32%	45	5	18
(.25) 65 or older	37%	29	7	27
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>				
(.66) White non-Hispanic	36%	35	4	25
(.17) Latino*	33%	33	3	31
(.17) Other*	32%	28	6	34
<u>Union affiliation</u>				
(.29) Union members in household	29%	45	3	23
(.71) Non-union household	37%	29	5	29
<u>Political ideology</u>				
(.39) Liberal	32%	40	3	25
(.49) Moderate	37%	30	5	28
(.12) Conservative*	36%	26	9	29
<u>Voting method</u>				
(.65) Precinct voters	35%	31	4	30
(.35) Absentee voters	36%	39	6	19

* Small sample size.

Schwarzenegger vs. Democrats in general election trial heats

The closeness of the Democratic nomination race is also mirrored in the division of voting preferences among the overall electorate, when incumbent Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is matched against either Westly or Angelides in possible general election match-ups.

In a hypothetical Schwarzenegger vs. Westly fall pairing, the Governor holds a slim two-point lead (44% to 42%) over Westly. In a Schwarzenegger – Angelides pairing, the Governor’s lead is seven points, 46% to 39%.

In both cases large partisan differences are evident, with Democrats favoring each of their party's nominee by roughly four to one margins, while Republicans favor Schwarzenegger by margins of seven or eight to one. Non-partisans appear to give the Governor his slim lead against both Democrats, as they favor Schwarzenegger by two points against Westly and eight points against Angelides.

Table 3
November general election pairings between
Schwarzenegger (R) and Westly (D) for Governor
(among likely general election voters)

	<u>Schwarzenegger</u>	<u>Westly</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Late May 2006	44%	42	3	11
April 2006	43%	43	3	11
February 2006	37%	41	1	21
October 2005	40%	46	**	14
August 2005	39%	42	**	19
June 2005	40%	44	**	16
February 2005	52%	33	**	15
<u>Party (Late May 2006)</u>				
Democrats	17%	67	4	12
Republicans	80%	13	1	6
Non-partisans/others	41%	39	3	17

** Not asked.

Note: 2005 surveys conducted among all registered voters.

Table 4
November general election pairings between
Schwarzenegger (R) and Angelides (D) for Governor
(among likely general election voters)

	<u>Schwarzenegger</u>	<u>Angelides</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
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
<u>Party (Late May 2006)</u>				
Democrats	19%	63	5	13
Republicans	80%	11	3	6
Non-partisans/others	43%	35	5	17

** Not asked

Note: 2005 surveys conducted among all registered voters.

Image ratings of the candidates

There have been a number of changes in voter appraisals of the major party candidates for governor over the past three months. For example, in February more voters held an unfavorable (49%) than favorable (44%) view of Schwarzenegger. Now, voters are evenly divided, with 46% viewing the Governor favorably and 46% unfavorably. Most of this shift is due to a somewhat more favorable impression of the Governor among non-partisan voters.

Three months ago voter impressions of Democrats Westly and Angelides were largely unformed, which greater than six in ten voters having no opinion of either. Now, majorities are able to offer an opinion of the two Democrats. In Westly's case, more voters (30%) hold a favorable view than an unfavorable view (24%). However, the reverse is true of Angelides, with those holding a negative impression outnumbering those with a positive assessment 34% to 27%.

Both Democrats are viewed quite positively among rank-and-file Democratic voters, but both also hold a largely negative image among Republicans. The biggest difference between the two relates to each Democrat's image among non-partisans. Among this pivotal group, Westly is rated positively 28% to 18%, while Angelides is viewed negatively 33% to 24%.

Table 5
Image ratings of the gubernatorial candidates
(among likely general election voters)

	Late-May 2006			February 2006		
	<u>Favor- able</u>	<u>Unfavor- able</u>	<u>No opinion</u>	<u>Favor- able</u>	<u>Unfavor- able</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
<u>Arnold Schwarzenegger</u>						
Total voters	46%	46	8	44%	49	7
Democrats	24%	69	7	23%	72	5
Republicans	73%	20	7	73%	18	9
Non-partisans/others	46%	41	13	34%	56	10
<u>Steve Westly</u>						
Total voters	30%	24	46	19%	9	72
Democrats	42%	17	41	24%	10	66
Republicans	17%	34	49	16%	10	74
Non-partisans/others	28%	18	54	17%	4	79
<u>Phil Angelides</u>						
Total voters	27%	34	39	24%	13	63
Democrats	39%	22	39	33%	10	57
Republicans	13%	49	38	17%	15	68
Non-partisans/others	24%	33	43	19%	17	64

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 May 23-31, 2006. In the main survey, total of 1,545 California adults were reached and screened, of whom 702 reported being likely to vote in the November general election, and 351 said they were likely to vote in the Democratic primary.

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 were 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.

To increase the precision of the poll's estimates in the upcoming June 6 Democratic primary, an additional 150 voters likely to vote in the Democratic primary were interviewed in a separate augmented sample, bringing the total Democratic primary likely voter sample to 501. These additional voters were randomly sampled from a statewide list of registered voters who were then screened for their likely participation in the Democratic primary.

Results from both the main sample and the augmented sample were weighted to conform to Field Poll estimates of the state's registered voter population.

According to statistical theory, 95% of the time results from the overall sample of likely voters in the general election have a sampling error of +/- 3.8 percentage points, while results from the combined Democratic primary sample of likely voters 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

ASKED OF LIKELY VOTERS IN DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY:

Two of the candidates in the June Democratic primary election for Governor are (NAMES AND TITLES OF CANDIDATES READ IN RANDOM ORDER). If the election were being held today, for whom would you vote for Governor? (SEE RELEASE FOR CANDIDATES READ)

ASKED OF LIKELY VOTERS IN NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTION:

I am going to read the names of some of the candidates for Governor this year. As I read each name, please tell me whether your opinion of that person is favorable, unfavorable or whether you don't know enough about that person to have an opinion. (NAMES AND TITLES READ IN RANDOM ORDER) Is your opinion of _____ favorable or unfavorable? (SEE RELEASE FOR CANDIDATES READ)

I am going to read some possible match-ups between the leading Democratic and Republican candidates for Governor in this year's November general election. For each pairing, please tell me which candidate you would vote for if the election for Governor were being held today. (PAIRS READ IN RANDOM ORDER) If these were the candidates for Governor in the November general election, for whom would you vote if the election were being held today? (SEE RELEASE FOR PAIRINGS)