

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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Health-Related Propositions:

SUPPORT FOR PROP. 71, STEM CELL RESEARCH BOND, CONTINUES TO GROW. VOTERS MOVING TO THE NO SIDE ON PROP. 72, HEALTH INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS.

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by Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

In next Tuesday's election, California voters will be asked to decide the fate of five wide-ranging health-related measures. Of the five, Proposition 71 (Stem Cell Research Bonds) and Proposition 72 (Health Insurance Requirements) are generating the most voter attention and interest.

In its final pre-election survey, *The Field Poll* finds that voter support for Prop. 71 has grown to where 54% of likely voters now intend to vote Yes, while 37% are on the No side. Last August voter opinions on Prop. 71 were more evenly divided (45% Yes and 42% No).

The reverse situation is seen with regard to Proposition 72. In August the measure led by a comfortable 48% to 31% margin. However, the latest survey shows that the proportion of voters intending to vote No has caught up to and now appears to exceed those intending to vote Yes – 42% to 41%.

Three other health-related propositions will appear on the ballot. Voter sentiments on Proposition 67 (Emergency Medical Services, Telephone Surcharge) continue to be more negative than positive. On the other hand, voters remain strongly supportive of Proposition 63 (Mental Health Services Expansion, Tax on Personal Income Above \$1 Million) and Proposition 61 (Children's Hospital Bond).

These are the findings from the final pre-election *Field Poll* conducted October 21-27 among a random sample of 1,086 likely voters statewide.

Proposition 71 (Stem Cell Research Bonds)

Support for Prop. 71 has grown over the past three months, while opposition has declined. In August Prop. 71 led by a narrow three-point margin, while in late-September this lead grew to seven points. In the current poll, voters are backing the measure by seventeen points (54% to 37%).

There are clear partisan differences of opinion regarding Prop. 71. Democrats and supporters of John Kerry for President are overwhelmingly supportive. On the other hand, Republicans and those favoring George W. Bush's re-election stand opposed.

While men are about evenly divided on the issue (47% Yes and 45% No), women support it greater than two to one (61% to 30%).

There are also clear differences of opinion relating to a voter's religious affiliation. Protestants oppose the initiative by seven points, and those who consider themselves "born-again" are even more strongly against the measure. By contrast, Catholics, voters affiliated with other non-Christian religions, as well as those with no religious preference are strongly supportive.

One other indication of the growing tide of support for Prop. 71 relates to how voters who had heard of the initiative prior to being read its official ballot summary are deciding. Among these voters, which now include over eight in ten of the probable electorate (83%), it leads by twenty-three points (58% to 35%).

Table 1
Voter preferences regarding Proposition 71,
the Stem Cell Research, Funding, Bonds initiative
(among likely voters)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Late October	54%	37	9
Late September	46%	39	15
August	45%	42	13
<u>Party registration</u>			
Democrats	72%	18	10
Republicans	32%	61	7
Non-partisans/others	53%	38	9
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	47%	45	8
Female	61%	30	9
<u>Religion</u>			
Protestant	43%	50	10
"Born Again" Christian	37%	56	7
Catholic	61%	28	11
Other religions	64%	28	8
No religious preference	63%	25	12
<u>Presidential preference</u>			
Kerry voter	73%	17	10
Bush voter	33%	60	7
<u>Prior awareness of Prop. 71</u>			
Yes, have heard	58%	35	7
No, have not	33%	49	18

Note: subgroup percentages are from the late October survey.

Why voters are intending to vote Yes or No on Prop. 71

Two chief reasons continue to be motivating voters to support Prop. 71. They are: “we need more medical research/believe in medical advances” (48%) and “to find cures for disease/to help treat people and save lives” (44%).

Those who are opposed to Prop. 71 cite a wide array of reasons, although none is cited by more than one in four No voters. They include: “it’s too expensive/state can’t afford it, creates too much debt/oppose new bonds,” “oppose retrieving stem cells from embryos, aborted fetuses/am pro-life anti abortion,” and “it’s immoral, unethical/scientists shouldn’t be playing God.”

Table 2		
What are some of the reasons why you intend to vote <u>Yes</u> to approve Prop. 71? (among likely voters intending to vote Yes)		
	<u>Late Oct.</u>	<u>Late Sept.</u>
We need more medical research/believe in medical advances	48%	56%
To find cures for diseases/to help treat people and save lives	44	40
Will benefit all mankind/improve the human condition	8	6
Will help a family member, others I know who are afflicted	8	6
Will make California a leader in bio-technology, medical research, will benefit the state’s economy	3	6
Oppose the federal government limiting, interfering in scientific research/should not be tied up in politics, religion	2	6
If federal government refuses to fund this, the state should	1	1
Other mentions	3	5
Don’t know / no answer	5	3

Note: Percentages add to more than 100% due to multiple mentions.

Table 3
What are some of the reasons why you intend to vote No to oppose Prop. 71?
(among likely voters intending to vote No)

	<u>Late</u> <u>Oct.</u>	<u>Late</u> <u>Sept.</u>
It's too expensive/state can't afford it/creates too much debt/oppose new bonds	24%	20%
Oppose retrieving stem cells from embryos, aborted fetuses/am pro-life/anti-abortion	23	26
It's immoral, unethical/scientists shouldn't be playing God/violates God's law	21	10
Oppose using public, tax money for this/let private industry pay for this	12	13
The federal government should be paying for it, not California	9	4
Its benefits are overblown, exaggerated	7	6
It moves us closer to cloning humans/oppose human cloning	4	13
Creates more government, bureaucracy/government is wasteful, inefficient	1	2
It's poorly written/too vague/not enough safeguards	1	2
Other mentions	5	11
Don't know / no answer	12	9

Note: Percentages add to more than 100% due to multiple mentions.

Proposition 72 (Health Insurance Requirements Referendum)

Voters started out the general election campaign very much in favor of Prop. 72. For example, in May it was favored by a 50% to 28% margin. However, support for Prop. 72 has been receding with each successive poll. In the past few weeks opposition has surged to where 42% are now intending to vote No, while 41% of voters are intending to vote Yes.

The voting subgroups opposed to Prop. 72 include Republicans, men, white non-Hispanics, high income earners and those less concerned about being without health insurance in the future. Supporters include Democrats, non-partisans, ethnic voters, lower income earners and voters with greater concerns about being without health insurance.

Three in four voters (74%) report having already heard of Prop. 72 prior to being read its official ballot summary. These voters are somewhat more likely to be opposed than are voters with no prior awareness.

Table 4
Voter preferences regarding Proposition 72,
the Health Care Coverage Requirements referendum
(among likely voters)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Late October	41%	42	17
Late September	45%	29	26
August	48%	31	21
May	50%	28	22
<u>Party registration</u>			
Democrats	56%	29	15
Republicans	22%	64	14
Non-partisans/others	45%	35	20
<u>Gender</u>			
Men	40%	48	12
Women	43%	38	19
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
White non-Hispanic	39%	46	15
Latino	42%	36	22
Others*	55%	32	13
<u>Union affiliation</u>			
Yes, anyone in household	47%	39	14
No	40%	44	16
<u>Household income</u>			
Less than \$20,000	61%	29	10
\$20,000 - \$39,999	43%	40	17
\$40,000 - \$79,999	44%	42	14
\$80,000 or more	37%	46	17
<u>Concern about not having health insurance in future</u>			
Currently without insurance*	47%	36	17
Insured/very concerned about future	46%	36	18
Insured/somewhat concerned about future	41%	43	16
Insured/not concerned about future	33%	54	13
<u>Prior awareness of Prop. 72</u>			
Yes, have heard	42%	46	12
No, have not	40%	32	28

Note: Subgroup results are from the late October survey.

* Small sample

Why voters are intending to vote Yes or No on Prop. 72

An increasing proportion of No voters, 43% in the current survey, cites the following as a main reason for opposing Prop. 72: “it would increase the cost of doing business in California, makes business less competitive, would be bad for business.” Next most frequently cited is the view that “providing workers health insurance should remain voluntary, a benefit, should not be mandated by government.”

As was found in earlier surveys, the two ranking reasons for supporting Prop. 72 are: “it’s a step in the right direction, will expand insurance coverage” and “employers should share in the costs, do their part, contribute to the health care of their workers.”

Table 5
What are some of the reasons why you intend to vote No to oppose Prop. 72?
(among likely voters intending to vote No)

	<u>Late Oct.</u>	<u>Late Sept.</u>	<u>August</u>
It would increase the cost of doing business in CA, makes business less competitive, bad for business	43%	33%	26%
Providing workers health insurance should remain voluntary, a benefit / should not be mandated by government	24	31	20
It’s not business’ responsibility / people or government (not businesses) should pay for health care	11	7	20
Businesses would pass the costs on to consumers and drive up prices	5	4	6
It will drive up the costs of health care further	3	1	2
Other mentions (less than 2% each)	8	19	20
Don’t know / no answer	14	12	17

Note: Percentages add to more than 100% due to multiple mentions.

** Less than 1/2 of 1%.*

Table 6
What are some of the reasons why you intend to vote Yes to approve Prop. 72?
(among likely voters intending to vote Yes)

	<u>Late Oct.</u>	<u>Late Sept.</u>	<u>August</u>
It's a step in the right direction, will expand insurance coverage	39%	48%	47%
Employers should share in the costs, do their part, contribute to the health care of their workers	36	39	40
It affects me directly, would guarantee coverage for me	15	6	8
Would make health care insurance more affordable to workers / it's too expensive to pay for yourself	7	9	15
It's better than having government pay for health care / would save the state money	7	4	4
It would put all businesses on an equal footing	1	1	1
Other mentions (less than 1% each)	5	4	3
Don't know / no answer	5	5	6

Note: Percentages add to more than 100% due to multiple mentions.

Proposition 67 (Emergency Medical Services/ Phone Surcharge)

In each of its three statewide surveys, *The Field Poll* has found the No side out-polling the Yes side on Prop. 67. In the current survey, that gap has widened, with 50% now intending to vote No and 37% intending to vote Yes.

Republicans and non-partisans oppose Prop. 67 by greater than two to one margins. Democrats are in favor but by just a narrower fourteen-point margin.

Voters with some awareness of the initiative prior to being read its official ballot description are more likely than those with no prior knowledge of the measure to be opposed.

Table 7
Voter preferences regarding Proposition 67, the
Emergency Medical Services, Funding, Telephone Surcharge initiative
(among likely voters)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Late October	37%	50	13
Late September	37%	46	17
August	37%	47	16
<u>Party registration</u>			
Democrats	50%	36	14
Republicans	26%	63	11
Non-partisans/others	27%	59	14
<u>Prior awareness of Prop. 67</u>			
Yes, have heard	38%	58	4
No, have not	36%	41	23

Note: Subgroup findings are from the late October survey.

Why voters are intending to vote Yes or No on Prop. 67

Two comments are cited most often by opponents of Prop. 67 as their reason for voting No. These are: “oppose adding a surcharge to phone bills” and “it’s another tax increase.”

When Yes voters are asked their reasons for supporting Prop. 67, no single answer predominates. About one in five cite each of the following reasons: “the additional telephone fee is modest,” “emergency services are important, would improve services,” and “emergency services are underfunded.”

Table 8
Reasons why No voters are opposed to Prop. 67
(among likely voters intending to vote No)

	<u>Late Oct.</u>	<u>Late Sept.</u>	<u>August</u>
Oppose adding a surcharge to phone bills, phone bills are already too high	32%	28%	25%
It’s another tax increase, oppose tax increases, already paying too much in taxes	27	20	32
Phone users shouldn’t have to shoulder the costs for health care, find other ways to fund emergency services	13	19	18
Hospitals/doctors already have enough money, they are mismanaged, should spend the money they have more wisely	11	11	14
Very little would go to fund emergency services, the money wouldn’t go where it’s supposed to	10	4	4
Oppose paying for the health care costs of people who don’t have insurance, illegal immigrants	3	14	10
Other reasons (less than 2% each)	4	15	10
Don’t know/no answer	14	8	5

Note: Percentages add to more than 100% due to multiple mentions.

Table 9
Reasons why Yes voters are supporting Prop. 67
(among likely voters intending to vote Yes)

	Late Oct.	Late Sept.	August
The additional telephone fee is modest/would not cost much	22%	13%	7%
Emergency services are important, will provide better emergency room services	19	22	24
Emergency services are underfunded, they need more money	19	28	21
It would help the people who are unable to pay for care, the uninsured, poor people	14	18	15
Doctors, emergency room personnel should be fairly reimbursed, compensated	13	13	16
It's needed, worth it	7	7	6
To improve the 911 system	5	6	4
Will improve the quality of the health care system	3	8	9
Other reasons (less than 1% each)	1	7	5
Don't know/no answer	15	12	10

Note: Percentages add to more than 100% due to multiple mentions.

Proposition 63 (Mental Health Services/Millionaires' Tax)

Voters continue to show strong support for Prop. 63. At present, 56% say they are poised to vote Yes, while 31% are intending to vote No.

Democrats are strongly supportive 72% to 12%. Non-partisans are also in favor 57% to 32%. On the other hand, Republicans are opposed 53% to 36%.

Table 10
Voter preferences regarding Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Expansion, Tax on Personal Income Above \$1 Million initiative
(among likely voters)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Late October	56%	31	13
Late September	57%	31	12
August	59%	29	12
<u>Party registration</u>			
Democrats	72%	12	16
Republicans	36%	53	11
Non-partisans/others	57%	32	11
<u>Prior awareness of Prop. 63</u>			
Yes, have heard	58%	35	7
No, have not	54%	27	19

Note: Subgroup findings are from the late October survey.

Proposition 61 (Children’s Hospital Bonds)

This measure was initially favored in an early August *Field Poll*, and since then its support has grown to a nearly two to one margin in the current survey.

Democrats strongly support the bond measure, while Republicans are narrowly opposed. Non-partisans favor it by sixteen points.

Table 8
Voter preferences regarding Proposition 61,
the Children’s Hospital Projects, Grant Program Bond Act
(among likely voters)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Late October	54%	29	17
Late September	46%	35	19
August	47%	31	22
<u>Party</u>			
Democrats	69%	14	17
Republicans	39%	46	15
Non-partisans/others	49%	33	18
<u>Prior awareness of Prop. 61</u>			
Yes, have heard	57%	31	12
No, have not	50%	27	23

Note: Subgroup findings are from the late October survey.

Throughout the 2004 general election campaign, The Field Poll expanded its coverage of health-related statewide ballot propositions as part of the California HealthCare Foundation’s HealthVote2004 project. HealthVote2004 is aimed at providing voters with facts and non-partisan analysis about each health-related ballot measure facing California voters in this election. More information can be found at www.healthvote2004.org.

Information About The Survey

Sample Details

The findings in this report are based on interviews conducted among a random sample of 1,086 Californians likely to vote in the November general election. Interviews were conducted by telephone in English and Spanish October 21-27, 2004. Sampling was carried out using a random digit dial methodology, which gives all voters, including those whose phone number is listed or unlisted, an equal chance of being contacted. Up to six attempts were made to reach a randomly selected voter at each number dialed. After the completion of interviewing, the overall registered voter sample was weighted to *Field Poll* estimates of the state’s total registered voter population. In order to cover a broad range of issues and still minimize vote fatigue, interviewing for the ballot propositions was divided into two approximately equal-sized subsamples of 534 and 552 voters each.

According to statistical theory, the overall results for each proposition have a sampling error of +/- 4.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. These are other possible sources of error in any survey in addition to sampling variability. Different results could occur because of differences in question wording, sequencing or through omissions or errors in sampling, interviewing or data processing. Extensive efforts were made to minimize such potential errors.

Questions Asked

Have you seen, read or heard anything about Proposition 61, which would authorize bonds for children's hospital projects?

Proposition 61 is the "Children's Hospital Projects, Grant Program Bond Act." It authorizes 750 million dollars in general obligation bonds for grants to eligible children's hospitals for construction, expansion, remodeling, renovation, furnishing and equipping children's hospitals. Fiscal impact: State costs of about 1.5 billion dollars over 30 years to pay off both the principal and interest costs of the bonds. Payments of about 50 million dollars per year. If the election were being held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 61?

Have you seen, read or heard anything about Proposition 63, having to do with expanded funding of mental health services and a tax on incomes above 1 million dollars?

Proposition 63 is the "Mental Health Services Expansion, Funding; Tax on Personal Incomes Above 1 Million Dollars" initiative. It establishes a 1 percent tax on taxable personal income above 1 million dollars to fund expanded health services for mentally ill children, adults and seniors. Fiscal impact: Additional state revenues of about 800 million dollars annually by 2006-2007, with comparable annual increases in total state and county expenditures for the expansion of mental health programs. If the election were being held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 63?

Have you seen, read or heard anything about Proposition 67, which provides additional funding for emergency medical services through a surcharge to telephone bills?

Proposition 67 is the "Emergency Medical Services, Funding, Telephone Surcharge" initiative. It increases the telephone surcharge and allocates other funds for emergency room physicians, hospital emergency rooms, community clinics, emergency personnel training and equipment, and the 9-1-1 telephone system. Fiscal impact: Increased state revenues of about 500 million dollars annually to reimburse physicians and hospitals for uncompensated emergency medical services and other specified purposes. If the election were being held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 67?

IF YES: What are some of the reasons why you intend to vote yes to approve Prop. 67? Any other reasons?

IF NO: What are some of the reasons why you intend to vote no to reject Prop. 67? Any other reasons?

Proposition 71 is the "Stem Cell Research, Funding, Bonds" initiative. It establishes a "California Institute for Regenerative Medicine" to regulate and fund stem cell research and establishes a constitutional right to conduct such research and an oversight committee. It prohibits funding of human reproductive cloning research. Fiscal impact: State costs of about 6 billion dollars over 30 years to pay off both the principal and interest on the bonds. State payments averaging 200 million dollars per year. If the election were being held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 71?

IF YES: What are some of the reasons why you intend to vote yes to approve Prop. 71? Any other reasons?

IF NO: What are some of the reasons why you intend to vote no to reject Prop. 71? Any other reasons?

Proposition 72 is the Health Care Coverage Requirements Referendum. A "Yes" vote approves and a "No" vote rejects legislation requiring health care coverage for employees working for large and medium sized employers. Fiscal impact: Significant expenditures fully offset, mainly by employer fees, for a state program to purchase private health insurance coverage. Significant county health program savings. Significant public employer health coverage costs and significant net state revenue losses. If the vote were being held today, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject Proposition 72?

IF YES: What are some of the reasons why you intend to vote yes to approve Prop. 72? Any other reasons?

IF NO: What are some of the reasons why you intend to vote no to reject Prop. 72? Any other reasons?