

# 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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**CALIFORNIA'S DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL  
PRIMARY TIGHTENING. CLINTON'S LEAD  
OVER SANDERS DECLINES TO TWO POINTS.  
STATE REPUBLICANS APPEAR TO BE  
WARMING TO TRUMP'S CANDIDACY.**

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By Mark DiCamillo, Director, *The Field Poll*

The final pre-election *Field Poll*, completed one week before California's June 7 primary, finds 45% of likely voters in the Democratic presidential race supporting Hillary Clinton and 43% favoring Bernie Sanders. This compares to an eleven-point Clinton advantage in a January *Field Poll* and a six-point lead in early April.

While it is a truism that turnout is a key factor in determining who will win any close election, it is especially true in this race. This is because there are unusually wide differences in preferences across many key subgroups of the Democratic presidential primary electorate, and even modest changes in the relative sizes of each subgroup could significantly alter the standings. The widest differences are generational, with Sanders the overwhelming choice of voters under age 30 and Clinton preferred by a two-to-one margin among Democratic primary voters age 65 or older. There are also big differences between registered Democrats, who favor Clinton by nine points, and non-partisans intending to vote in the Democratic presidential primary, who are now backing Sanders two to one.

On the Republican side, 60% of this state's GOP voters are now intending to vote for Donald Trump in California's Republican presidential primary. In addition, an increasing proportion of the state's likely GOP electorate now say they have a favorable opinion of Trump.

While Trump appears to be winning over more of the state's Republican voters, he still has a long way to go to become competitive in November among the overall California electorate. When Trump is paired against Clinton or Sanders in general election trial heats, *The Field Poll* finds both Democrats preferred by large margins, with Clinton besting Trump by 19 points and Sanders leading by 29 points.

## California's Democratic presidential primary tightening

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The latest poll is the sixth in which *The Field Poll* has pitted Clinton against Sanders as possible candidates in California's Democratic presidential primary election. During the first two surveys, completed in February and May of last year, Clinton held huge leads over Sanders. However, Clinton's lead diminished considerably during the late summer and fall, as the field of potential candidates winnowed and the Sanders campaign began to pick up steam. Since then, support for Clinton has stagnated and now stands at 45%. Over this same period, support for Sanders has increased, and he is now winning the votes of 43% of the likely electorate.

Table 1 Trend of preferences for the Democratic presidential nomination (among likely voters in California's Democratic primary)						
	Late May 2016	April 2016	January 2016	October 2015	May 2015	February 2015
Hillary Clinton	45%	47%	46%	47%	66%	73%
Bernie Sanders	43	41	35	35	9	10
Undecided/others	12	12	19	17	23	14

*Note: In the February and May 2015 polls, other potential Democratic presidential candidates were included in addition to Clinton and Sanders. In these polls, voters supporting other candidates were allocated to Clinton or Sanders based on their second-choice preferences.*

## Wide differences in preferences across subgroups of the likely Democratic primary electorate

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The poll finds big differences in preferences between Clinton and Sanders across a number of key segments of the likely Democratic primary electorate. The largest differences are generational. The poll finds Sanders supported by a five-to-one margin among voters under age 30 and Clinton backed two-to-one among those age 65 or older. While there is also a significant gender gap in voter preferences, with Clinton leading among women and Sanders favored by men, the generational divide is also on display among voters of both sexes. Clinton is the clear leader among both male and female voters age 40 or older, while Sanders is the overwhelming choice of both men and women under age 40.

The turnout of the Democratic primary by party will also play a role in determining the outcome. While Clinton leads by nine points among registered Democrats, Sanders is preferred two to one among non-partisans planning to vote in the Democratic presidential primary. Regionally, Clinton receives her strongest support among voters in Los Angeles County and in the inland regions of the Central Valley and Sierra mountains. On the other hand, Sanders does best among voters in the San Francisco Bay Area or those living along the North or Central coasts.

*The Field Poll* estimates that about two-thirds of the votes in this year's presidential primary will be cast early or by mail. In fact, in this survey 23% of the likely voters interviewed had already voted early or by mail. Among these early voters Clinton leads Sanders by nine points. However, among the 77% of likely voters who had not yet to cast a ballot, 45% support Sanders and 44% back Clinton.

**Table 2**  
**Trend of preferences in California's June 2016 Democratic primary for president – by subgroup**  
**(among likely voters in California's Democratic presidential primary)**

	Late May 2016			April 2016		
	Clinton	Sanders	Undec./ NR <sup>†</sup>	Clinton	Sanders	Undec./ NR <sup>†</sup>
<b>Total likely voters</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Party registration</b>						
(.79) Democrat	49%	40	11	50%	39	11
(.21) Non-partisan/no party preference	27%	54	19	39%	49	12
<b>Type of voter</b>						
(.23) Already voted	47%	38	15	N/A	N/A	N/A
(.77) Had not yet voted, but likely to	44%	45	11	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Age</b>						
(.17) 18-29*	15%	75	10	18%	77	5
(.14) 30-39*	33%	60	7	31%	56	13
(.17) 40-49*	49%	40	11	51%	39	10
(.27) 50-64	56%	31	13	54%	34	12
(.25) 65 or older	56%	28	16	64%	23	13
(.14) First-time voter*	21%	60	19	38%	59	3
<b>Gender</b>						
(.43) Male	39%	48	13	40%	48	12
(.14) Under age 40*	19%	71	10	17%	72	11
(.29) Age 40 and older*	49%	36	15	51%	38	11
(.57) Female	49%	40	11	53%	36	11
(.16) Under age 40*	27%	66	7	32%	59	9
(.41) Age 40 and older	57%	29	14	61%	27	12
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>						
(.56) White non-Hispanic	44%	43	13	45%	43	12
(.26) Latino	46%	42	12	49%	42	9
(.09) African American*	57%	36	7	64%	25	11
(.11) Asian American/other*	34%	47	19	43%	44	13
<b>Household income</b>						
(.40) Less than \$60,000	40%	49	11	46%	45	9
(.21) \$60,000–\$99,999	47%	44	9	46%	45	9
(.28) \$100,000 or more	50%	38	12	51%	39	10
<b>Tenure</b>						
(.55) Homeowner	48%	41	11	51%	37	12
(.45) Renter/other	40%	46	14	42%	50	8
<b>Marital status</b>						
(.23) Single/never married	34%	58	8	35%	55	10
(.58) Married/live together	46%	40	14	50%	40	10
(.19) Widow/separated/divorced	54%	35	11	57%	30	13
<b>Region</b>						
(.28) Los Angeles County	50%	41	9	51%	41	8
(.26) Other Southern California	43%	47	10	44%	44	12
(.31) SF Bay Area/North or Central Coast	41%	47	12	49%	46	5
(.15) Central Valley/Sierras*	47%	33	20	45%	30	25

\* Small sample base. N/A = Not asked. † Undecided/Not reported.  
Note: Voters may report being of multiple races.

### **Greater enthusiasm for Sanders than Clinton among backers of each candidate**

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The poll finds significantly greater enthusiasm for Sanders than for Clinton among voters backing each candidate. Nearly two in three of those currently backing Sanders (65%) say they are enthusiastic in their support of his candidacy. By comparison, less than half (45%) of Clinton supporters say this.

<b>Table 3</b> <b>Stated enthusiasm of vote support for Clinton and Sanders among their backers</b> <b>(among likely voters supporting Clinton or Sanders in the Democratic Primary)</b>		
	<b>Clinton voters</b>	<b>Sanders voters</b>
Enthusiastic	45%	65%
Satisfied	47	30
Dissatisfied/upset	8	5

### **Clinton's image rating among Democratic primary voters has declined**

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While both Democratic contenders are viewed favorably by the likely Democratic primary electorate, more have a positive opinion of Sanders (76%) than say this Clinton (64%). This is a relatively new development and is due to a decline in the proportion of likely Democratic primary voters who have a favorable opinion of Clinton over the past four months.

<b>Table 4</b> <b>Trend of image ratings of Clinton and Sanders</b> <b>(among likely voters in California's Democratic presidential primary)</b>			
	<b>Late May 2016</b>	<b>April 2016</b>	<b>January 2016</b>
<b>Hillary Clinton</b>			
Favorable	64%	70%	74%
Unfavorable	30	27	22
No opinion	6	3	4
<b>Bernie Sanders</b>			
Favorable	76%	75%	76%
Unfavorable	17	16	12
No opinion	7	9	12

### **More California Republicans are warming to Trump's candidacy**

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The poll also finds that 60% of the state's Republicans likely to vote in the June primary say they'll be casting their ballots for Trump, while 31% say they'll vote for one of the other Republicans on the ballot. Another 9% are undecided.

In addition, an increasing proportion of state's GOP voters reports having a favorable opinion of Trump. At present, 60% of the Republican electorate now feel this way, while 35% view him negatively. This is a more positive assessment than the views of the state's Republican voters in each of the last two *Field Polls* conducted earlier this year.

<b>Table 6</b>			
<b>Trend of Republican voter image ratings of Trump (among likely GOP voters in California's Republican presidential primary)</b>			
	<b>Late May 2016</b>	<b>April 2016</b>	<b>January 2016</b>
Favorable	60%	53%	51%
Unfavorable	35	43	45
No opinion	5	4	4

**Both Clinton and Sanders hold big leads over Trump in California in the fall**

While Trump has won over more of the state's GOP voters, he still has a long way to go to become competitive in the November general election among the overall California electorate. When Trump is paired against either Clinton or Sanders in general election trial heats, he trails both Democrats by large margins. Against Clinton, Trump trails by nineteen points (53% to 34%). When paired against Sanders he trails by an even larger twenty-nine points (60% to 31%)

<b>Table 7</b>				
<b>Voter preferences when pairing Republican Donald Trump against Democrats Clinton or Sanders in the November general election (among California likely voters)</b>				
	<b>Total statewide</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Republicans</b>	<b>No party preference/ others</b>
<b>Clinton vs. Trump</b>				
Clinton	53%	83%	12%	65%
Trump	34	8	74	15
Undecided	13	9	14	20
<b>Sanders vs. Trump</b>				
Sanders	60%	88%	20%	73%
Trump	31	6	69	17
Undecided	9	6	11	10

## Information About the Survey

### Methodological Details

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The findings in this report come from a *Field Poll* survey completed May 26-31 among 1,002 likely voters in California, of whom 571 are considered likely to vote in the Democratic presidential primary and 351 are likely voters in the Republican primary.

Interviews were administered by telephone in English and Spanish by live professionally trained interviewers calling from the Davis Research central location call center in Calabasas. Individual voters were sampled at random from listings derived from the statewide voter registration rolls. Once a voter's name and telephone number had been selected, interviews were attempted with voters on their landline or cell phone. In this survey, 581 voters were interviewed on their cell phone, and 421 were interviewed on a landline or other type of telephone.

Up to four attempts were made to reach, screen and interview each randomly selected voter on different days and times of day during the interviewing period. After the completion of interviewing, the sample was weighted to align it to demographic and geographic characteristics of the state's 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 total likely voter sample is  $\pm 3.2$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level,  $\pm 4.1$  percentage points for results from the likely Democratic presidential primary sample and  $\pm 5.4$  percentage points for the likely Republican primary sample. These estimates are based on survey findings in the middle of the sampling distribution (i.e., results at or near 50%). Percentages at or near either end of the 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. 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

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(ASKED OF DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY VOTERS WHO HAD ALREADY VOTED) In California's Democratic primary for President, for whom did you vote – (NAMES AND PARTIES OF CANDIDATES READ IN RANDOM ORDER)?

(ASKED OF LIKELY DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY VOTERS WHO HAD NOT YET VOTED) If California's Democratic primary for President were being held today, for whom would you vote – (NAMES AND PARTIES OF CANDIDATES READ IN RANDOM ORDER)?

(ASKED OF EACH CANDIDATE'S SUPPORTERS) Which of the following best describes your support for (Hillary Clinton) (Bernie Sanders) as the Democratic Party's nominee for President – enthusiastic, satisfied but not enthusiastic, dissatisfied but not upset, or upset?

(ASKED OF ALL DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY VOTERS) Generally speaking, is your opinion of (Hillary Clinton) (Bernie Sanders) favorable or unfavorable?

(ASKED OF REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY VOTERS WHO HAD ALREADY VOTED) In California's Republican primary for President, for whom did you vote – (NAMES AND PARTIES OF CANDIDATES READ IN RANDOM ORDER) or someone else?

(ASKED OF LIKELY REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY VOTERS WHO HAD NOT YET VOTED) If California's Republican primary for President were being held today, for whom would you vote – (NAMES AND PARTIES OF CANDIDATES READ IN RANDOM ORDER) or someone else?

(ASKED OF ALL REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY VOTERS) Generally speaking, is your opinion of Donald Trump favorable or unfavorable?

(ASKED OF ALL LIKELY VOTERS IN CALIFORNIA) If the November general election for President were being held today and the candidates were Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Hillary Clinton, for whom would you vote – Trump or Clinton?

(ASKED OF ALL LIKELY VOTERS IN CALIFORNIA) Suppose the candidates in the November general election for President were Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Bernie Sanders. If the November general election for President were being held today, for whom would you vote – Trump or Sanders?