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Newsom and Cox now the clear leaders in California's top two primary election for governor.

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Less than a week before California holds its primary election, a new *Berkeley IGS Poll* finds Democrat Gavin Newsom and Republican John Cox outdistancing the large field of twenty-seven candidates running in the gubernatorial primary. The latest survey finds Newsom holding a commanding lead, with 33% of the preferences of likely voters and Cox in second, at 20%. Democrat Antonio Villaraigosa and Republican Travis Allen trail, receiving 13% and 12% of the vote, respectively. The two candidates with the most votes in the primary, regardless of party, square off against one another in the November general election.

The preferences of likely voters in the governor's race are highly partisan. The poll finds Democratic candidates receiving an aggregate 89% of the preferences of likely Democrats voters, with Newsom receiving the dominant share (50%). Similarly, Republican candidates are receiving an aggregate 86% of the GOP vote, with 53% going to Cox. The views that partisans have of the two poll leaders are also quite positive, with 68% of Democrats holding a favorable opinion of Newsom and 64% of Republicans voicing high regard for Cox.

The poll finds Newsom and Cox also holding large leads among voters who say they have already voted in the primary. According to a Political Data, Inc. (PDI) analysis of voters who, according to official county records had already cast ballots in the primary, 23% of the likely voters surveyed were confirmed to have already voted.   The poll finds that among these early voters 38% say they cast their ballot for Newsom, while 23% voted for Cox. Allen was a distant third with 14%, and none of the other contenders was receiving double-digit support from these voters.

The latest *Berkeley IGS Poll* was completed online May 22-28, 2018 among a statewide random sample of 2,106 likely voters in English and Spanish. Voters were drawn from the state voter rolls by PDI, who is partnering with the *Berkeley IGS Poll* in its pre-election polling this year.

Newsom and Cox now the clear leaders in the gubernatorial primary

Newsom has been the leader in each of the five statewide gubernatorial polls conducted by the *Berkeley IGS Poll* over the past year, and the percentage of voters backing him has increased with each poll. His current 33% support compares to 30% in April, 26% in December and 22% last May. Voter support for Cox has been slower to develop, but has increased significantly over the past two months. His current 20% preference percentage compares to 18% in April, and is up from 9%-10% in each of three *Berkeley IGS Polls* conducted last year.

While the poll finds that Villaraigosa has increased his standing from 9% to 13% over the past month, he remains far off the pace. Voter support for Allen appears to have stalled, with 12% of likely voters now favoring his candidacy, down from 16% in April.

Table 1
Trend of voter preferences in the primary election for governor

	Late May 2018 %	April 2018 %	December 2017 %	September 2017 %	May 2017 %
Gavin Newsom (D)	**33**	30	26	23	22
John Cox (R)	**20**	18	9	10	9
Antonio Villaraigosa (D)	**13**	9	17	12	17
Travis Allen (R)	**12**	16	9	9	NA
John Chiang (D)	**7**	7	5	7	5
Delaine Eastin (D)	**4**	4	5	4	3
All others	**4****	3	1	*	7
Undecided	**7**	13	28	35	37

*   *Less than ½ of 1%   (D) denotes Democrat, (R) denotes Republican.   NA: Not measured*
** *Of the other candidates, eight are Democrats who received a combined total of 3% of voter preferences, three are Republicans receiving less than 1%, while ten other candidates not affiliated with the major parties receive an aggregate 1% of the vote.*

Voter preferences are highly partisan

The preferences of likely voters in the gubernatorial primary are highly partisan. The latest poll finds Democratic candidates receiving an aggregate 89% of likely Democratic voter preferences, with Newsom receiving 50% of their vote support. Newsom also polls strongly among liberals (56%) and voters living in his home region of the San Francisco Bay Area (47%).

Similarly, Republican candidates receive an aggregate of 86% of GOP likely voter preferences, with Cox receiving 53% and Allen 32%. Cox receives the backing of 50% conservative voters. Allen also does well among conservative, with 31% of their support. Villaraigosa does best among Latino voters (32%).

The poll also finds Newsom and Cox holding large leads over the rest of the field among voters who say they have already voted in the primary. Among voters who report having already cast their ballots, 38% say they voted for Newsom and 23% voted for Cox. Allen is a distant third with 14% and none of the other candidates receive double-digit support among these voters

Table 2
Likely voter preferences in the primary election for governor
across major voter subgroups in late May 2018

	Newsom (D) %	Cox (R) %	Villar-aigosa (D) %	Allen (R) %	Chiang (D) %	Eastin (D) %	Other/ undec. %
Total likely voters	**33**	**20**	**13**	**12**	**7**	**4**	**11**
Voting method							
Already voted early	38	23	9	14	8	3	5
Will vote by mail	32	19	15	10	8	4	12
Will vote at voting precinct	29	18	13	14	6	4	16
Party registration							
Democrats	50	1	20	2	9	6	12
Republicans	2	53	4	32	2	**	7
No Party Pref/others	33	18	9	10	11	3	16
Political ideology							
Conservative	4	50	7	31	3	**	5
Moderate	30	18	16	11	11	2	12
Liberal	56	**	16	**	12	8	12
Area							
Coastal counties	37	19	12	9	8	4	11
Inland counties	24	20	16	20	7	4	9
Region							
Los Angeles County	35	16	18	6	10	4	11
South Coast	26	27	10	12	9	1	15
Other Southern California	23	20	19	21	7	3	7
Central Valley	25	20	13	18	8	5	11
San Francisco Bay Area	47	16	7	7	5	6	12
Other Northern California	33	25	12	14	6	4	6
Gender							
Male	28	25	13	16	7	3	8
Female	36	15	13	9	8	5	14
Race/ethnicity							
White non-Hispanic	36	23	8	13	8	5	7
Latino	22	11	32	9	4	2	20
All others	31	16	11	9	11	2	20
Age							
18-39	30	7	12	14	9	7	23
40-49	35	16	12	14	4	4	15
50-64	35	21	13	12	8	3	8
65 or older	32	29	14	10	7	2	6

*small sample base   ** less than ½ of 1%   (D) denotes Democrat, (R) denotes Republican

Comparing voter image ratings of the major gubernatorial candidates

Newsom is the best known of the gubernatorial candidates and receives the largest proportion of voters offering a favorable opinion of him. Statewide, 81% of likely voters can rate the Lieutenant Governor, with 45% having a favorable impression and 36% unfavorable. Newsom's image profile with voters is highly partisan. Democratic voters hold him in very high regard

(68% favorable vs. 12% unfavorable), while Republicans have an overwhelmingly negative opinion (76% unfavorable vs. 7% favorable).

Only about half of the likely electorate is able to offer an opinion of Cox, but among those who do slightly more view him favorably than unfavorably (26% vs. 23%). Opinions of the Republican businessman are also highly partisan. About three in four GOP voters can offer an opinion of Cox and they view him positively 64% to 12%. By contrast, just one in three Democrats has an opinion of Cox, their opinions are much more negative (28%) than positive (5%).

While most voters are able to offer an assessment of Villaraigosa, more view him negatively (41%) than positively (30%). Only about a third of likely voters can rate Allen, although this increases to 65% among Republicans. Among the minority of likely voters with an opinion of Allen his image profile is 22% to 14% positive.

Table 3
Identification and image ratings of the major gubernatorial candidates
among likely voters in late May

	Total %	Democrats %	Republicans %	No Party Pref/others %
Gavin Newsom, Lt. Governor/ businessman				
Favorable	**45**	68	7	43
Unfavorable	**36**	12	76	35
No opinion	**19**	20	17	22
John Cox, Businessman/taxpayer advocate				
Favorable	**26**	5	64	22
Unfavorable	**23**	28	12	25
No opinion	**51**	67	24	53
Antonio Villaraigosa, Public policy advisor				
Favorable	**30**	45	9	25
Unfavorable	**41**	27	64	42
No opinion	**29**	28	27	33
Travis Allen, CA Assemblyman/businessman				
Favorable	**22**	6	53	19
Unfavorable	**14**	16	12	13
No opinion	**64**	78	35	68
John Chiang, California State Treasurer				
Favorable	**35**	46	15	39
Unfavorable	**17**	7	36	13
No opinion	**48**	47	49	48
Delaine Eastin, Educator/Youth Advocate				
Favorable	**18**	28	6	15
Unfavorable	**12**	4	23	13
No opinion	**70**	68	71	72

About the Survey

The findings in this report are based on a *Berkeley IGS Poll* completed by the Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) at the University of California, Berkeley. The poll was completed online among 2,106 likely voters May 22 - 28, 2018 in English and Spanish by distributing email invitations to stratified random samples of registered voters throughout California. Each email invitation asked the randomly selected voter to participate in a short non-partisan survey conducted by IGS, and were provided with a link to the IGS website where the survey questionnaire was housed. The sample listings of voters and their email addresses were drawn from the state voter rolls by Political Data, Inc., which is collaborating with IGS in its pre-election polling.

During the data processing phase, post-stratification weights were applied to align the larger registered voter sample to a wide range of political and demographic characteristics of the state's overall registered voter population. Likely voters were then identified from these voters, based on their stated intentions about voting in the June primary and their history of voting in past primary elections.

The IGS study director was responsible for overseeing all phases of the research, including the development of the survey questionnaire and email scripts, their translation into Spanish, sample selection, oversight of data collection and processing and the development of the post-stratification weights.

Sampling error estimates applicable to the results of any probability-based survey depend on sample size, the percentage distributions being examined and design effects relating to how the sample was drawn. While estimates of the overall sampling error applicable to the results in this survey are not exact, it is estimated that the maximum sampling error applicable to the results from the likely voter sample is approximately +/- 3.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

Questions Asked

A total of 27 candidates are listed on the state's primary election ballot for governor. **IF ALREADY VOTED IN THE PRIMARY:** For whom did you vote for governor? **IF CONSIDERED LIKELY TO VOTE:** If the election were held today, for whom would you vote for governor? **(NAMES, JOB DESCRIPTIONS, AND PARTY AFFILIATIONS OF THE 27 GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES DISPLAYED TO VOTERS IN RANDOM ORDER)**

Below are the names of some of the candidates for governor. For each, please tell me whether your opinion of that person is favorable, unfavorable or whether you don't know enough about them to say? **(NAMES AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS OF SELECTED CANDIDATES DISPLAYED IN RANDOM ORDER)**

(IF NO PREFERENCE GIVEN FOR GOVERNOR) Thinking again about the state's upcoming primary election for governor. Earlier you didn't indicate your voting preference in the primary election for governor. As of today, if you had to choose, which of the following candidates would you be most likely to vote for governor in the primary election? **(NAMES, OFFICIAL JOB DESCRIPTIONS, AND PARTY AFFILIATIONS OF SELECTED CANDIDATES DISPLAYED IN RANDOM ORDER)**

About the Institute of Governmental Studies
The Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) is an interdisciplinary organized research unit that pursues a vigorous program of research, education, publication and public service.   A component of the University of California (UC) system's flagship Berkeley campus, it is the oldest organized research unit in the UC system and the oldest public policy research center in the state. IGS conducts periodic surveys of California public opinion on matters of politics, public policy and public issues through its *Berkeley IGS Poll,* housed within its newly established Citrin Center for Public Opinion Research. For a complete listing of stories issued by the poll go to https://igs.berkeley.edu/igs-poll/berkeley-igs-poll.