

THE FIELD POLL

THE INDEPENDENT AND NON-PARTISAN SURVEY
OF PUBLIC OPINION ESTABLISHED IN 1947 AS
THE CALIFORNIA POLL BY MERVIN FIELD

Field Research Corporation

601 California Street, Suite 210
San Francisco, CA 94108-2814
(415) 392-5763 FAX: (415) 434-2541
EMAIL: fieldpoll@field.com
www.field.com/fieldpollonline

Release #2531

Release Date: **Friday, April 8, 2016**

CLINTON'S LEAD OVER SANDERS DECLINES TO SIX POINTS IN CALIFORNIA'S DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY. BIG DIFFERENCES IN PREFERENCES ACROSS SUBGROUPS OF THE LIKELY VOTER POPULATION.

IMPORTANT: Contract for this service is subject to revocation if publication or broadcast takes place before release date or if contents are divulged to persons outside of subscriber staff prior to release time. (ISSN 0195-4520)

By Mark DiCamillo, Director, *The Field Poll*

With just two months remaining before California voters will be casting their ballots in the state's Democratic primary for President, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's once commanding lead over Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders has declined to just six points. Clinton is currently the choice of 47% of likely voters in this state's Democratic presidential primary, while 41% now favor Sanders. Clinton's current six-point lead in California is only about half the margins found in each of the last two *Field Polls* conducted in January and October.

The poll finds huge differences in preferences across demographic subgroups of the likely Democratic primary electorate. The widest differences are generational. Sanders is supported by a greater than four-to-one margin among voters age 18-29, while Clinton is favored nearly three to one among Democratic primary voters age 65 or older.

There is also a significant "gender gap" in preferences, with Clinton holding a commanding seventeen-point lead among women, but Sanders preferred by eight points among men.

Big differences are also observed between registered Democrats and the state's non-partisan voters, who are also eligible to participate in California's Democratic presidential primary. Among likely voters who are registered Democrats, Clinton is preferred by eleven points, whereas among non-partisans Sanders holds a ten point advantage.

These differences mean that relatively modest changes in the relative sizes of these voting blocs would have a big impact on each candidate's overall standing statewide. Thus, turnout will play a critical role in the primary.

Clinton's once commanding lead in California has declined to just six points

About a year ago Clinton held a huge 66% to 9% advantage over Sanders in California. Her lead diminished significantly during the late summer and fall as the field of potential candidates winnowed and Sanders' campaign began picking up steam nationally. By October 47% of the state's likely Democratic primary voters favored Clinton, while 35% backed Sanders. Since then, the proportion of likely Democratic primary voters backing Clinton has remained static at 47%, while support for Sanders has increased six points to 41%.

| Table 1 | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Trend of preferences for the Democratic presidential nomination (among likely voters in California's Democratic primary) | | | | | |
| | April 2016 | January 2016 | October 2015 | May 2015 | February 2015 |
| Hillary Clinton | 47% | 46% | 47% | 66% | 73% |
| Bernie Sanders | 41 | 35 | 35 | 9 | 10 |
| Others/undecided | 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.

Very large differences in preferences across subgroups of the Democratic primary electorate

There are huge differences in voting preferences across different demographic subgroups of the California's likely Democratic presidential primary electorate.

Sanders' support is spearheaded by the overwhelming backing of voters under age 30, who prefer the Vermont Senator over Clinton greater than four to one. By contrast, Democratic primary voters age 65 or older prefer Clinton over Sanders nearly three to one.

The race also exhibits a significant gender gap in voting preferences, with Clinton currently preferred among female Democrats by seventeen points and Sanders leading among males by eight points. There are big also generational differences among men and women, with Sanders the clear leader among voters of both sexes among those under age 40, while Clinton is preferred by majorities of men and women age 40 or older.

One of the state's fastest growing voting constituencies, Latinos, are now closely divided in their presidential preferences. The current poll finds 49% of Latinos backing Clinton and 42% supporting Sanders. This represents a narrowing of Clinton's advantage among Latinos from January, when Clinton held an eighteen-point advantage (53% to 35%) over Sanders among Latinos. The current poll also finds a huge generational divide among Latino voters, with 69% of Latinos under age 40 backing Sanders, and 66% of Latinos age 40 or older supporting Clinton.

Big differences are also observed between registered Democrats and the state's non-partisan voters, who are also eligible to vote in California's Democratic presidential primary. Among likely voters who are registered Democrats, Clinton is preferred by eleven points, whereas among non-partisans Sanders holds a ten point advantage.

There are also class differences in preferences. Clinton holds big leads over Sanders among homeowners and voters who live in households with incomes of \$100,000 or more. By contrast, Sanders is leading among renters and runs about even with Clinton among low and moderate-income voters.

These large subgroup differences mean that even modest changes in the relative sizes of these voting constituencies in the primary would have a big impact on each candidate's overall support.

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

| | <u>Clinton</u> | <u>Sanders</u> | <u>Others/ undecided</u> |
|---|----------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| Total likely voters statewide | 47% | 41 | 12 |
| <u>Party registration</u> | | | |
| (.78) Democrat | 50% | 39 | 11 |
| (.22) Non-partisan/no party preference | 39% | 49 | 12 |
| <u>Age</u> | | | |
| (.13) 18-29 | 18% | 77 | 5 |
| (.17) 30-39 | 31% | 56 | 13 |
| (.15) 40-49 | 51% | 39 | 10 |
| (.30) 50-64 | 54% | 34 | 12 |
| (.25) 65 or older | 64% | 23 | 13 |
| (.09) First-time voter* | 38% | 59 | 3 |
| <u>Gender</u> | | | |
| (.44) Male | 40% | 48 | 12 |
| (.14) Under age 40* | 17% | 72 | 11 |
| (.30) Age 40 and older* | 51% | 38 | 11 |
| (.56) Female | 53% | 36 | 11 |
| (.16) Under age 40* | 32% | 59 | 9 |
| (.40) Age 40 and older | 61% | 27 | 12 |
| <u>Race/ethnicity</u> | | | |
| (.59) White non-Hispanic | 45% | 43 | 12 |
| (.16) Under age 40* | 26% | 62 | 12 |
| (.43) Age 40 and older | 51% | 37 | 12 |
| (.26) Latino | 49% | 42 | 9 |
| (.11) Under age 40* | 25% | 69 | 6 |
| (.15) Age 40 and older* | 66% | 24 | 10 |
| (.08) African American* | 64% | 25 | 11 |
| (.09) Asian American/other* | 43% | 44 | 13 |
| <u>Political ideology</u> | | | |
| (.34) Strongly liberal | 44% | 49 | 7 |
| (.64) All others | 49% | 37 | 14 |
| <u>Household income</u> | | | |
| (.37) Less than \$60,000 | 46% | 45 | 9 |
| (.25) \$60,000–\$99,999 | 46% | 45 | 9 |
| (.32) \$100,000 or more | 51% | 39 | 10 |
| <u>Tenure</u> | | | |
| (.63) Homeowner | 51% | 37 | 12 |
| (.37) Renter/other | 42% | 50 | 8 |
| <u>Marital status</u> | | | |
| (.22) Single/never married | 35% | 55 | 10 |
| (.60) Married/live together | 50% | 40 | 10 |
| (.18) Widow/separated/divorced | 57% | 30 | 13 |
| <u>Region</u> | | | |
| (.26) Los Angeles County | 51% | 41 | 8 |
| (.27) Other Southern California | 44% | 44 | 12 |
| (.30) San Francisco Bay Area/North or Central Coast | 49% | 46 | 5 |
| (.17) Central Valley/Sierras | 45% | 30 | 25 |

* Small sample base. Note: Voters can report being of more than one race.

Both Clinton and Sanders are viewed favorably by large majorities of Democratic primary voters

Greater than seven in ten likely voters in California's Democratic presidential primary hold positive views of both Democratic contenders. For Clinton, 70% say they have a favorable impression of her, while 27% offer a negative assessment. Sanders' profile among Democratic primary voters is even more positive, with 75% viewing him favorably and 16% unfavorably.

However, in the current poll Sanders is viewed much more favorably by voters currently backing Clinton, than Clinton is among supporters of Sanders. Clinton backers offer a more than two-to-one positive assessment of Sanders (61% to 26%). By contrast, Sanders' supporters hold mixed views of Clinton, with 50% rating her positively and 47% negatively.

| Table 3 Trend of image ratings of Clinton and Sanders (among likely voters in California's Democratic primary) | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | April 2016 | | | January 2016 | | |
| | Total likely voters | Clinton supporters | Sanders supporters | Total likely voters | Clinton supporters | Sanders supporters |
| Hillary Clinton | | | | | | |
| Favorable | 70% | 98% | 50% | 74% | 99% | 54% |
| Unfavorable | 27 | 2 | 47 | 22 | * | 39 |
| No opinion | 3 | * | 3 | 4 | 1 | 7 |
| Bernie Sanders | | | | | | |
| Favorable | 75% | 61% | 99% | 76% | 71% | 99% |
| Unfavorable | 16 | 26 | 1 | 12 | 12 | * |
| No opinion | 9 | 3 | * | 12 | 17 | 1 |

* Less than 1/2 of 1%.

Sanders is viewed more positively than Clinton among the overall California electorate

When a cross-section of all California voters are asked their impressions of the two Democratic presidential contenders, Sanders possesses a more positive image profile than Clinton. Statewide, 55% of voters say they have a favorable opinion of Sanders, while 35% offer a negative assessment. The electorate is more evenly divided when asked about Clinton, with 47% having a favorable opinion and 48% unfavorable.

Opinions of the two Democrats are highly partisan and ideological, with very large majorities of registered Democrats and liberals viewing each positively, while Republicans and conservatives hold much more negative opinions.

Table 4 following compares how opinions of Clinton and Sanders vary across major demographic and regional subgroups of the state's overall registered voter population.

| Table 4 | | | | |
|--|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Image ratings of Clinton and Sanders among the overall California registered voter population | | | | |
| | Clinton | | Sanders | |
| | Favorable | Unfavorable | Favorable | Unfavorable |
| Total California voters | 47% | 48 | 55% | 35 |
| <u>Party registration</u> | | | | |
| Democrats | 73% | 24 | 73% | 17 |
| Republicans | 12% | 85 | 20% | 70 |
| No party preference/other | 44% | 50 | 63% | 27 |
| <u>Region</u> | | | | |
| Los Angeles County | 55% | 38 | 59% | 32 |
| Other Southern California | 34% | 63 | 47% | 42 |
| San Francisco Bay Area | 62% | 32 | 70% | 21 |
| Central Valley/Sierras | 43% | 54 | 45% | 43 |
| <u>Gender</u> | | | | |
| Male | 40% | 57 | 55% | 37 |
| Female | 54% | 41 | 55% | 33 |
| <u>Race/ethnicity</u> | | | | |
| White non-Hispanic | 40% | 56 | 52% | 39 |
| Latino | 58% | 36 | 59% | 27 |
| African American* | 74% | 18 | 66% | 21 |
| Asian American/other | 49% | 47 | 59% | 32 |
| <u>Nativity</u> | | | | |
| U.S. born | 45% | 51 | 55% | 35 |
| Born outside U.S. | 62% | 33 | 54% | 31 |
| <u>Age</u> | | | | |
| 18-29 | 38% | 50 | 78% | 19 |
| 30-39 | 50% | 47 | 63% | 28 |
| 40-49 | 46% | 52 | 57% | 32 |
| 50-64 | 52% | 43 | 47% | 37 |
| 65 or older | 47% | 51 | 42% | 50 |
| First-time voter | 45% | 48 | 62% | 23 |
| <u>Political ideology</u> | | | | |
| Strongly conservative | 13% | 83 | 20% | 75 |
| Moderately conservative | 19% | 81 | 27% | 52 |
| Middle-of-the-road | 48% | 45 | 54% | 33 |
| Moderately liberal | 74% | 22 | 78% | 12 |
| Strongly liberal | 73% | 26 | 88% | 11 |
| <u>Household income</u> | | | | |
| Under \$20,000* | 56% | 38 | 59% | 21 |
| \$20,000–\$39,999 | 48% | 46 | 53% | 35 |
| \$40,000–\$59,999 | 41% | 56 | 47% | 39 |
| \$60,000–\$99,999 | 45% | 50 | 57% | 35 |
| \$100,000 or more | 47% | 49 | 57% | 37 |

* Small sample base.

Note: Differences between the sum of each candidate's percentages and 100% equal proportion with no opinion.

Information About the Survey

Methodological Details

The findings in this report come from a *Field Poll* completed March 24 – April 4, 2016 among 1,400 registered voters in California, including 584 who are considered likely to vote in the state's June Democratic presidential primary election. The statewide sample of voters interviewed in this survey was augmented among Democrats and no party preference registrants to increase the number of interviews conducted among likely voters in the Democratic primary for President. Image ratings reported in this release are based on a statewide random sample of 800 registered voters.

Interviews were administered by telephone in English and Spanish by live 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 depending on the source of the listing from the voter file and the preference of the voter. In this survey, about two in three of all voters interviewed (63%) complete the survey on their cell phone, while about one-third were interviewed on a landline phone.

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 registered voter sample is ± 3.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level and is ± 4.0 percentage points for the likely Democratic primary voter 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

ASKED OF LIKELY VOTERS IN THE JUNE CALIFORNIA DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY:

I am going to read the names of the candidates running for the Democratic nomination for President. If the June Democratic primary for President in California were being held today, for whom would you vote – (NAMES OF CANDIDATES READ IN RANDOM ORDER) – or someone else?

ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS:

Please tell me whether your opinion of the following Presidential candidates is favorable, unfavorable or whether you don't know enough about that person to have an opinion. (NAMES AND TITLES OF CANDIDATES READ IN RANDOM ORDER) Is your opinion of (NAME) favorable or unfavorable?