

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

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DEMOCRATIC VOTER SUPPORT FOR CLINTON SLIPPING IN CALIFORNIA, AS SUPPORT FOR SANDERS SURGES. WHILE MOST DEMOCRATS THINK A BIDEN CANDIDACY WOULD BE A GOOD THING, JUST 15% WOULD BACK HIM IF HE BECOMES A CANDIDATE.

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By Mark DiCamillo, Director, *The Field Poll*

The latest statewide *Field Poll* finds that fewer than half of likely voters in California's June 2016 Democratic presidential primary (47%) are now intending to support former Secretary of State, U.S. Senator and First Lady Hillary Clinton for President, a decline of nineteen points since May. Over this same period Democratic voter support for Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders has increased nearly four-fold from 9% to 35%.

The poll also shows that fewer Democrats in this state would be enthusiastic were Clinton to become the party's nominee in the fall. Whereas in May nearly half of the state's Democrats (46%) said they would be enthusiastic if Clinton were to become their party's presidential standard-bearer next year, now just 37% feel this way.

By a 63% to 22% margin California's Democratic primary voters think it would be a good thing for their party if Vice President Joe Biden were to become a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination. Despite this, when Biden's name is added to the list of possible Democratic candidates, just 15% of likely voters say they would back him. Biden's presence in the race, however, does change the dynamics of the contest somewhat, by narrowing Clinton's preference lead over Sanders in the state from twelve points to nine points – 40% to 31%.

These are the findings from the latest statewide *Field Poll* conducted by telephone in English and Spanish among this state's likely Democratic primary voters.

Big drop in Clinton's once sizable lead in California's Democratic presidential primary

Earlier this year Clinton was the overwhelming choice of between two-thirds and three-quarters of California Democrats. Now, fewer than half of likely voters in next June's Democratic primary (47%) are supporting her candidacy. Meanwhile, support for Sanders has increased nearly four-fold over the past five months, from 9% to 35%.

Table 1			
Preferences for the Democratic presidential nomination for President (among likely voters in California's June 2016 Democratic primary)			
	October <u>2015</u>	May <u>2015</u>	February <u>2015</u>
Hillary Clinton	47%	66%	73%
Bernie Sanders	35	9	10
Jim Webb	1	2	3
Martin O'Malley	1	*	1
Lincoln Chaffee	*	*	N/A
Other	2	2	2
Undecided	14	21	11

* Less than 1/2 of 1%.

Note: In this table, the voter preferences of prior Field Polls are based on measures excluding Joe Biden and Elizabeth Warren as possible candidates.

Subgroups where Sanders is making the biggest inroads against Clinton

The Democratic constituencies most likely to be backing Sanders include strong liberals, voters under age 40 or who have never married, and non-Hispanic whites. Sanders does less well against Clinton among likely voters in the Central Valley, Latinos and Democratic primary voters who do not identify themselves as strongly liberal in politics.

Table 2			
Preferences in California's June 2016 Democratic primary for president among likely voters in the Democratic primary – by subgroup			
	<u>Clinton</u>	<u>Sanders</u>	<u>Others/ undecided</u>
Total statewide	47%	35	18
<u>Region</u>			
Los Angeles County	49%	33	18
Other Southern California	49%	34	17
Central Valley*	48%	24	28
San Francisco Bay Area	45%	38	17
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	44%	38	18
Female	49%	33	18
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
White non-Hispanic	43%	43	14
Latino	52%	22	26
All others	50%	35	15
<u>Age</u>			
18-39	42%	42	16
40-64	48%	35	17
65 or older	51%	27	22
<u>Marital status</u>			
Married or live together	49%	33	18
Separated/divorced/widow	48%	34	18
Single/never married	42%	42	16
<u>Political ideology</u>			
Strongly liberal	46%	47	7
All others	46%	27	27

* Small sample size.

Nearly two in three Democrats think a Biden candidacy would be a good thing for the party

About two in three likely voters (63%) think it would be a good thing for the Democratic Party if Biden were to become a candidate in the presidential election. Just 22% feel this would be bad for the party, while 16% have no opinion.

Views about this are broad-based and include 65% of Democratic primary voters now supporting Clinton and 68% of those backing Sanders.

Table 3
Would it be a good thing or a bad thing for the Democratic Party if Vice President Joe Biden were to become a candidate for President (among likely voters in California's June 2016 Democratic primary)

	<u>Good thing</u>	<u>Bad thing</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
Total likely voters	63%	22	15
<u>Current voting preference for Democratic nomination</u>			
Hillary Clinton	65%	21	14
Bernie Sanders	68%	22	10
Other/undecided*	49%	26	25

* Small sample base.

Yet, if Biden were to enter the race, he would start with just 15% support in California

Despite the widely held view among the state's Democratic primary voters that Biden's entry into the presidential race would be a good thing, when he is listed as a candidate, the Vice President would begin the race in a distant third, with just 15% of likely voter support. His presence does, however, affect the dynamics of the race somewhat by narrowing Clinton's lead over Sanders from twelve points to nine points – 40% to 31%.

Table 4
Preferences for the Democratic presidential nomination for President if Joe Biden is also included as a candidate (among likely voters in California's June 2016 Democratic primary)

	<u>October 2015</u>	<u>May 2015</u>	<u>February 2015</u>
Hillary Clinton	40%	61%	66%
Bernie Sanders	31	8	10
Joe Biden	15	7	11
Others	2	2	3
Undecided	12	23	15

Note: In this table, the voter preferences of prior Field Polls are based on measures excluding Elizabeth Warren as a possible candidate.

Democratic voter enthusiastic for Clinton as their party's presidential nominee drops

The proportion of likely voters in the state's June 2016 Democratic primary who say they would be enthusiastic were Clinton to become their party's presidential nominee has declined. At present, 37% say they'd be enthusiastic about Clinton as their party's standard bearer, down from 46% who felt this way in May. Another 42% of Democratic voters in the current poll say they would be satisfied should Clinton win the nomination, while 26% would be dissatisfied or upset.

Table 5		
Democratic voter reaction were Clinton to become the Democratic Party's nominee for President (among likely voters in California's Democratic primary)		
	October 2015	May 2015
Enthusiastic	37%	46%
Satisfied	42	38
Dissatisfied/upset	20	10
No opinion	1	6

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Information About The Survey

Methodological Details

The findings come from a *Field Poll* completed September 17-October 4, 2015 among 1,002 registered voters in California, of whom 391 are consider likely to vote in next year's June Democratic presidential primary election.

Interviews were administered by telephone using live interviewers in English and Spanish. 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 787 of the interviews were completed with voters on their cell phones, while 215 were completed on a landline or other phone.

Up to six 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 the proper distribution of voters by race/ethnicity and other demographic, geographic and party registration characteristics of the state's registered 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 Democratic primary voter sample in this report is +/- 5.0 percentage points. 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

I am going to read the names of some of the possible candidates for the Democratic nomination for President next year. If the June Democratic primary for President in California were being held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were (NAMES OF ALL DEMOCRATS READ IN RANDOM ORDER)? Who would be your second choice? (IN TABLE 1 VOTERS FAVORING BIDEN WERE ALLOCATED TO THE OTHER CANDIDATES BASED ON THEIR SECOND CHOICE PREFERENCES)

How would you feel if Hillary Clinton were the 2016 Democratic Party's presidential election nominee – enthusiastic, satisfied but not enthusiastic, dissatisfied but not upset, or upset?

Do you think it would be a good thing or a bad thing for the Democratic Party if Vice President Joe Biden were to become a candidate for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination?