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**CALIFORNIANS BLAME ALL IN SACRAMENTO FOR STATE BUDGET DELAY, MAY FAVOR CHANGING TO 55% THRESHOLD TO PASS BUDGET
 RECORD PESSIMISM ABOUT DIRECTION OF THE STATE; SCHWARZENEGGER APPROVAL RATING NEAR RECORD LOW AS MAY 19TH SPECIAL ELECTION NEARS**

SAN JOSE, APRIL 22 – The Spring 2009 SPRI Omnibus Survey conducted by the Survey and Policy Research Institute at San José State University has found that most Californians blame both political parties and the governor for the recent state budget impasse. When asked who was most to blame for the lengthy delay in passing a state budget earlier this year – Governor Schwarzenegger, Republicans or Democrats in the state legislature -- the most common response from Californians was that the three parties were all equally to blame, volunteered by 41% of respondents. Republicans (20%) and the governor (13%) were seen as somewhat more to blame than Democrats (9%), among those who were willing to single out specific parties.

Opinions on this issue were strongly colored by partisanship, however, with Democrats more likely to blame the governor (18%) and Republicans (25%), and less likely to blame their own party (4%). By the same token, Republicans were more likely to blame Democrats in Sacramento (27%) than the governor (3%) or their own party members (7%). Independent voters resembled Democrats in being more likely to blame Republicans (21%) than Democrats (6%), with just 2% blaming Governor Schwarzenegger.

“This demonstrates just how frustrated Californians are right now with the state budget process as a whole,” stated Survey and Policy Research Institute Research Director Dr. Melinda Jackson, “There is more than enough blame to go around.”

Table 1

As you may know, the California state legislature recently passed a budget to close a projected 42 billion dollar deficit, after more than three months of negotiations. Who do you think was most to blame for the delay in passing the state budget?

	CA Adults	Voters	Democrats	Republicans	Decline to state
Governor Schwarzenegger	13	10	18	3	2
Democrats in state legislature	9	12	4	27	6
Republicans in state legislature	20	18	25	7	21
All equally to blame (vol.)	41	45	39	50	60
Don't know	16	13	14	12	10

SUPPORT FOR 55% THRESHOLD CHANGE DEPENDS ON QUESTION WORDING

One proposed reform measure would change the threshold needed to pass a budget from a two-thirds majority in both houses of the state legislature to a 55% majority. In light of the chronic failures to pass a state budget on schedule, and the current budget crisis, California voters seem more willing to consider this option this year.

In a question-wording experiment, SPRI asked two different versions of this question (each asked of half the respondents). In the first version, respondents were simply asked if they would favor changing the two-thirds majority to 55%. Voters were slightly opposed to this idea, with 48% saying No and 45% saying Yes. Democrats were much more supportive of the proposal (62%) than Republicans (16%), with 50% of Independents saying Yes and 42% saying No.

Table 2
Budget Majority – Version 1

As you may know, California currently requires a two-thirds majority of the state legislature to pass a state budget. Would you favor a constitutional amendment to change the number of votes needed in the California state legislature to pass a state budget from two-thirds to 55%?

	CA Adults	Voters	Democrats	Republicans	Decline to state
Yes	47	45	62	16	50
No	38	48	28	82	42
Don't know	14	3	8	2	8

In the second version of the question, respondents were reminded that California is one of only three states in the country to require a two-thirds majority to pass a state budget, along with Arkansas and Rhode Island. When the question was asked in this way, 47% of voters were in favor of changing to a 55% majority and 41% were opposed. Republicans' opinions were most affected by the question wording, with 25% supporting the change under the second version of the question, compared to only 16% under the first version.

Table 3
Budget Majority – Version 2

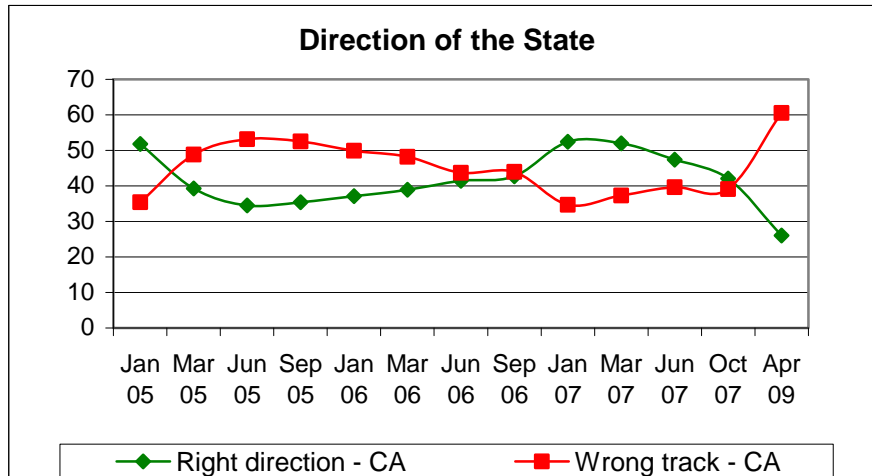
As you may know, California is one of only three states in the country to require a two-thirds majority of the state legislature to pass a state budget. The other two states are Arkansas and Rhode Island. Would you favor a constitutional amendment to change the number of votes needed in the California state legislature to pass a state budget from two-thirds to 55%?

	CA Adults	Voters	Democrats	Republicans	Decline to state
Yes	50	47	60	25	53
No	36	41	26	63	44
Don't know	13	11	13	12	--

RECORD PESSIMISM ABOUT DIRECTION OF THE STATE

The survey also found that Californians are more concerned than ever about the direction the state is heading, with just 26% saying that they think things in California are generally going in the right direction, while 61% think things are seriously off on the wrong track.

This is the most pessimistic assessment of the state's direction that SPRI has recorded, and is substantially more negative than the previous record low rating of 35% right track - 53% wrong track in June and September 2005, leading up to the last statewide special election in the fall of that year.



Source: Survey and Policy Research Institute at San José State University
California Consumer Confidence Surveys

Republican voters are currently the most pessimistic about the direction the state is headed, with 68% saying it is off on the wrong track, compared to 48% of Democrats, and 54% of independents.

Table 4
California Right Track/Wrong Track

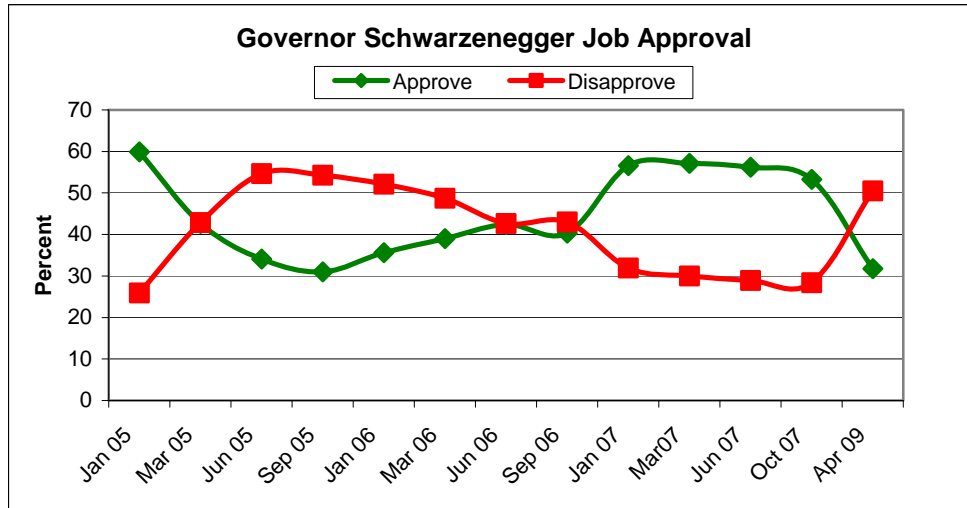
Do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or are they seriously off on the wrong track?

	CA Adults	Voters	Democrats	Republicans	Decline to state
Right Track	26	27	33	18	31
Wrong Track	61	56	48	68	54
Don't know	12	15	17	11	15

"Wow! I've never seen such gloom among perennially optimistic Californians. This bodes ill for incumbent officeholders, as further indicated by the governor's declining approval ratings and the willingness to spread blame around generously for the budget impasse," said San José State University political science professor Terry Christensen, "A new voter revolt could be brewing -- and we could see it in the May 19 vote on the budget propositions."

SCHWARZENEGGER JOB APPROVAL NEAR RECORD LOW HEADING INTO MAY 19TH SPECIAL ELECTION

Governor Schwarzenegger also faces a near-record low job approval rating, with just 32% of Californians saying they approve of the job he is doing as governor, and a 51% majority disapproving. This nearly ties the record low of 31% approval - 54% disapproval for Schwarzenegger recorded by SPRI in September 2005, just before the last statewide special election in which all of the initiatives backed by the governor were voted down.



Source: Survey and Policy Research Institute at San José State University
California Consumer Confidence Surveys

While Democratic voters are most disapproving of the governor (52%), Schwarzenegger also faces disapproval from more than a third of his own party's voters (37%).

"These kind of approval numbers suggest that Governor Schwarzenegger faces an uphill battle in trying to win voter support for the six budget propositions he is pushing for in the May 19th special election," stated SPRI Research Director Dr. Melinda Jackson.

Table 5
Schwarzenegger Job Approval

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling his job as governor?

	CA Adults	Voters	Democrats	Republicans	Decline to state
Approve	32	40	34	46	46
Disapprove	51	45	52	37	40
Don't know	16	13	3	18	10

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The Survey and Policy Research Institute at San José State University conducted the Spring 2009 SPRI Omnibus Survey March 30-April 10, 2009. This telephone survey of 408 California adults was conducted in English and Spanish, and contained questions on several different topics including consumer attitudes, political issues, and environmental attitudes.

Telephone numbers were randomly generated by computer to ensure that both listed and unlisted numbers were included, from all landline exchanges in California. Telephone numbers in the survey sample were called up to four times on different days at different times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. Likely voters are defined as registered voters who report voting most or all of the time.

The sampling error for the total sample is plus or minus 4.85 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. For the subsample of 314 likely voters, the margin of error is plus or minus 5.53 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Political party subgroups have smaller numbers of respondents and higher margins of error. Results for the full sample were statistically weighted by race and gender to match recent U.S. Census estimates of the California population; results for the likely voter sample were weighted by race, gender, and political party to match the state's registered voter population.

Time series questions include results from the SPRI California Consumer Confidence Survey, conducted quarterly from 2005-2007.