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# Clinton, Giuliani leading in California primary contests

## *Edwards and Obama tied; Thompson elbows McCain aside; Bush approval, views on Iraq complicate tasks for candidates*

SAN JOSE, June 25 – With overwhelming support among women and non-white voters, New York Sen. Hillary Clinton holds a commanding lead in the California Democratic Party primary, while former North Carolina Sen. John Edwards and Illinois Sen. Barack Obama are tied in a distant second.

Amid a more divided field, former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani leads in the California Republican Party primary while actor and former Tennessee Sen. Fred Thompson, not yet formally in the race, has edged his way to second place, with a statistically insignificant lead over Arizona Sen. John McCain. Former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney trails far behind.

Meanwhile, President George Bush's approval rating among Californians remains near historic lows, driven by corrosive dissatisfaction with the war in Iraq, a staggering lack of credibility and deep pessimism about the direction the country is headed. For GOP candidates in California, Bush is no asset. And for all candidates, the war in Iraq is a much-regretted reality.

	DEMOCRATIC PARTY PRIMARY				REPUBLICAN PARTY PRIMARY				
	Clinton	Edwards	Obama	Others	Giuliani	Thompson	McCain	Romney	Others
All primary voters	37	15	15	10	25	16	14	5	11
Women	45	8	13	8	21	12	14	6	11
Men	27	24	17	14	29	20	14	6	12
Liberals	39	24	17	7	24	14	24	0	19
Moderates	37	9	16	8	19	7	16	8	16
Conservatives	26	11	8	29	32	25	11	5	6
Whites	32	18	13	12	23	18	13	6	11
Non-Whites	45	12	19	5	30	13	20	0	10
Bay Area	33	14	22	11	25	17	11	3	8
Los Angeles	33	22	13	7	24	17	14	10	12
Other Southern CA	46	13	10	6	22	19	18	5	11
Central Valley	39	11	13	15	35	10	17	2	15
Union HH	38	22	18	9	25	7	11	14	14
Non-union HH	36	14	14	11	25	17	14	4	11
Religious attenders	36	14	17	14	24	20	12	5	11
Non-attenders	37	16	15	8	26	11	15	7	12
18-34	37	15	22	10	17	13	17	4	30
35-54	36	16	15	10	30	13	13	10	6
55+	37	15	12	12	22	20	14	3	12
Democrats/Republicans	37	15	16	9	25	16	14	5	11
Independents	37	15	7	22					No vote in GOP primary

“For presidential candidates trying to capture their party’s nomination and still remain viable in the general election, California voters are offering a word of extreme caution,” said SPRI Director Phil Trounstein. “Two-thirds of the voters here say it was not worth going to war in Iraq, and that includes more than eight in 10 Democrats, more than six in 10 independents and fully half of the Republicans.”

These are some of the findings by the Survey and Policy Research Institute at San Jose State University, which asks a variety of political questions in its quarterly survey of 1,000 California consumers. The June survey identified 663 voters, including 645 likely voters. The margin of error for all voters in +/- 3.8 percentage points and for likely voters it is +/- 3.9 percentage points.

With eight months remaining before the vote Feb. 5, 2008, significant numbers of voters – a fifth of the Democrats and a quarter of the Republicans -- are undecided. And about one in 10 voters in both parties is supporting a candidate other than the leaders..

But early standings in California serve as a signal to campaign contributors and activists who are lining up based, at least in part, on perceptions of candidates’ viability in the largest, most diverse state in the country.

### **Democrats**

In the Democratic primary, Clinton’s powerful lead is rooted in her support among women and non-whites, among whom she is approaching a majority of the vote. Overall, she leads with 37%, compared to 15% each for Edwards and Obama. But among women, Clinton has 45%, compared to 8% for Edwards and 13% for Obama. And among non-white voters she also has 45%, compared to 12% for Edwards and 19% for Obama.

Among men, Clinton, at 27%, has just a 3-point lead over Edwards and a 10-point lead over Obama.

“Clinton is being swept along by her support among women,” said Trounstein. “If Edwards, Obama or any other candidate can peel women away from Clinton, the Democrats could have a competitive race in California. But if Clinton keeps her grasp on women, it’s not going to be much of a contest here.”

Edwards runs best among men, liberals, union households, Los Angeles voters and those with incomes of \$100,000 or more. Obama runs best in the Bay Area and among voters aged 18-34. Edwards also draws more than twice the independents who elect to vote in the Democratic primary than Obama does.

### **Republicans**

In the Republican primary, Giuliani leads with 25%, including 32% among conservatives who comprise about half (49%) of all California Republican voters. It is among this large bloc of GOP voters that Thompson, still officially undeclared, makes his most forceful presence, with 25% compared to just 11% for McCain.

GOP voters who are 55 and older are sharply divided: 22% for Giuliani, 20% for Thompson and 14% for McCain. Likewise, the youngest GOP voters, aged 18-34 are divided 17% for Giuliani and McCain and 13% for Thompson.

Thompson also cuts close to Giuliani among those who attend religious services once a month or more, with 20% compared to Giuliani’s 24%. McCain’s best showing is among liberal, non-white and the youngest Republican voters – a small constituency to draw from.

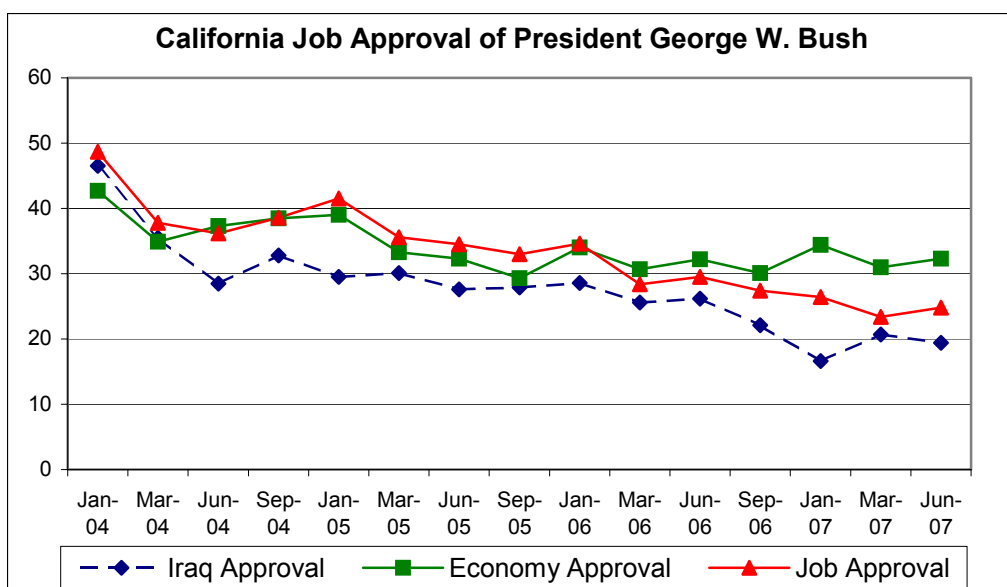
For all of the Republican candidates, President Bush presents a problem. While they cannot afford to distance themselves from him for fear of alienating party loyalists, they cannot embrace him for fear of losing the vast majority of California voters who hold Bush in contempt.

## President Bush and Iraq

The president's overall job approval now stands at 25% among California adults (24% among voters), up slightly from the record low of 23% recorded by SPRI in March. Just 19% of Californians (22% of voters) say they approve of the president's handling of the situation in Iraq, while 71% disapprove (72% of voters).

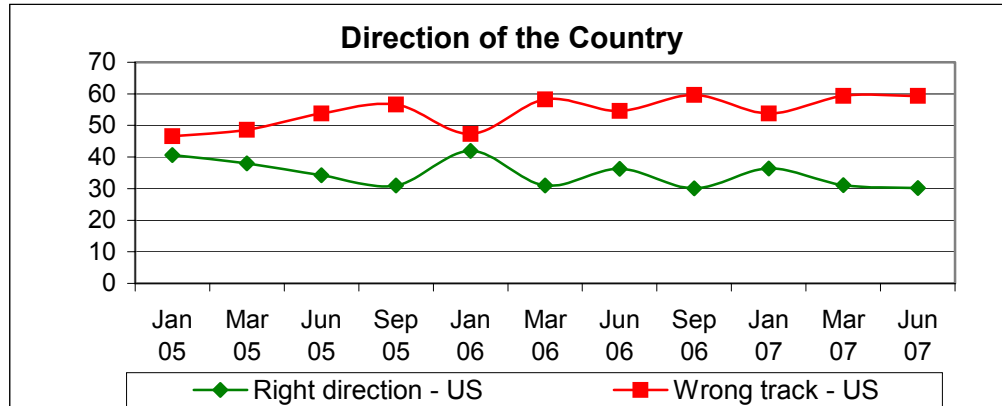
Added to this is a significant credibility gap, with less than half as many Californians (27% overall and 30% of voters) saying they believe what President Bush tells the American people is true, as those who say they do not believe the president (61% of adults and 62% of voters).

Bush's status in California has plummeted so badly that his approval rating among Republicans is 45-46% and his approval on Iraq among Republicans is 41-50%. Only 53% of Republican voters say they believe the president tells the truth while 37% do not believe he speaks truthfully.



“The American people have been loud and clear in expressing their growing dissatisfaction with the president's performance over the course of his second term,” said survey director Melinda Jackson, assistant professor of political science at San Jose State University. “At the same time President Bush has remained steadfast in pursuing his chosen policies while ignoring this downward spiral in public opinion.”

In June, just 30% of California adults said they think things in this country are generally going in the right direction, while nearly six in ten (59%) said they were seriously off on the wrong track. This reflects a steady sense of pessimism about the state of the nation, essentially unchanged from March.



Assessments of Bush's handling of the economy were slightly more positive with 32% of Californians approving, compared to 58% disapproving. And the president received his highest ratings on his handling of terrorism, with 35% of California adults approving and 54% disapproving.

	Mar-06		Jun-06		Sep-06		Jan-07		Mar-07		Jun-07	
	Pos	Neg	Pos	Neg	Pos	Neg	Pos	Neg	Pos	Neg	Pos	Neg
Direction of Country	31	58	36	55	30	60	36	54	31	59	30	59
Bush Approval on Iraq	26	66	26	67	22	68	17	75	21	73	19	71
Bush Approval on Economy	31	59	32	56	30	57	34	56	31	61	32	58
Bush Approval on Terrorism	36	55	41	52	35	56	30	60	34	58	35	54
Bush Overall Approval	28	62	30	60	27	62	26	66	23	69	25	64
Bush Tells the Truth	30	60	33	57	29	62	28	63	28	64	27	61
Iraq War Made US safer	25	45	25	45	25	50	22	50	20	47	23	49
Iraq War Worth It	26	64	29	63	25	65	19	72	24	70	23	69

## Methodology

The non-partisan Survey and Policy Research Institute polled a random sample of 1,000 California adults June 18-22 by telephone. Interviews were conducted in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. At least six attempts were made to reach every phone number. The questions on state and national politics were included in the quarterly California Consumer Confidence Survey, funded by San Jose State University. The survey included 663 respondents identified as voters and 645 respondents identified as likely to vote in the February 2008 primaries. The margin of error, at the 95% confidence level, is +/- 3.1 percentage points for all adults, 3.8 percentage points for voters and 3.9 percentage points for likely voters.

Survey marginals attached:

**SURVEY MARGINALS**

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

	Adults	Voters
Right direction	30	30
Wrong track	59	63

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

	Adults	Voters
Approve	25	24
Disapprove	64	68

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy?

	Adults	Voters
Approve	32	34
Disapprove	58	59

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation with Iraq?

	Adults	Voters
Approve	19	22
Disapprove	71	72

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling terrorism?

	Adults	Voters
Approve	35	40
Disapprove	54	54

Do you think the war in Iraq has made the United States safer, less safe, or hasn't it had an effect on the safety of the United States?

	Adults	Voters
Safer	23	26
Less safe	49	47
No effect	22	23

All in all, do you think it was worth going to war in Iraq, or not?

	Adults	Voters
Worth going to war	23	26
Not worth going to war	69	67

Generally speaking, do you believe that what President Bush tells the American people is true?

	Adults	Voters
Yes	27	30
No	61	62