

# UC Berkeley

## IGS Poll

### Title

Californians support doctor-assisted suicide, IGS poll finds

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## **Californians support doctor-assisted suicide, IGS poll finds**

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**Berkeley** — Californians overwhelmingly support doctor-assisted suicide for terminally ill people, according to a new poll released today by the Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) at the University of California, Berkeley.

That support includes strong majorities in both major political parties and among independent voters, and crosses most other demographic categories. Support is noticeably lower only among African-Americans, although a narrow majority does back the idea.

The online survey, which polled 1,097 Californians from Aug. 11-26, questioned respondents about pending legislation to allow terminally ill people to voluntarily end their own lives by taking drugs prescribed by a physician.

A large majority of respondents (76 percent) supported that idea, including 82 percent of Democrats, 79 percent of independents and 67 percent of Republicans.

“Although many political issues reflect strong partisan differences, physician-assisted suicide clearly draws strong support from Californians across the political spectrum,” said IGS director Jack Citrin.

Support was at least 75 percent among whites, Latinos and Asian Americans, but only 52.3 percent among African Americans. When an earlier version of the same proposal failed in the Legislature earlier this year, many commentators cited the opposition of Latino legislators from Southern California, but less public discussion focused on the views of the African American community.

“Although most African American respondents supported physician-assisted suicide, there is a clear difference in the data between African Americans and other ethnic groups,” Citrin said.

Support levels of at least 69 percent were registered across all other demographic categories, from gender to educational, income and age levels. Among age groups, support was weakest among 18- to 19-year-olds (70 percent) and stronger among older groups: 86 percent among those in their 40s, 79 percent among those in their 50s, and 81 percent among those over 65.

## Background

The poll was conducted for IGS by Survey Sampling International, using online questionnaires. There were 1,097 respondents sampled between Aug. 11 and Aug. 26. The margin of error is 2.5 percent. Responses for the entire sample were weighted to reflect the statewide distribution of the California population by gender, race/ethnicity, education and age.

## RELATED INFORMATION

An IGS [poll on attitudes on economic issues](#) such as gas taxes and the minimum wage, and another on attitudes about regulations relating to [climate change](#), were released earlier this week.

## CONTACTS

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## Appendix

A bill under consideration before the California State Legislature would allow terminally ill people to be able to voluntarily end their own lives by taking drugs prescribed by a physician. Do you favor or oppose this bill?

	Percent
Favor	75.5%
Oppose	24.5%

### By Partisanship

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Favor	82.4%	78.7%	67.1%
Oppose	17.6%	21.3%	32.9%

## By Income

	Less than \$25,000	\$25,000- \$49,999	\$50,000- \$74,999	\$75,000- \$99,999	\$100,000- \$149,999	\$150,000+
Favor	74.8%	75.2%	77.6%	74.8%	83.7%	78.7%
Oppose	25.2%	24.8%	22.4%	25.2%	16.3%	21.3%

## By Age

	Age 18-29	Age 30-39	Age 40-49	Age 50-65	Age 65+
Favor	70.1%	74.8%	86.4%	78.9%	81.5%
Oppose	29.9%	25.2%	13.6%	21.1%	18.5%

## By Race/Ethnicity

	Asian	Black	Latino	White
Favor	78.9%	52.3%	74.9%	79.5%
Oppose	21.1%	47.7%	25.1%	20.5%

## By Education

	Less than high school	High school degree or equivalent	Some college	Bachelor's degree	Advanced degree
Favor	75.0%	69.1%	74.6%	79.8%	83.25%
Oppose	25.0%	30.9%	25.4%	20.2%	16.75%

## By Gender

	Female	Male
Favor	77.7%	76.4%
Oppose	22.3%	23.6%