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U.S. Senate election to succeed Feinstein remains a wide-open affair. Schiff and Porter leading, but one in three likely voters undecided.

by Mark DiCamillo, Director, *Berkeley IGS Poll*

Congressman Adam Schiff at 20% and Congresswoman Katie Porter at 17% lead the field in next year's election to succeed Dianne Feinstein in the U.S. Senate, but one in three likely voters remain undecided. These are the findings from the latest *Berkeley IGS Poll* completed online last week among likely voters in next year's March 2024 primary election.

Schiff benefits from the fact that he is the best known of the Senate candidates, with three in four likely voters (75%) able to offer an opinion of him. In addition, his image is more positive than negative, with 43% having a favorable opinion of Schiff and 32% viewing him unfavorably. Porter is the next best known at 57%, and her image among those voicing an opinion is two-to-one positive (38% favorable vs. 19% unfavorable). Majorities of likely voters are unable to voice an opinion about any of the other contenders,

There is increasing speculation that former Los Angeles Dodgers baseball star Steve Garvey will enter the Senate race. Because of this, the poll tested the impact that his entry would have on voter preferences. The results indicate that Garvey would begin the race appealing to the same base of Republican and conservative voters as fellow Republicans James Bradley and Eric Early and would thereby bring down their statewide preference totals to no more than 7% for each of three.

The poll also asked voters about what position a candidate should take with regard to the war in Ukraine when considering whom they would support for U.S. Senate. By a 53% to 30% margin voters say they would prefer someone who gives priority to helping Ukraine achieve victory over Russia, even if it means a longer war, as opposed to a candidate who gives priority to bring the war to an end, even if it means Ukraine giving up some territory to Russia.

Finally, by a two to one margin (51% to 24%) if Governor Gavin Newsom were in position to appoint a successor to Feinstein if she were unable to serve out the remainder of her term, most voters prefer that he nominate someone prepared to run for a full-term next year rather than his making an interim appointee who would not seek re-election.

IGS co-director Eric Schickler added, "While most Californians prefer that Newsom appoint a successor to Feinstein who will run for the full-term, if put in this position the Governor's political calculus is complicated. With three well-known and well-liked Democrats vying for the seat, appointing a likely successor would divide the Governor's supporters."

Schiff and Porter lead the field in U.S. Senate race, but large proportions remain undecided

The latest poll finds Congressman Schiff at 20% and Congresswoman Katie Porter at 17% leading the field in next year's election for U.S. Senate. However nearly one in three likely primary election voters remains undecided as to whom they will support.

Another Democrat, Congresswoman Barbara Lee, trails with 7%, and is currently tied with Republicans Garvey and Bradley, should Garvey enter the race, with Early close behind at 5%. Were Garvey to decide against a senatorial bid, support for Bradley and Early increases to 10% and 7%, respectively. The poll also listed Democratic high tech executive Lexie Reese in the preference question, but she receives just 1% of voter support at this time.

Table 1
Voter preferences in the 2024 primary election for U.S. Senate –
both including and excluding Steve Garvey as a candidate
(among likely voters)

	Including Garvey	Excluding Garvey
	%	%
Adam Schiff (D)	20	20
Katie Porter (D)	17	17
Barbara Lee (D)	7	7
Steve Garvey (R)	7	--
James Bradley (R)	7	10
Eric Early (R)	5	7
Lexie Reese (D)	1	1
Others	4	4
Undecided	32	34

Senate preferences across subgroups display each candidate's strengths and weaknesses

When examining the preferences of likely voters across major subgroups, Schiff's vote is derived from larger levels of support from Democrats, liberals, Black voters, and those ages 65 or older. Porter also polls well among Democrats and liberals, especially those identifying themselves as strongly liberal. But in contrast to Schiff, Porter polls much better among younger voters while lagging among older voters and leads Schiff nearly three to one among voters who identify as LGBTQ.

Lee's support is strongest among strong liberals, Black voters, LGBTQ voters, and those living in the nine-county San Francisco Bay, where her congressional district is located.

Garvey, Bradley and Early all draw most of their support from Republican and conservative voters. Because of this a Garvey candidacy serves mainly to divide the preferences of these voters, bringing each of them down into the single digits statewide.

Table 2
Voter preferences in the 2024 primary election for U.S. Senate
across major subgroups of the likely voter electorate (including Garvey)

	Adam Schiff (D) %	Katie Porter (D) %	Barbara Lee (D) %	Steve Garvey (R) %	James Bradley (R) %	Eric Early (R) %	Lexie Reese (D) %	Other %	Unde-cided %
Total statewide	**20**	**17**	**7**	**7**	**7**	**5**	**1**	**4**	**32**
Party registration									
Democrats	31	26	11	1	1	*	1	2	27
Republicans	3	2	1	21	18	15	*	6	35
No party preference/others	17	16	8	5	5	4	1	5	39
Political ideology									
Strongly liberal	26	35	16	*	*	*	*	1	22
Somewhat liberal	35	24	8	1	*	*	1	2	29
Moderate	20	13	5	6	5	3	2	5	41
Somewhat conservative	6	2	2	19	14	13	*	8	36
Strongly conservative	1	*	2	20	22	18	*	6	31
Age									
18-29	6	27	11	3	3	3	1	1	45
30-39	14	23	9	3	4	4	1	4	38
40-49	14	19	9	7	6	5	3	2	35
50-64	18	16	8	9	8	6	1	3	31
65 or older	29	12	4	9	7	6	*	6	27
Gender									
Female	19	17	8	5	5	6	1	3	36
Male	21	16	6	10	8	5	1	5	28
Race/ethnicity									
White non-Hispanic	22	17	6	9	6	5	1	4	30
Latino	14	14	10	7	8	8	2	4	33
Asian/Pacific Islander	16	15	6	2	6	4	*	4	47
Black	30	21	19	3	3	*	1	5	18
Region									
Los Angeles County	21	19	6	6	7	6	*	3	32
San Diego County	19	17	4	10	7	5	1	3	34
Orange County	12	22	2	9	10	9	*	5	31
Inland Empire	22	15	6	11	6	5	1	5	29
Central Coast	24	17	5	8	5	6	2	2	31
Central Valley	17	14	4	9	9	7	2	6	32
San Francisco Bay Area	22	15	16	4	4	3	1	4	31
North Coast/Sierras	17	10	8	13	7	5	2	7	31
Sexual orientation									
Straight	20	15	6	8	7	6	1	4	33
LGBTQ	21	34	16	2	2	2	*	2	20

less than ½ of 1%   (D) denotes Democrat, (R) denotes Republican

Schiff is the best known of the Senate candidates

Three in four likely voters (75%) can offer an opinion of Schiff, and his image rating among these voters is four to three positive (43% favorable vs. 32% unfavorable). Porter is the next best known of the Senate candidates, with 57% able to offer an opinion of her and among these voters twice as many have a favorable opinion of Porter (38%) view her unfavorably (19%).

Majorities of the likely voters are unable to voice an opinion about any of the other contenders, although Lee and Garvey are somewhat better known that the other candidates tested. About half of the likely electorate (48%) offers an opinion of Lee and her image among those able to rate her is three-to-two positive (29% favorable vs 19% unfavorable). About four in ten (41%) are able to rate Garvey, but slightly more view him negatively (22%) than positively (19%). Only about one in four can offer an opinion of Republicans Bradley and Early, and voter impressions of each divide about evenly positively to negatively. Reese is known to just 20% of likely voters and among those offering an opinion more view her unfavorably (15%) than favorably (5%).

Early impressions of each of the candidates are highly partisan. Democratic voters offering very favorable assessments of Democrats Schiff, Porter, and Lee, while Republicans view each in decidedly negative terms. Conversely, Republicans Garvey, Bradley, and Early are each viewed very positively by fellow GOP voters, but in highly negative terms by Democrats.

Table 3
Image ratings of the major party candidates or potential candidates for U.S. Senate
(among likely voters)

	Total likely voters %	Democrats %	Republicans %	No Party Pref./others %
Adam Schiff (D)				
Favorable	**43**	66	6	42
Unfavorable	**32**	9	70	31
No opinion	**25**	25	24	27
Katie Porter (D)				
Favorable	**38**	59	5	33
Unfavorable	**19**	7	40	17
No opinion	**43**	34	55	50
Barbara Lee (D)				
Favorable	**29**	46	5	24
Unfavorable	**19**	8	36	21
No opinion	**52**	46	59	55
Steve Garvey (R)				
Favorable	**19**	5	44	15
Unfavorable	**22**	30	9	19
No opinion	**59**	65	47	66
James Bradley (R)				
Favorable	**13**	2	33	9
Unfavorable	**13**	17	7	11
No opinion	**74**	81	60	80
Eric Early (R)				
Favorable	**12**	2	30	11
Unfavorable	**14**	18	8	11
No opinion	**74**	80	62	78
Lexie Reese (D)				
Favorable	**5**	6	4	5
Unfavorable	**15**	12	22	12
No opinion	**80**	82	74	83

Most Californians prefer a Senate candidate who'll give high priority to helping Ukraine achieve victory over Russia

When voters are asked to consider a Senate candidate's position on the war in Ukraine, by a five to three margin (53% to 30%) most Californians prefer someone who will give priority to helping Ukraine achieve victory over Russia, even if it means a longer war, than one who would give priority to bringing an end to the war, even if it means Ukraine giving up some territory to Russia.

Large majorities of Democrats and liberals, and especially those backing Schiff or Porter, favor a candidate who will give priority to helping Ukraine achieve victory. By contrast, majorities of Republicans, strong conservatives, and voters backing one of the three Republicans tested would prefer a Senate candidate who give greater priority to bringing an end to the war in Ukraine, even if it means ceding some territory to Russia.

Table 4
Voter preferences about the position that U.S. Senate candidates
should take with regard to the war in Ukraine
(among likely voters)

	A Senate candidate who gives priority to . . .		
	Helping Ukraine achieve victory over Russia, even if it means a longer war %	**Bringing an end to the war, even if it means Ukraine giving up some territory to Russia** %	**No opinion** %
Total registered voters	**53**	**30**	**17**
Party registration			
Democrats	65	16	19
Republicans	31	54	15
No party preference/others	54	29	17
Political ideology			
Strongly liberal	72	13	15
Somewhat liberal	72	11	17
Moderate	49	31	20
Somewhat conservative	30	51	19
Strongly conservative	26	60	14
Voting preference for Senate			
Schiff	81	11	8
Porter	72	13	15
Lee	58	21	21
Garvey	32	52	16
Bradley	30	60	10
Early	17	66	17
Others	35	37	28
Undecided	42	34	24

Most voters prefer that Newsom nominate someone prepared to run for a full-term to the Senate next year if he is in position to appoint a successor to Feinstein

The poll also asked voters their opinions of what Governor Newsom should do were he in position appoint a successor to Feinstein if she becomes unable to serve out the remainder of her term. The results indicate that by a two-to-one margin (51% to 25%) voters would favor Newsom appointing someone prepared to run for a full term rather than making an interim appointee.

Democrats and liberals overwhelmingly take this view, while pluralities of Republicans favor the Governor making only an interim appointment to fill a vacancy in the Senate.

Table 5
If Senator Feinstein were unable to serve out her term, should Governor Newsom make an interim appointment or someone prepared to run for a full term as Senator in 2024
(among likely voters in California)

	Someone prepared to run for a full term in 2024 %	An interim appointee who won't run in 2024 %	No opinion %
Total registered voters	**51**	**25**	**24**
Party registration			
Democrats	64	16	20
Republicans	34	41	25
No party preference/others	46	23	31
Political ideology			
Strongly liberal	63	14	23
Somewhat liberal	62	15	23
Moderate	53	22	25
Somewhat conservative	36	40	24
Strongly conservative	30	44	26

About the Survey
The findings in this report are based on a *Berkeley IGS Poll* completed by the Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) at the University of California, Berkeley. The poll was administered online in English and Spanish August 24-29, 2023, among 6,030 California registered voters, of whom a weighted subsample of 3,113 were considered likely to vote in the March 2024 primary election. Funding for the poll was provided in part by the *Los Angeles Times.*

The poll was conducted by distributing email invitations to stratified random samples of the state's registered voters. Each email invited voters to participate in a non-partisan survey conducted by the University and provided a link to the IGS website where the survey was housed. Reminder emails were distributed to non-responding voters and an opt out link was provided for voters not wishing to receive further email invitations.

Samples of California registered voters with email addresses were derived from information contained on the official voter registration rolls and provided to IGS by Political Data, Inc. Prior to the distribution of emails, the overall sample was stratified by age and gender in an attempt to obtain a proper balance of survey respondents across major segments of the registered voter population.

To protect the anonymity of respondents, voters' email addresses and all other personally identifiable information derived from the original voter listing were purged from the data file and replaced with a unique and anonymous identification number during data processing. In addition, after the completion of data collection, post-stratification weights were applied to the survey data file to align the sample of registered voters to population characteristics of the registered voters statewide and within major regions of the state.

The sampling error associated with the survey results is difficult to calculate precisely because of sample stratification and post-stratification weighting. Nevertheless, it is likely that findings based on the sample of likely voters are subject to an estimated sampling error of approximately +/-2.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

Question wording

Senator Dianne Feinstein is in ill health and it is possible that she could leave office before the end of her term. Governor Gavin Newsom would then be in position to appoint someone else to serve out the remainder Feinstein's term as U.S. Senator. If that were to happen, which of the following two guidelines should Newsom follow when making the appointment: (1) He should appoint someone who is willing to serve as an interim appointee and would not run for a full term to the Senate in the 2024 election, (2) He should appoint someone who is prepared to run for a full term to the Senate in the 2024 election?

A number of people have already declared their candidacies to run for the U.S. Senate in next year's 2024 elections and several others have said they are considering it. Suppose the election for U.S. Senate were being held today and you were choosing from among the following candidates, who would be your 1st choice? **(NAMES LISTED IN RANDOM ORDER)**

Please indicate whether your opinion of each of these possible Senate candidates is favorable or unfavorable, or whether you don't know enough about him or her to offer an opinion. **(NAMES LISTED IN RANDOM ORDER)**

When considering whom to support for the U.S. Senate, what views would you prefer the Senate candidate to take with regard to the war in Ukraine -- Someone who gives priority to helping Ukraine achieve victory over Russia, even if it means a longer war, or Someone who gives priority to bringing an end to the war, even if it means Ukraine giving up some territory to Russia.

About the Institute of Governmental Studies

The Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) is an interdisciplinary organized research unit that pursues a vigorous program of research, education, publication, and public service. A component of the University of California system's flagship Berkeley campus, IGS is the oldest organized research unit in the UC system and the oldest public policy research center in the state. IGS's co-directors are Professor Eric Schickler and Associate Professor Cristina Mora.

IGS conducts periodic surveys of public opinion in California on matters of politics and public policy through its *Berkeley IGS Poll*. The poll, which is disseminated widely, seeks to provide a broad measure of contemporary public opinion, and to generate data for subsequent scholarly analysis. The director of the *Berkeley IGS Poll* is Mark DiCamillo. For a copy of the detailed tabulations to this report or a listing of all past poll reports issued by the *Berkeley IGS Poll,* please visit the poll's website at https://www.igs.berkeley.edu/research/berkeley-igs-poll.