

TO: United States Justice Foundation
FROM: Brock McCleary, Mike Yelovich
DATE: August 28, 2025
RE: **California Redistricting Poll Findings**

Harper Polling, on behalf of the United States Justice Foundation, conducted two statewide polls in California to assess Governor Gavin Newsom's proposed redistricting ballot amendment. Unlike other surveys released recently, we tested Arnold Schwarzenegger's legacy, corruption concerns around the State Legislature, and the viability of restoring the independent commission in 2028. The results show voters oppose politicians reclaiming control of redistricting, but partisan blinders and sanitized ballot language could still allow the amendment to pass.

Voters Trust the Commission, Not the Politicians

- **Six-in-ten voters support using an independent commission** to draw the congressional district maps (61% support, 20% oppose) with 42% saying they *strongly* support the independent commission.
- A plurality of Republicans (43-32%) and three quarters of Democrats (74-11%) and more than half of Independent voters (58-26%) support the independent commission.
- 49% **oppose authorizing the state legislature to draw the congressional district maps** (40% support).
- When contextualized as an effort by Governor Newsom in response to Republican-led redistricting efforts in Texas, Newsom's proposal reaches 52% support.
- Testing the **Proposition 50 language**, we find support at 54% Yes and 29% No, while 17% are undecided.
- 15% of voters who oppose Newsom's contextualized efforts mistakenly vote Yes on Proposition 50, highlighting **voter confusion related to the ballot language**.
- 48% of voters would support a ballot measure to return to the original congressional district map in 2028, when Trump is out of office. Only 29% oppose.
- When highlighting **corruption concerns about powerful politicians drawing themselves custom congressional districts**, the ballot narrows considerably to 45% Yes, 40% No.
- **Arnold Schwarzenegger's image** is in a strong spot at 49% favorable, 27% unfavorable. His image is **positive across partisan and ideological lines**.
- When pitting Schwarzenegger's argument (41%), as the original proponent of the independent commission, against Newsom's (47%), Democrats are nearly twice as likely to back Schwarzenegger (16%) as Republicans are to Newsom (9%), while Independents side with Schwarzenegger by a 6-point margin.

The sample size is 600 likely voters in the upcoming statewide special election in California. The margin of error is +/- 3.98% at a confidence interval of 95%. The demography of the survey sample is balanced to accurately represent the state's likely voting population. The first survey data were collected August 17 – 20, 2025 and the second survey's data were collected August 25 – 27, 2025. Respondents were interviewed via live phones and SMS-to-online.