

California Voter Survey
Conducted May 9th to 11th, 2020



Key Findings

1. Voters overwhelmingly want to protect K-12 education and health care from spending cuts, rather than prisons and corrections spending

Voters were asked which budget area they would prefer to protect from spending cuts. When prisons and corrections are posed against K-12 education, 73% say protect K-12 from spending cuts, and 18% say protect prisons and corrections.

With prisons and corrections posed against health care and public services, 78% say protect health care, and 16% say protect prisons and corrections.

Which of the following would you prefer to protect from spending cuts?

All Voters	
K-12 education	73%
Prisons and corrections	18
Don't know	10

All Voters	
Healthcare and public health services	78%
Prisons and corrections	16
Don't know	7

2. Two in three would vote YES on measures to reduce prison spending and put savings toward schools and health care

Voters were asked about potential ballot measures to address the state budget deficit, and solid majorities support two proposals to reduce prison spending.

Asked about creating a task force that is required to reduce the state prisons budget by \$2 billion, with savings designated to protect the public health and hospital budgets, 68% say they would vote YES and 21% say NO.

Asked a similar question about reducing the prisons budget by \$2 billion, with savings designated to protect the schools budget, 67% say they would vote YES and 21% say NO.

Policy Proposals to Reduce Incarceration

Would you vote YES or NO on a potential ballot measure to...	YES	NO
Create a task force that is required to reduce the state prisons budget by \$2 billion, with savings designated to protect the public health and hospital budgets.	68%	21%
Create a task force that is required to reduce the state prisons budget by \$2 billion, with savings designated to protect the schools budget.	67	21

3. Over 2 in 3 would vote YES on proposals to release people determined to be low risk and to require wider use of alternatives to incarceration

Voters were asked about a series of proposals to reduce incarceration and reduce the state prisons budget by \$1 billion or more.

Eight in ten would vote YES on a measure to authorize review of sentences and allow for the release of people in prison who are elderly or frail, and are determined to low risk to public safety. Only 16% say they would vote NO.

On a similar proposal to review sentences and allow release of those who have already served more than 10 years and have been determined to be low risk, 72% say they would vote YES and 22% say NO.

Just over 2 in 3 (68%) would vote YES to reduce incarceration of those determined to be low risk, and 72% support requiring wider use of alternatives to incarceration, with savings dedicated to protect schools and hospital funding.

A strong majority (69%) also support proposal to revise the Three Strikes law, so longer sentences are only imposed when the new conviction is serious or violent, and to allow resentencing of people in prison under Three Strikes if a judge determines that release does not risk public safety.

Policy Proposals to Reduce Incarceration

<i>Would you vote YES or NO on a potential ballot measure to...</i>	YES	NO
Authorize the review of sentences to allow for release of people in prison who are elderly or frail, and are determined to low risk to public safety, to reduce the prisons budget by \$1 billion or more.	79%	16%
Authorize the review of sentences to allow for release of people in prison who have already served more than 10 years, and are determined to low risk to public safety, to reduce the prisons budget by \$1 billion or more.	72	22
Require wider use of alternatives to incarceration, to reduce the prisons budget by at least \$1 billion, with savings designated to protect schools and hospital funding.	72	18
Revise Three Strikes Law to impose longer sentences only when new conviction is serious or violent, and authorize resentencing of people in prison under Three Strikes if the judge determines release does not risk public safety, to reduce incarceration and reduce the prisons budget by \$1 billion.	69	23
Reduce incarceration for people who are determined to be low risk to public safety, in order to close prisons and reduce the prisons budget by \$1 billion.	68	25

Survey Methodology

David Binder Research conducted a survey of 600 California voters estimated as likely to vote in November 2020. The survey was conducted online, with respondents recruited using email addresses from the state voter file and an online survey panel. The margin of error ±4.0%.