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New Poll Reveals California Voters Overwhelmingly Opposed to Gov. Gavin Newsom's Policies

Just 90 Days in Office, Gov. Gavin Newsom Out-of-Step with California Voters on Death Penalty, Water Tax, Gas Tax Threat, and High Speed Rail

New poll results released today show that even in liberal California, Gov. Gavin Newsom and his early policies are out of step with a large swath of California's voters.

"Gov. Gavin Newsom is getting national media attention for his moves, but what the media is missing is how Newsom is actually out-of-step with California voters – and in several instances out of step with Democrat voters as well," said Carl DeMaio, chairman of Reform California, the group sponsoring the scientific poll conducted by Remington Research.

"This poll reveals that Gov. Gavin Newsom's early policy proposals are big turn-offs for voters – and without some sort of moderation soon, his extreme agenda may end up costing Democrats in the 2020 elections," DeMaio noted.

Among the results of the poll on policy proposals:

Q1. In 2016, Californians voted to keep the death penalty. Despite this, Governor Gavin Newsom recently announced he will permanently suspend the death penalty because he considers it immoral. Do you support or oppose Newsom's decision?

Support: 39%

Oppose: 52%

Not sure: 9%

Of interest, the poll reveals a super-majority of white voters and even a plurality of Latino and African American voters opposed to Newsom's position on this issue.

"In 2016 voters voted to keep and strengthen the death penalty, but by overruling the will of the voters with this arbitrary order to permanently suspend the death penalty, Newsom shows he's not only weak on public safety issues, but willing to arrogantly overrule the judgment of the voters," DeMaio said.

Q2. Governor Newsom's first budget proposal included a tax on drinking water. Do you support or oppose California enacting a tax on drinking water?

Support: 13%
Oppose: 78%
Not sure: 9%

Newsom has managed to unite California voters of all political parties – just not in a good way for him. The poll reveals even a 67% supermajority of Democrats oppose Newsom’s Water Tax – along with 94% of Republicans and 78% of Independents.

"With California’s cost-of-living reaching a crisis point, the Water Tax may shape up to be the biggest liability for Newsom and Democrats in the Legislature – and could rightfully cost them seats in 2020 if they dare vote to impose it on working families," DeMaio said.

Q3. In 2018, Californians were told that the gas tax would be guaranteed to go to transportation projects and fairly distributed to all regions of the state. Despite that, Governor Newsom wants to take away gas tax funding from any city that does not comply with his affordable housing mandates. Do you support or oppose this decision by the Governor?

Support: 32%
Oppose: 53%
Not sure: 14%

A solid majority of voters oppose Newsom on this diversion of gas taxes, and Democrats risk alienating Latinos who oppose this move by a sizable 14% margin.

"By raiding Gas Tax funds yet again, Newsom shows California's voters that he's untrustworthy and demonstrates complete contempt for taxpayer money," DeMaio added.

Q4. Governor Gavin Newsom recently admitted that the High Speed Rail Project is billions over budget and behind schedule. Despite this, Governor Newsom wants to proceed with a scaled back segment of the project in the least traveled route. Do you support or oppose his decision to proceed?

Support: 31%
Oppose: 54%
Not sure: 15%

"Californians see through Newsom’s phony cancellation of the project and realize that he is still throwing good money after bad by completing a partial route in violation of voter protections that were promised when the project was proposed," DeMaio said.

COMING TOMORROW: Do you think Governor Newsom should be recalled from office?

Recall questions and results will be released at 3pm PT on Thursday, March 21.

About the poll

Survey conducted by Remington Research Group on March 17 through March 18, 2019. 1,303 likely 2020 General Election voters participated in the survey. Survey weighted to match expected

turnout demographics for the 2020 General Election. Margin of Error is +/-2.71% with a 95% level of confidence. Totals do not always equal 100% due to rounding.

About Reform California

Formed in 2003 by former San Diego City Councilmember Carl DeMaio, Reform California is dedicated to holding state and local government accountable and fighting costly and unfair taxes, mandates, and fees because working families cannot afford a higher cost of living — and state and local politicians already have enough of our money. In 2018 Reform California successfully led the Recall against State Senator Josh Newman over his misguided vote to approve the car and gas tax hikes.

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