

# Poll: Jerry Brown leads Neel Kashkari by a mile in re-election bid

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By David Siders

Gov. Jerry Brown leads Republican Neel Kashkari by 20 percentage points in the general election race for governor, according to a new Field Poll, with Kashkari struggling to raise his profile despite a heated primary contest.

Brown, a third-term Democrat, leads Kashkari 52 percent to 32 percent among likely voters early in the campaign, according to the poll. Sixteen percent of likely voters are undecided.

The poll comes at the start of a general election campaign in which Brown is heavily favored. He finished ahead of Kashkari by 35 percentage points in this month's primary election and holds a massive fundraising advantage heading into the summer-long campaign.

He's a popular governor, said Mark DiCamillo, director of the poll. Most people know Brown, have an opinion. It's largely favorable.

While Brown did almost no public campaigning in the primary election, Kashkari labored to move from third place to second, overcoming Tim Donnelly, a Twin Peaks assemblyman and tea party favorite, for a spot in the November runoff.

Yet Kashkari, a former Goldman Sachs executive and U.S. Treasury Department official, remains relatively unknown to California voters. More than half of likely voters—56 percent—have no opinion of Kashkari, according to the poll. Twenty-eight percent of likely voters view Kashkari favorably, while 16 percent have a negative view of him.

Kashkari is just not well known, DiCamillo said. He's got a long way to go to kind of introduce himself to voters, and that's what's going to be the task ahead of him in the next couple of months.

Brown's dominance in the poll is reflective of the state's Democratic leaning. He leads Kashkari 82 percent to 7 percent among Democrats and 49 percent to 25 percent among independent likely voters, according to the poll.

Brown also leads Kashkari among voters of all age groups and ethnicities, and among both men and women, according to the poll.

Melanie Rice, a Democratic poll respondent from Davis, credited Brown for the state's improving budget outlook, saying the budget balancing would definitely be my No. 1 with him.

Rice, 46, said, It seems that since he's been in office, the budget crisis hasn't been such a crisis as it has in the past.

For Kashkari, the poll includes a glimmer of hope: Brown's favorable image rating has slipped 7 percentage points from April, to 54 percent.

Furthermore, Kashkari is outperforming Brown among conservatives, according to the poll, leading Brown 71 percent to 13 percent among Republican likely voters.

Kashkari's standing among Republicans is significant after a primary election in which he was criticized by the conservative wing of the party for his moderate social views and his vote for Barack Obama in 2008.

DiCamillo said conservatives who supported Donnelly have quickly gone to Kashkari, given the choice vs. Brown, adding, I don't think it's going to be a problem for Kashkari to shore up the conservative base.

Asked if she would vote for Kashkari, Kay Ratkovich, a Republican poll respondent from Sacramento, said, I suppose so.

Ratkovich, 78, worried Kashkari leans a little more to the left. But her choices are limited.

I'm going to have to vote for the Republican, she said. I don't like Jerry.

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