

Californians say undocumented immigrants should get to stay: poll

By Sharon Bernstein



Two men eat their lunch while enjoying the San Diego skyline from the shoreline in Coronado, California November 9, 2011.

Reuters/Mike Blake

A strong majority of Californians say immigrants benefit their state and that those who came to the United States illegally should be allowed to remain to live and work, a poll published on Wednesday shows.

About three-quarters of those interviewed for the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) poll, including a majority of Republicans, said undocumented immigrants should be allowed to stay if they meet certain conditions.

The findings come as some candidates vying for the Republican presidential nomination take strong anti-illegal immigration policy stances, including a call by front-runner Donald Trump to deport the estimated 11 million people living in the United States illegally.

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"I asked the question because of all the chatter on immigration this summer," said PPIC President Mark Baldassare. "What I found was Californians, much more than the nation as a whole, say that we need to find a way for

undocumented immigrants who live and work here to stay here."

At the national level, a majority also believe undocumented immigrants should be able to stay, Baldassare said, citing a July ABC News/Washington Post poll that shows 60 percent favor a path to legal status.

Those numbers are considerably higher in California, however, where 83 percent of Democrats, 53 percent of Republicans and 70 percent of independents said undocumented immigrants should be able to stay if they pay a fine and meet other requirements, for a total of 75 percent of all adults interviewed.

Support was also strong across ethnic lines, with 76 percent of Asians, 68 percent of blacks, 92 percent of Latinos and 63 percent of whites in favor of a path to legal status.

Those opposed to such a policy included 15 percent of Democrats, 43 percent of Republicans and 26 percent of independents.

In California, 43 percent of voters are registered as Democrats, 28 percent as Republicans and 24 percent as having no party preference. Democrats hold all statewide elected offices and large majorities in both houses of the legislature.

In other matters, a slim majority of Californians told pollsters they favored extending temporary tax increases credited with easing a budget crisis in 2013. The poll also showed that state residents continue to see ongoing drought and the possibility of water shortages as a pressing issue, but fewer blame their neighbors for not doing enough to conserve.

(Editing by [Eric Walsh](#))

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