

California Voter Experience Study Methodology

To better understand how and why California voters choose to cast their ballots (by Vote-By-Mail or polling place), and how they perceive the introduction of the Vote Center Model, the UC Davis California Civic Engagement Project (CCEP) conducted a multi-method research project entitled *The California Voter Experience Study*. This study involved a statewide survey of California voters, and an extensive number of focus groups with electorally underrepresented populations. The survey's design and questionnaire were informed by the CCEP's work with two of its research partners: Asian Americans Advancing Justice, Los Angeles; and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund.

Statewide Survey Methodology

We conducted a statewide telephone survey of California voters in order to identify the reasons for voters' ballot choices, and to learn about their experience with the voting process in the state.

Statewide, we surveyed 1,100 California voters. Of these, 38% of respondents were interviewed on landlines and 62% on cell phones. The survey included an oversample of Latinos (417), and was conducted by bilingual interviewers in either English (932) or Spanish (168), according to respondents' language preference. The sample error for the total survey sample is +/-2.9% and +/-4.4 for the Latino subsample. Interviews took an average of 15 minutes to complete. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights from September 1–30, 2016. Samples were drawn from California voter lists according to random sampling procedures and matched to telephone numbers. The survey design was informed by findings from twenty CCEP focus groups which were held on the same topic, and conducted with voters from historically underrepresented groups across California. CCEP Director Dr. Mindy Romero worked with Dr. Hugh M. Clark of CJI Research Corporation on the sample design, questionnaire drafting, and supervision of data collection.

The statewide telephone survey of 1,100 California voters was conducted in the following manner:

A sample of 60,000 voter records and contact information was purchased from L2, a company specializing in voter lists and voter samples. To be included, voters must have voted in one or more elections since 2012, or be new registrants. This ensured a distribution of those who vote regularly and those who do not, but assured that all those included actually were voters. Names and addresses were matched to landline and cell phone numbers so that both landline and cell users could be included. A quota was established to obtain sound subsamples of voters who identified as Latino. The goal was to complete 400 such responses.

The overall sample was divided into three separate subsamples based on the voter's age, with approximately equal numbers of respondents from each age group. This was done because persons over 60 tend to dominate the responses when age-quotas are not used. In the analysis phase, the results were weighted to correctly represent the percent of voters who identified as Latino, and the percent within each age group. See Appendix A for the survey questionnaire.

The questionnaire:

- Posed questions about the registration and voting practices of respondents.
- Linked respondents to their records regarding the frequency with which they vote.
- Inquired about any problems respondents currently have with how they vote.
- Using neutral language, described proposed changes in the voting system, including the introduction of Vote Centers, automatic sending of Vote-By-Mail ballots to all voters, early voting, and drop-off lock-boxes.
- Asked respondents whether they liked the idea of the proposed changes.
- Concluded with demographic questions.

The analysis of this survey presented the overall state-level results, and examined how members of the different ethnic, income, age, and geographic groupings regard the proposed changes in voting procedures.

For more information about the CCEP statewide survey methodology, contact Dr. Mindy Romero at msromero@ucdavis.edu.

Focus Group Methodology

Between October 2015 and August 2016, the CCEP conducted 20 focus groups across California with historically underrepresented groups of voters. These groups included voters who were Latino, Asian-American, young (aged 18-24), African-American, had limited English proficiency (LEP), or had disabilities. The purpose of these focus groups was to identify how these voters cast their votes, and why they choose the ballot method they do. The study also sought to identify the perceptions of focus group members with regard to the proposed Vote Center Model, and find out whether they would use a Vote Center. Focus groups took two hours to complete.

The CCEP conducted the following numbers of focus groups for this study, totaling 20 in all:

- three with voters with disabilities (San Francisco, Sacramento, and Los Angeles)
- three with young voters age 18-24 (Berkeley, Sacramento, and Los Angeles)
- two with English-speaking Latino voters (Stockton and Los Angeles)
- three with English-speaking Asian-American voters (San Francisco, Sacramento, and Los Angeles)
- two with Spanish-speaking voters (Los Angeles and Huron)
- four with African-American voters (Oakland, Sacramento, and the South Los Angeles and Watts neighborhoods of Los Angeles)
- three with Asian-American voters with Limited English Proficiency (Chinese-speaking voters in San Francisco, Vietnamese-speaking voters in Garden Grove, and Korean-speaking voters in Koreatown, Los Angeles)

Participants resided in communities located throughout each of these regions, including the specific neighborhood where each focus group was located. Each focus group engaged 8-13 participants ranging in age, income, education, gender, ballot type use, and voting frequency.

Participants were recruited using a common mixed-methods approach in focus group research, including Craigslist ads and Facebook posts, and outreach to organizations with members or clients from the desired demographic groups in the target regions. These organizations were provided with fliers to post and recruitment letters to forward to members/clients via email (see Appendix B for a list of the organizations the CCEP partnered with to recruit participants for this study). Participation was incentivized by means of \$75 Target gift cards, which were provided to participants at the end of each focus group. Participants were also provided a complimentary meal.

Ms. Michelle Romero of the Greenlining Institute and Mr. Ted Jackson of the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers provided assistance with recruitment and site logistical arrangements for all the focus groups, except those specifically organized to include African-American voters. CCEP staff conducted recruitment and made site logistical arrangements for these particular focus groups.

Focus group members were screened and selected in an effort to include diverse voting experiences. Focus groups were comprised of approximately equal numbers of people who use the Vote-By-Mail voting option, and those who vote at the polls. Participants were approximately 55% female and 45% male. In addition, the groups were selected to include voters of various ages, and voters who reported varying levels of electoral participation. All participants had voted in at least one of the last four statewide elections. Only one participant per household or organizational affiliation was chosen for each group. People who had worked in election policy or administration were not selected.

Participants were screened through a two-stage process. All applicants were asked to provide their name, contact information, age, and city of residence. They also were asked about their availability, voter registration status, and frequency of voting in the past four statewide elections. Applicants who met the participation criteria were called and asked a series of follow-up questions about how they learned about the study, whether they had voted in at least one of the last four elections, whether they worked in election policy or administration, and whether they typically cast their ballot by mail, dropped off a Vote-By-Mail ballot at the polls, or voted at the polls.

A total of 12-14 voters were invited to participate in each focus group, and were then sent a confirmation email with the location of the meeting and other details. The CCEP requested suggestions from many of the same organizations that helped recruit participants to identify welcoming, private, affordable and appropriate venues and catering for the focus groups. Venues included nonprofit and community-based organization meeting rooms and public libraries. Focus groups were conducted by Dr. Mindy Romero and were audio recorded, with additional notes taken by a research assistant in some cases. At the beginning of each focus group session, participants signed an informed consent agreement and were assured that their feedback would be kept confidential. A translator was employed for the

focus groups with Limited English Proficient voters. Each focus group was asked the same questions. The focus groups with African-American voters received an updated description of Vote Centers to reflect the latest elements included in the legislative discussions on the Vote Center Model. (See Appendix B for a list of assisting organizations, and Appendix C for the focus group questions.)

Appendix: A
California Voter Experience Study
Statewide Survey Questionnaire

Part 1: Introduction, breaking the ice

May I speak with...? Hello, my name is.....with CJI Research, a professional research firm. We are conducting a survey today concerning community issues in [NAME OF COUNTY] County and all of California. The survey is for the California Civic Engagement Project of the University of California at Davis. This is a survey about voting. Not who you vote for, but the way you can register to vote and the various ways— like voting by mail or in person at a polling place— that you can vote in an election. Your responses to our questions will remain confidential and the survey will take no more than fifteen minutes of your time.

Note if from cell sample

- (1) Cell
- (2) LL

[FOR CELL PHONE SAMPLE] Are you currently a resident of [PIPE IN COUNTY NAME FROM SAMPLE] California?

- (3) Yes → CAPTURE COUNTY NAME
- (4) No → In what county do you live currently? [CA County list]

Am I speaking to you on a cell phone now?

- (5) Yes → Are you in a place that is safe to talk, or are you driving or in an unsafe location?
(If not in safe place or if driving – arrange call back)
- (6) May I call you again later? Yes/No → Thank you anyway. Goodbye.

In California, you have four different ways you can cast your vote in an election. You can fill out your ballot at home and mail it. You can fill out a ballot at home and drop it off at a polling place. You can vote early at a county elections location. You can go to your assigned polling place to vote on Election Day. Do you most often. . .

- (7) Fill out a ballot at home and mail it in?
- (8) Fill out a ballot at home and drop it off at a polling place?
- (9) Vote early at a county elections location?
- (10) Go to your assigned polling place to vote on Election Day?
- (11) Recently registered. Have not yet voted
- (12) Do not recall

Are you registered to always vote by mail, or do you have to request a Vote-By-Mail ballot at each election if you want to vote by mail?

- (13) Registered to always vote by mail
- (14) Have to request at each election

(15) [VOL] Not sure/Do not recall

(16) [VOL] REF

Examining reasons for choice of mode of voting

[ASK 0 IF 0=1, 2, OR 3. IF 0=4 ASK 0] Have you ever voted at a neighborhood polling place in an election in California?

(17) Yes (0)

(18) No (0)

(19) Newly registered – have not yet voted in any California election (0)

(20) Do not recall (0)

Which of each of the following best describes your most recent experience at the polling place?

a. Lines were too long or lines were not a problem [VOL] Do not recall

b. The polling place was hard to find or the polling place was not hard to find [VOL] Do not recall

c. You encountered a problem checking in to vote or you did not encounter any problem checking in to vote [VOL] Do not recall

Are you registered to always vote by mail or do you have to request a Vote-By-Mail ballot at each election if you want to vote by mail?

(21) Registered to always vote by mail

(22) Have to request at each election

(23) [VOL] Not sure/Do not recall

(24) [VOL] REF

[ASK ONLY IF 0=1, 2, 3, OR 5 IF 0=4, SKIP TO 0] If you wanted to vote at your Election Day polling place, do you know where it is located?

(25) Yes

(26) No

(27) Not sure

How would you typically get to your assigned polling place when and if you vote there?

(28) Walk/Bicycle

(29) Drive

(30) Get a ride/Uber/Lyft

(31) Bus/Public transit

If and when you were to vote at your assigned polling place, about how many minutes would it take you to get there? _____

(32) Have never used so do not know

(33) Not sure

What language do you most often speak at home?

- (34) English (0)
- (35) Spanish (0)
- (36) Other: _____ (0)

[IF A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH IN (33)] When and if you vote at a polling place, how concerned are you that you might *not* be able to get assistance with voting in your native language? Are you...

- (37) Very concerned about that
- (38) Somewhat concerned
- (39) Not very concerned
- (40) Not concerned at all
- (41) REF

[IF 0=1, AUTOCODE RESPONSE 1 AND SKIP TO AUTOCODE 0] Have you ever voted by mail in California?

- (42) Yes
- (43) No
- (44) Do not recall
- (45) [VOL] REF

[NOT A QUESTION – AUTOMATED CHECK-POINT SET EQUAL TO 0]

- (46) Fill out a ballot at home and mail it in
- (47) Fill out a ballot at home and drop it off at a polling place
- (48) Vote early at a county elections location
- (49) Or go to your assigned polling place to vote on Election Day?
- (50) Recently registered. Have not yet voted
- (51) Do not recall

INTRODUCTION TO NEXT SECTION

- a. [INTRO IF 0=1, INTRO AND ASK 0 through 0] Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about why you vote by mail:
- b. [INTRO IF 0=2 AND ASK 0 through 0] Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about why you fill out your ballot at home and drop it off at a neighborhood polling place
- c. [INTRO IF 0=3 AND ASK ONLY 0 THROUGH 0] Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about why you vote early rather than going to your assigned neighborhood polling place on Election Day
- d. [INTRO IF 0=4. ASK 0 THROUGH 0] Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about why you vote at your assigned neighborhood polling place on Election Day
- e. [INTRO IF 0=5 OR 6. ASK 0 to 0] Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

You prefer to fill out your ballot in a place where you can discuss it with family or friends

You prefer to fill out your ballot in a place where you can look up things on the Internet

Your work hours or family obligations make it hard to get to the neighborhood polling place on Election Day

You do not have transportation to get to neighborhood polling place

You would have difficulty finding parking at the neighborhood polling place

You do not want to wait in line at the neighborhood polling place

You are not sure where the neighborhood polling place is

It is more convenient than going to neighborhood polling place on Election Day

You vote that way because you want to be certain that your vote is counted

You don't trust the US Postal Service to get your ballot there safely or in time to be counted

Going to the polling place on Election Day is an important part of the voting experience for you

You want to get the sticker that says you voted

Your polling place is convenient to get to

[NOW ALL CONTINUE WITH 0]

Is there any other reason for voting the way you do that I have not mentioned? (a)

(a) [SPECIFY] _____ (0)

Most voters skip voting once in a while. When you have skipped voting, which of the following has been a reason:

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| [VOL] Denies ever skipping | 1. Never skipped (0) |
| You forgot | 1 Yes 2 No |
| You were too busy | 1 Yes 2 No |
| You were not interested | 1 Yes 2 No |
| You did not like the candidates or issues | 1 Yes 2 No |
| You thought you had not mailed your Vote-By-Mail ballot in time to be counted | 1 Yes 2 No |

Any other reason? _____

Perceptions of proposed voting system

California policy makers are considering a new system for how you vote. In the present system:

- You can request a Vote-By-Mail ballot and mail it or drop it off.
- You can vote on election day at your assigned neighborhood polling place
- In some counties, you can vote early at a central polling location

How familiar are you with those voting options?

- (1) Very familiar
- (2) Somewhat familiar
- (3) Not very familiar or

- (4) Not at all familiar
- (5) Not sure

If the new voting system were adopted, there would be five big changes in voting. I would like to read all five to you. Please remember that if the election rules are changed, all five changes would be made. This is not a choice among the five changes. Here is the proposed package of changes:

- First: neighborhood polling places would be replaced by a smaller number of larger voting places called “Vote Centers,” with one Vote Center replacing 10 or more polling places.
- Second: you could vote at any Vote Center in your county, so there would be more places you could go to vote.
- Third: you would automatically be sent a Vote-By-Mail ballot without having to request it
- Fourth: there would be many locked and secure drop boxes throughout your county where you could drop off your Vote-By-Mail ballot
- Fifth: you could vote or drop off your ballot starting ten days before Election Day

Having heard this description of the proposed new voting system, if you could ask election authorities about it, what would you ask? [IF NO QUESTION, ASK: “I understand you do not have any questions about the proposed voting system, but do you have any comment about it?”]
[open ended] _____

Which of the following statements about the proposed Vote Centers do you agree with?

- (52) You like the idea of Vote Centers replacing neighborhood polling places
- (53) You do not like the idea of Vote Centers replacing neighborhood polling places
- (54) [VOL] Depends on location/how far away it would be
- (55) [VOL] Not sure

The proposed changes in the election system include several parts. Would each of the following make you more likely to vote, less likely, or would it make no difference in whether you vote? Under the new system. . .

- . . . You would have more choices where you can go to vote, although they may be farther away from home than your current assigned polling place
- . . . You could vote early starting ten days before the election and not just on Election Day
- . . . You would receive a Vote-By-Mail ballot in the mail without having to request it
- . . . There would be large number of secure, locked drop boxes in your county where you could drop off a Vote-By-Mail ballot

Of those changes, which one would be most important in making it easier for you to vote? Is it:

- (56) Having more choices where to go to vote,
- (57) Being able to vote earlier than election day,
- (58) Getting a Vote-By-Mail ballot automatically, or

- (59) Being able to drop off your ballot in a secure lock box?

(60) [VOL] Not sure

How many minutes would you be willing to take to get to a Vote Center, regardless of how you would get there? _____ 888=Not sure

Demographics

Now I have a few final questions for classification purposes only.

In what year were you born? 19 ____ 9999=REF

[AUTOCODE 1 AND SKIP IF CONDUCTING INTERVIEW IN SPANISH] Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?

(61) Yes (0)

(62) No (0)

(63) [VOL] REF (0)

Do you [also] consider yourself to belong to a racial group such as Caucasian or African-American, or do you identify only as Hispanic or Latino?

(64) African-American

(65) Caucasian or white

(66) Asian

(67) Another ethnic or racial group?

(68) [VOL] None of these

(69) [VOL] REF

Which of the following best describes your level of education?

(70) Completed some high school

(71) High school graduate

(72) Completed some college

(73) Associate degree

(74) Bachelor's degree

(75) Graduate degree

(76) (REF)

Is the approximate total income of your family who live with you more or less than fifty thousand dollars?

- (77) Less than \$50,000 (a)
- (78) More than \$50,000 (b)
- (79) Refused (Vol.) (0)

a. (If less than \$50,000) Into which income group would you say your family falls? Would you say it falls into. . .[\[READ RESPONSES 1-4\]](#)

- (80) Less than \$15,000 (0)
- (81) \$15,000 to \$24,999 (0)
- (82) \$25,000 - \$34,999 (0)
- (83) \$35,000 to \$49,999 (0)
- (84) (VOL) Refused (0)

b. (If more than \$50,000) Into which income group would you say your family falls? Would you say it falls into. . .(Read responses 1-5)

- (85) \$50,000 - \$74,999
- (86) \$75,000 - \$99,999
- (87) \$100,000 to \$149,999
- (88) \$150,000 - \$199,999
- (89) More than \$200,000
- (90) (VOL) Refused

Which of the following describes how you think of yourself?

- (91) As male
- (92) As female
- (93) In another way—please specify, if you wish _____
- (94) Prefer not to answer

Do you have any condition that makes it difficult for you to fully participate in daily activities such as work, school, social or housework-related activities, including voting?

- (95) Yes
- (96) No
- (97) [VOL] REF

Thank you very much for your time and thoughtful answers. Your information will help in the process of planning various improvements to voting procedures in California.

Appendix: B
Organizations that Assisted with Focus Group Participant Outreach

San Francisco Bay Area

1. Oakland Community Organization (OCO)
2. Black Organizing Project
3. East Oakland Senior Center
4. West Oakland Senior Center
5. Oakland Rising
6. Causa Justa :: Just Cause (CJC)
7. The Greenlining Institute
8. Chinese for Affirmative Action

Sacramento Region

1. Sacramento Area Congregations Together (ACT)
2. Capital Region Organizing Project (CROP)
3. Oak Park Community Center
4. Meadowview Neighborhood Association
5. Del Paso Heights Community Association
6. The Arbors at Oak Park (Senior Community)
7. Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services

San Joaquin Valley

1. El Concilio
2. San Joaquin Valley LEAP

Greater Los Angeles Region

1. African American Civic Engagement Project
2. Community Coalition
3. Los Angeles Urban League
4. SCOPE L.A.
5. Advocates for African American Elders
6. Watts Senior Citizens Center
7. Alma Reeves Woods – Watts Branch Public Library
8. Hispanic Heritage Foundation
9. Korean Resource Center
10. Asian American Business Women Association

Appendix: C
California Voter Experience Study
Focus Group Questions
October 2015 - February 2016

I. Welcome

Thank you for agreeing to be part of this focus group. We appreciate your willingness to participate.

II. Introduction of study and focus group facilitator/study director

III. Purpose of this Focus Group

We are conducting a study trying to better understand the experience of California voters when preparing to cast and actually casting their ballots. We are holding 12 focus groups with 8 to 10 participants each. Approximately 100 people will take part in this study.

We need your input and invite you to share your views with us.

IV. Ground Rules

1. We would like everyone to participate. We may call on you if you have not spoken yet or often.
2. There are no right or wrong answers. Every person's experience and opinions are important. We ask that you speak up whether you agree or disagree with what is being said.
3. Everything discussed in this session will remain completely confidential. We want you to feel comfortable sharing your views, even when dealing with sensitive issues.
4. We will be recording the group discussion so that we can capture everything you have to say. Your comments will remain anonymous.

V. Questions

1. How would you feel about voting?

- a. How often do you vote? Why do you vote? If you don't vote, or don't always vote, why not?

Introduction to Questions 2 and 3

In California, voters can choose different methods to vote. You can sign up to be a permanent absentee voter, you can vote by mail in a specific election, or you can vote at a local polling site.

- 2. Did you know that you can vote by mail?**
- 3. Do you vote in the polling place, mail your ballot, or drop it off in person at a polling place? Why do you choose one method or another?**
 - a. For individuals who generally prefer to vote at the polling place: Is there anything you particularly like about voting at a polling place?
 - b. Have you been contacted by campaigns, advocacy groups and/or your county elections office to encourage you to vote by mail? If so, how did this affect your use of Vote-By-Mail?
- 4. Do you have any concerns about voting by mail?**
- 5. For example, are you concerned about the reliability of the postal system, or concerned that a mailed ballot will not be counted?**
- 6. Have you ever experienced difficulties with completing the Vote-By-Mail materials?**
 - a. Do you know that you have to sign your ballot envelope and that your signature must be verified by your signature on file with your county election's office?
 - b. Do you know what postage is required for a Vote-By-Mail ballot?
- 6. Do you know what to do if you lose or damage your ballot?**
- 7. Please talk about your experience accessing polling places.**
 - a. Have you ever had difficulty accessing a polling place because of transportation issues or other barriers?
- 8. Please tell us about your experiences voting at a polling place.**
 - a. Have you ever needed assistance at a polling place? If so, what kind?
 - b. How welcoming or helpful were the polling place workers you encountered?
 - c. Would help with voting increase your ability to participate in the voting process?
 - d. Have you ever had difficulty voting due to poll workers' lack of knowledge about voting procedures and requirements?
 - e. Have you ever had difficulty voting because the poll site lacked materials in a language you prefer, or did not have a bilingual Spanish-English poll worker?
 - f. For voters who prefer to vote by mail: have you ever had an experience at a polling place that has contributed to your choice to vote by mail?

Introduction to Questions 9 and 10

California policy makers are discussing the possibility of changing state election procedures to allow voters to cast a ballot at any “Vote Center” in their county, instead of their polling place. If this were to take place, all registered voters would be mailed a ballot in advance of the election. Voters could mail in their ballot or drop it off at any Vote Center, or at any secure 24-hour ballot drop-off box within their county.

Vote Centers would be open a set number of hours per day, and for a certain number of days, before Election Day. Neighborhood polling places would be replaced with Vote Centers. These would be located throughout the county, and near heavily traveled routes. Vote Centers would be far less numerous than existing local polling places. If a voter were to need or prefer to vote in person, then he or she would need to use a Vote Center. The number of Vote Centers would be based on a ratio to a number of registered voters. This ratio is not yet determined. An example would be 1 voter center per 30,000 registered voters. Whatever the ratio, there would be twice as many Vote Centers on Election Day itself. Vote Centers would have more voting machines than the one machine currently found at polling places.

9. Based on this brief description, do you think you will want to use a Vote Center?

- a. Do you think you would be more likely to vote by mail if you received a ballot in the mail without having to request one?
- b. What features would you like to see in a Vote Center (for example, access to parking and public transportation, being open certain hours, etc.)?
- c. Do you have preferences regarding the location of polling places/Vote Centers?
- d. Do you have preferences on voting at a public site (like a school, library, city hall) compared to a private site (a private community-based organization, a shopping center)?
- e. Do you have preferences regarding the types of services available at Vote Centers?
- f. Do you have any concerns about the elimination of neighborhood polling places?

10. How might the availability of Vote Centers affect your likelihood of voting?

- a. Do you think the ability to vote at a Vote Center before Election Day would affect your decision about how and where to cast a ballot?
- b. How far would you be willing to travel to go to a Vote Center?
- c. For those who say they would go to a Vote Center: Would you use the Vote Center closest to home, work, or other places or activities?

Thank you for your time and insights.

**California Voter Experience Study
Focus Group Questions
August 2016**

I. Welcome

Thank you for agreeing to be part of this focus group. We appreciate your willingness to participate.

II. Introduction of study and focus group Facilitator/study PI

III. Purpose of this Focus Group

We are conducting a study trying to better understand the experience of California voters when preparing to cast and actually casting their ballots. We are holding 19 focus groups with 8 to 10 participants each. Approximately 180 people will take part in this study.

We need your input and invite you to share your views with us.

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2. There are no right or wrong answers. Every person's experience and opinions are important. We ask that you speak up whether you agree or disagree with what is being said.
3. Everything discussed in this session will remain completely confidential. We want you to feel comfortable sharing your views, even when dealing with sensitive issues.
4. We will be recording the group discussion so that we can capture everything you have to say. Your comments will remain anonymous.

VI. Questions

1. How would you feel about voting?

- a. How often do you vote? Why do you vote? If you don't vote, or don't always vote, why not?

Introduction to Questions 2 and 3

In California, voters can choose different methods to vote. You can sign up to be a permanent absentee voter, you can vote by mail in a specific election, or you can vote at a local polling site.

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- 3. Do you vote in the polling place, mail your ballot, or drop it off in person at a polling place? Why do you choose one method or another?**
 - a. For individuals who generally prefer to vote at the polling place: Is there anything you particularly like about voting at a polling place?
 - b. Have you been contacted by campaigns, advocacy groups and/or your county elections office to encourage you to vote by mail? If so, how did this affect your use of vote by mail?

- 4. Do you have any concerns about voting by mail? For example, are you concerned about the reliability of the postal system, or concerned that a mailed ballot will not be counted?**

- 5. Have you ever experienced difficulties with completing the Vote-By-Mail materials?**
 - a. Do you know that you have to sign your ballot envelope and that your signature must be verified by your signature on file with your county election's office?
 - b. Do you know what postage is required for a Vote-By-Mail ballot?

- 6. Do you know what to do if you lose or damage your ballot?**

- 7. Please talk about your experience accessing polling places.**
 - a. Have you ever had difficulty accessing a polling place because of transportation issues or other barriers?

- 8. Please tell us about your experiences voting at a polling place.**
 - a. Have you ever needed assistance at a polling place? If so, what kind?
 - b. How welcoming or helpful were the polling place workers you encountered?
 - c. Would help with voting increase your ability to participate in the voting process?
 - d. Have you ever had difficulty voting due to poll workers' lack of knowledge about voting procedures and requirements?
 - e. Have you ever had difficulty voting because the poll site lacked materials in a language you prefer, or did not have a bilingual Spanish-English poll worker?
 - f. For voters who prefer to vote by mail: have you ever had an experience at a polling place that has contributed to your choice to Vote-By-Mail?

Introduction to Questions 9 and 10

California policy makers are considering a new election model that hopes to increase voter turnout to begin in 2018. In this new model there will be multiple ways you could cast your ballot.

In the present system:

- You can request a vote by mail ballot and mail it or drop it off.
- You can vote on Election Day at your assigned neighborhood polling place
- In some counties, you can vote early at a central polling location

If the new voting system were adopted there would be five main changes in voting:

Number 1: Neighborhood polling places would be replaced by a smaller number of larger voting places called "Vote Centers," with one Vote Center replacing 10 polling places.

Number 2: You could vote at any Vote Center in your county so there would be more places you could go to vote.

Number 3: You would automatically be sent a Vote-By-Mail ballot without having to request it,

Number 4: There would be many locked and secure drop boxes throughout your county where you could drop off your Vote-By-Mail ballot

Number 5: You could vote or drop off your ballot starting ten days before Election Day

Lastly, your county elections office would be required to engage with community organizations to develop their plan for this model in advance of the election. We would like to know your thoughts about this election model.

9. Based on this brief description, do you think you will want to use a vote center?

- a. Do you think you would be more likely to Vote-By-Mail if you received a ballot in the mail without having to request one?
- b. What features would you like to see in a vote center (for example, access to parking and public transportation, being open certain hours, etc.)?
- c. Do you have preferences regarding the location of polling places/Vote Centers?
- d. Do you have preferences on voting at a public site (like a school, library, city hall) compared to a private site (a private community-based organization, a shopping center)?
- e. Do you have preferences regarding the types of services available at vote centers?
- f. Do you have any concerns about the elimination of neighborhood polling places?

10. How might the availability of vote centers affect your likelihood of voting?

- a. Do you think the ability to vote at a Vote Center before Election Day would affect your decision about how and where to cast a ballot?

- b. How far would you be willing to travel to go to a Vote Center?
- c. For those who say they would go to a Vote Center: Would you use the vote center closest to home, work, or other places or activities?

VII. Thank you for your time and insights.