

To: Interested parties

From: Immigrant Legal Resource Center, National Day Laborer Organizing Network, and Goodwin Simon Strategic Research

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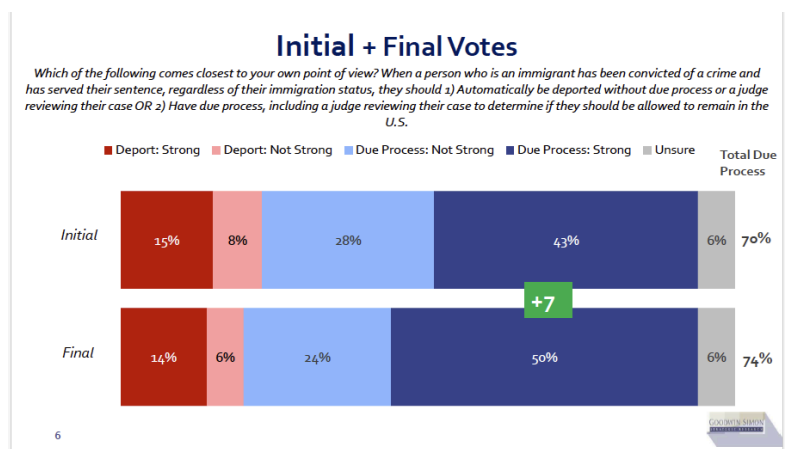
## Re: California survey shows intensity of opposition to mass deportation, highlights strong support for strengthening due process protections in the state

From October 3-7, 2025, *Goodwin Simon Strategic Research* surveyed a statewide representative sample of 1,213 registered voters. The poll explored voter attitudes towards mass deportation, recent ICE actions, and sanctuary protections in the state. Uniquely, this poll explores key themes that may be driving Californians' growing disapproval of mass deportation, including revealing voters' strong support for due process, including for people with past records, and equal treatment in the legal system, regardless of immigration status. Voters also expressed deep concern with the cost of the Trump administration's approach to immigration on taxpayers.

The October 2025 survey adds detail to a growing body of research marking Californians' deepening concern with how the Trump administration is handling mass deportations of immigrants. In recent weeks, [PPIC](#) found that 65% of likely California voters disapprove of the job ICE is doing, including 94% of Democrats and 67% of independents, and [CNN's November 4, 2025 exit poll](#) of California voters found that 64% say the Trump administration's immigration actions have gone too far, including 92% of those who voted yes on Prop 50.

### 1. Strong majority support for due process increases even further after hearing both pro and oppo messaging.

Prior to hearing any messaging, **7 out of 10 California voters (70%)** believe that “when a person who is an immigrant has been convicted of a crime and has served their sentence, regardless of immigration status,” **the person should “have due process, including a judge reviewing their case to determine if they should be allowed to remain in the U.S.”** More than 4 in 10 voters feel strongly that a person who is an immigrant and who has served their sentence should have due process, while only about 2 in 10 voters indicate that the alternative option offered, “automatically be deported without due process or a judge reviewing their case,” comes closer to their views.



**After hearing a slate of pro-immigrant and opposition messaging, support for due process becomes even stronger**, with 50% of voters saying they feel **strongly** that immigrants in these circumstances should have due process, **an increase of 7 points**. A total of **74% of voters** overall support due process over automatic deportation.

Central Coast voters and Republican women voters increased support for due process by 9 points each after hearing messaging. By region, final support for due process ranged from 82% among Central Coast voters to 67% among Central Valley voters.

## **2. California voters feel strongly that community members should be treated with respect, dignity, and fairness.**

A total of 11 pro-immigrant messages were tested in the survey; five were shown to all voters and the rest were divided among the two split samples. Each pro-immigrant message significantly exceeded the threshold for effectiveness, generally considered to be more than a majority with strong agreement from at least 30% of voters.

The top performing messages prioritize due process, equal treatment, and putting resources towards communities' everyday well-being.

- **Sixty-nine percent (69%) of voters** agree with a message that includes “**even if someone does have a record, they deserve due process and the chance to have their case heard by a judge** before being deported to a country that is no longer home.” (46% strongly agree)
- **Sixty-six percent (66%) of voters** agree with a message that includes “**when ICE abducts people off the street or grabs them from prison or jail, [private prison] companies profit**. Meanwhile, our communities do not have what we need. **Our tax dollars should be going to affordable housing, healthcare, and education.**” (47% strongly agree)
- **Sixty-six percent (66%) of voters** agree with a message that includes “**California’s state prisons make unfounded gambles with people’s lives** based on where they were born, what they look like, and what language they speak.” (42% strongly agree)
- **Sixty-six percent (66%) of voters** agree that “**people are coming together and showing what it means to be a country where people look out for each other**” through actions such as “**raising money for street vendors,**” “**protesting and calling on elected leaders to protect our rights and safety,**” and teachers and doctors creating safe zones, which “**are about embracing people’s shared humanity**” (39% strongly agree)

Additionally, most voters agree with strengthening the state’s sanctuary protections and preventing transfers from state prison to ICE after people have served their time and earned their release.

- **Sixty-one percent (61%) of voters** agree that “**we need California elected officials to stand up and stop the prison system from transferring people directly to ICE** without a warrant—hurting our state and ruining so many lives.” (37% strongly agree)
- **Sixty-two percent (62%) of voters** also agree that “**there are too many exceptions to these sanctuary rules** —and too many local and state law enforcement officers are acting as deportation agents. **We need to strengthen our state’s protections to prevent abuses of power and help keep thousands of hardworking families together.**” (38% strongly agree)

Overall, 68% of voters support (53% strongly) a [vision](#) for California where:

- California’s state prison system stops directly handing immigrants over to ICE even after they have completed their prison sentence - and before a judge can review their case.
- Local law enforcement stops standing guard or clearing the path for ICE agents as they abduct people on the street.
- Our state steps up to ensure that everyone is treated humanely with dignity and due process.
- We stand up for the basic rights of every person who calls California home.

The full text of each message tested is available [here](#).

### 3. Personal stories can powerfully transform attitudes across party affiliation

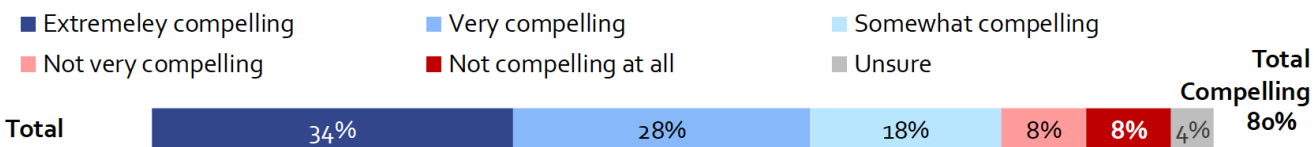
In a split-sample test, the poll gauged California voters’ reactions to one of two constructed personal narratives, including a [narrative](#) from a community member who served time for a prior conviction and transformed his life in prison, only to be deported. **Seventy-nine percent (79%) of voters found the story compelling**, while just 8% of voters found the story “not compelling at all.” Through open-end questions, voters were asked to explain their selection:

- *“When someone takes responsibility for a mistake they made that resulted in a crime, they should be given credit for the good they have done and allowed to return to their family Especially for everything they did to become a better person.”*
- *“Everybody has the same rights, even undocumented people. The law must be followed for everyone, not just white Americans.”*

A [second narrative](#) shared the experiences of a Californian who met a person who had been turned over to ICE after serving 30 years in state prison; this person had been working as counselor and mentor to youth who are at-risk. As the narrative messenger says, hearing about the experience of “double punishment” directly from someone who experienced it “made me question the whole idea of who is really a ‘criminal.’”

## Narrative #2: How Compelling

*How compelling was this statement for you personally?*



**Eighty percent of voters surveyed found this story compelling, including 94% of Democrats, 75% of independents, and 63% of Republicans.** Thirty-four percent of voters found the story extremely compelling, 28% very compelling, and 18% somewhat compelling. Only eight percent of voters found this story not compelling. In the open-ended responses, voters shared:

- *“We need to stop this fighting and treat all people fairly until we have the full story about them.”*
- *“Everyone in the United States is entitled to due process, and by doing these horrible practices we are destroying the very foundations that [th]is country was founded on.”*

#### **4. Support for due process, dignity, and shared humanity across party affiliation**

Across party affiliations, a majority of California voters agreed that **“even if someone does have a record, they deserve due process** and the chance to have their case heard by a judge before being deported.” **The message was supported by 84% of Democrats, 61% of independents, and 54% of Republicans.**

**In the post-messaging attitude votes, 90% of Democrats, 74% of independents, and 51% of Republicans** said that when a “person who is an immigrant has been convicted of a crime and has served their sentence,” they should **“have due process, including a judge review their case to determine if they should be allowed to remain in the U.S.”** Less than 1 in 10 Democrats, less than 2 in 10 independents, and just over 4 in 10 Republicans favored the alternative, “automatically be deported without due process or a judge reviewing their case.”

#### **5. Methodology overview and topline further details**

This representative survey was conducted online among 1,213 California voters in October 2025. The margin of error for the full sample is +/- 3%. Subgroups have a larger margin of error. Data have been weighted to reflect voter population proportions across the state.

Structure: After demographic questions and initial attitude questions, the survey assessed voter attitudes towards pro-immigrant messages and opposition messages, as well as a split sample test of two personal story narratives with open-ended responses. The poll concluded by revisiting attitude questions.

Toplines, including the full text of messages and narratives tested, are available [here](#).