

Voting on Term Limits Initiatives Then and Now: Has Anything Changed?

Jeffrey A. Karp
Texas Tech University
University of Twente, the Netherlands
j.karp@ttu.edu

Abstract: Voting on term limits offers citizens an opportunity to vent their frustration with the process by giving them the chance to “throw the rascals out”. Such a characterization implies that voting on issues like term limits is based more on emotion than rational calculus. This may be true especially when information about the issue in question is low. However, in hotly contested campaigns where both sides are able to make their position known voters may make different decisions. Moreover, once the policy is implemented and voters have more information about their potential implications, opinions may change. We examine how context and information may influence voting on term limits initiatives. Our analysis is based on two term limits initiatives that appeared on the California ballot in 1990 and a later initiative that appeared on the ballot in 2002. Unlike most of the term limits initiatives that appeared elsewhere, the California campaigns were hotly contested and voters were made aware of both the advantages and disadvantages of limiting legislative terms.

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Introduction

In the early 1990's, the American public's confidence toward government, and Congress in particular, reached a seventeen-year low. The government appeared to be incapable of addressing the economic problems of the day and Congress was plagued by scandal. Pay raises, ethical lapses, the savings and loan debacle, and overdrafts fueled disdain for Congress. During this time, voters began to approve a series of initiatives that placed limitations on the number of terms that legislators can serve. Voters in California were among the first in the nation to vote on the issue. By a narrow margin of 52 percent, Californians approved a measure that limited state legislative terms. A similar, but weaker alternative measure that appeared on the ballot at the same time failed, receiving only 38 percent of the vote. The success of the California initiative focused national attention on the issue. Two years later, voters in 14 states had approved term limits initiatives by wide margins. By the end of the 1990s, voters in over 20 states had imposed term limits for state legislators. The imposition of term limits raises fundamental questions about governance and is the most significant innovation in state legislatures since the legislative modernization movement of the 1960s and 1970s (Carey et al. 2004).

While the public appeared to strongly support the idea of limiting legislative terms, questions remain about how informed voters were when they approved such measures. Few of the initiatives passed by voters ever encountered serious opposition. Analysis of public opinion surveys suggested that support for term limits in the early 1990s was largely motivated by cynicism with the political process rather than a desire to achieve specific policy outcomes (Karp 1995). Voting on term limits offered citizens an opportunity to vent their frustration with the process by giving them the chance to "throw the rascals out". Such a characterization implies that voting on issues like term limits is based more on emotion than rational calculus. This may be true especially when information about the issue in question

is low. However, in hotly contested campaigns where both sides are able to make their position known voters may make different decisions. Moreover, once the policy is implemented and voters have more information about their potential implications, opinions may change.

Such an expectation often motivates those on the losing side to attempt to qualify initiatives that either repeal the laws passed earlier by voters or weaken them. In California, opponents of term limits successfully qualified another term limits measure appearing on the ballot in 2002 that proposed an exception for certain lawmakers. The measure would allow state legislators who had reached their limit to run again if they received 20 percent of the registered signatures in their district. A successful candidate could then serve an additional four years.

In this paper, we examine how context and information may influence voting on term limits initiatives. Our analysis is based on the two term limits initiatives that appeared on the California ballot in 1990 and the later initiative that appeared on the ballot in 2002. Unlike most of the term limits initiatives, the California campaigns were hotly contested and voters were made aware of both the advantages and disadvantages of limiting legislative terms. The California legislature is also highly professionalized and the proposed limits were severe, limiting state legislators to a life time ban of just three terms in the State Assembly (or six years) and two four-year terms in the Senate. Office. Passage of term limits, therefore, would have a substantial impact.

The two term limits initiatives that appeared on the ballot in 1990 provided voters with two different “flows of information”. One campaign involved conflicting campaign messages from elites and the other campaign can be characterized as dominated by an elite consensus in opinion. We proceed

with a discussion of our theoretical framework for understanding how voters may reason about issues in initiative campaigns and then develop a model for assessing the effects of campaign context.

Theoretical Framework

Early studies of opinion formation suggest that individuals rely on information or messages from political elites to help organize political issues and ideas (Converse 1962). Exposure to messages from political elites varies within the population and depends in part on an individual's level of political involvement and on the intensity of the message at the aggregate level. Those who are moderately informed are most susceptible to campaign messages because they have a higher probability of being exposed to the message than the least aware and are more likely to be persuaded by the message than the highly aware (Converse 1962). Following on Converse's work, Zaller (1989, 1990, 1991) outlines scenarios for mass opinion change in two cases: first, when there is a consensus among elites and second, when there is elite polarization. If there are no ideological or partisan cues in the messages, meaning there is a consensus in elite opinion, then support for the elite position should increase among the politically aware. However, if there are partisan cues in the messages, the politically aware liberal will reject messages inconsistent with his or her ideological predisposition and accept the more consistent liberal messages. Likewise, politically aware conservatives will be exposed to persuasive messages but reject the inconsistent liberal ones. While Zaller is not necessarily referring to direct legislation campaigns (for an exception, see Zaller 1987, 826 on gay rights), the model is applicable as these campaigns present information to voters attempting to persuade them with messages from political elites.

Elite endorsements are a source of information about the ideological or partisan nature of ballot propositions. Research on the effects of elite endorsements indicates that endorsements may serve as a cost cutting decision making strategy in direct legislation elections (Karp 1998; Lupia 1994; Bowler and Donovan 1998, 1993; Magleby 1984) and that these effects may be greater when there are high levels of consensus among elites (Magleby 1984, 152-153).

Following on Zaller's theory, we hypothesize that when elites concur on the desirability of adopting a proposition, those who pay attention to politics are more likely to respond favorably to the message. When the messages from political elites conflict, individuals will accept or reject the message based on their own political predispositions. For example, individuals who are sympathetic to the environmental movement are more likely to accept the endorsement message from the Sierra Club than from Sierra Pacific - a lumber company. Differential levels of political awareness will also affect acceptance or rejection of a message; those who are more politically aware should be better able to sort out the conflicting endorsements and respond accordingly. Because the patterns of elite support differed, two competing term limits initiatives on the 1990 California ballot provide an opportunity to test these hypotheses. On one initiative, elites were united in opposition; on another they were divided along partisan lines.

The 1990 Term Limits Initiatives

The two term limits initiatives that appeared on California's ballot in 1990 differed in severity. Proposition 131, authored by the incumbent Democratic attorney general, John Van de Kamp, combined term limits with campaign finance reform restricting state legislators to twelve consecutive

years in office and other statewide elected officials to two consecutive four-year terms. and providing for public campaign financing and spending limits. The other measure, Proposition 140, authored by Pete Schabarum, a conservative Republican, former assemblyman, and, most recently, a retired Los Angeles County supervisor, was more severe. If Proposition 140 were adopted, members of the state assembly would be limited to three two-year terms and holders of all other state offices, including governor, lieutenant governor and secretary of state were limited to two four-year terms in any one office. The limit was a lifetime ban. When the provisions of initiatives conflict such as in the case of Proposition 131 and 140, California's constitution stipulates that the conflicting provision from the measure with the most affirmative votes is adopted.

The dynamics of elite support for each of the term limits initiatives were remarkably different. Like term limits campaigns in other states, support for Proposition 140 was led by anti-tax conservative groups, often with connections to the Republican party and/or business. Republican gubernatorial candidate Pete Wilson's endorsement of Proposition 140, according to Price (1992), was perhaps the most critical to the initiative's success (p.124). Wilson was later joined by President George Bush, who announced during a Wilson fund-raiser in Los Angeles that he also supported term limits (Yoachum 1990). Recognizing the potential partisan effect of these endorsements Lew Uhler, one of the co-authors of Proposition 140, said, "We don't want to scare away everybody from the Democratic Party or any other party" (Schogan 1990).

Supporters of Proposition 131, in contrast, were characterized by their liberal backgrounds. Van de Kamp led the effort in support of Proposition 131, along with Democratic San Jose Mayor Tom McHenry. Common Cause and consumer advocate Ralph Nader jumped on the bandwagon of

support once Van De Kamp agreed to reform campaign finance laws by including a provision for public financing of elections. Other groups which endorsed the initiative were the Sierra Club, National Organization for Women, Friends of the Earth, and Voter Revolt. In sum, Democratic liberal reformers supported Proposition 131 while anti-tax conservatives supported Proposition 140.

Whereas proponents of the two term limits initiatives were varied and worked independently, opponents were unified in their efforts to defeat both initiatives. Leading the opposition against both initiatives were the two Democratic leaders in the California Legislature, Assembly Speaker Willie Brown and Senate President Pro Tem David A. Roberti. They were joined by Democratic gubernatorial nominee, Dianne Feinstein, and a wide range of diverse “special interests” which had a stake in the status quo. These interests included lottery contractors, trial lawyers, oil companies and the horse racing, tobacco, and alcohol industries.

Together the opposition outspent both proponents combined. Reports from the California Commission on Campaign Finance (1992) indicate that the opposition spent four times as much as the pro-campaign for Proposition 131 and two and a half times more than supporters of Proposition 140. Whereas the opposition spent over \$4.5 million, supporters of Proposition 140 spent a total of almost \$2 million, while supporters of Proposition 131 spent just over \$1 million. More than half of the money spent on behalf of Proposition 131 went toward collecting signatures, leaving little left for advertisements. On advertisements, the opposition outspent supporters of Proposition 131 by a margin of 432 to one. As for Proposition 140, they were outspent by a margin of over four to one on advertisements.

Expectations

Given the partisan nature of the Proposition 140 campaign, we expect opinions to split along partisan lines and the divergence of opinions to depend on an individual's level of political awareness and the intensity of the campaign. Specifically, partisan differences in support for Proposition 140 should emerge at higher levels of political awareness and later in the campaign as the intensity of partisan cues increases. In contrast, the Proposition 131 campaign was mostly nonpartisan; both Democratic and Republican elites opposed the measure while a few liberal reformers supported it. Therefore, we expect that partisan differences will not emerge. Those who are politically aware will be even less likely to support the measure because they are more likely to be exposed to the "vote no" messages.

Our analysis is based on three pre-election California Polls conducted by Mervin Field during the 1990 campaign.¹ We also use the Voter Research and Surveys exit poll to examine partisan differences in the final vote.

Changing Support for Propositions 131 and 140

Table 1 shows changes in public support for both term limits propositions.² In mid-August, those who had opinions on the propositions were overwhelmingly supportive. By early October, significant partisan differences emerged on both Propositions 131 and 140. In late October, the partisan gap on Proposition 131 narrowed while the gap on Proposition 140 continued to widen. Democrats became significantly less supportive of Proposition 140 while Republican and independent support remained unchanged. In contrast, on Proposition 131, support declined significantly in all groups. The exit poll reveals that the trend of the narrowing partisan gap on Proposition 131 continued until there

were no partisan differences.³ The erosion in support in the last week of the Proposition 131 campaign resulted in Proposition 131's failure. As for Proposition 140, a similar trend is evident. Aggregate support fell by almost 20 points in the last week of the campaign but support decreased more for Democrats than Republicans.

(Table 1 about here)

From Table 1 it appears that, at least in the aggregate, our expectations are supported. In this section, the effects of information are examined at the individual level in a multivariate analysis using the three pre-election surveys by California Poll. To measure political awareness at the individual level, an index of awareness of propositions was constructed based on the following question, "Have you heard anything about an initiative, Proposition X, that will be on next month's statewide ballot having to do with _____?" The measure captures how much attention individuals pay to political information and, thus, the likelihood of being exposed to persuasive messages. Our index of awareness is a cumulative measure summarizing the number of propositions of which an individual is aware.⁴

One of the factors contributing to the demise of Proposition 131 and not 140, according to some political analysts, was the estimated fiscal impact resulting from partial public funding of state campaigns. While Proposition 140 had no initial fiscal impact and was predicted to save the state money, some estimated the cost of Proposition 131 to be about 12 million dollars. The California poll provided a means of controlling for these effects by splitting the survey. In the last two surveys, half of each of the two sub-samples were asked questions which included a description of the fiscal impact of the proposition if adopted while the questions asked of the other half of the sample did not include any mention of fiscal impact. As Proposition 140 had no predicted fiscal impact, question wording

differences should only occur on Proposition 131. Apart from partisan differences which may emerge from elite partisan cues, there may also be gender and racial differences (see Donovan and Snipp 1994).⁵

Results

The results of our multivariate analysis are presented in Table 2. The first three columns display the coefficients in the model predicting support for Proposition 140 and the last three columns display the coefficients estimating support for Proposition 131. There are no significant partisan differences in any of these models. However, the coefficient specifying the influence of the interaction between awareness and party has a significant effect on support for Proposition 140 in the final survey. The significance of this interaction term indicates that, as expected, the effect of partisanship depends on level of awareness but the effect does not emerge until the survey just before the election. The overall fit of the model is relatively poor; using the logistic regression to predict support for these measures is little improvement over guessing everyone supports term limits.

Figure 1, based on the estimated coefficients from the final survey, shows the probability of support for Proposition 140 and 131 at different levels of awareness for strong Democrats, strong Republicans and independents. The different slopes of the lines illustrate the interaction between partisanship and awareness; increasing levels of awareness are associated with decreasing support on Proposition 140 for Democrats, but not for Republicans. Democrats at high levels of awareness are more responsive to the “vote no” messages conveyed by Democratic elites. Although Figure 1 shows

slight partisan differences in support for Proposition 131, these differences are not statistically significant in the multivariate analysis.

(Table 2 and Figure 1 about here.)

The fiscal effects associated with the public financing of campaigns significantly decreases the probability that individuals will support Proposition 131, indicating that the costs of implementing the proposition weighed heavily in the decision to support the measure. The inclusion of this provision most likely contributed to Proposition 131's failure, and given the constraints of the model and data, we cannot separate the effects of partisan cues from public financing.⁶

Other findings indicate that ideology is also a factor in support for term limits in California. Across the three equations estimating support for Proposition 140, conservatives are significantly more likely to support the measure than liberals. As for Proposition 131, it was expected that conservatives would not support the measure because it contained public financing of campaigns. The last model, however, predicts conservatives as being more likely than liberals to support Proposition 131. Perhaps the idea of term limits was attractive enough to offset the negative aspects of public financing. The issue of term limits may also have outweighed the positive effects of public financing for liberals, as they are less likely to support term limits than conservatives.

Changes in Public Support Over Time in California

The success of Proposition 140 encouraged term limits supporters to qualify initiatives in other states and most passed easily with little or no opposition. The severity of the limits vary considerably from one state to another. Along with Michigan and Arkansas, the California term limits are the toughest in the nation. Aside from forcing Speaker Willie Brown out of office in 1995, the law has succeeded in increasing turnover in the legislature to a point where typically over a third of the members of the Assembly are freshman (Weintraub 2002). The increased turnover has succeeded in leading to a creating a more diverse legislature, with more women and more minorities. Term limits have also produced an unstable leadership, with a new Assembly speaker being elected every 18 months. Despite these changes, public support for term limits in California appears to remain relatively stable. As Figure 2 shows, prior to the passage of proposition 140, 70 percent of registered voters support term limits for state legislators. After the first cohort of lawmakers were removed from office through term limits in 1996, support remained at about the same level and has continued to remain steady at about 68 percent.

(Figure 2 here)

Proposition 45

Given the nature of popular support, opponents decided that it would be difficult to persuade voters to repeal term limits outright. Instead, they embarked on a less ambitious approach and qualified an initiative to appear on the 2002 primary ballot. The measure allows voters to petition the Secretary of State to permit their incumbent Senator or Assembly Member who is “termed-out” to run again thereby allowing the legislator to serve an additional four years in office. The petition required the signatures of

20 percent of the registered voters in the legislator's district. According to the voters pamphlet prepared by the Attorney General, verifying the signatures could potentially cost up to several hundred thousand dollars on a statewide basis.

Proposition was backed by top legislative Democrats, including Senate President Pro Tem John Burton from San Francisco and Assembly Speaker-elect Herb Wesson. They were joined by a coalition of interests that included labor unions, veteran lawmakers, firefighters, corporate leaders and the League of Women Voters. The California state Democratic party contributed \$3 million to the effort. While Governor Gray Davis did not take a position on the issue, all three Republican gubernatorial candidates opposed it. In a bit of irony, supporters of Proposition 45 warned that term limits would force out John Burton and allow Willie Brown to return to the legislature to assume the leadership. Opponents managed to raise almost \$1 million to defeat the initiative with proponents spent almost \$9 million. While proponents emphasized the loss of experienced lawmakers, opponents stressed that it would destroy term limits and allow career politicians and special interests to expand their power in Sacramento.

Early surveys indicated that 50 percent supported the initiative but in the final weeks of the campaign, support dropped. By late February, a week prior to the election, a Field Poll indicated that 35 percent supported the initiative, down from 44 percent recorded in a January survey. Proponents were not able to reverse the decline and Proposition 45 failed with 58 percent voting against it. Below we apply the same models to examine support for the measure using data from these three pre-election surveys. Our measures are identical except for awareness which is based on whether a respondent had heard of Proposition 45 only.⁷ In addition, in two of the surveys, partisanship is measured by party

registration rather than identification. Given the partisan nature of the campaign, we expect the pattern of opinion change to be similar to Proposition 140.

Table 3 displays the results. Like both of the 1990 initiatives, ideology is a consistent factor with liberals being more likely to oppose term limits. Like Proposition 140, partisan differences do not emerge until the final pre-election survey and they depend on political awareness. Figure 3 illustrates the impact of partisanship and awareness. In the first survey conducted three months prior to the election, politically aware Democrats and Republicans were likely to support the initiative. Later, the probability of politically aware Republicans supporting the initiative drops dramatically. In contrast, while support among politically aware Democrats drops, the probability of supporting the initiative is about 14 percent greater in the final survey.

(Table 3 and Figure 3 here)

As a further test of the effects of the intensity of the campaign and political awareness, we present the results from a model where each of the three pre election surveys are pooled together. This allows us to control directly for time and interact time with awareness and partisanship. In all three cases, time is a significant factor, indicating that support drops over the course of the campaign. This is particularly noteworthy given the relative stability in opinions observed over a longer period of time in the absence of a campaign. The effects are greatest for Proposition 45 and 131, both of which ultimately failed. The interaction between time, awareness, and partisanship is significant on both Proposition 140 and 45 but not on Proposition 131. This is largely consistent with the expectation that politically aware voters will respond to the partisan messages in the campaign as it becomes more intense.

(Table 4 here)

Discussion

We find some support for an informational model of opinion change. The pattern of opinion change on Proposition 140 and 45 is consistent with a two-message model where there is partisan disagreement over an issue among political elites (Zaller 1991). Zaller (1991) has found that the two-message model can be generalized to many partisan issues and our analysis suggests that it may also be applicable to certain ballot proposition campaigns. Much of the research on ballot proposition campaigns indicates that intense campaigns will have a general negative effect on support which implies that information affects individuals equally. Our findings suggest that the effects of information and elite cues may depend on the probability of exposure to the messages and the partisan or ideological nature of the messages.

These findings suggest a way of understanding opinion change in proposition elections generally and on term limits measures specifically. In the absence of a partisan campaign, opinions on term limits are less likely to be determined by partisanship. The absence of partisan cues may help to explain why some researchers have not found significant partisan differences in other states (Farmer 1993) and in national polls unless the level of political knowledge is taken into account (Karp 1995). In California, where elite support for term limits diverged along partisan lines and the campaign was intense, public opinion appears to have responded to elite messages particularly among the politically aware.

Finally, in the context of direct legislation elections, we suggest how campaigns can serve to activate what are believed to be long-held political attitudes such as partisan identification. After being exposed to and digesting cues from political activists, an individual may recognize the position which is

most consistent with his or her prior political beliefs. Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet (1944) describe a similar activation of prior political beliefs but the prior political beliefs are based largely on social groups memberships. We find little evidence of activation among social groupings such as race or gender, but we do find support for activation along lines of partisan identification. In the case of term limits in California, partisan cues took on special importance because, unlike most ballot proposition campaigns, there were clear partisan lines and party leaders on both sides were speaking out.

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Endnotes

¹ The first survey was conducted in August and the last in late October, one week prior to the election. In order to keep the interview short but still cover a large number of questions, the sample in each of the surveys was split. Because of the split sample, questions measuring respondent support of Propositions 131 and 140 were asked of different groups.

² Support for the propositions is based on a question which first summarizes the proposition.

³ The VRS exit poll is based on a different population than the California Poll surveys. The exit poll contains only those who voted while the others polls take a sample from the population of eligible voters.

⁴ Each of the three surveys asks respondents their awareness of six propositions. The exception is the August, 1990 survey, where half the sample was asked if they had heard of seven propositions, while the other half was asked about three propositions. These indexes have been weighted to be consistent with the other surveys. The measure ranges from low awareness (0) to high awareness (6).

⁵ Another factor not included in this analysis because it was not available in the California Poll but which has been shown to influence support for legislative term limitations is cynicism (Karp 1995).

⁶ In the series of questions used to measure support for a proposition, those who have heard of a proposition are asked whether they are inclined to vote yes or no before being read the explanation. The explanation of the proposition is then read and all respondents, whether they had heard of the proposition or not, are asked whether they are inclined to vote yes or no. Of those who were aware of the proposition and had expressed support for the measure, 13 percent switched to against when read the fiscal impact of the public financing provision. In the other half of the sample, which was read an explanation of Proposition 131 without the fiscal impact of public financing, less than 6 percent switched from support to against. Nominally, the fiscal impact seems to have affected responses. However, because only the provision of public financing and not the fiscal impact appears on the ballot, the fiscal impact would affect the support for those who are aware of the costs.

⁷ Although four other initiatives appeared on the March 5, 2002 ballot, the California poll asked respondents whether they had heard of only one other initiative, the Proposition 42, a Transportation Congestion Improvement Act. Therefore, we are unable to construct an interval level measure that would be similar to that used in the previous analysis.

Table 1: Partisan Differences in Support of Propositions 131 and 140

	<i>August 17-27</i>	<i>October 4-10</i>	<i>October 26-30</i>	<i>November 6</i>
	Prop 131	Prop 131	Prop 131	Prop 131
	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Democrat	0.70	0.64	0.56	0.41
Republican	0.73	0.76	0.62	0.42
Independent	0.58	0.82	0.75	0.43
<i>Total</i>	0.70	0.71	0.60	0.42
	<i>n=393</i>	<i>n=412</i>	<i>n=487</i>	<i>n=2426</i>
	Prop 140	Prop 140	Prop 140	Prop 140
	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Democrat	0.77	0.73	0.61	0.42
Republican	0.80	0.81	0.79	0.62
Independent	0.68	0.86	0.80	0.54
<i>Total</i>	0.78	0.78	0.72	0.51
	<i>n=366</i>	<i>n=457</i>	<i>n=562</i>	<i>n=2417</i>

Source : Field Institute: California Poll (1990) and VRS Exit Poll (November 6, 1990), ICPSR #9604.

Table 2: Estimating Support for California's First Term Limits Initiatives
Logit Coefficients

	<i>Proposition 140</i>			<i>Proposition 131</i>		
	<u>Aug. 17-27</u>	<u>Oct. 4-10</u>	<u>Oct. 26-30</u>	<u>Aug. 17-27</u>	<u>Oct. 4-10</u>	<u>Oct. 26-30</u>
Aware	-.01 (.07)	.11 (.08)	-.16 * (.07)	.01 (.07)	.11 (.07)	.00 (.06)
Party	.07 (.09)	-.02 (.12)	-.12 (.12)	.04 (.08)	.12 (.10)	-.12 (.11)
Aware by Party	-.05 (.03)	.05 (.04)	.06 * (.03)	.02 (.03)	.01 (.03)	.04 (.03)
Female	.32 (.26)	.48 * (.24)	-.03 (.20)	.26 (.23)	.33 (.23)	-.11 (.19)
African American	-.24 (.72)	-.15 (.44)	-.71 (.47)	-.20 (.51)	.57 (.63)	.15 (.54)
Ideology	.30 * (.14)	.28 * (.12)	.30 ** (.10)	-.13 (.11)	.09 (.12)	.21 * (.10)
Fiscal Effects00 (.23)	-.05 (.20)	...	-.76 ** (.23)	-.45 * (.20)
Constant	.99 ** (.22)	.77 ** (.31)	1.53 ** (.32)	.77 ** (.21)	.79 ** (.28)	.62 * (.29)
<i>n</i>	364	451	548	395	407	474
-2 Log Likelihood	383.48	458.30	614.83	473.80	466.57	626.12
% correctly classified	76.92%	77.61%	73.18%	70.63%	72.24%	62.45%

*p<.05

**p<.01

Source: Field Institute: California Opinion Poll (1990)

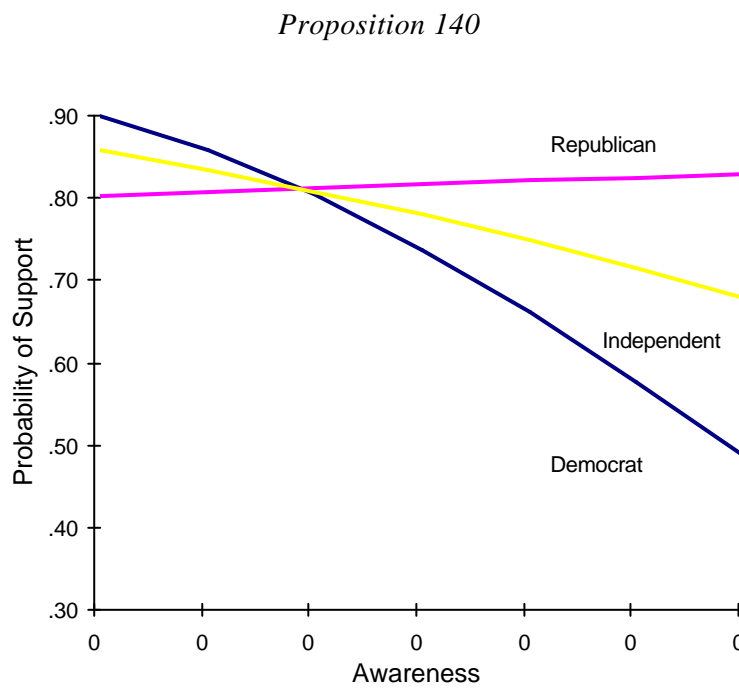
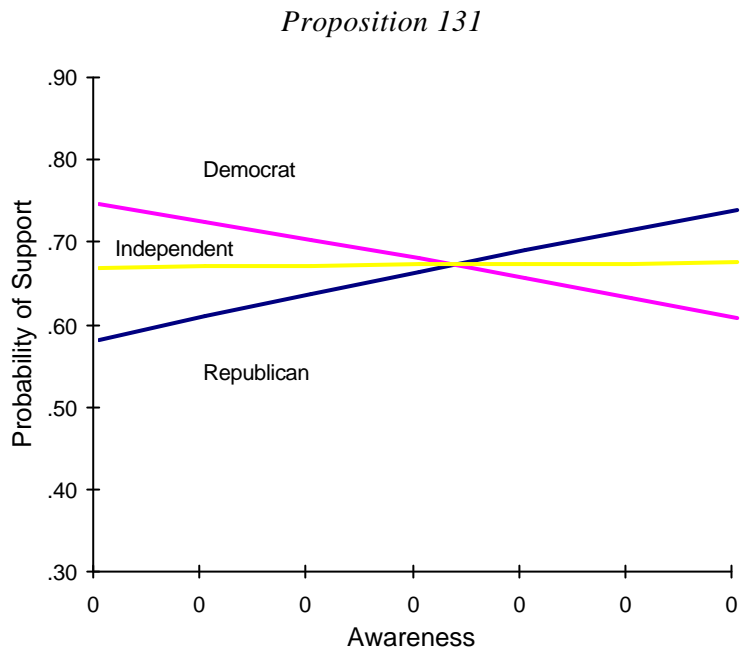
Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses

Partisanship is a seven point scale that varies from strong Republican (+3) to strong Democrat (-3)

with independents and other party identifiers placed at the middle (0).

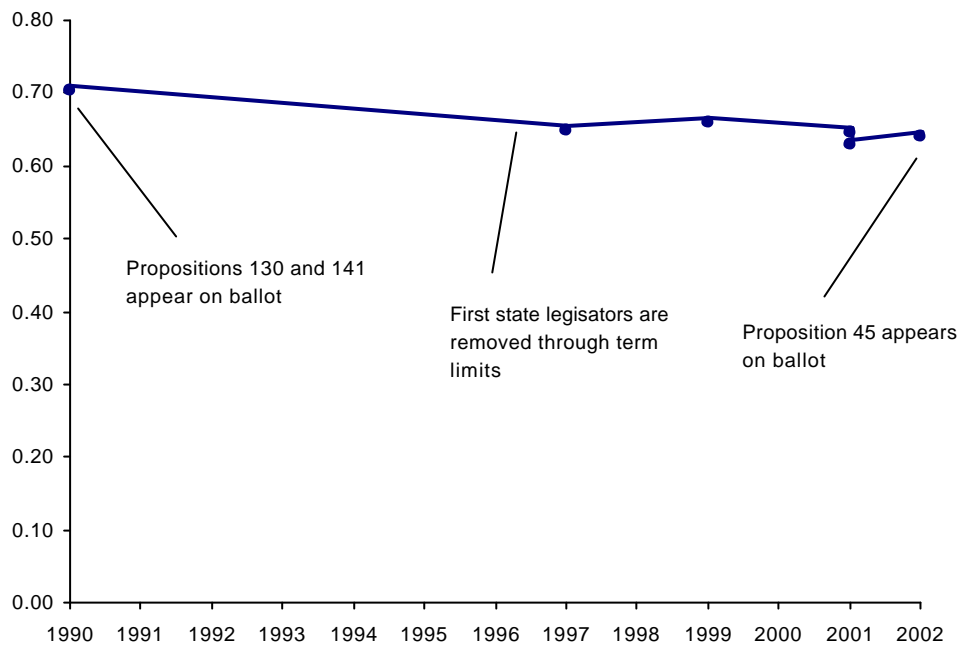
Ideology is a five point scale that varies from conservative (+2) to liberal (-2) with moderates and "don't knows" placed in the middle (0).

Figure 1: Estimated Support for Prop 131 and 140 by Political Awareness



Note: Estimates are derived from coefficients in Table 2 (October 26-30 poll).

Figure 2: Support for Term Limits for State Officials in California (1990-2002)



Do you feel that state elected officials should be limited in the number of terms they are allowed to serve in office, or should they be allowed to run for as many terms as they choose?

Table 3: Estimating Support for Proposition 45 (2002)
Logit Coefficients

	<i>Proposition 45</i>		
	<u>Dec. 3-11</u>	<u>Jan. 23-27</u>	<u>Feb. 22-25</u>
Aware	0.69 ** (0.25)	0.67 ** (0.18)	0.28 * (0.14)
Party	0.01 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.03)	0.04 (0.04)
Aware by Party	-0.03 (0.12)	-0.02 (0.06)	-0.14 * (0.05)
Female	0.09 (0.16)	0.01 (0.13)	0.03 (0.14)
African American	0.36 (0.36)	0.27 (0.25)	-0.26 (0.34)
Ideology	-0.19 ** (0.07)	-0.04 (0.05)	-0.20 ** (0.06)
Fiscal Effects	...	-0.58 ** (0.13)	
Constant	-0.09 (0.12)	-0.08 (0.12)	-0.67 ** (0.13)
<i>n</i>	697	1022	928
-2 Log Likelihood	945.17009	1368.06	1168.646
% correctly classified	56	57.70	65.2

*p<.05

**p<.01

Source: Field Institute: California Opinion Poll (2001, 2002)

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses

Partisanship is a seven point scale that varies from strong Republican (+3) to strong Democrat (-3) with independents and other party identifiers placed at the middle (0).

Ideology is a five point scale that varies from conservative (+2) to liberal (-2) with moderates and "don't knows" placed in the middle (0).

Figure 3. Changing Support for Proposition 45
by Party and Level of Awareness

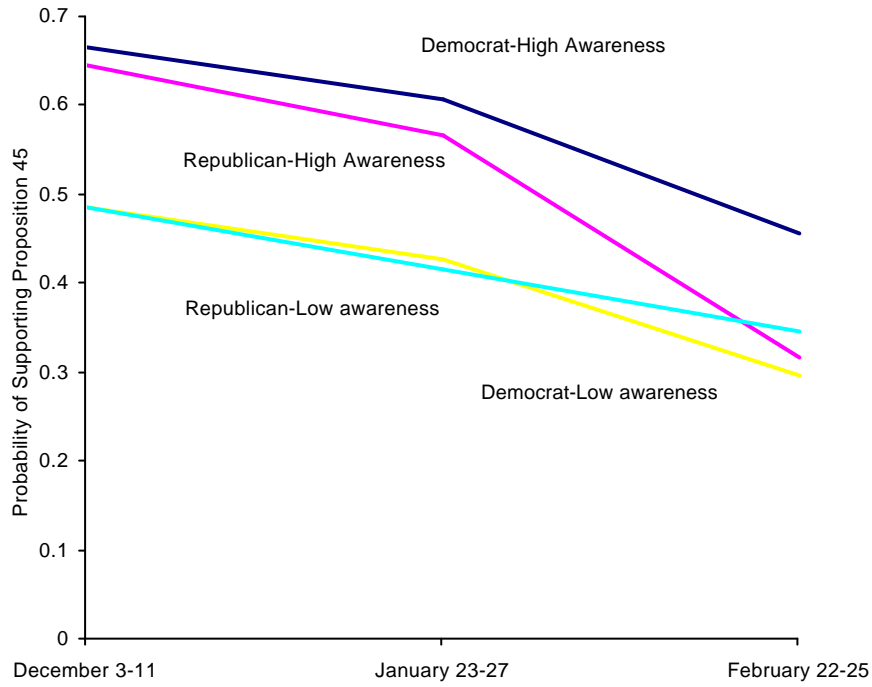


Table 4: Estimating Support for California Term Limits Initiatives
Pooled Cross Sections: Logit Coefficients

	<i>Prop 140</i>	<i>Prop 131</i>	<i>Prop 45</i>
Aware	-.02 (.04)	.03 (.04)	.42 ** (.10)
Party	-.02 (.05)	.04 (.05)	.01 (.02)
Aware by Party by Time	.01 * (.01)	.00 (.01)	-.04 ** (.01)
Time	-.16 + (.09)	-.18 * (.09)	-.38 ** (.06)
Gender	.22 (.13)	.11 (.12)	.05 (.08)
African American	-.34 (.28)	.13 (.31)	.14 (.17)
Ideology	.26 ** (.07)	.06 (.06)	-.14 ** (.03)
Fiscal Effects	.06 (.14)	-.45 ** (.14)	
Constant	1.34 ** (.20)	1.06 ** (.18)	.38 ** (.12)
<i>n</i>	1363	1276	2647
-2 Log Likelihood	1475.69	1590.31	3515.85
Overall fit	75.79%	67.01%	57.5

Source : Field Institute: California Opinion Poll (1990, 2001, 2002)

Note. Standard errors are in parentheses

+p<.10

*p<.05

**p<.01