

*Fairbank,
Maslin,
Maullin,
Metz &
Associates*

FM3

*Public Opinion Research
& Strategy*

TO: Conway Collis
GRACE

FROM: John Fairbank, Paul Maslin and Adam Sonenshein
Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates

RE: Results of Recent Survey

DATE: May 29, 2015

Background:

GRACE contracted with Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) for an exploratory public opinion research project about the views of California voters on the subject of child poverty and potential programs and services to reduce it.

As part of this project FM3 completed a poll of 900 California voters in January 2015.¹ The poll found that voters believe child and family poverty is an extremely serious problem in California, they believe there is a need for additional funding to address it and they view it as an important, personal issue that could affect them personally.

Awareness of Poverty Issue

Results of several questions in the poll show that California's voters are aware of the poverty issue:

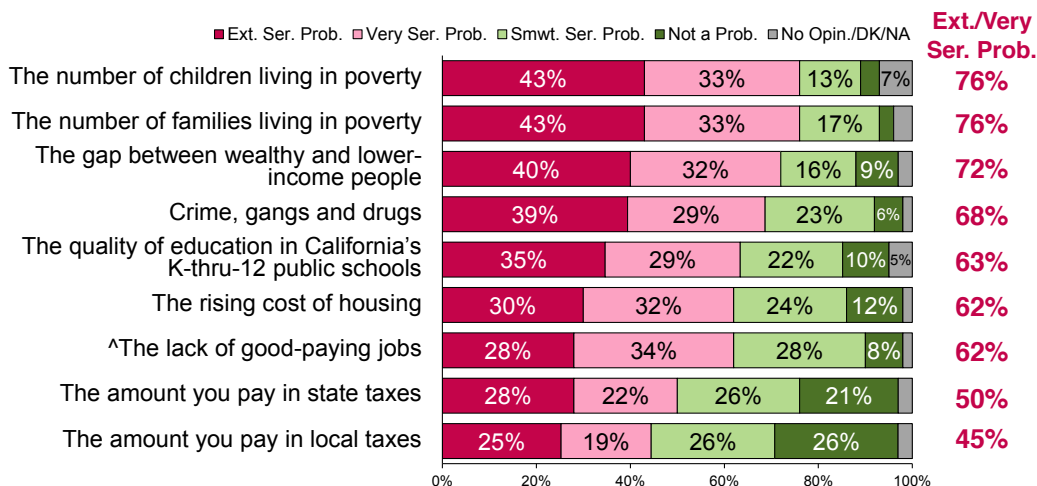
Voters believe child and family poverty is as serious a problem as the quality of local schools and crime (see **Table 1** below). It was rated as the most serious issue tested in the poll². This finding seems to mark a change in the opinions of California's voters who have typically selected crime and education as the top-rated items on this question over the past several years. The rating did not change when the question was posed as "the number of children" or "the number of families" living

¹ The poll's margin of error for questions asked of the full sample is +/- 3.3% at the 95% confidence interval.

² The drought issue was not tested in the poll, however salience has increased substantially in the last several months.

in poverty, indicating that California’s voters recognize the need to support both children and their families.

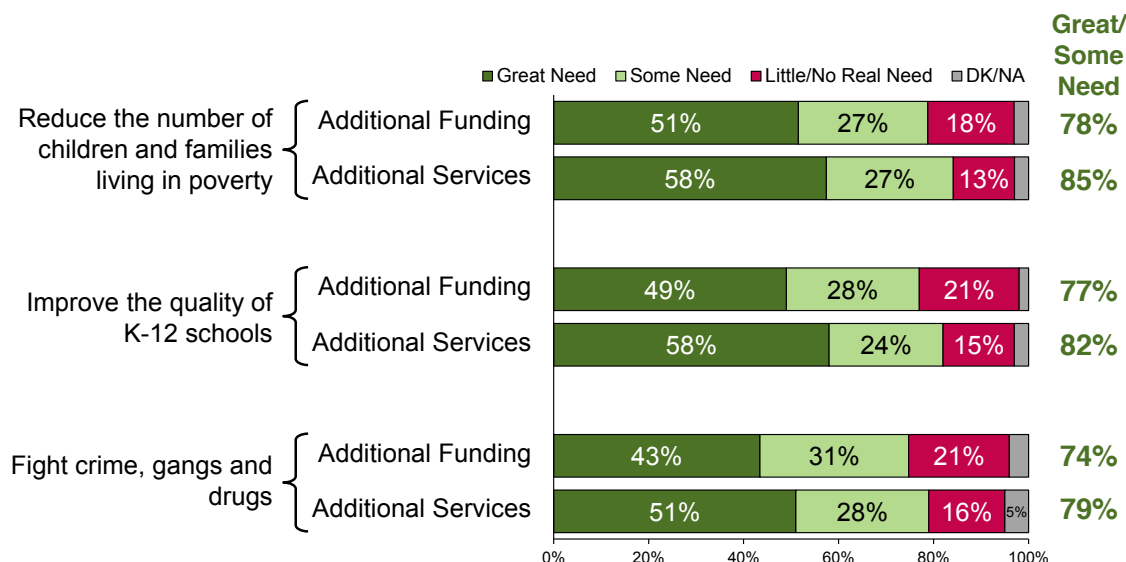
Table 1: Rating of Seriousness of Problems Facing California



Need for Funding

Voters clearly want the poverty issue to be addressed. They saw the need for additional funding and services to “reduce the number of children and families living in poverty” as greater than or equal to the need for funding and services to “improve the quality of K-12 schools” or to “fight crime, gangs and drugs” (see **Table 2** below). More than half of voters (51%) perceive the need for additional funding and services to address child and family poverty as “great” and an additional quarter (27%) perceive some need.

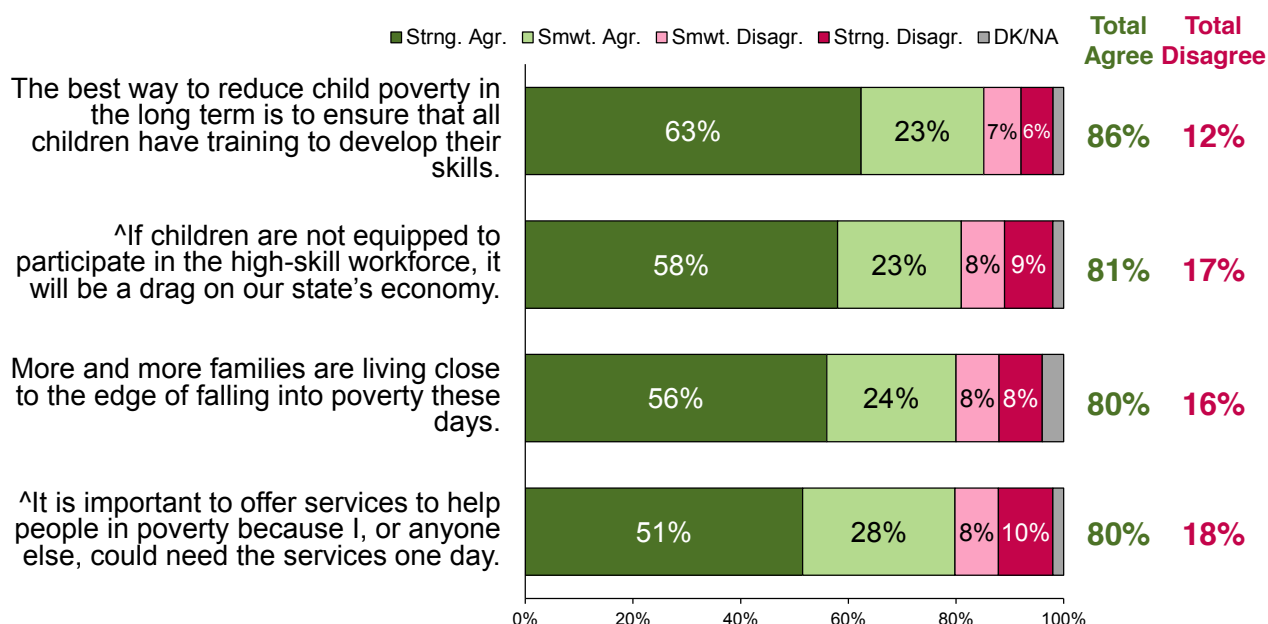
Table 2: Need for Funding for Additional Funding and Services



Importance of Child Poverty

Voters’ reaction to several statements in the poll support findings mentioned earlier that show voters think the poverty problem in California is significant, personal and has important ramifications. Voters make a clear connection between skill development, poverty and the long-term economy, with over 80 percent agreeing with statements that make that connection (see **Table 3** below). Further, 80 percent of voters or more say that family poverty is increasing and that they see the potential for themselves to need services.

Table 3: Agreement with Statements about Child and Family Poverty



Willingness to Raise Taxes

The poll indicated that California’s voters may be willing to support increased taxes to fund services that address child and family poverty. There was strong support in the poll for establishing a 0.2% surcharge on all residential and commercial properties valued at over \$3 million with exemptions for people on fixed incomes and small businesses.

Conclusion

California’s voters clearly believe that addressing child and family poverty is important and additional funding is needed to address it.