



MEMORANDUM

April 28th, 2021

TO: AIDS HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION

FROM: PAUL GOODWIN
Goodwin Simon Strategic Research

RE: Topline Findings from Los Angeles Voter Survey

Overview

A survey completed in mid-April with 500 Los Angeles city voters shows extraordinarily high levels of concern about homelessness, compassion for the unhoused, and support for changes to current city homelessness policies. Such changes include support for improving services provided to homeless encampments, support for prefab modular housing over more expensive permanent housing, and giving higher priority to temporary housing to those who are ill and on the streets over those who are healthy and residing in city parks. Voters also support requiring developers to greatly increase over current levels the proportion of affordable units in new housing developments.

The survey also shows high favorable ratings for Mayor Garcetti, even among those most concerned about homelessness, and also high favorables for the AIDS Healthcare Foundation.

Finally, the poll takes an early look at the race for mayor of Los Angeles. It finds the candidates closely bunched in a six-way primary race matchup, but that Councilman Kevin deLeón has an early lead of 10 points or more over his rivals in a variety of two-way general election matchups.

Findings on Homelessness

- **Ninety-six percent of L.A. city voters say that homelessness is a “very” or “somewhat” serious problem, with fully 79% who say it is “very” serious.** This result expresses an exceptionally high level of urgency about the problem. Black voters and renters are especially focused on homelessness, with more than 90% in each group who rate this problem as “very serious.”
- **Fully 70% believe the problem of homelessness in the city has gotten worse in the past year.**

- Most L.A. voters (and in particular Black and Latino voters) show compassion toward the unhoused, with **54% blaming rising rents and inadequate wages over poor personal choices (31%) as the primary cause of homelessness**. This ratio is reversed among the city's relatively few GOP voters and white conservatives.
- By more than a two-to-one margin, **voters believe that the city should make housing and services for the homeless a priority (66%) over protecting neighborhoods from the homeless (29%)**. Black voters were especially likely to say that services and housing for the homeless should be the priority.
- **Eighty-five percent of L.A. voters support more services such as trash pickup and toilets for existing homeless encampments**, with just 12% opposed. There is no significant difference by ideology, with 87% of liberals and 84% of conservatives who would favor an increase in such services for homeless encampments.
- There is **very strong support for proposals to build more housing for the unhoused**, including 86% who favor converting city-owned empty lots into housing for the homeless, 85% who favor converting unused motels to housing, and 84% who favor building more permanent housing options for the unhoused, such as apartments.
- **A large majority supports requiring developers to set aside 35% or 50% of new housing units for rental at affordable rates (77% and 71%, respectively)**.
- L.A.'s voters support – by more than two to one – **building less expensive prefabricated modular housing (58%) over the city's current efforts to build permanent housing at a cost of \$500,000 per unit or more (26%)**.
- When it comes to placements in temporary housing, **voters believe the higher priority should be the unhoused who are mentally or physically ill and living on the street (64%) over the city's recent practice of giving priority to healthy unhoused residents residing in parks (26% of voters favor this option)**.

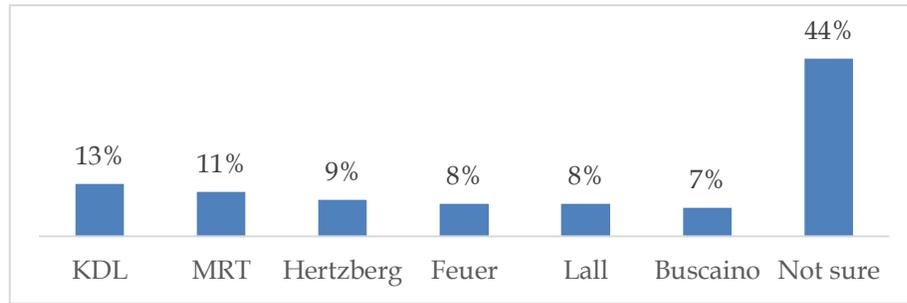
Views about Garcetti and the AHF

Voters continue to express positive views about Mayor Eric Garcetti, who is earning a 68% favorable rating, with just 27% who have unfavorable views about him. This includes a 76% favorable rating from Democrats, 53% from Independents, and 47% from GOP voters. Even among voters who feel that homelessness is growing worse, 61% give Garcetti a favorable rating.

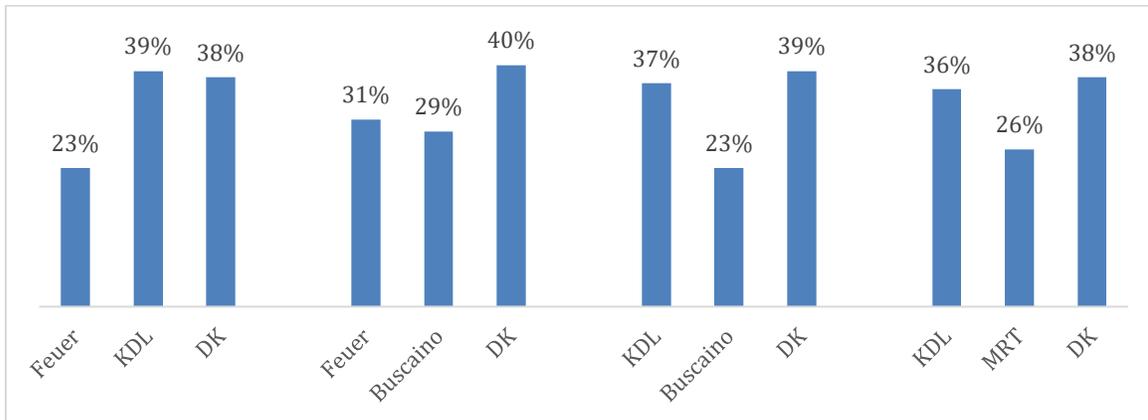
The AIDS Healthcare Foundation earns a 74% favorable rating from L.A. voters, with just 9% who have an unfavorable opinion about it and 18% who say they can't rate it or are not familiar with it.

The Mayor's Race

An early look at the race for mayor of Los Angeles shows that Councilmembers Kevin deLeón and Mark Ridley-Thomas start in the low teens (13% and 11%, respectively), a few points ahead of the field we tested (also including State Senator Bob Hertzberg, City Attorney Mike Feuer, Councilmember Joe Buscaino, and Jessica Lall of the Central City Association), with 44% undecided. DeLeón earns 31% support from Latinos (28% of all respondents), while MRT earns 27% from Black voters (9% of all respondents). White voters divide fairly evenly across the candidates.



DeLeón has a 10 to 16 point early lead over Feuer, Buscaino, and Ridley-Thomas in two-way matchups, driven by strong support from Latino voters (54% to 62% depending on the matchup). He also leads by 5 to 7 points among white voters in these matchups. Black voters divide for Ridley-Thomas by two to one when matched against DeLeón. A matchup between Councilman Joe Buscaino and City Attorney Mike Feuer shows the two essentially tied at about 30% each. Across the four two-way matchups, we find 38% to 40% undecided.



Methodology: Goodwin Simon Strategic Research completed 500 interviews in English and Spanish between April 13 and 18, 2021 with participants in a randomly recruited panel of Los Angeles voters. Respondents self-identified as city residents, as registered voters, and as likely to vote for mayor in the election next year. Results were weighted slightly by age, political party, and education levels to match estimates for voters in November 2022.