

August 25, 2015

To: Interested Parties

From: Ben Tulchin, Corey O’Neil and Kiel Brunner; Tulchin Research

Re: **California Statewide Survey Finds Voters Oppose Asset Forfeiture For Those Not Convicted of a Crime**

Tulchin Research recently conducted a California statewide survey on behalf of the ACLU of California Center for Advocacy & Policy to assess how likely voters think and feel about the criminal justice system, especially with regard to asset forfeiture by law enforcement. This research aims to gauge voter sentiments towards these issues in California specifically and help inform elected officials in Sacramento about the public’s desire to reform how police interact with the public, especially communities of color.

We provide below a summary of the key findings from the survey.

Police Asset Forfeiture without Conviction

The survey asked a series of questions on voters’ opinions of asset forfeiture by police. The results were very consistent in terms of voters’ dislike for the practice of police permanently taking property away from people who have not been convicted of a crime. Specifically, voters in California feel strongly that police should **not** be able to permanently seize the property or assets of people who have **not** been convicted of a crime as more than three quarters (76 percent) responded that this should not be permitted compared to only 14 percent who felt this was an acceptable tactic with the remaining 10 percent unsure. Similarly, the vast majority of voters (70 percent) reject asset forfeiture for people *suspected* of but not charged with a crime while only 16 percent favor this approach.

Strong Opposition for Police Asset Forfeitures, Especially without a Conviction

	No	Yes	Don’t Know	No - Yes
Should police be allowed to seize and permanently take away property from people who have not been convicted of a crime ?	76%	14%	10%	+62
What about people suspected of committing a crime? Should police be allowed to seize and permanently take away their property even if they haven’t been charged or convicted ?	70%	16%	15%	+54

Ending the practice of taking property from people who have not been convicted of a crime is broadly supported across a myriad of demographic groups.

- Voters among all ethnicities in California including nearly nine-in-ten African American voters (89 percent), over three quarters of white voters (76 percent), and more than seven in ten Asian (73 percent) and Latino voters (72 percent) oppose seizing and permanently taking away the assets of those not convicted of a crime by law enforcement;

- Opposition also carries across party lines as strong majorities of Democrats (75 percent), Republicans (75 percent) and independent voters (79 percent) oppose this practice; and
- These sentiments also hold across the state as at least three quarters of voters in every region of the state, from coastal to inland areas and from North to South opposes asset forfeiture in the absence of a conviction.

The table below shows the results among likely voters.

<u>Opposition to Asset Forfeiture Without Conviction</u>	
<i>Should police be allowed to seize and permanently take away property from people who have not been convicted of a crime?</i>	
	No
All California Voters	76%
<u>Ethnicity</u>	
Blacks	89%
Latinos	72%
Asians	73%
Whites	76%
<u>Party</u>	
Democrats	75%
Republicans	75%
Independents	79%
<u>Region</u>	
LA County	75%
LA Area	78%
Bay Area	75%
San Diego	76%
Sacramento/ North	75%
Central Valley	77%

Conclusion

Our research finds that voters across the state have strong preferences for improving how law enforcement interacts with the public, especially when it comes to ending the practice of permanently seizing the assets of people who have not been convicted of a crime. Support for eliminating this law enforcement tactic is strong across all demographic and geographic lines.

Survey Methodology: Tulchin Research conducted a statewide survey in California among 900 likely November 2016 voters, including a statewide base sample of 800 voters and an oversample of 100 African American voters. The oversample of African American voters provides increased statistical confidence for that specific demographic group. Interviews were conducted online from July 10-14, 2015. The margin of error for the statewide base sample is +/- 3.46 percent.