

Penta Policy Insiders

California Insights Review Series

Infrastructure



Executive Summary

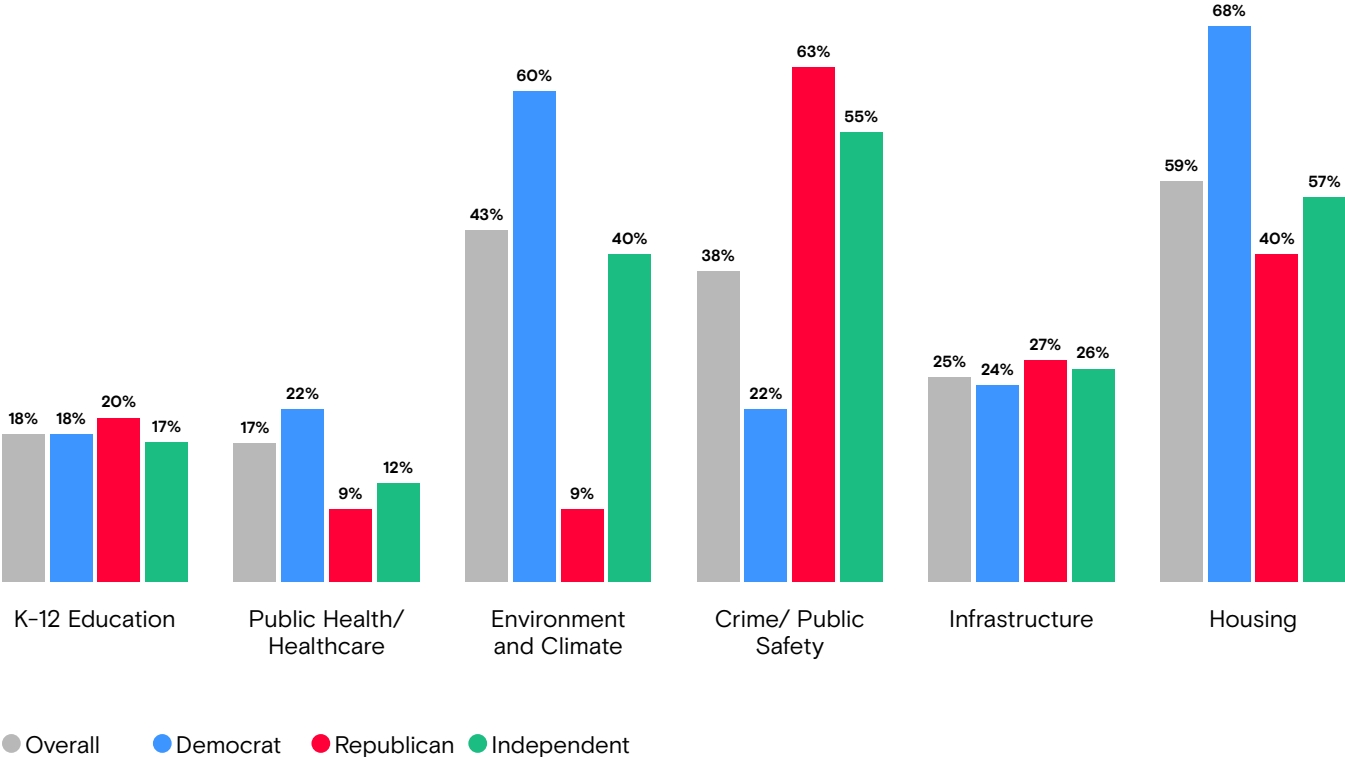
We are thrilled to share our findings from our fourth annual California Insights Review. From April to July 2022, we interviewed over 371 policymakers in California to gain a deeper understanding of the policy priorities for the state and what the private sector is doing to engage with the identified challenges.

Along with issues such as housing, the environment, and healthcare, one of the most significant challenges we heard policymakers detail is the state’s infrastructure, with almost

a quarter of decision-makers detailing it as a top priority. Policymakers also discuss how they would like to see the private sector get involved to help solve some of these concerns, and note that this kind of engagement would be beneficial in bolstering development of local communities and the state as a whole.

This report is the fourth in a series that examines California policymakers’ top policy priorities of 2022. This review examines Infrastructure in the state.

Which of the following do you view as the most pressing issues facing the state?



Qualitative n=49, Quantitative n=322

Infrastructure

Decision-makers in California are concerned about the state's infrastructure, particularly as it relates to transportation. To help bolster the state's infrastructure, policy leaders want to see more forms of transportation and increased manufacturing capacity, and detail the challenges and opportunities with the rise of electric and autonomous vehicles.



Relieving the congestion of Southern California traffic is another [policy priority]. We have to do a better job of getting cars off the street.

Councilmember, Municipal, R



We need more interconnectivity between different modes of travel. I don't think we're tapping into that enough.

Mayor Pro Tempore, Municipal, R



Almost every city has very aging infrastructure. So we're very happy that the federal government is concentrating on infrastructure but the money is trickling down.

Councilmember, Municipal, D

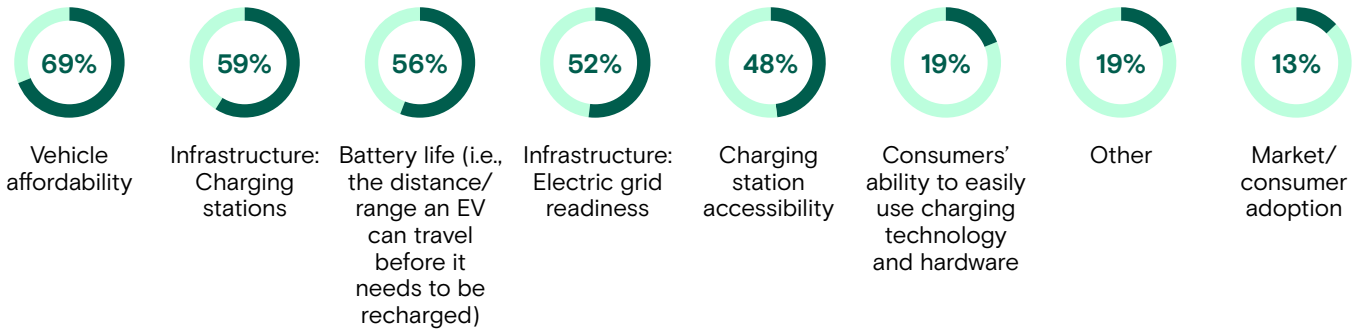


We have seen vehicles that cannot get parts, predominantly chips, that are required to make sure that all the technology in those vehicles work. And **I think it calls for us to review and reassess the diversity of capabilities to build kinds of things. There's a lot in this country we just don't do anymore.**

Director, Executive, D

Top concerns for California policymakers: Implementation of EV

n=308



While **45 percent** of respondents are supportive of a transition to electric vehicles (EVs), many are concerned about the infrastructure surrounding implementation, including affordability, availability of charging stations, and electric grid readiness.



We need to first make sure that we have enough electricity. Electric vehicles cost more money, so **you need to make sure that the transition isn't regressive.**

VP of Communications, Private, R



If every vehicle was electrical and we're already having an electrical power grid issue, then **will the grid even be able to support that continuous transition of vehicles?**

Councilmember, Municipal, D



My first concern is creating the infrastructure prior to the development and introduction of the [electric] vehicle. So if we don't have an electric charging system set up, it's not going to do any good to produce the vehicles.

Mayor, Municipal, D



I think there are issues that we haven't fully thought through, **but it does seem to be becoming more and more viable.** More and more vehicles are available on the market for electric vehicles, **but I think policymakers need to consider other alternatives.**

Chief of Staff, Legislative, D



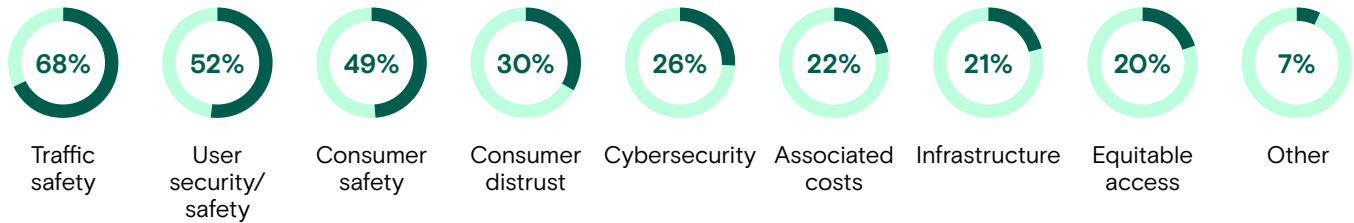
I think electric vehicle transition is great. I think that technology is catching up. However, **I'm still very, very concerned about battery recycling.**

Mayor, Municipal, R

Development and Consumer use of Autonomous Vehicles

Top concerns with the development and consumer use of autonomous vehicles

n=301



State policymakers across party lines express several concerns with the technology and integration of autonomous vehicles within the state, particularly with regard to consumer safety. In fact, **49 percent** of decision-makers are concerned with the safety of autonomous vehicles.



I think there's still a lot we don't know. Not necessarily about the technology itself, but **how are these vehicles going to actually integrate into communities.**

Deputy Secretary, Executive, D



A few years ago, I thought this was going to be viable. But now **I'm beginning to question the viability... you hear these news stories about issues and accidents.** And I'm a little more skeptical than I was maybe three, four years ago.

Chief of Staff, Legislative, D



There's a lot of practical usage we can use autonomous vehicles for. **I think we need to continue and get them on the road as quickly as possible.**

Mayor Pro Tempore, Municipal, R



You cannot have driverless autonomous [vehicles]; you always have to have a driver in the car. And if the driver is not paying attention, sometimes the autonomous vehicle doesn't have the technology to do what it needs to do. But I think we're getting there. **I think we're going to get there quicker than most people think we are, but I think there's still a lot of work to be done.**

Mayor Pro Tempore, Municipal, R

Conclusion

California faces numerous infrastructure challenges, ranging from supporting the transition to electric vehicles, to the introduction of autonomous vehicles. Additionally, policymakers express the necessity of increased modes of transportation in order to relieve the state's increased traffic congestion – particularly in areas of Southern California.¹ Decision-makers support local engagement with private entities and other local leaders in order to sustainably improve the state's infrastructure and introduce environmentally friendly modes of transportation.

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Citations

1. <https://www.foxla.com/news/los-angeles-has-the-6th-worst-traffic-in-the-us-study-finds>

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