

Penta Policy Insiders

California Insights Review Series

Top Policy Issues



Executive Summary

We are excited to share findings from our fourth annual California Insights Review. From April to July 2022, we surveyed and spoke with over 371 state and local policymakers in California to understand policy priorities throughout the state and how the private and public sectors are engaging on those issues.

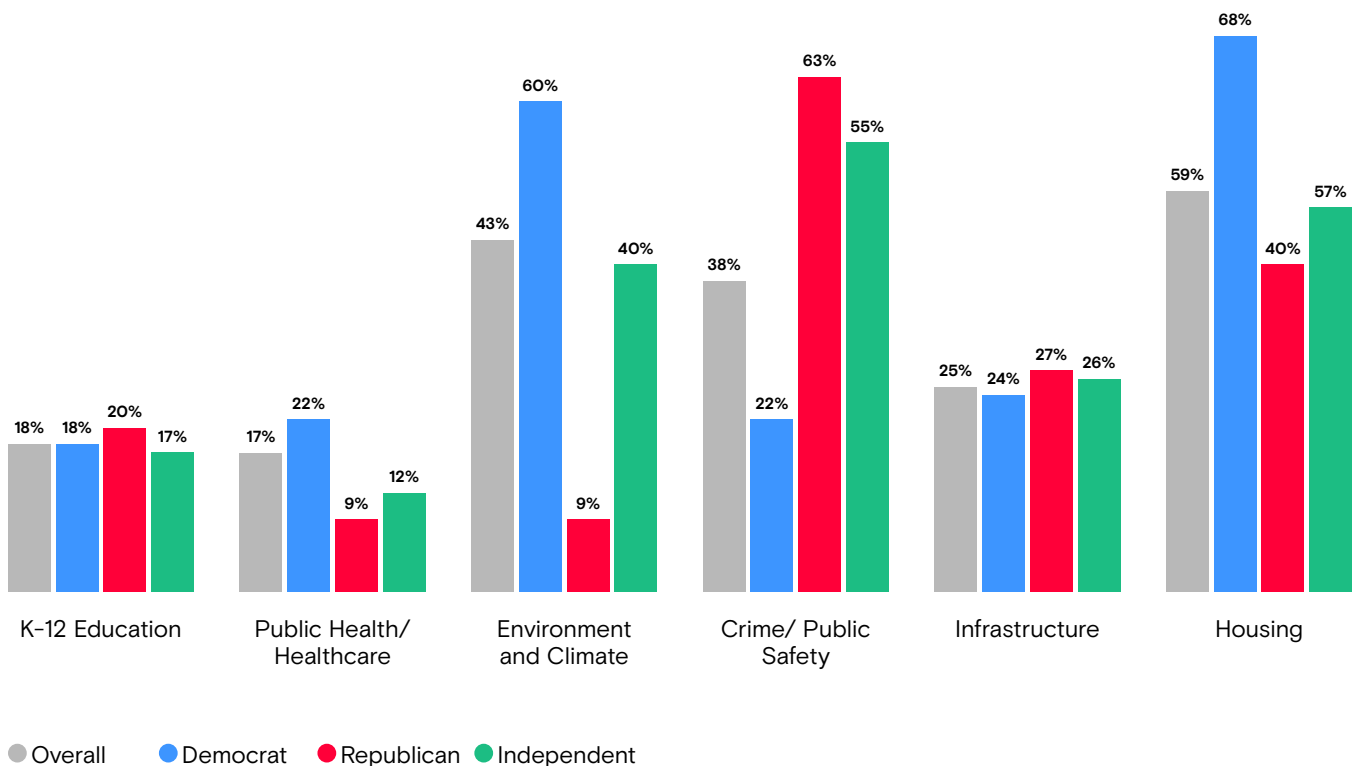
This year, policymakers center on the interconnectedness of issues across the state, focusing on concerns that have been long-standing in California. Housing has remained the top priority for California policymakers for four years in a row, with policymakers highlighting a multitude of concerns, such as healthcare and infrastructure, also impacted by this particular

issue. 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 to both local communities and the state as a whole.

This is the first report in a series that covers various top policy priorities in the state of California. This report is an examination of overall policymaker priorities for this year.

This first review highlights five of California policymakers' top policy priorities, which include (i) Housing (ii) Environment and Climate (iii) Crime and Public Safety (iv) Infrastructure and (v) Education.

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



Qualitative n=49, Quantitative n=322

Top Issues in 2022

Housing

Improving housing accessibility is the top priority for policymakers across all parties. Fifty-nine percent of policymakers report this to be the most pressing issue for 2022.



Most important policy issues for California in [2022] - **I'll go big buckets and specify housing...** I think both **investments in affordable immediate housing** and then also drastic change in **how we address our general housing stock problem**.

Health Deputy, Municipal, R



I think housing is extremely important. It's really bad here in California. Lack of housing and the price of housing, and tied in with that is homelessness. I think there's some connection there between those two problems.

Advisor, Executive, D



I would say housing is probably right at the top of our list in California right now.

Councilmember, Municipal, I

Environment and Climate

While the environment and climate rank as the second priority overall, there is a clear distinction in importance between parties. Sixty percent of Democrats identify the environment and climate as a pressing issue, whereas only nine percent of Republicans report the same.



I think climate change is very important. That includes reducing emissions and also dealing with the impacts of climate change, such as wildfire. **That's a big deal.**

Advisor, Executive, D



I would say number one is climate change for the whole of California. So we're talking about sea level rise, climate adaptation strategies, giving the private sector leverage to build our infrastructure and combat heat in certain communities and air quality issues.

Consultant, Legislative, R

Crime and Public Safety

Policymakers believe an emphasis on solutions for crime and public safety issues are key, particularly given concerns around inflation.



I think public safety is a big one.

District Attorney, Municipal, D



Because of inflation, because the price of everything is going up, **I'm hearing a lot of crime, a lot of robberies, a lot of people stealing catalytic converters.** I've heard that a lot recently.

Field Representative, Legislative, D

K-12 Education

Policymakers across parties agree that education remains a priority in the coming year.



I always try to look at it as education needs more investment.

Councilmember, Municipal, D

Infrastructure

Improving infrastructure in California is a top priority for policymakers. They place a particular focus on the state's transportation systems, especially in regards to electric vehicles (EVs).



There's always infrastructure needs, no matter what. It would be nice if the state worked a little bit more proactively with the needs of the cities.

Mayor Pro Tempore, Municipal, D



I think we need better infrastructure when it comes to transit and different modes other than single-passenger vehicles. **We need established infrastructure, whether it's rail or bus, rapid transit, or whatever. We need more interconnectivity** between different modes of travel. I don't think we're tapping into that enough.

Mayor Pro Tempore, Municipal, R

Public Health and Healthcare

Policymakers want to see more investment in healthcare, particularly when it comes to accessibility and mental health resources.



A more broad investment in local access to healthcare, especially in areas that are under-resourced. And then more specifically... something I feel is acutely needed is **investments and change in the mental health care system.** Both investments in resources as well as changes to state laws that better allow us to provide mental health resources.

Health Deputy, Municipal, R



I think the biggest priorities for 2022 are really going to end up being...public health issues around continuing with COVID, abortion, privacy, and health care. I think they're going to be big.

Health Program Specialist, Executive, D

Partnership with the Private Sector

Policymakers see opportunities to work with the private sector in order to address their priority issues for the year, and believe that engagement on this level is key to moving the state forward.



What I think should be happening is more engagement on the local level with private companies, legislative and local leaders.

Consultant, Legislative, R



I think that the only way for us really to truly get anything done is with partnerships. Private partnerships are always the best because they can happen quickly, and there's more buy-in and engagement if you have a private partnership.

Mayor, Municipal, R



I think another area where we really appreciate the private sector's engagement is in sort of... cutting green tape and **helping us see where we may be inadvertently creating a challenge or where we're not necessarily creating a challenge, but where we have a useful role in undoing a challenge.**

Deputy Secretary, Executive, D

Conclusion

Policymakers believe housing to be the most significant issue facing California today, but also view the environment and public safety as other top areas in need of attention. They are also working to make improvements in education and healthcare. Policymakers are looking to industry leaders to help them address these challenges, particularly when it comes to getting solutions to local communities in a more timely manner.

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Messaging, Communications,
& Go-To-Market

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Policymaker Research

Trend Forecasting: What's Next?

Message Testing

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Public Opinion Polling

Stakeholder Mapping & Research

About Penta Policy Insiders

Penta provides direct feedback from policymakers to government relations professionals, improving advocates' ability to understand, validate, and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their engagement.

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