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POLL: 2 in 3 Likely San Francisco Voters Support Establishing a Public Bank

SF likely voters overwhelmingly support a public bank, more so if a "green bank" or offering greater "public control" and investments in "people over profits"

San Francisco advocates celebrated the passage of the CA Public Banking Act in September 2019.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES, October 7, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- An Underpin poll commissioned by the San Francisco Public Bank Coalition (SFPBC) found two in three (67%) likely San Francisco voters support establishing a public bank.

The Underpin-SFPBC poll also found that 70% of voters were more likely to support the bank if it were initially a green bank, with investments in renewable energy later supporting affordable housing and other community needs; 9.5% are less likely. The results also show that San Franciscans are especially supportive (+4.7%) of a public bank that "put people over profits and invest[ed] in things that lower costs," or if a public bank meant "giving the public more control."

> San Franciscans sent a clear message: we want our money working for our city, not siphoned off to Wall Street. We want a public bank to lower costs and build an economy where everyone can thrive."
>
> *Misha Steier, spokesperson of the SF Public Bank Coalition*

The poll found support for a public bank among two thirds of San Franciscans despite just over half (51%) having heard of a public bank before. Respondents were given a basic description of a public bank followed by more specific parameters such as a "green bank."

Additional key findings show consistent support across household differences:
— Support for a public bank is consistent across income brackets
— At least two in three renters and homeowners support a public bank
— 18-35 year-olds overwhelmingly support establishing a public bank (73.6%)

Read the report memo here and press release from SFPBC here.

In 2023, San Francisco city leadership unanimously approved plans to pursue a public bank and funded a Feasibility Task Force in 2023. This poll signals a significant investment by advocates looking to ramp up efforts to make San Francisco the first city to establish a municipal public bank.

“San Franciscans, especially young people, are demanding bold solutions to today’s affordability and climate crises,” said Supervisor Jackie Fielder, co-founder of the San Francisco Public Bank Coalition. “A public bank is how we take our money back from Wall Street and reinvest it into housing, clean energy, and small businesses right here at home. Voters are ready for a Green Bank that works for the people, not for profit."

This survey provides an up-to-date picture of support for a long-standing effort to establish public banks in California, particularly since the Great Recession and 2021 legislation AB 857, The California Public Banking Act. In 2023, the Los Angeles City Council unanimously approved a resolution to fund the development of a business plan for a municipal bank in L.A. amid research supporting its impacts on affordable housing, small business lending, and green energy. Nationwide, several city-based efforts to establish a public bank have also progressed in Rochester, NY; Philadelphia and elsewhere.

The results complement other polling that suggests Americans want to see change when it comes to financial institutions; a Pew survey of U.S. adults in January 2024 found 60% believe banks “have a negative effect on the way things are going in the country these days,” with consistent findings across both Republicans and Democrats. While recent legislation has rolled back consumer banking protections such as limits on hidden fees, polling from Americans for Financial Reform in March 2025 showed strong bipartisan support for such regulations to remain. A Morning Consult poll from January 2025 found a majority of Americans also want to see more community banks.

This poll was conducted by Underpin, a political strategy, research and communications firm, in partnership with Swayable, a trusted survey partner for both private and public-sector organizations such as the ACLU, UAW, AFLCIO, DCCC, among others. A random sample of 541 respondents was drawn throughout August and results are weighted to represent Census-based demographics in the City and County of San Francisco. The margin of error across the sample is +/- 4.4 percentage points.

For more on poll methods and details, contact info@underpin.us

About Underpin
Underpin connects grassroots organizing and grasstops policymaking using rigorous research, narrative, advocacy, and culture interventions. Our polling and message-testing follows the

highest standards of evidence with top FiveThirtyEight-rated vendors and sampling methods.

About San Francisco Public Bank Coalition
The mission of The San Francisco Public Bank Coalition (SFPBC) is to educate San Franciscans about costs associated with the City and County of San Francisco's private banking relationships, and ensure a future public bank of San Francisco abides by principles of racial, social, economic, and environmental justice.

Misha Steier
San Francisco Public Bank Coalition
+1 415-926-3971
mishasteiersf@gmail.com
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X
