

July 9, 2020

To: Interested Parties

From: Ben Tulchin, Ben Krompak, and Ross Miletich; Tulchin Research

Polling Finds Gascón Leads Lacey in Close Race for LA County District Attorney

Tulchin Research recently conducted a survey among likely voters in Los Angeles County to assess the state of the race for District Attorney between incumbent Jackie Lacey and justice reform advocate George Gascón. Our polling finds a close and competitive race in which Gascón currently leads Lacey by a 3-point margin. Trailing her challenger and attracting support well below 50%, Lacey is in real peril of losing re-election. Lacey faces an electorate who has grown increasingly skeptical of her hardline approach to criminal justice and who widely favors a District Attorney who is independent from police unions and refuses to take their money over a politician like Lacey who is staunchly backed by police unions.

Voters Back Gascón Over Lacey in a Close Contest, Prefer a D.A. Independent of Police Unions

Our poll finds that George Gascón has taken the lead over incumbent Jackie Lacey, attracting support from 35% of voters while Lacey is supported by 32% and 33% of voters are still undecided. While the race is quite close and competitive, Lacey is in a challenging position for a two-term incumbent, polling well below 50% and already trailing her challenger in his first Los Angeles County election.

LA District Attorney: Initial Vote	
<i>If the election for Los Angeles County District Attorney were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were justice reform advocate George Gascón and Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey?</i>	
	<i>Initial Vote</i>
George Gascón	35%
Jackie Lacey	32%
Undecided	33%
Gascón – Lacey	+3

Additionally, the poll finds that voters strongly prefer a District Attorney candidate like Gascón over a candidate like Lacey when it comes to holding police accountable to the communities they serve. Voters favor “a candidate who refuses to take money from the police officers’ union to avoid any conflict in case an officer needs to be investigated for wrongdoing” over “a candidate who is proud to be supported by police officers, including getting money from their union, because the police trust this candidate in fighting crime” by a 54-point margin, with 7 in 10 voters (70%) choosing a candidate who is independent of police unions and just 16% preferring a candidate backed by police unions. While Lacey has benefited from millions of dollars in political spending by police unions, Gascon – a veteran police officer turned justice reform advocate – has pledged to be an independent watchdog and has sworn off such donations.

Which candidate for District Attorney do you prefer?	
_ A candidate who refuses to take money from the police officers' union to avoid any conflict in case an officer needs to be investigated for wrongdoing.	70%
_ A candidate who is proud to be supported by police officers, including getting money from their union, because the police trust this candidate in fighting crime.	16%
Refuses Money from Police Unions - Supported by Police Unions	+54

In conclusion, George Gascón is well positioned to win this election and become the next District Attorney of Los Angeles County, provided he has the necessary resources to communicate his reform message to voters. Gascón has already taken an early lead over incumbent Jackie Lacey, whose support is well below 50%, and Lacey's close ties to police unions put her out of step with an electorate that is concerned about police misconduct and seeking independent leadership in the District Attorney's office.

Survey Methodology: From June 26 – July 6, 2020, Tulchin Research conducted a survey among 800 likely November 2020 election voters in Los Angeles County. The survey was conducted via online panel survey in both English and Spanish. The margin of error for the survey is +/- 3.46 percentage points.