

Brown, Boxer keep California a blue state

By Stu Woo and Jim Carlton, Wall Street Journal

OAKLAND — California voters seemed to buck the national trend of anti-establishment anger on Tuesday by electing two Democratic stalwarts in the state's top-ticket races and adding to the state legislature's Democratic majority.

Former two-term Gov. Jerry Brown was projected to make a remarkable return to the governor's office, a post he first held 36 years ago. Mr. Brown was leading Republican Meg Whitman 50.9% to 44.3%.

Polls also indicated that Democratic Sen. Barbara Boxer, 69 years old, would well fend off a feisty challenge from Republican Carly Fiorina, 56. The liberal icon was leading 48.8% to 45.6%.

The twin wins could reinforce a broader Democratic dominance of the nation's most-populous state. With Mr. Brown's win, and with their candidates leading the races for lieutenant governor and insurance commissioner, the Democrats are positioned to claim every statewide office—as long they win a down-to-the-wire attorney-general race.

The Democrats' staying power may also extend to the state legislature, where the party is expected to retain or enlarge its already-dominant majority. Democratic lawmakers are also expected to win their holy grail: a ballot measure that would allow them to pass a budget with a 50% majority—which is to say, without any GOP support.

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