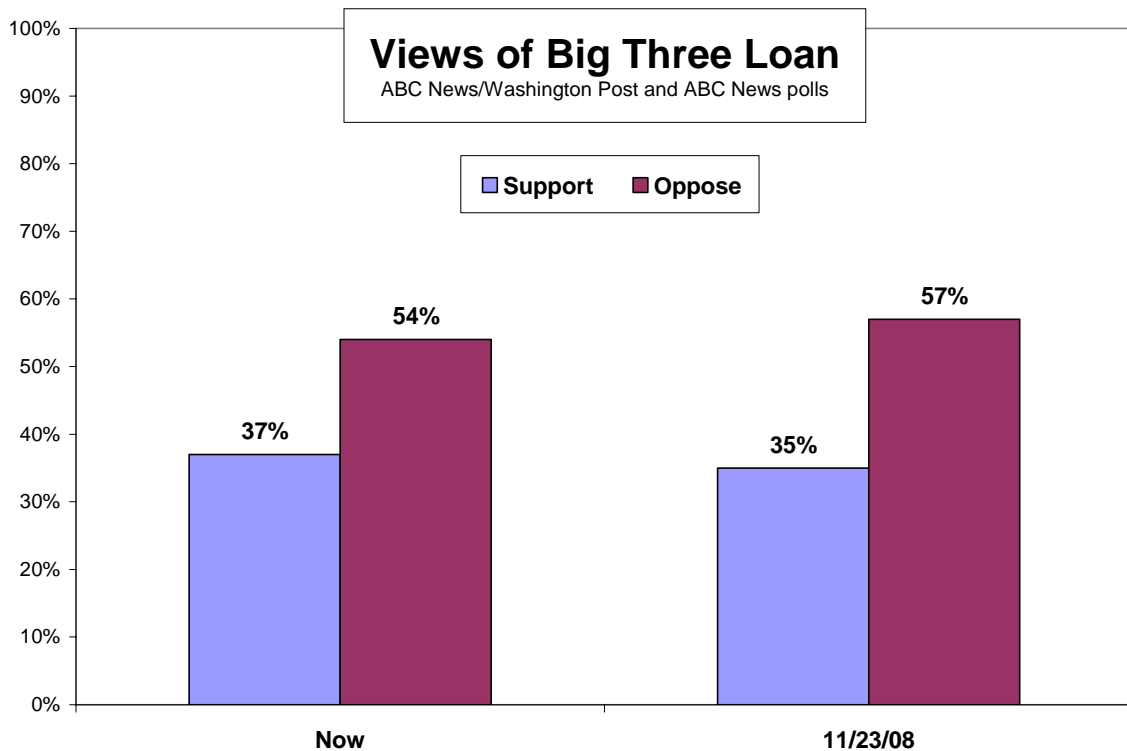


## Most Still Oppose Big Three Bailout

When it comes to Washington's support plan for the Big Three automakers, one party's still not along for the ride: American taxpayers.

Fifty-four percent in a new ABC News/Washington Post poll oppose giving automakers up to \$34 billion in federal loans, while 37 percent support it. That's barely budged from 57-35 percent opposition two weeks ago.



Still, the intensity of opposition has softened – while 30 percent of Americans strongly oppose the idea, that's eased from 36 percent in an ABC News poll Nov. 23. That, plus the 10 percent undecided, suggest possible flexibility in public attitudes on the plan.

The White House and Congressional leaders are in talks on a stripped-down, roughly \$15 billion loan package, including government oversight of auto industry restructuring. ABC News has reported that terms of a deal could come by the end of today.

Views are partisan: Democrats divide on automaker loans by 47-42 percent, while Republicans and independents are more broadly opposed, by 57-36 percent and 55-36 percent respectively. Opposition among Republicans and independents has eased slightly, from just over six in 10 late last month; Republicans have moved from 29 percent support then to 36 percent now.

	Automaker Loans	
	Support-Oppose	
	Now	11/23
All	37-54%	35-57
Democrats	42-47	42-49
Independents	36-55	32-61
Republicans	36-57	29-62

Strong opponents still outnumber strong supporters by a substantial margin, 30 percent vs. 17 percent. But as noted there's been a change in intensity, and it's occurred specifically among Republicans, whose strong opposition has dropped from 48 percent two weeks ago to 33 percent now.

This poll presented pro and con arguments on the issue, noting that proponents say the loan program is needed to protect auto workers and save a key part of the economy, while opponents say it's an undeserved bailout and the automakers would be better off reorganizing under bankruptcy laws.

Apart from partisanship, support, though still below a majority, has increased by 8 points among men, to 40 percent; and by 9 points among better-off adults, albeit just to 37 percent.

**METHODOLOGY** – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Dec. 3-7, 2008, among a random national sample of 1,003 adults. The results have a 3-point error margin for the full sample. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934.

Full results follow (\*= less than 0.5 percent).

\*= less than 0.5 percent

1. The big three automakers in the United States have asked for up to 34 billion dollars in loans from the government. Some people say (it's a bailout those companies don't deserve, and that they'd be better off reorganizing under bankruptcy laws). Other people say (it's necessary to protect auto workers and save a key part of the U.S. economy). On balance, do you support or oppose this plan?

	----- Support -----			----- Oppose -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
12/7/08	37	17	20	54	23	30	10
11/23/08*	35	18	17	57	21	36	9
* "25 billion"							