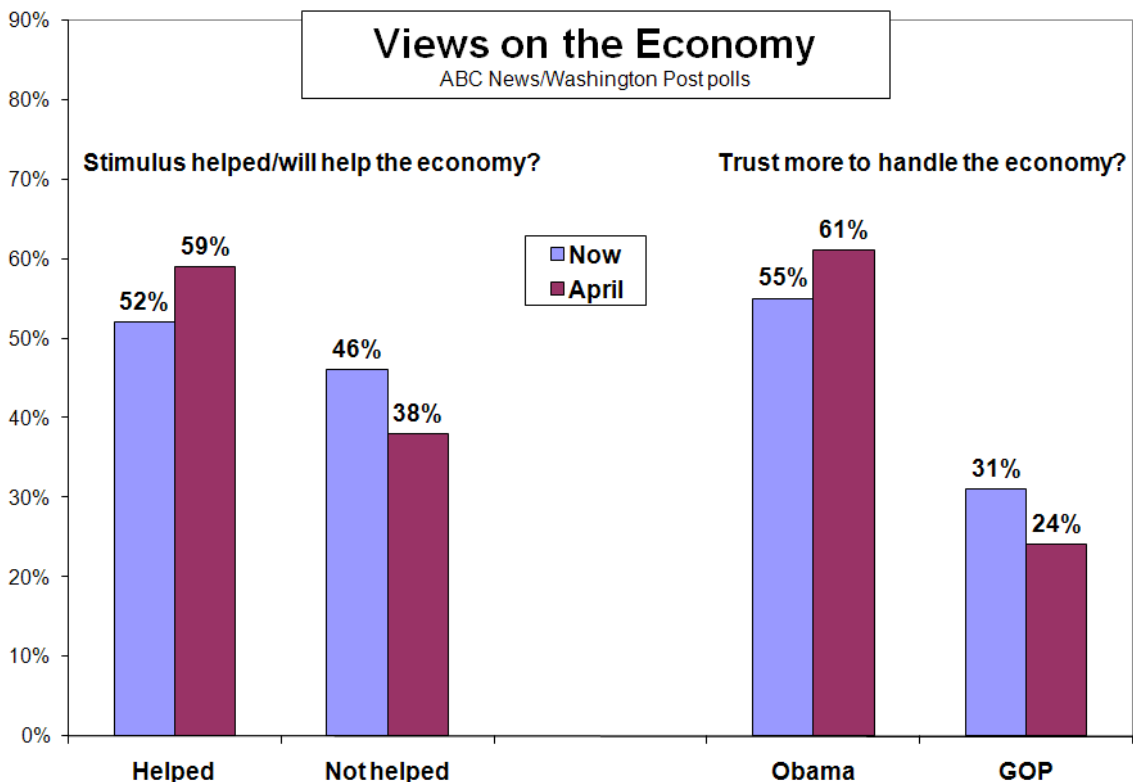


Obama's Honeymoon Forecast: A Hint of Clouds on the Horizon

President Obama remains on his honeymoon – but with a hint of clouds over the beach.

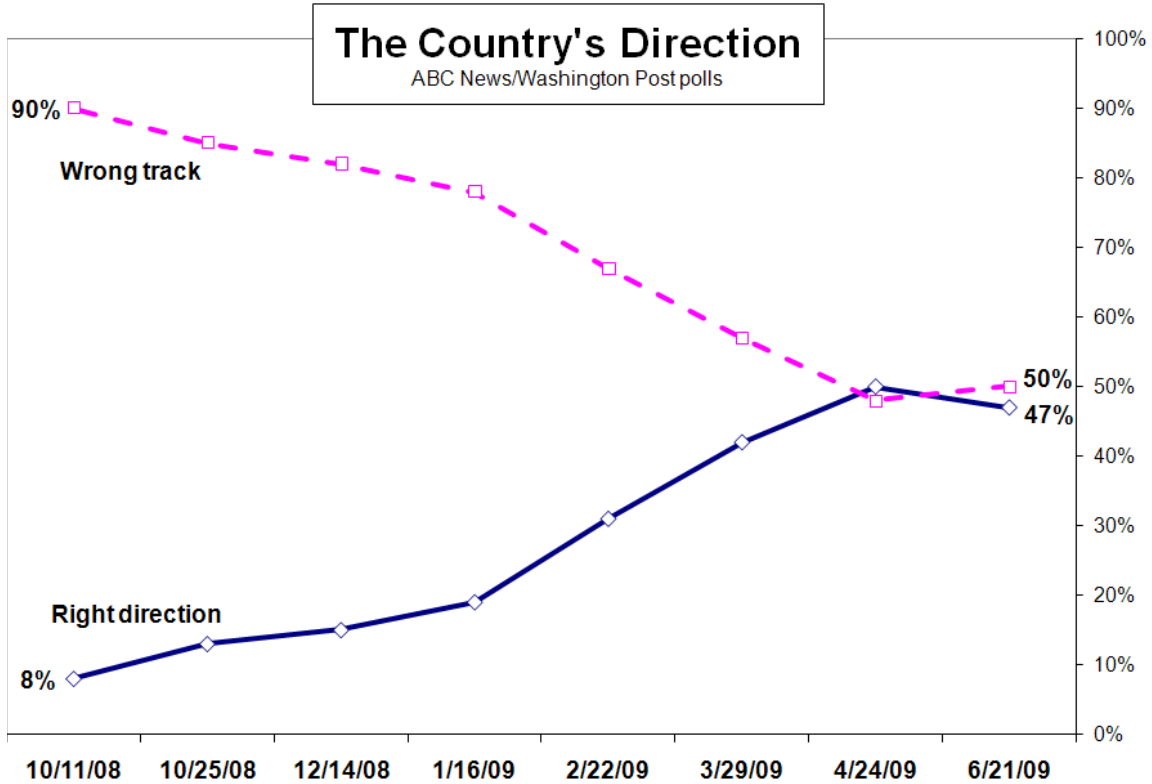
They signal economic impatience. A still-impressive 65 percent of Americans in this new ABC News/Washington Post poll approve of Obama's job performance. But there's been a retrenchment in the expectation that his stimulus plan will improve the economy – and, consequently, a halt in what had been steadily improving views of the nation's direction.

A narrow majority, 52 percent, now thinks Obama's stimulus program has helped or will help the nation's economy – down from 59 percent in late April. While he's vulnerable elsewhere as well, it's the economy that's his make-or-break issue – and his advantage over the Republicans in trust to handle it, while still broad, has narrowed from a record 37 points, 61-24 percent, in April, to 24 points, 55-31 percent, today.



Where the economy leads broader public sentiment typically follows; given expectations for gains under Obama, the number of Americans saying the country's headed in the right

direction had grown steadily from a record low 8 percent in October to 50 percent in April, its highest in six years. Now it's inched back under half, to 47 percent, with 50 percent saying we're on the wrong track – the first time since Obama's election that views of the country's course have not improved.



The president's overall approval remains higher than his rating for handling any specific issue, and there are several on which he's notably vulnerable. He's below 50 percent approval for handling the federal deficit and the automaker bailout alike. His positions on Guantanamo Bay and torture continue to lack majority support. And he has a fairly tepid 53 percent approval on health care, a longtime political sand trap on which the administration is making a major push this summer.

Obama approval ratings		
	Approve	Disapprove
Job overall	65%	31
Int'l affairs	61	32
Terrorism	57	36
Economy	56	41
Global warming	54	28
Health care	53	39
Iran	52	36
Deficit	48	48
Automakers	45	50

In another sign of his risks, the number of Americans who approve “strongly” of Obama’s job performance overall has slipped by 6 points, to 36 percent.

BUT STILL – Yet Obama is broadly popular despite these threats. While off its peak of 69 percent, his overall approval is slightly above the five-month average for elected postwar presidents, trailing three (George H.W. Bush, John F. Kennedy and Dwight Eisenhower) but clearly ahead of three others (George W. Bush, Bill Clinton and Ronald Reagan).

Still, five-month approval ratings of the remaining two, Jimmy Carter and Richard Nixon, were about the same as Obama’s today – an indication, given the course of their presidencies, that early approval is hardly a predictor of long-term success.

	Approval at appx. 5 months	
	Approve	Disapprove
Obama 6/21/09	65%	31
Bush 6/3/01	55	40
Clinton 6/28/93	43	50
Bush 6/19/89	73	22
Reagan 6/22/81	59	29
Carter 6/20/77	63	18
Nixon 6/24/69	63	16
Kennedy 6/28/61	72	14
Eisenhower 7/9/53	69	15
Pre-Obama average	62	26

(Reagan and previous by Gallup)

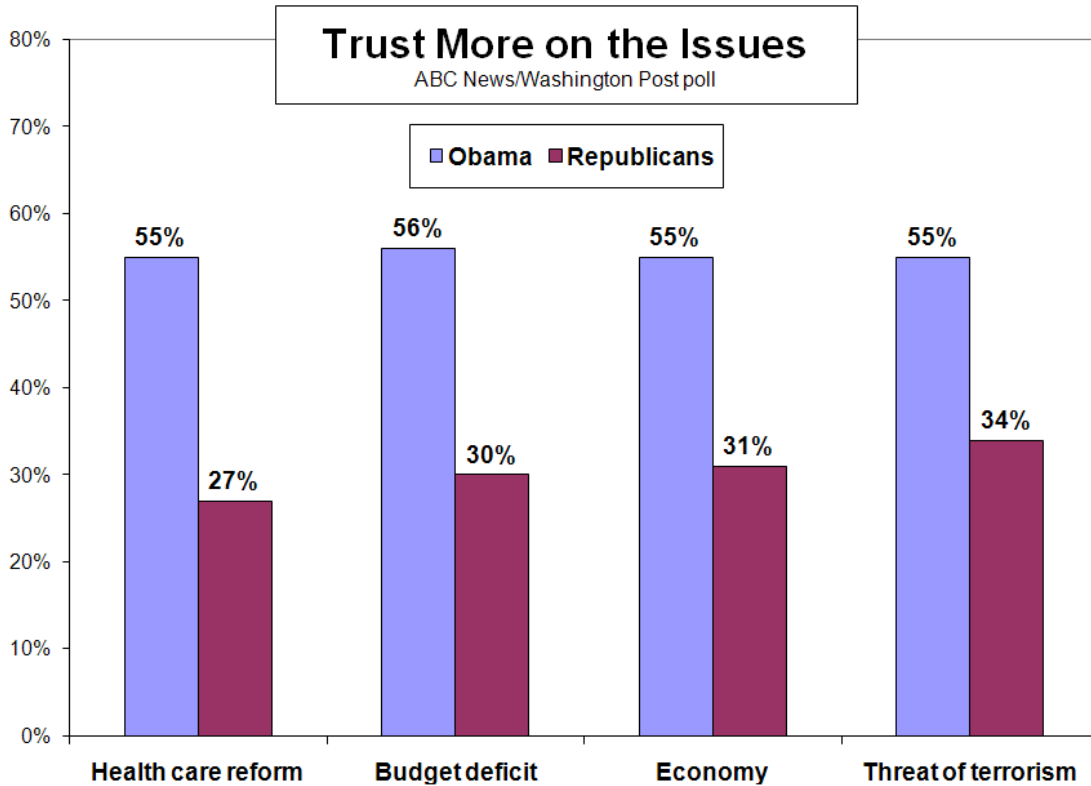
Obama also retains vastly more popularity than other players in Washington. Just 36 percent of Americans now express a favorable opinion of the Republican Party – the fewest in polls dating back to 1984, save for a one-time anti-GOP blip at the time of the Clinton impeachment. Just 22 percent of adults now identify themselves as Republicans; April’s 21 percent was the lowest since 1983.

Obama, moreover, leads the Republicans in Congress by wide margins in trust to handle a variety of issues – the economy, as noted, by 55-31 percent; but also health care, by 55-27 percent; the deficit, by 56-30 percent; and the threat of terrorism, by 55-34 percent.

His advantage on the deficit is notable given the very broad concern about its size – 87 percent of Americans are concerned about it, 56 percent “very” concerned – as well as Obama’s own weak rating for handling it, 48 percent approval. The Republicans may have opportunity here, but they have yet to capitalize on it.

This also is shown by Obama’s ability thus far to evade the “tax-and-spend” label; 58 percent of Americans see him as a “new-style Democrat who will be careful with the public’s money” rather than “an old-style, tax-and-spend Democrat” – down a titch from 62 percent in March, but still a good majority. That shows far better sustain than Clinton, whose rating as a non-profligate Democrat dropped from 61 percent to 48 percent in his first four months.

Nonetheless, Obama’s vulnerability on the economy remains – exemplified by Reagan, the last president to take office in the teeth of a recession. His approval fell from a peak of 73 percent in March 1981 to 48 percent as the economy still struggled 11 months later. And today public ratings of current economic conditions are just a few points from their record low in 23 years of weekly tracking by ABC News.



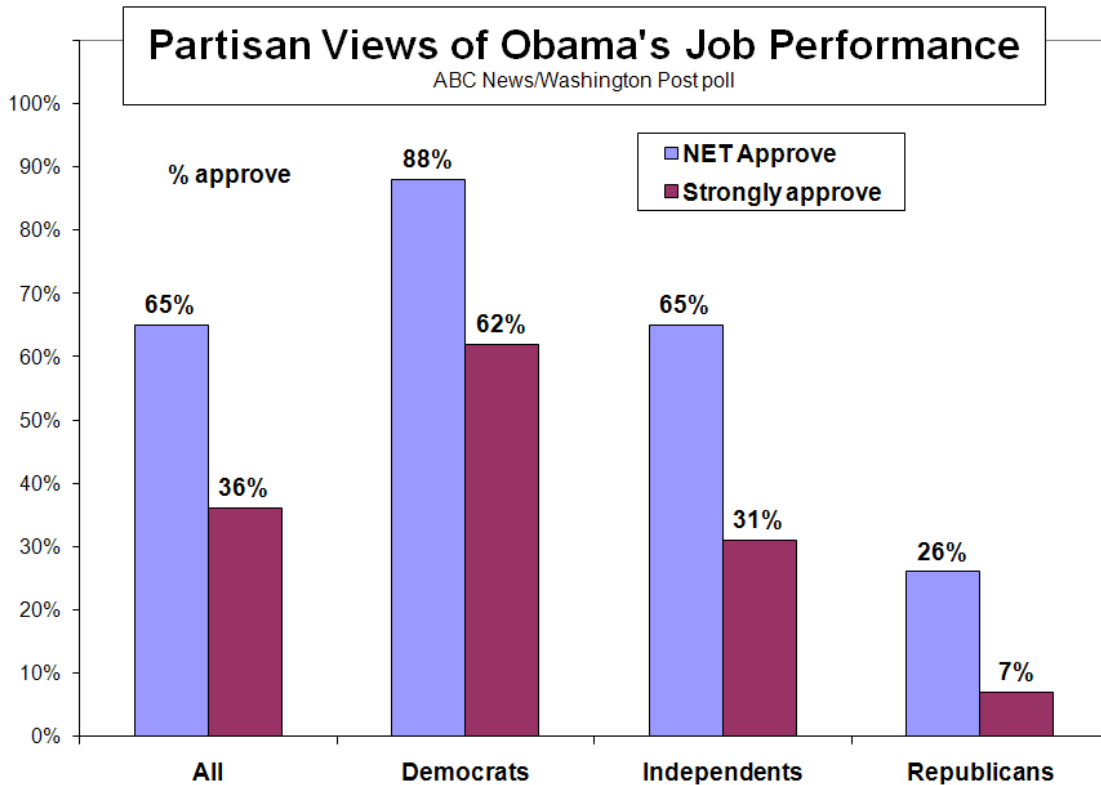
In ratings on handling the threat of terrorism, Obama similarly is staying out of trouble so far – yet faces some significant risks. He leads the Republicans in trust to handle terrorism by 21 points, and holds a 57-percent approval rating on the issue, even with sharp divisions on some of his policies. Just half the public agrees with his ban on torture of terrorism suspects in all cases. Fewer, 45 percent, support his decision to close the Guantanamo Bay detention center by early next year – and if it means transferring terrorism suspects for trial in the respondent’s own state, support drops to 37 percent.

Nonetheless, relatively few, 22 percent, say the country has become less safe from terrorism under Obama; 32 percent say it’s more safe, 44 percent the same – unchanged since April.

DEMS and INDIES – Boosted by the president, the Democratic Party has far more support than the opposition – a 53 percent favorable rating, 17 points better than the GOP’s. But that doesn’t apply to one congressional Democrat in particular: Just 38 percent approve of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s job performance, matching the

departing rating of Newt Gingrich in 1998. Pelosi has 62 percent approval from Democrats, plummeting to 33 percent among independents and 9 percent among Republicans.

Indeed many of these views remain highly partisan. Obama, for his part, has 88 percent approval among Democrats and 65 percent among independents, but just 26 percent among Republicans. One likely reason is that the shrunken ranks of Republicans means those who remain are true believers.



While appeal to remaining Republicans looks highly unlikely, Obama's ability to hold the center – the growing ranks of independents – is crucial to his fortunes. And that may be the greatest challenge he faces; while independents give him a 65 percent approval rating overall, that declines to 54 percent on the economy and 50 percent on health care and the deficit, all marquee issues. Just half of independents, likewise, think the stimulus either has worked, or will work, to improve the economy.

Moreover, in terms of fundamental philosophy, 61 percent of independents prefer “smaller government with fewer services” to “larger government with more services” – a basic view that puts independents much more in line with Republicans than Democrats. That makes maintaining their allegiance a particular challenge for any Democratic president – even one on his political honeymoon.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone June 18-21, 2009, among a random national sample of 1,001 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results for the full sample have a 3.5-point error margin; click [here](#) for a detailed description of sampling error. 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).

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
6/21/09	65	36	29	31	10	22	4
4/24/09	69	42	27	26	8	18	4
3/29/09	66	40	26	29	9	20	5
2/22/09	68	43	25	25	8	17	7

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Obama is handling [ITEM]? (IF ITEM A,B,C) Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

6/21/09 - Summary Table*

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
a. The economy	56	41	3
b. Health care	53	39	9
c. The federal budget deficit	48	48	5
d. International affairs	61	32	7
e. Global warming	54	28	17
f. The threat of terrorism	57	36	7
g. The situation with Iran	52	36	12
h. The situation involving the big U.S. automakers	45	50	5

*Full sample asked items a-b; half sample asked items c-e; other half sample asked items f-h.

Trend where available:

a. The economy

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
6/21/09	56	28	28	41	13	27	3
4/24/09	58	31	28	38	13	25	4
3/29/09	60	34	25	38	12	26	3
2/22/09	60	NA	NA	34	NA	NA	6

b. Health care

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion

6/21/09	53	27	26	39	10	29	9
4/24/09	57	NA	NA	29	NA	NA	13

c. The federal budget deficit

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
6/21/09	48	22	26	48	13	35	5
4/24/09	51	NA	NA	43	NA	NA	7
3/29/09	52	NA	NA	43	NA	NA	5

d. International affairs

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
6/21/09	61	32	7
4/24/09	67	27	6
3/29/09	62	27	11

e. Global warming

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
6/21/09	54	28	17
4/24/09	61	23	16

f. The threat of terrorism

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
6/21/09	57	36	7
4/21/09*	57	26	17

*Pew

g. The situation with Iran

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
6/21/09	52	36	12
4/24/09	54	35	11

h. The situation involving the big U.S. automakers

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
6/21/09	45	50	5
4/24/09	41	53	6

3. Do you think things in this country (are generally going in the right direction) or do you feel things (have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track)?

	Right direction	Wrong track	No opinion
6/21/09	47	50	3
4/24/09	50	48	2
3/29/09	42	57	1
2/22/09	31	67	2
1/16/09	19	78	3
12/14/08	15	82	3
10/25/08 LV	13	85	2
10/11/08 RV	8	90	2
9/22/08 RV	14	83	3
8/22/08	19	78	2
6/15/08	14	84	2
5/11/08	16	82	2
1/12/08	21	77	2

11/1/07	24	74	2
6/1/07	25	73	2
1/19/07	26	71	3
11/4/06 RV	39	59	2
10/22/06	30	68	2
10/8/06	32	66	2
5/15/06	29	69	2
11/2/05	30	68	2
10/24/04 LV	41	55	4
4/18/04	42	57	1
4/30/03	52	46	2
9/26/02	43	53	4
2/21/02	54	42	4
2/14/99	55	41	4
11/1/98	55	43	2
11/1/98 LV	55	44	1
8/21/98	57	40	4
7/12/98	50	45	6
4/4/98	55	41	4
1/31/98	61	34	5
1/30/98	61	34	5
1/19/98	44	50	6
8/27/97	39	57	4
6/8/97	37	60	3
3/9/97	34	62	4
10/17/96 RV	40	55	5
10/16/96 RV	42	53	5
10/15/96 RV	43	52	5
10/14/96 RV	44	51	5
10/13/96 RV	44	51	5
9/04/96 RV	40	54	6
8/21/96	28	67	5
6/30/96	26	70	5
3/17/96	27	70	3
1/21/96	27	66	6
1/3/96	21	77	3
4/5/95	23	73	3
1/4/95	27	68	6
10/31/94	27	69	4
7/20/94	26	70	4
3/27/94	28	69	3
1/23/94	31	60	10
11/14/93	25	69	6
8/8/93	26	71	3
6/20/93	26	71	3
4/26/93	27	71	2
3/11/93	36	57	7
2/28/93	37	59	4
1/17/93	31	63	6
12/14/92	35	60	5
10/27/92 RV	22	76	2
10/4/92 RV	18	78	4
6/7/92	14	83	3
4/9/92	16	81	3
3/11/92	18	79	4
1/15/92	19	78	3
11/10/91	24	72	4
10/29/91	26	71	3
8/27/91	31	60	9
7/28/91	30	67	3
6/2/91	39	57	4
4/9/91	42	51	7
2/26/91	58	39	3

1/27/91	49	48	4
10/14/90	19	79	2
9/9/90	36	60	4
8/20/90	35	60	5
7/24/90	37	60	2
5/21/90	39	60	2
3/26/90	44	53	2
2/4/90	49	48	3
1/16/90	48	49	3
5/23/89	42	55	3
3/16/89	46	52	2
1/16/89 LV	51	46	3
10/25/88 RV	49	46	6
9/27/88	48	44	8
7/11/88	40	56	4
5/25/88	35	59	6
3/21/88	40	56	4
1/23/88	39	59	2
12/13/87	49	47	4
12/2/87	35	61	4
9/23/87	43	54	4
6/29/87	35	62	3
4/13/87	37	60	3
3/9/87	38	58	4
1/18/87	39	56	5
9/8/86	50	48	2
1/26/86	45	47	8
7/29/85	52	43	6
1/16/85	59	36	4
5/22/84	47	48	5
12/13/83	43	51	6
11/7/83	51	44	5
4/12/83	41	54	4
3/2/83	43	53	3
10/11/82	35	57	8
1/30/82	39	56	5
2/80*	20	70	10
2/78	34	53	13
2/77	41	44	14
10/75	19	71	9
10/74	15	75	11
10/73	16	74	10

*2/80 and previous: Roper

4. Do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of [ITEM]?

6/21/09 - Summary Table*

	Favorable	Unfavorable	No opinion
a. The Democratic Party	53	40	6
b. The Republican Party	36	56	8

Trend:

a. The Democratic Party

	Favorable	Unfavorable	No opinion
6/21/09	53	40	6
8/22/08 RV	58	36	5
11/1/07	51	45	5
3/5/06	55	41	4
6/5/05	51	47	2

12/15/02		56	37	6
1/27/02		56	36	8
7/30/01		60	36	4
12/15/00		64	25	11
1/16/00		56	35	9
1/10/00*		61	33	6
1/10/00	LV	58	37	5
11/21/99		51	41	8
5/2/99		53	37	10
2/21/99		55	37	8
2/13/99		56	38	6
2/8/99		57	37	6
1/10/99		57	35	8
12/20/98		57	30	13
12/16/98		58	32	10
10/29/97		54	39	7
9/1/96	RV	60	36	4
8/18/96	RV	55	41	4
8/7/96	RV	57	38	5
4/10/96		55	38	7
4/19/95		51	43	6
7/8/92	RV	54	38	8
6/6/91**		52	34	14
4/2/90		54	35	11
1/15/90		58	32	10
11/16/88		54	36	10
11/4/84		47	42	11
10/4/84	RV	50	39	11

*1/10/00 to 7/8/92: Gallup

**6/6/91 and previous: CBS News/New York Times

b. The Republican Party

		Favorable	Unfavorable	No opinion
6/21/09		36	56	8
8/22/08	RV	47	49	4
11/1/07		39	56	5
3/5/06		51	46	3
6/5/05		49	49	2
12/15/02		56	38	5
1/27/02		63	30	7
7/30/01		51	46	3
12/15/00		54	35	11
1/16/00		53	37	10
1/10/00*		53	41	6
1/10/00	LV	56	39	5
11/21/99		50	44	6
5/2/99		47	44	9
2/21/99		45	46	9
2/13/99		40	54	5
2/8/99		45	47	8
1/10/99		40	52	8
12/20/98		31	57	12
12/16/98		43	47	10
10/29/97		50	42	8
9/1/96	RV	50	45	5
8/18/96	RV	55	41	4
8/7/96	RV	51	44	5
4/10/96		52	41	7
4/19/95		52	42	6
7/8/92	RV	53	39	8
6/6/91**		62	28	10
4/2/90		58	34	8

1/15/90	63	28	9
11/16/88	57	34	9
11/4/84	58	33	9
10/4/84	53	36	11

*1/10/00 to 7/8/92: Gallup

**6/6/91 and previous: CBS News/New York Times

5. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Nancy Pelosi is handling her job as Speaker of the House?

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
6/21/09	38	45	16
4/15/07	53	35	12
2/25/07	50	31	18
1/19/07	54	25	21

Compare to: Newt Gingrich

11/7/98*	38	58	4
7/12/98	41	44	15
5/12/98	41	44	15
1/19/98	40	52	7
4/24/97	26	62	12
3/9/97	33	61	7
9/15/96 RV	39	54	7
1/7/96	30	61	8
11/19/95	27	65	8
6/8/95	35	50	15
3/19/95	37	48	15
3/5/95	38	51	11
1/29/95	40	48	12
1/4/95	35	37	28
12/20/94**	35	43	22

* "has handled"

** "as incoming speaker"

6. Who do you trust to do a better job handling [ITEM] - (Obama) or the (Republicans in Congress)?

6/21/09 - Summary Table*

	Obama	Reps	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
a. Health care reform	55	27	2	11	4
b. The economy	55	31	2	9	2
c. The federal budget deficit	56	30	2	9	2
d. The threat of terrorism	55	34	2	6	3

*Half sample asked items a-b; other half sample asked items c-d.

Trend where available:

a. No trend.

b. The economy

	Obama	Reps	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
6/21/09	55	31	2	9	2
4/24/09	61	24	2	11	2

3/29/09	58	25	1	14	2
2/22/09	61	26	1	9	3

Compare to:

G.W. Bush or the Democrats in Congress:

	Bush	Dems	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
6/1/07	36	54	1	6	2
2/25/07	36	56	1	6	2
1/19/07	32	60	1	4	2
12/11/06	34	58	1	5	2
1/18/04	43	50	1	4	3
4/30/03	51	41	2	2	3
11/6/01	51	36	5	4	5
9/9/01	44	50	1	3	2
7/30/01	47	46	1	4	1
6/3/01	44	46	2	6	2

Clinton or the Republicans in Congress:*

	Clinton	Reps	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
1/23/96	51	34	11	3	2
10/30/95	38	50	9	1	2
10/1/95	44	44	8	2	3
7/17/95	42	51	4	1	2
3/19/95	43	47	7	1	2
1/4/95	34	56	3	1	5
12/20/94	36	59	NA	NA	5
11/14/93	45	37	3	12	3
8/8/93	48	35	1	13	3
6/28/93	45	40	1	10	4
4/26/93	59	29	4	7	1

G.H.W. Bush or the Democrats in Congress:*

	Bush	Dems	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
3/11/92	37	36	1	20	7
3/8/92	32	44	3	14	6
2/2/92	40	44	1	9	5
1/29/92	38	41	2	13	5
12/15/91	36	46	2	12	4

* "on the economy"

c-d. No trend.

7. Generally speaking, would you say you favor (smaller government with fewer services), or (larger government with more services)?

	Smaller govt. fewer services	Larger govt. more services	No opinion
6/21/09	54	41	4
1/16/09	53	43	4
6/15/08	50	45	5
11/1/07	50	44	5
6/20/04	50	46	4
11/4/02 LV	61	34	5
11/3/02 LV	60	34	5
11/2/02 LV	62	34	3
7/15/02	53	42	6
1/27/02	54	41	5
10/9/00 RV	58	32	10

10/1/00 RV	58	33	9
7/23/00	59	34	7
7/23/00 RV	61	32	7
4/2/00	56	38	7
8/16/98	59	35	6
8/5/96	63	32	5
7/8/92	55	38	7

8. Which of these statements comes closer to your view: (Beneath it all, Obama is an old-style, tax-and-spend Democrat) or (Obama is a new-style Democrat who will be careful with the public's money).

	Old-style	New-style	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
6/21/09	36	58	4	3
3/29/09	32	62	3	3

Compare to: Clinton

5/22/96	44	50	NA	6
1/29/95	40	54	4	2
1/4/95	48	45	3	3
2/27/94	40	52	6	3
1/23/94	40	49	6	5
11/14/93	48	44	5	2
8/8/93	45	50	3	2
6/28/93	45	50	3	2
5/23/93	48	48	2	2
4/26/93	37	59	3	1
2/28/93	35	61	3	1

9-28 held for release.

29. So far, do you think the economic stimulus program has (helped) the national economy, (hurt) the national economy, or hasn't made much difference? (IF HELPED/HURT) Is that a great deal or somewhat?

	----- Helped -----			----- Hurt -----			No	No
	NET	Great deal	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Great deal	diff.	opin.
6/21/09	28	8	20	19	6	13	52	2
4/24/09	33	10	23	16	6	10	49	2

30. (IF HURT/NO DIFFERENCE) Do you think the economic stimulus program will help the national economy, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
6/21/09	34	63	3
4/24/09	41	55	4

29/30 NET

	--- Helped/Will help ---			----- Won't help/unsure -----				No
	NET	Has helped	Will	NET	Has hurt	No diff.	No op.	opin.
6/21/09	52	28	24	46	17	27	2	2
4/24/09	59	33	27	38	13	23	2	2

31. How concerned, if at all, are you about the size of the federal budget deficit - very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned or not concerned at all?

	----- Concerned -----			--- Not concerned ---			No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too	At all	opinion
6/21/09	87	56	31	13	9	4	0
4/24/09	87	59	27	13	9	4	*
2/22/09	87	59	28	12	9	3	1
12/14/08	86	49	37	13	9	5	*

32. Do you think Obama's policies are making the United States (safer) from terrorism, (less safe), or are they not making much difference in that?

	Safer	Less safe	Not much difference	No opinion
6/21/09	32	22	44	2
4/24/09	32	21	43	4

33. Obama has said that under his administration the United States will not use torture as part of the U.S. campaign against terrorism, no matter what the circumstance. Do you support this position not to use torture, or do you think there are cases in which the United States should consider torture against terrorism suspects?

	Support not using torture	There are cases to consider torture	No opinion
6/21/09	50	46	3
4/24/09	49	48	2
1/16/09	58	40	2

34. Do you approve or disapprove of Obama's decision to close the U.S. military prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, early next year?

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
6/21/09	45	50	4
6/14/09*	45	46	8
4/21/09*	51	38	11
2/8/09*	46	39	15

*Pew: 6/09: "plan to close...within a year"; 4/09 and previous: "decision to close...within a year"

35. (IF APPROVE) What if closing Guantanamo meant some of the terrorism suspects now held there were transferred to face trial in your state. In that case would you approve or disapprove of closing the U.S. military prison in Guantanamo Bay?

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
6/21/09	80	19	1

34/35 NET

	Approve	----- Disapprove -----		No opinion
	NET	At first	Now do	
6/21/09	37	59	50	9
				4

36-42 held for release.

END