

Enron Contributions: Not a Big Political Issue

The Enron brouhaha hasn't caught fire as a midterm election issue: Hardly anyone says it'll be the driving factor in their vote for Congress in November.

Seventy percent of Americans say they'd be no less likely to support a candidate who received a campaign contribution from Enron. And while a quarter would be less apt to support such a candidate, just three percent say it would be the top issue in their vote.

	2/24/02
Less likely to vote for a candidate who received an Enron contribution	25%
Less likely, and most important issue	3
No less likely	70

One reason is that most people aren't picking partisan sides on Enron. In a Washington Post poll last week, 44 percent said neither party was more responsible for the mess, and 32 percent blamed both equally. (Twelve percent gave the Republicans more blame, three percent the Democrats).

An ABC/Post poll last month found broad support for a full investigation, support for full disclosure of politicians' contacts with Enron, and concern that the company's collapse signifies wider problems with corporate accounting. But there was no more demand for campaign finance reform, which remained last on a list of public priorities.

PARTY - Partisanship isn't entirely absent: Democrats are somewhat more likely than Republicans to say Enron will affect their vote next fall. Thirty-two percent of Democrats say they'd be less likely to vote to re-elect a representative who accepted money from Enron, versus 21 percent of Republicans. Again, however, just 4 percent of Democrats call it their top voting issue.

The Washington Post poll found that Democrats who assigned blame to one of the parties were much more likely to single out the Republicans; the few Republicans who assigned blame split it between the two parties.

	Dem	Rep	Ind
Less likely to vote to re-elect if rep. got money from Enron	32%	21	27
Less likely and top issue	4	2	5

The Senate Commerce and Banking Committees are scheduled to hold further hearings on the Enron situation today.

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News.com survey was conducted by telephone Feb. 20-24, 2002, among a random national sample of 1,021 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS Intersearch of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Daniel Merkle.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet at:
<http://www.abcnews.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

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Here are the full results:

137. Say your representative in Congress accepted a campaign contribution from the Enron Corporation. Would that make you more likely or less likely to vote to re-elect your representative, or wouldn't it make much difference in your vote?

(If less likely:) Would it be the single most important issue in your vote, or would other issues be more important?

	-----Less likely-----						
	NET	Most imp. issue	Other issues more imp.	No op.	More likely	No diff.	No opin.
2/24/02	25	3	20	1	3	67	5

END