

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS  
DECEMBER 2010 POLITICAL SURVEY  
FINAL TOPLINE  
December 1-5, 2010  
N=1500**

**QUESTIONS 1, 3a, 9, 12-14, 17-19 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**QUESTIONS 2-3, 4-5, 9, 20-23 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**NO QUESTIONS 6-8, 10-11, 15-16**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.24 Which of the following national economic issues worries you most? **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

Dec 1-5 <u>2010</u>		Aug 25-Sep 6 <u>2010</u>	Jun 3-6 <u>2010</u>	Mar 10-14 <u>2010</u>
47	The job situation	49	41	45
19	The federal budget deficit	19	23	22
15	Rising prices	15	16	17
14	Problems in the financial and housing markets	12	13	11
1	Other <b>(VOL.)</b>	2	3	2
1	None/Not worried about any <b>(VOL.)</b>	1	1	*
3	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	2	2	2

**NO QUESTIONS 25-27, 38, 45-48**

**QUESTIONS 28-37, 39-44 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.49 How much, if anything, have you heard or read about discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit? Have you heard **[READ]**

Dec 1-5 <u>2010</u>	
31	A lot
49	A little
19	Nothing at all
1	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>

**ASK ALL:**

Q.50 Which of these statements do you think best describes the federal budget deficit **[READ IN ORDER; REVERSE ORDER FOR HALF OF SAMPLE]**

Dec 1-5 <u>2010</u>	
70	It is a major problem that the country must address now
23	It is a major problem that should be addressed when the economy is better
1	It is not much of a problem for the country
5	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>

**ASK ALL:**

Q.51 What-is the best way to reduce the federal budget deficit? Should we mostly focus on **[RANDOMIZE: Cutting major programs / Increasing taxes]** mostly focus on **[increasing taxes / cutting major programs]** or should we do a combination of both?

Dec 1-5

2010

16	Cutting major programs
4	Increasing taxes
65	Combination of both
1	Deficit is not a priority/Don't focus on deficit <b>(VOL.)</b>
13	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>

**ASK ALL:**

Q.52 Looking ahead five years or so, do you think we will have made significant progress in reducing the federal budget deficit, or not?

Dec 1-5

2010

37	Yes
52	No
11	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>

Feb

1989

40
46
14

**ASK ALL:**

Q.53 Thinking about ways to reduce the federal budget deficit, please tell me if you would you approve or disapprove of each of the following. First, **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE; OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]**? What about **[NEXT ITEM]**? **[IF NECESSARY: Would you approve or disapprove of this as a way to reduce the federal budget deficit?]**

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=763]:**

		<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>(VOL.)</u> <u>DK/Ref</u>
a.F1	Reduce federal funding to states for things like education and roads Dec 1-5, 2010	25	71	4
b.F1	Gradually raise the age at which people can begin receiving Social Security benefits Dec 1-5, 2010	38	58	4
c.F1	Reduce Social Security benefits for seniors with higher incomes Dec 1-5, 2010	48	47	5
d.F1	Eliminate tax deductions for interest paid on home mortgages Dec 1-5, 2010	34	56	10
e.F1	Create a national sales tax Dec 1-5, 2010	42	52	6
f.F1	Reduce the number of people serving in the military Dec 1-5, 2010	34	61	5

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=737]:**

g.F2	Raise the amount people on Medicare contribute to cover their health care costs Dec 1-5, 2010	32	64	5
h.F2	Tax the health insurance people receive from their employer Dec 1-5, 2010	21	72	7

**Q.53 CONTINUED...**

		<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
i.F2	Cut back on the development of military weapons programs Dec 1-5, 2010	43	50	8
j.F2	Make more of high-earners' income subject to the Social Security payroll tax Dec 1-5, 2010	64	27	9
k.F2	Freeze the salaries of federal workers Dec 1-5, 2010	59	35	5
l.F2	Raise the national gasoline tax Dec 1-5, 2010	22	74	4

**ASK ALL:**

Q.54 How much confidence do you have in **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]** to do the right thing when it comes to dealing with the federal budget deficit – a great deal of confidence, a fair amount of confidence, not too much confidence, or no confidence at all? What about **[NEXT ITEM]**?

		<u>A great deal</u>	<u>A fair amount</u>	<u>Not too much</u>	<u>No confidence at all</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Barack Obama Dec 1-5, 2010	19	34	20	24	4
b.	Republican leaders in Congress Dec 1-5, 2010	6	34	29	27	4
c.	Democratic leaders in Congress Dec 1-5, 2010	9	33	28	24	5

**ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

**ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):**

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>No preference</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>Other party</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>	<i>Lean Rep</i>	<i>Lean Dem</i>
Dec 1-5, 2010	25	33	34	5	1	2	13	14
Nov 4-7, 2010	26	30	37	4	*	2	17	13
Oct 27-30, 2010	25	34	31	6	1	4	13	11
Oct 13-18, 2010	25	31	36	4	*	3	16	13
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	24	32	39	2	*	2	15	17
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	26	33	34	4	*	3	14	14
Jun 16-20, 2010	27	34	34	3	1	2	15	15
Apr 21-26, 2010	26	33	36	3	1	3	16	13
Mar 11-21, 2010	28	34	32	3	*	3	13	12
Mar 10-14, 2010	22	33	37	6	*	3	14	13
Feb 3-9, 2010	26	31	37	3	*	3	14	17
Jan 6-10, 2010	22	33	42	2	1	2	17	16
<b>Yearly Totals</b>								
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6

**PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED...**

			(VOL.)		(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	Republican	Democrat	Independent	No preference	Other party	DK/Ref	Rep	Dem
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

**QUESTION 55 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****ASK ALL:**

TEAPARTY From what you know, do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the Tea Party movement, or don't you have an opinion either way?

	Strongly		Strongly		No opinion	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Not
	agree	Agree	Disagree	disagree	either way	heard of	Refused	heard of/ DK
Dec 1-5, 2010	5	17	14	12	49	2	2	--
Nov 4-7, 2010	8	19	11	11	49	1	1	--
Oct 27-30, 2010 <sup>1</sup> (RVs)	12	17	11	14	32	--	1	13
Oct 13-18, 2010 (RVs)	9	19	11	13	30	--	1	16
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010 (RVs)	11	18	12	14	32	--	1	13
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	8	14	9	9	37	--	1	21
Jun 16-20, 2010	9	15	10	8	30	--	*	27
May 20-23, 2010	10	15	8	10	31	--	1	25
Mar 11-21, 2010	9	15	7	7	29	--	1	31

<sup>1</sup> In October 2010 and earlier, question was asked only of those who had heard or read a lot or a little about the Tea Party. In May through October, it was described as: "the Tea Party movement that has been involved in campaigns and protests in the U.S. over the past year." In March it was described as "the Tea Party Protests that have taken place in the U.S. over the past year."

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER NEWS INTEREST INDEX  
DECEMBER 2-5, 2010 OMNIBUS  
FINAL TOPLINE  
N=1003**

**PEW.1-PEW.7 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**ASK ALL DECEMBER 3-5 ONLY [N=775]:**

PEW.8f How much, if anything have you heard about the federal budget deficit commission that recently made proposals on how to reduce the national debt over the next several years? Have you heard  
**[READ IN ORDER]**

		<i>\$1.75 trillion deficit projection</i>
Dec 3-5		Feb 27-Mar 2
<u>2010</u>		<u>2009<sup>2</sup></u>
24	A lot	57
48	A little	30
27	Nothing at all	12
1	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL. DO NOT READ)</b>	1

**ASK IF HEARD A LOT OR A LITTLE (PEW.8f=1,2), DECEMBER 3-5 ONLY [N=578]:**

PEW.8g From what you have read and heard, do you approve or disapprove of the deficit commission's proposals?

Dec 3-5	
<u>2010</u>	
30	Approve
48	Disapprove
21	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>

**PEW.9 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

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<sup>2</sup> For February 27-March 2, 2009 the question asked about "The Obama administration projecting a \$1.75 trillion budget deficit for this year."