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GOP Has Midterm Engagement Advantage

*But ‘Enthusiasm Gap’ Narrower than
in 2010*

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
ON THIS REPORT:**

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GOP Has Midterm Engagement Advantage

But ‘Enthusiasm Gap’ Narrower than in 2010

The Republican Party holds a clear advantage in voter engagement in this fall’s midterm elections, according to a new national survey by the Pew Research Center. Yet GOP voters are not as enthused and engaged as they were at this point in the midterm campaign four years ago, prior to the Republican Party winning control of the House of Representatives, or as Democratic voters were in 2006, before Democrats gained control of Congress.

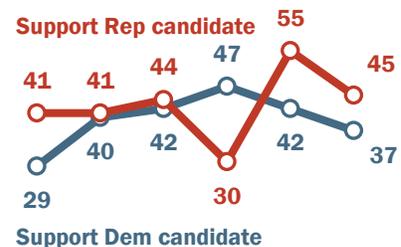
The latest survey by the Pew Research Center, conducted July 8-14 among 1,805 adults, including 1,420 registered voters, finds neither party has an advantage in voter preferences. Currently, 45% say if the election were held today they would support the Republican in their district or lean toward the Republican, while 47% favor the Democrat or lean Democratic.

The two parties also ran even on the so-called “generic ballot” throughout much of the 2010 campaign. The GOP’s victory in the national popular vote in 2010 – and their gain of 63 seats in the House – was ultimately fueled by a sharp rise in turnout by the Republican base, [particularly among conservatives and older voters](#).

Today, the Republicans lead on a number of key engagement indicators, though in some cases by smaller margins than four years ago. Currently, 45% of registered voters who plan to support the Republican in their district say they are more enthusiastic about voting than in prior congressional elections; that compares with 37% of those who plan to vote for the Democratic candidate. The GOP had a 13-point enthusiasm advantage at this point in the midterm campaign four years ago (55% to 42%) and the Democrats held a 17-point advantage eight years ago (47% to 30%).

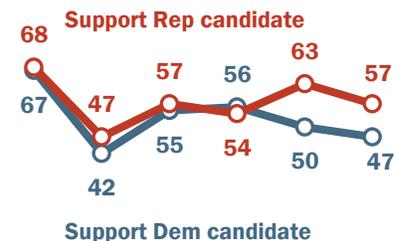
More Modest Enthusiasm Gap than in 2010, 2006

% more enthusiastic than usual about voting ...



Oct 94 Jun 98 Jun 02 Jun 06 Jun 10 Jul 14

% following news about elections very/fairly closely ...



Oct 94 Jun 98 Sep 02 Jun 06 Jun 10 Jul 14

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on registered voters who plan to vote for Rep/Dem candidates in their districts.

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However, as many voters who support the Republican in their district say they are “absolutely certain” to vote this fall as said this in June 2010. Three-quarters of Republican voters (76%) say they are absolutely certain to vote, compared with 67% of Democratic voters. Four years ago, 77% of Republican voters and 64% of Democratic voters said they were absolutely certain to vote in the fall.

Barack Obama is as powerful a motivating factor for Republican voters as he was in 2010: about half (51%) of those who say they will vote Republican this fall consider their vote as a vote “against” Obama, little changed from June 2010 (52%). And Obama has become a less positive factor for Democrats – 36% of those who plan to vote for the Democrat in their district view their vote as being “for” Obama, down from 44% four years ago. ([For more on Obama’s job ratings.](#))

However, slightly more Democratic voters say the issue of which party controls Congress will be a factor in their vote than did so at this point in 2010. Currently, 62% of Democratic voters say partisan control of Congress will be a factor in their vote, compared with 57% four years ago. In this regard, the Democrats have caught up with the Republicans: 62% of Republican voters also say which party controls Congress will matter in their vote.

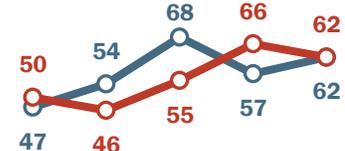
The survey finds that the public continues to hold Congress in extremely low regard. Just 28% of Americans view Congress favorably and a record-high 55% say the current Congress has accomplished less than usual. By a wide margin (44% to 28%), those who say Congress has accomplished less than usual blame Republican leaders rather than Democratic leaders for this situation.

Anti-incumbent sentiment also remains widespread: Only about half of all registered voters (48%) want to see their own representative reelected and just half as many (24%) would like to see most members of Congress reelected. These also are close to two-decade lows in Pew Research Center surveys.

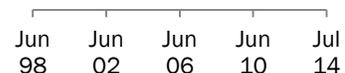
Congress Control Matters to Voters in Both Parties

% saying which party controls Congress will be factor in vote ...

Support Dem Candidate



Support Rep Candidate



Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on registered voters who plan to vote for Rep/Dem candidates in their districts.

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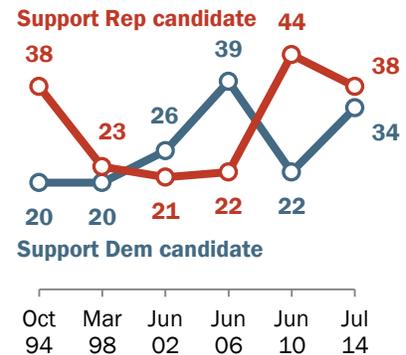
Yet unlike in the previous two midterms, anti-incumbent sentiment is shared fairly equally among both Democratic and Republican voters. Today, 38% of those who support the GOP candidate in their district say their own representative does not deserve reelection; nearly as many Democrats (34%) share that view. In 2010, when Democrats still controlled Congress, twice as many GOP voters as Democratic voters wanted to see their own representative defeated (44% vs. 22%); in 2006, when the GOP controlled Congress, anti-incumbent sentiment was far more widespread among Democrats (39%) than Republicans (22%).

However, even in the pivotal midterms of 2010 and 2006 when anti-incumbent feeling was prevalent, most members of Congress were reelected. The 2010 midterm was a high turnover election: 54 incumbents, all of them Democrats, were defeated for reelection. That was the highest number in half a century, according to [Vital Statistics on American Politics](#). Even so, 91% of all House members won reelection that year.

There are some indications that anti-incumbent sentiment can be partly explained by voters' negative reactions toward Congress generally, rather than specific critiques of their own representative. Only about half (53%) of registered voters are able to correctly identify the party of their congressional representative; 22% incorrectly identify their representative's party and 26% offer no response.¹

Modest Partisan Gap in Anti-Incumbent Sentiment

% who do not want to see their own representative reelected...



Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on registered voters who plan to vote for Rep/Dem candidates in their districts.

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¹ Respondents were matched to congressional districts using their zip codes and the [Sunlight Foundation's API](#) (98% of respondents were matched).

The 2014 Midterm: Voter Preferences, Voter Engagement

With four months to go before the 2014 midterm elections, the preferences of registered voters are about evenly divided: 47% say they plan to vote for the Democratic Party's candidate in their district, while 45% say they plan to back the Republican Party's candidate. There has been little change in voter preferences over the four previous Pew Research Center surveys measuring 2014 midterm voting intentions.

There are wide gender, educational and income differences in voter preferences. Republicans currently hold a 10-point lead among men (50% to 40%), while Democrats have a 12-point advantage among women (52% to 40%).

In recent elections, voters with post-graduate degrees have emerged as reliable Democratic voters: In the current survey, 55% of voters with post-graduate degrees favor the Democrat in their district, or lean Democratic, while 38% support the Republican or lean Republican. Voters with less education are evenly divided.

Middle-income voters – those with family incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999 – favor the GOP candidate by a wide margin (57% to 33%). Democrats hold a 13-point advantage (52% to 39%) among voters with incomes of less than \$30,000, while voters in other income categories are divided. *(For a closer look at midterm vote preferences, see the detailed*

Dems Lead among Post-Grads; Reps Lead among Middle-Income Voters

<i>Plan to vote for ...</i>	Rep candidate	Dem candidate	Other/DK	N
	%	%	%	
All voters	45	47	9=100	1420
Men	50	40	10=100	720
Women	40	52	8=100	700
White	53	40	8=100	1065
Black	14	81	5=100	130
Hispanic	32	58	10=100	117
18-29	41	50	9=100	154
30-49	44	45	10=100	342
50-64	45	49	7=100	448
65+	49	43	8=100	461
Post-grad degree	38	55	8=100	280
College degree	45	48	7=100	381
Some college	46	45	9=100	391
HS or less	46	44	10=100	363
<i>Family income</i>				
\$100,000+	45	48	7=100	288
\$75k-\$99,999	45	48	6=100	185
\$50k-\$74,999	57	33	9=100	229
\$30k-\$49,999	41	48	11=100	239
Less than \$30,000	39	52	9=100	333
Republican	94	3	3=100	424
Democrat	5	93	2=100	495
Independent	44	39	17=100	444
Lean Republican	83	6	11=100	230
Lean Democratic	7	83	9=100	166

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding. Based on registered voters. Whites and black include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race.

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table that accompanies this report.)

More Enthusiastic than Usual about Midterm Vote?

Overall, 40% of voters say that they are more enthusiastic about voting than in previous midterm elections, however, at least as many (45%) say they are less enthusiastic than usual; 13% volunteer that they feel the same about voting in this congressional election as in previous ones.

The percentage saying they are less enthusiastic about voting than usual is as high as it has been since 1998, in the midterm elections held in Bill Clinton's second term, following the scandal surrounding his affair with Monica Lewinsky.

At this point in the 2010 elections enthusiasm was stronger: 46% said they were more enthusiastic about voting, while fewer (36%) said they were less enthusiastic.

About half of Republican voters (49%) say they are more enthusiastic about voting this year than in the past, compared with 39% of Democrats. While Republicans maintain an enthusiasm gap over Democrats, the size of this advantage is more modest than in 2010.

Conservative Republicans are 10 points less likely to express greater midterm voting enthusiasm today than in 2010 (49% vs. 59%). By contrast, 41% of liberal Democrats say they are more enthusiastic than usual about voting in the 2014 midterms; in 2010, 37% said this.

Enthusiasm among independents is lower today

Modest Enthusiasm for 2014 Midterm

Compared to previous elections, how enthusiastic about voting ...

	More	Less	Same	DK
	%	%	(Vol.) %	%
July 2014	40	45	13	3=100
June 2010	46	36	16	2=100
June 2006	38	40	18	4=100
June 2002	41	33	23	3=100
June 1998	38	45	15	2=100

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding. Based on registered voters.

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GOP Voters Less Enthusiastic than in 2010, Little Change among Democrats

% more enthusiastic about voting in midterm than usual

	June	June	June	July	10-14
	2002	2006	2010	2014	change
	%	%	%	%	
All voters	41	38	46	40	-6
Republican	44	30	56	49	-7
Conservative	49	30	59	49	-10
Moderate/Liberal	37	30	50	49	-1
Democrat	40	46	42	39	-3
Conservative/Moderate	38	43	45	38	-7
Liberal	45	53	37	41	+4
Independent	37	37	42	33	-9
Lean Republican	42	31	54	43	-11
Lean Democratic	46	46	39	30	-9

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on registered voters. Figures may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

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than in 2010 (33% vs. 42%) and has ticked down among both Democratic-leaning and Republican-leaning independent voters.

Party Control of Congress a Factor in Midterm Vote

Nearly six-in-ten registered voters (58%) say the issue of which party controls Congress will be a factor in their vote this fall. This percentage is identical to opinion in June of 2010 and 2006. More say party control is an issue for them at this point in the 2014 midterm cycle than said this in the summer of 2002 (47%) and 1998 (45%).

In the current survey, about equal percentages of Republican (67%) and Democratic (66%) voters say party control of Congress will matter to their vote. This marks a shift from 2010 when more Republicans (73%) than Democrats (60%) cited control of Congress as a factor in their vote.

Independents are less likely than Republicans and Democrats to say they will consider party control of Congress in their vote: 45% say this will matter to them, while 52% say it won't.

Democrats as Likely as Republicans to Cite Control of Congress as Vote Factor

% saying party control will be a factor

	June 1998	June 2002	June 2006	June 2010	July 2014	10-14 change
	%	%	%	%	%	%
All voters	45	47	58	58	58	0
Republican	53	50	54	73	67	-6
Conservative	*	55	60	77	72	-5
Mod/Lib	*	40	42	65	55	-10
Democrat	53	59	72	60	66	+6
Cons/Mod	*	57	69	60	66	+6
Liberal	*	67	79	59	67	+8
Independent	28	28	48	42	45	+3
Lean Rep	36	27	45	55	50	-5
Lean Dem	30	34	63	44	50	+6
<i>Among Rep/ Lean Rep...</i>						
Tea Party	--	--	--	77	69	-8
Non-Tea Party	--	--	--	53	57	+4

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on registered voters.

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More Say Vote Is Against – than For – Obama

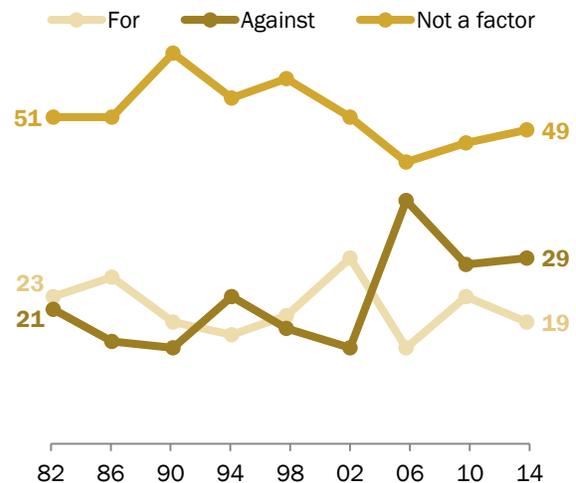
About half of voters say Obama will be a factor in their vote this fall, with somewhat more saying they consider their ballot a vote against Obama (29%) than for him (19%); 49% say the president won't be much of a factor in their decision. Opinion is little changed from [April of this year](#).

In June 2010, opinion was similarly distributed: 28% considered their vote as a vote against Obama, 23% a vote for him and 47% said he wasn't much of a factor.

While more say they will cast their midterm ballot as a vote against, than for, the president, opinion is not as negative toward Obama as it was toward George W. Bush in 2006. Eight years ago, 38% of voters said they were voting against Bush with their midterm vote, compared with just 15% who said they were voting for him.

More Voters See Midterm Ballot as a Vote Against Obama than for Him

Consider midterm vote as for president, against president, or president not a factor in vote?



Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on registered voters. Data for 1990 and earlier from CBS/NYT polls. For each year, survey closest to June is shown.

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A 55%-majority of Republican voters say they think of their vote for Congress as a vote against Barack Obama, including 61% of conservative Republicans. A smaller percentage of Democrats say they consider their midterm vote as one for Obama: 40% say this, with little difference in the views of liberal Democrats and conservative and moderate Democrats.

In 2006, Democrats were even more likely to cite opposition to Bush as a factor in their vote than Republicans are to say this about Obama today. Eight years ago, 65% of Democratic voters considered their midterm ballot to be a vote against Bush, as did 39% of independent voters.

Obama Has Greater Impact on the Votes of Republicans than Democrats

% who think their vote as...

	For Obama	Against Obama	Not a Factor	DK/Ref
	%	%	%	%
All voters	19	29	49	3=100
Republican	4	55	38	3=100
Conservative	3	61	32	3=100
Mod/Lib	6	42	51	2=100
Democrat	40	8	50	3=100
Cons/Mod	38	9	50	3=100
Liberal	41	6	51	2=100
Independent	10	27	60	3=100
Lean Republican	3	43	52	2=100
Lean Democratic	20	6	70	4=100
<i>Among Rep/ Rep Lean...</i>				
Tea Party	1	66	32	2=100
Non-Tea Party	5	43	50	3=100

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on registered voters. Figures may not up to 100% because of rounding.

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High Anti-Incumbent Sentiment – Among Both Parties

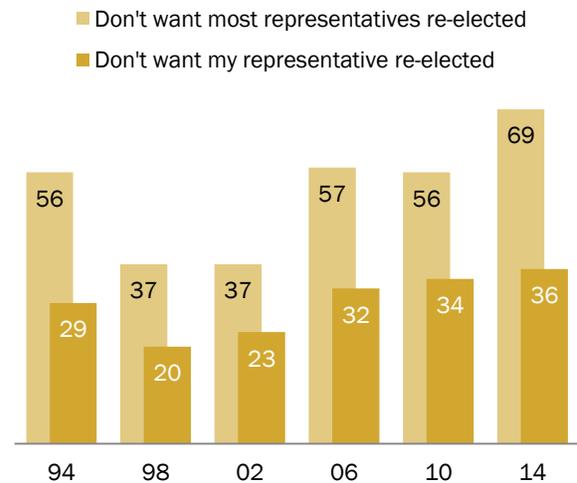
At this point in 2014, anti-incumbent sentiment is as high as it has ever been in midterm elections dating back to 1994.

Overall, 36% of voters say they do not want to see their own representative reelected to Congress, while 48% say they would like to see them win reelection. In the wave elections of 2010 and 2006, the percentage wanting their own representative to be unseated stood at 34% and 32% in June of each year.

In addition, fully 69% say they do not want most member of Congress to be reelected this year; just 24% say they want them back. In June of 2010, 56% wanted to see most members of Congress lose their jobs; in June of 2006, 57% of voters said this.

Anti-Incumbent Sentiment Higher than at Similar Points in Recent Midterms

% who say they do not want their representative/most representatives reelected to Congress



Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on registered voters. 2010, 2006 and 2002 figures from June; 1998 figures from early September; 1994 figures from early October.

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The current anti-incumbent sentiment is being driven by voters across partisan groups. About equal percentages of Republicans (34%) and Democrats (32%) say they do not want their own representative reelected to Congress. Independents (44%) are even more likely to take this view.

This stands in contrast to 2010, when Republicans were much more likely to express anti-incumbent views than Democrats, and 2006, when Democrats were more likely to want their representative to change.

Anti-Incumbent Sentiment Now Crosses Partisan, Ideological Lines

Do not want own representative reelected

	Oct 1994	Sept 1998	June 2002	June 2006	June 2010	July 2014
	%	%	%	%	%	%
All voters	29	20	23	32	34	36
Republican	34	18	20	20	41	34
Conservative	*	*	21	18	41	33
Moderate/Lib	*	*	19	24	41	35
Democrat	27	19	26	36	20	32
Cons/Mod	*	*	26	35	20	33
Liberal	*	*	26	40	21	32
Independent	29	23	26	38	42	44
Lean Republican	31	19	22	29	57	49
Lean Democratic	24	28	22	38	27	38
<i>Among Rep/ Lean Rep</i>						
Tea Party	--	--	--	--	51	40
Non-Tea Party	--	--	--	--	47	39

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on registered voters.

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Those living in districts represented by a member of their own party are, perhaps not surprisingly, more likely to support their member's reelection. In districts with a Republican congressperson, nearly six-in-ten Republicans (58%) want to see their representative reelected, compared with 25% who do not. In districts represented by a Democrat, 64% of Democrats want to see the incumbent win and 25% do not.

Voters represented by someone of the opposite party are less supportive of their incumbent congressperson. Still, nearly half (47%) of Democratic voters in Republican-represented districts say their lawmaker deserves reelection. That compares with just 34% of Republican voters in districts represented by a Democrat.

Support for Incumbents Strongest among Voters of the Same Party as Their Representatives

	In Republican districts ...			In Democratic districts ...		
	Rep voter	Dem voter	Ind voter	Rep voter	Dem voter	Ind voter
% of voters in district	33	32	32	25	41	30
<i>Would you like to see your representative reelected?</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	58	47	38	34	64	46
No	25	39	45	52	25	41
Don't know	18	13	17	14	12	14
	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Would you like to see most members reelected?</i>						
Yes	24	27	17	21	31	25
No	69	66	78	71	59	73
Don't know	7	6	5	8	9	2
	100	100	100	100	100	100

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on registered voters who were matched with representative in congressional district. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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Factors Driving 2014 Vote Choice

Voters view national issues as their top concern when it comes to factors influencing their midterm vote.

Overall, 34% say national issues will make the biggest difference in their vote for Congress, while slightly fewer name local and state issues (28%) or a candidate's character and experience (27%). Very few say they will be voting primarily on a candidate's political party (7%).

The factors influencing voters' midterm choice in 2014 are similar to those registered in the summer of 2010, when voters also viewed the election through a national lens. In 2002 and 1998, there was relatively more emphasis on state and local issues and a candidate's character and experience.

Nearly four-in-ten Republican voters (39%) say national issues will make the biggest difference in how they vote for congress this year, compared with fewer (28%) Democratic voters. Similarly, more Republicans (32%) than Democrats (21%) cite a candidate's character and experience as the top factor informing their vote.

Democrats are more likely than Republicans to say their vote will be most influenced by state and local issues (36% vs. 20%).

National Issues at Top of Voters' Minds

% who say ____ will make the biggest difference in vote

	June 1998	June 2002	June 2006	June 2010	July 2014
	%	%	%	%	%
National issues	22	26	30	38	34
Local/state issues	37	30	26	28	28
Candidate's character & experience	32	33	33	21	27
Candidate's political party	4	5	6	5	7
Other/None/DK	5	6	5	7	4
	100	100	100	100	100

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on registered voters. Figures may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

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Reps View Midterms Through National Lens, Dems Have a More Local Focus

% who say ____ will make the biggest difference in vote

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	R-D diff
	%	%	%	%	
National issues	34	39	28	35	R+11
Local/state issues	28	20	36	28	D+16
Candidate's character & experience	27	32	21	31	R+11
Candidate's political party	7	6	10	4	D+4
Other/None/DK (Vol.)	4	3	6	3	D+3
	100	100	100	100	

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on registered voters.

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Engagement Indicators Favor Republicans

At this stage of the 2014 election campaign, Republicans hold an all-important engagement edge over Democrats. Overall, 77% of Republican voters say they are “absolutely certain” to vote in the election this November, compared with somewhat fewer Democratic voters (70%) who say the same. Republicans also are 9 points more likely than Democrats to say they are following news about the midterm elections either very or fairly closely (56% vs. 47%).

However, while Republicans lead Democrats on key engagement indicators, their advantage is somewhat more modest than at the same point in the 2010 elections. In June 2010, Republicans were 12 points more likely than Democrats to say there were absolutely certain to vote (77% vs. 65%) and 14 points more likely to be following election news (64% vs. 50%).

GOP's Engagement Advantage Extends to Rep-Leaning Independents

	Absolutely certain to vote	Following campaign news very/fairly closely
	%	%
All voters	70	51
Republican	77	56
Conservative	81	60
Moderate/Liberal	70	48
Democrat	70	47
Conservative/Mod	67	42
Liberal	74	52
Independent	63	50
Lean Republican	69	56
Lean Democratic	61	46

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on registered voters.

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In fact, the enthusiasm of Republicans and Republican leaners who agree with the Tea Party – a group that had major impact on the 2010 elections – has dipped on some measures when compared with four years ago.

Tea Party Republicans remain highly engaged: 83% say they are certain to vote and 71% are following news about the midterms closely. Nonetheless, the percentage saying they are more enthusiastic about voting

this year than in the past has declined 11 points (from 65% to 54%) and news interest is down 9 points from June of 2010 (71% today, 80% then).

Tea Party Republicans: High Levels of Engagement, But Somewhat Lower than in 2010

	More enthusiastic than usual	Absolutely certain to vote	Following campaign news closely
	%	%	%
2014			
All Republican/ Republican-leaning RVs	47	75	56
Agree with Tea Party	54	83	71
Disagree/No opinion	43	70	48
2010			
All Republican/ Republican-leaning RVs	55	77	64
Agree with Tea Party	65	88	80
Disagree/No opinion	49	71	52

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on registered voters.

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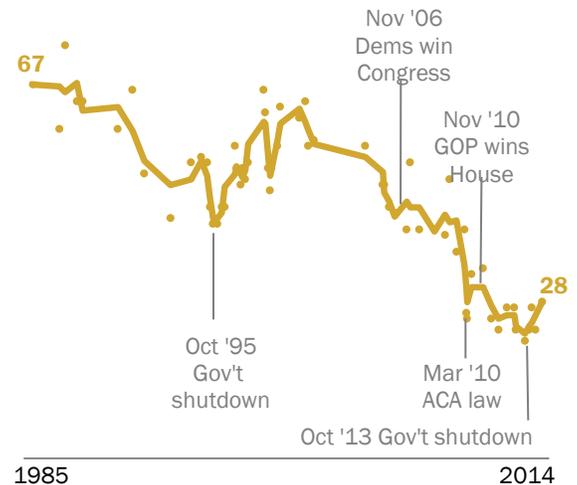
Section 2: Public Views of Congress; Voters' Views of Their Own Representatives

As the midterm election approaches, public views of Congress remain very negative. And a record share of Americans – 55% – say the current Congress has accomplished less than recent sessions.

Overall, just 28% of Americans say they have a favorable opinion of Congress. Nearly seven-in-ten (69%) have an unfavorable view. Views of the institution have improved, though only modestly, since reaching an all-time low of 21% a year ago. Congress's favorability rating has been in negative territory for nearly five years.

Views of Congress: 1985-2014

% with a favorable view of Congress



Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Line represents a three-poll average, while dots show individual polls. July 2014 based on current survey.

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Just 30% of Democrats, 29% of Republicans and 24% of independents view Congress favorably. Majorities in all three groups – 65% of Democrats, 68% of Republicans and 73% of independents – view Congress unfavorably.

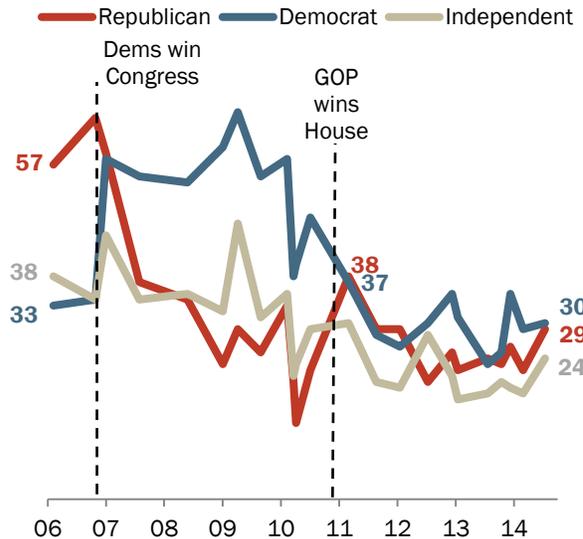
Republicans' views of Congress became more favorable after the GOP won control of the House in 2010. In March 2011, 38% of Republicans had a favorable impression of Congress, up from 22% the previous July. Even at that point, however, 55% had an unfavorable view of the institution.

Among Democrats, favorable views of Congress also have slipped since early 2011; in March of that year, 37% viewed the institution favorably.

The last time a majority of Democrats rated Congress favorably was in February 2010 (58%), when the party controlled the House and Senate. And the last time a majority of Republicans viewed Congress favorably was in January 2007 (59%).

Low Favorability Ratings for Congress among Members of Both Parties

% with a favorable view of Congress



Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Data points are from individual surveys.

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Record Share Says Congress Has Accomplished Less than Usual

Americans see the 113th Congress as one of the least productive in almost 20 years. The share who say that this Congress accomplished less than its recent predecessors stands at 55%, up from 33% in 2010 and 43% in 2006.

Republicans (57%), Democrats (52%) and independents (58%) largely agree that the current Congress has accomplished less than usual. The public's assessments of congressional accomplishments are less partisan today than at about this point during any midterm year since 1998.

Majority Sees Congress as Less Productive than Usual

% who say Congress has accomplished...

	Oct 1994	Aug 1998	June 2002	June 2006	June 2010	July 2014
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Less than usual	36	15	22	43	33	55
About the same	51	60	56	42	44	33
More than usual	10	18	16	7	18	9
Don't know	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding. October 1994 data from Gallup.

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Partisans Agree Congress Has Done Less than Usual

% saying Congress has accomplished less than usual

	Oct 1994	Aug 1998	June 2002	June 2006	June 2010	July 2014
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	36	15	22	43	33	55
Republican	36	14	13	26	51	57
Democrat	35	17	28	57	17	52
Independent	38	14	24	45	35	58

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding. October 1994 data from Gallup.

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Among those who say the current Congress has accomplished less, 44% say that Republican leaders are mostly to blame, 28% say Democratic leaders, and 22% volunteer that both parties' leaders are to blame.

In 2010, those who said Congress had accomplished less – a group mostly consisting of Republicans – placed more of the blame on Democratic leaders (49%). During the 2006 campaign, when more Democrats said Congress had accomplished less, a majority blamed Republican leaders (56%).

Nearly two-thirds of Republicans (64%) say that Democratic leaders are mostly to blame, while 21% place responsibility on both parties' leaders. Democrats overwhelmingly blame the Republican Party's leaders, including fully 86% of liberal Democrats.

While Republicans and Republican leaners who agree with the Tea Party overwhelmingly blame Democratic leaders for the lack of congressional accomplishments (73%), non-Tea Party Republicans have more divided views: 48% say Democratic leaders are mostly to blame, but 29% volunteer that both parties' leaders are to blame and 14% mostly blame GOP leaders.

GOP Leaders Viewed as More to Blame for Little Accomplishment in Congress

% saying ____ are most to blame for less accomplished

	Rep Leaders	Dem Leaders	Both (vol.)	Other/ DK
	%	%		%
Total	44	28	22	6=100
Republican	10	64	21	5=100
Democrat	81	6	11	2=100
Independent	36	23	32	9=100
<i>Among Rep/Lean Rep...</i>				
Tea Party	6	73	18	3=100
Non-Tea Party	14	48	29	8=100

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Based on those who say that Congress accomplished less than usual. Figures may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

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Voters' Views of Their Representatives

Currently, four-in-ten voters (40%) approve of the job their own representative is doing while 48% disapprove, little different than in September 2010. Today, Democrats and Republicans are about equally likely to say they approve of their member (46% and 42%, respectively). In 2010, a 56% majority of Democrats, compared with just 36% of Republicans, approved of their member of Congress.

Only about a third (34%) of independents approve of their representative today, little changed from 2010.

When it comes to specific evaluations of their House member, 51% of voters say their representative is in touch with the people in their district, 46% say their own representative does a good job bringing government projects and money back to their district and 44% say their member “works well with those across the aisle.” At the same time, 53% say their representative “cares more about their political party than the interests of the country” and 40% think their member has been in Washington, D.C., too long.

There are few differences on these five measures overall between those who plan to vote Democratic in the fall and those who plan to vote Republican, except on the question of tenure in Washington: Those voting Republican (43%) are somewhat more likely than those voting Democratic (36%) to say their member has been in D.C. too long.

Democrats' Approval of House Member Down 10 Points Since 2010

% who approve of their own representative in Congress

	Sep 2006	Sep 2010	July 2014
	%	%	%
All voters	49	43	40
Republican	58	36	42
Democrat	47	56	46
Independent	44	37	34

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Q4. Based on registered voters.

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Half of Voters Say Their House Member Is in Touch with District

% saying their representative to the U.S. House...

	Yes	No	DK
Is in touch with people in their district	51	40	9=100
Does good job bringing gov't projects and money to district	46	41	14=100
Works well with members of the other party	44	38	18=100
Cares more about their political party than interests of the country	53	37	10=100
Has been in Washington, D.C. too long	40	48	12=100

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Q68. Based on registered voters.

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As expected, voters who live in districts currently represented by a member of the party they plan to vote for in the fall have more positive ratings of their lawmakers than do other voters in that district.

However, even among Republican voters who live in GOP-represented districts, fewer than half (44%) approve of the job their own member of Congress is doing. A majority (56%) of Democratic voters in Democratic districts approve of the job performance of their representative.

Among GOP voters represented by a Republican who know their lawmaker's party, 54% approve of their job performance. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of Democratic voters in a Democratic district who know their representative's affiliation give a positive job rating to their member of Congress.

Fewer than Half of Republican Voters in GOP Districts Approve of the Job Their Representative Is Doing

	Voting Republican			Voting Democrat		
	All	In Rep district	In Dem District	All	In Dem district	In Rep district
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Approval of member	38	44	28	44	56	35
Is in touch with people in their district	50	57	41	55	62	49
Does good job bringing gov't projects and money to district	45	50	37	47	54	41
Works well with members of the other party	43	47	38	47	57	38
Has been in D.C. too long	43	39	51	36	29	44
Cares more about their political party than interests of the country	56	50	65	51	42	60

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Q68. Based on registered voters.

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On the other hand, partisans rank the other side poorly if they know their representative is from the opposing party. Most Democrats who live in a GOP-represented district – and are aware of their member's party – disapprove of their lawmaker's job performance (55%); and 57% of Republicans who live in Democratic districts and know their lawmaker's party also disapprove.

Many Voters Don't Know Their Representative's Party

Asked whether their House member is a Democrat or a Republican, 53% of registered voters correctly identify the party of their congressional representative; 22% pick the wrong party and 26% say they don't know.

Voters with college degrees are more likely to correctly identify their lawmaker's party: 71% of those with post-graduate degrees and 60% of those with bachelors' degrees correctly identify the party of their member of Congress. Among those who have not graduated from college, far fewer (47%) answer correctly.

About six-in-ten Republicans (59%) know their representative's party, along with 53% of Democrats. About half (47%) of independents know the party of their representative.

Men are more likely than women to correctly identify the party of their representative (60% vs. 46%), but no less likely to provide the incorrect answer (women are less likely than men to offer a response).

Roughly Half of Registered Voters Can Correctly ID Representative's Party

Do you happen to know whether your representative in Congress is a Democrat or a Republican?

	Correctly identified party %	Incorrectly identified party %	DK %
Total	53	22	26=100
Men	60	21	19=100
Women	46	22	31=100
White	56	20	23=100
Black	47	25	28=100
Hispanic	41	20	39=100
18-29	49	20	32=100
30-49	49	25	26=100
50-64	58	21	22=100
65+	54	20	26=100
Post grad	71	17	13=100
College grad	60	17	23=100
Some college	48	27	26=100
H.S. or less	46	22	32=100
Republican	59	20	20=100
Conservative	59	20	20=100
Moderate/Liberal	60	20	20=100
Independent	47	22	31=100
Democrat	53	24	24=100
Conservative/Moderate	47	26	27=100
Liberal	60	21	19=100

Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Q67. Based on registered voters. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Respondents were matched to congressional districts using their zip codes and the [Sunlight Foundation's API](#) (98% of respondents were matched). This made it possible to determine whether respondents correctly named the party of their House member.

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About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted July 8-14, 2014 among a national sample of 1,805 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (723 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 1,082 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 597 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://people-press.org/methodology/>

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity and region to parameters from the 2012 Census Bureau's American Community Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status (landline only, cell phone only, or both landline and cell phone), based on extrapolations from the 2013 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,805	2.7 percentage points
Republican	480	5.2 percentage points
Democrat	608	4.6 percentage points
Independent	639	4.5 percentage points
Registered voters	1420	3.0 percentage points
Republican voters	424	5.5 percentage points
Democratic voters	495	5.1 percentage points
Independent voters	444	5.4 percentage points
<i>House vote choice</i>		
Support Rep candidate	658	4.4 percentage points
Support Dem candidate	643	4.5 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.