



**THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER**  
**For The People & The Press**

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Liberal Democrats Are on Board

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Tax Cuts Win Broad Bipartisan Support

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**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

**Andrew Kohut**

President, Pew Research Center

**Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock**

Associate Directors

**Scott Keeter**

Director of Survey Research

1615 L St, N.W., Suite 700

Washington, D.C. 20036

Tel (202) 419-4350

Fax (202) 419-4399

[www.people-press.org](http://www.people-press.org)

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## Liberal Democrats Are on Board

# Tax Cut Deal Wins Broad Bipartisan Support

The agreement between President Obama and congressional Republicans to extend tax cuts and unemployment benefits is getting strong bipartisan support.

Overall, 60% approve of the agreement while just 22% disapprove.

There are virtually no partisan differences in opinions about the agreement – 63% of Democrats approve of it, as do 62% of Republicans and 60% of independents. Among Democrats, liberals are as supportive of the agreement as are conservative and moderate Democrats.

The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted Dec. 9-12 among 1,011 adults, finds that on balance more say the agreement will help rather than hurt the U.S. economy and people like themselves.

Nearly half (48%) say the agreement will help the economy, while just 29% think it will hurt the economy. Opinions are similar about the personal impact of the deal: Nearly twice as many say the agreement will help (47%) rather than hurt (25%) people like themselves.

However, far more people say the agreement on tax cuts and unemployment benefits will hurt (46%), rather than help (26%) the federal budget

### Broad Backing for Tax Cut Deal

	Approve %	Disapprove %	DK %
Total	60	22	18=100
Republican	62	21	16=100
Conservative	64	22	14=100
Democrat	63	24	12=100
Liberal	65	20	15=100
Independent	60	21	18=100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 9-12, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

### Good for Economy and Average Americans, Bad for the Deficit

	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
<i>Plan's effect on ...</i>				
<b>U.S. economy</b>				
Help	48	52	50	50
Hurt	29	28	28	30
No difference/DK	<u>23</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>20</u>
	100	100	100	100
<b>People like you</b>				
Help	47	51	47	50
Hurt	25	24	26	25
No difference/DK	<u>27</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>25</u>
	100	100	100	100
<b>Budget deficit</b>				
Help	26	27	30	24
Hurt	46	51	43	48
No difference/DK	<u>28</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>
	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Dec. 9-12, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

deficit. Opinions about the impact of the agreement – like views of the deal itself – show little difference across parties.

Roughly half of Republicans, Democrats and independents say the agreement will both be good for the economy and for people like themselves. Pluralities across all three groups see the agreement will be bad for the federal budget deficit; Republicans (51%) are slightly more likely than Democrats (43%) to say that the agreement will have a negative impact on the deficit.

## About the Survey

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted December 9-12, 2010 among a national sample of 1,011 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (676 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 335 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 139 who had no landline telephone). Interviewing was conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. Both the landline and cell phone samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. 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/ethnicity, region, and population density to parameters from the March 2009 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones (for those with both), based on extrapolations from the 2009 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 within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	1,011	4.0 percentage points
Republican	278	7.5 percentage points
Conservative Republican	207	8.5 percentage points
Democrat	305	7.0 percentage points
Liberal Democrat	101	12.0 percentage points
Independent	328	6.5 percentage points

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.

## About the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of seven projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. All of our current survey results are made available free of charge.

All of the Center's research and reports are collaborative products based on the input and analysis of the entire Center staff consisting of:

Andrew Kohut, Director

Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research

Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock, Associate Directors

Michael Remez, Senior Writer

Leah Christian and Jocelyn Kiley, Senior Researchers

Robert Suls, Shawn Neidorf, and Alec Tyson, Research Associates

Jacob Poushter, Research Analyst

Danielle Gewurz, Research Assistant

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**PEW RESEARCH CENTER NEWS INTEREST INDEX  
DECEMBER 9-12, 2010 OMNIBUS  
FINAL TOPLINE  
N=1,011**

**PEW.1 THROUGH PEW.2 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.3 As you may know, Barack Obama and Congressional Republicans have reached an agreement to extend tax cuts and unemployment benefits. From what you've read and heard, do you strongly approve, approve, disapprove or strongly disapprove of this plan?

Dec 9-12

2010

60	NET Approve
12	Strongly approve
48	Approve
22	NET Disapprove
17	Disapprove
5	Strongly disapprove
18	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>

**TREND FOR COMPARISON:**

*In recent years, President Bush and Congress have made major cuts in federal income tax rates. Do you approve or disapprove of these tax cuts?*

	Jan <u>2006</u>	Jan <u>2005</u>	March <u>2004</u>	Aug <u>2003</u>
Approve	50	51	53	54
Disapprove	38	41	38	37
Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	12	8	9	9

**ASK ALL:**

Thinking ahead...

PEW.4 Do you think this plan will help or hurt **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]?**

		<u>Help</u>	<u>Hurt</u>	<u>(VOL.) Make no difference</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
a.	The condition of the U.S. economy December 9-12, 2010	48	29	5	18
b.	People like yourself December 9-12, 2010	47	25	12	15
c.	The federal budget deficit December 9-12, 2010	26	46	5	23

**PEW.5 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**