



THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER
For The People & The Press

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Midterm Voting Intentions Evenly Divided
CONGRESSIONAL FAVORABILITY AT 24-YEAR LOW

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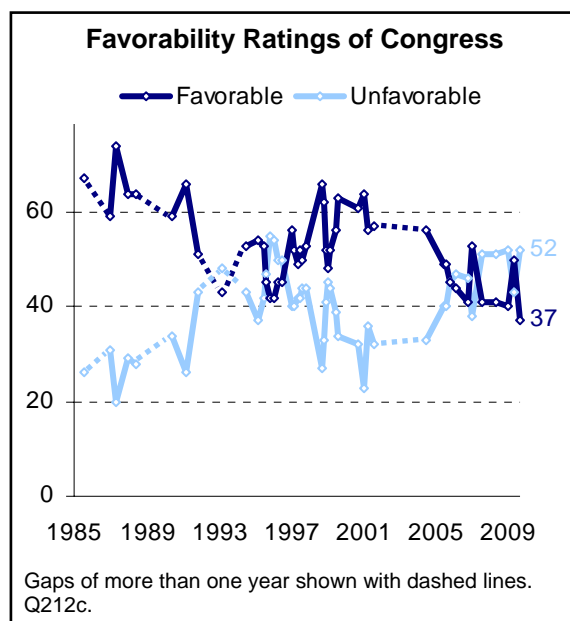
Midterm Voting Intentions Evenly Divided CONGRESSIONAL FAVORABILITY AT 24-YEAR LOW

Americans are extremely displeased with Congress, and there are already some signs that this could take a toll on the Democrats in the 2010 midterm elections. Currently, 37% express a favorable opinion of Congress, while 52% hold an unfavorable view. Positive opinions of Congress have declined by 13 points since April and are now at one of their lowest points in more than two decades of Pew Research Center surveys.

At the same time, intentions to vote Democratic in the next midterm election are markedly lower than they have been over the past four years. Voters are about evenly divided when asked how they would vote if the election for Congress were being held today: 45% say they would vote for a Democratic candidate in their district, or lean Democratic, while 44% say they would vote for a Republican or lean Republican. At about this point four years ago, Democrats led in the generic congressional ballot by 52% to 40% and went on to win a majority of the popular vote and regain control of Congress the following November.

The new survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted Aug. 20-27 in English and Spanish among 2,003 adults reached on landlines and cell phones, finds that the Democrats' dimmer electoral prospects are more a matter of disillusionment with the party that controls Congress than a revival of the image of the Republican Party. Favorable ratings of the GOP remain quite low (40%), even as opinion of Democrats has soured; just 48% say they have a favorable opinion of the Democratic Party, down 11 points since April.

Most of the shift in voting intentions since the 2006 election cycle has occurred among political independents. Independent voters backed Democrats by a wide margin in the previous midterm (11 points on the eve of the election), but currently say they support the GOP candidate in their district by 43% to 38%.



Trouble Ahead for Democrats?

<i>If election were today, would you...</i>	Sept 2005	Nov 2006	Aug 2009
Vote Democratic	52	48	45
Vote Republican	40	40	44
Other/DK	8	12	10

Figures read down. Based on registered voters; includes leaners. Q210/211.

Independents' views of Congress shifted more dramatically in recent months than have opinions among Republicans or Democrats. Notably, independent voters who express an unfavorable view of Congress, say they would back the GOP candidate over the Democrat by a whopping 51% to 31% margin, while the smaller proportion of independent voters who have a positive view of Congress say they intend to vote for the Democrat, by 55% to 29%.

A separate national survey, conducted Aug. 27-30 among 1,005 adults, finds that the Democratic Party continues to hold substantial advantages over the GOP on nearly all issues and leadership traits. Yet since last year the Democrats' leads on most issues have narrowed, including the economy and taxes. In addition, the two parties currently run about even on which can do a better job of reducing the federal budget deficit; in the fall of 2006, the Democrats led by a wide margin on the deficit.

Democrats Lose Ground on Deficit, Managing Government			
	Dem Party	Rep Party	Dem adv.
<i>Can better handle</i>			
Health care reform	%	%	
August 2009	46	27	+19
February 2008	56	26	+30
Economy			
August 2009	42	32	+10
February 2008	53	34	+19
Budget deficit			
August 2009	36	35	+1
September 2006	47	27	+20
<i>Party that...</i>			
Better manages government			
August 2009	38	34	+4
October 2007	44	32	+12
Cares about people			
August 2009	51	27	+24
October 2007	54	25	+29
Is honest & ethical			
August 2009	42	26	+16
October 2007	40	26	+14
Figures read across. Q3/Q4.			

The Democrats continue to be widely viewed as the party more associated with honest and ethical governance, concern with the needs of average Americans, and having better candidates for office. However, nearly as many say the Republican Party as (34%) as Democratic Party (38%) can manage the federal government; two years ago, the Democrats led by 12 points (44% to 32%) as better able to manage the government.

Opinions about health care reform may well be contributing to public discontent with Congress. By a 46% to 39% margin, more Americans generally oppose than favor the health care proposals being considered in Congress, which is little changed from July (44% oppose, 38% favor).

An increasing proportion of Americans have heard "a lot" about health care bills in Congress; 53% say that now, up from 41% in July. And as was the case then, most of those who have heard a lot about the legislation are generally opposed to these proposals (by

Health Care Reform: Awareness Grows, Plurality Still Opposed		
<i>Heard about health care reform bills...</i>	July	August
	%	%
A lot	41	53
Little/nothing	57	47
Don't know	1	1
	99	101
<i>Generally favor/oppose?</i>		
Favor	38	39
<i>Very strongly</i>	--	25
Oppose	44	46
<i>Very strongly</i>	--	34
Don't know	18	15
	100	100
Q215/216/217.		

55% to 38%) while those who have heard less about the proposals are evenly divided (41% favor, 36% oppose, 23% no opinion).

There is more intense opposition than support for health care reform legislation: 34% say they very strongly oppose the proposals while 25% favor these proposals very strongly. Opinion about health care reform also continues to be highly partisan. More than seven-in-ten conservative Republicans (72%) say they very strongly oppose the health care reform legislation being discussed in Congress. Strong support is concentrated among liberal Democrats; still only about half of this group (52%) says they very strongly favor the bills.

For all the public's reservations about health care reform, however, Barack Obama continues to enjoy the confidence of a majority of the public with regard to this issue. More than half (56%) say they have a great deal (26%) or a fair amount of confidence (30%) in Obama to do the right thing in dealing with health care reform. That compares with 45% who have at least a fair amount of confidence in Democratic leaders in Congress and 39% who have confidence in GOP congressional leaders.

Health Care Up, Economy Down as Top National Problem

The economy remains the most frequently mentioned problem facing the nation, but an increasing proportion of Americans cite health care. Currently, 55% mention the economy in general or one of several specific economic problems, such as unemployment or the financial crisis. In February, 80% mentioned the economy, the highest percentage in more than 20 years of Pew's surveys.

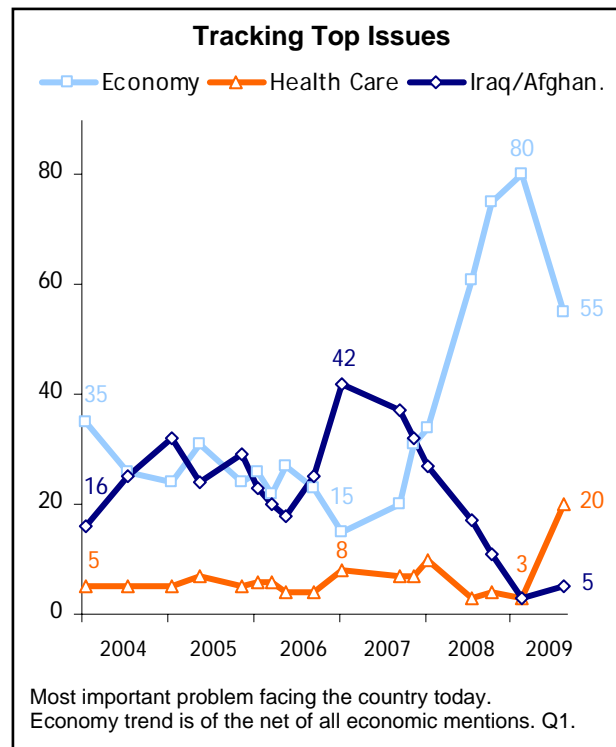
Meanwhile, mentions of health care as the top national problem have risen from just 3% in February to 20% today. The last time health care was cited this often was June 1994, during the congressional debate over health care reform in Bill Clinton's first term. There is little difference in the percentage of Democrats (26%) and Republicans (20%) citing health care as an important national problem.

The federal budget deficit and the national debt, the subject of much media attention recently, were mentioned by 6%, essentially unchanged from February when 4% cited the debt or deficit.

Other issues – including the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan – are far less likely to be mentioned today than in the past. Iraq and Afghanistan were cited by 5%, down from 17% about a year ago and from a high of 42% in January 2007. Collectively, international issues, including both wars, were mentioned by 10%.

	Jan 2008	July 2008	Oct 2008	Feb 2009	Aug 2009
	%	%	%	%	%
Economic problems (Net)	34	61	75	80	55
Economy (general)	20	39	55	53	27
Unemployment	5	5	9	31	19
Financial crisis	--	--	26	16	7
Recession/Depression	2	1	1	3	2
Inflation/Cost of living	3	6	5	2	*
Gas/Energy prices	3	19	5	--	--
Health care	10	3	4	3	20
Deficit/National debt	2	1	1	4	6
War/Iraq/Afghanistan	27	17	11	3	5
Dissatisfaction w/govt	6	3	4	5	5
Number of respondents	1,515	737	728	643	1,005

Based on open-ended question, multiple responses allowed. See topline for full results. Survey conducted Aug. 27-30, 2009. Q1.



Race for Congress Tied

When asked to look ahead to the 2010 races for Congress, voters divide almost evenly between the parties. The sizable advantage enjoyed by the Democratic Party in the past two election cycles is gone, at least for now. As in previous years, both parties command nearly unanimous support from their own ranks. But the Democratic edge among independent voters, critical to their large electoral gains in 2006 and 2008, has vanished. Republicans have gained 10 points since November 2006, on the eve of the midterms (from 33% to 43%).

Republicans now lead among white non-Hispanic voters (by 15 points), men (11 points) and voters 65 and older (by eight points). In November 2006, Democrats ran about even among whites and men, and led by 11 points among voters 65 and older. In addition, Republicans now lead by eight points among white non-Hispanic Catholics, whose vote preferences were evenly divided at the end of the last midterm campaign.

Democrats have a huge lead among African Americans, and more modest advantages among women (51%-40%), low-income voters (50%-38%); however, Republicans have gained 11 points since 2006 among the latter group. Democrats continue to hold an advantage among voters unaffiliated with a religion, but their margin has declined.

Attitudes about health care reform are closely related to vote intentions. Voters who favor the reform proposals currently being discussed support Democratic candidates by a margin of 81% to 12%. Among the larger proportion that opposes the reform proposals, 72% support Republican candidates for Congress compared with 18% who back Democratic candidates.

Independents Move to GOP in Midterm Matchup						
	Nov 2006		Aug 2009		<i>Rep gain</i>	<u>N</u>
	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>		
	%	%	%	%		
All voters	40	48	44	45	+4	1669
Republicans	92	4	93	4	+1	518
Democrats	2	95	6	93	+4	541
Independents	33	44	43	38	+10	546
Men	43	46	50	39	+7	699
Women	38	49	40	51	+2	970
White non-Hisp	46	42	52	37	+6	1361
Black non-Hisp	10	83	3	91	-7	139
18-29	37	50	40	51	+3	159
30-49	41	47	48	39	+7	478
50-64	41	47	39	52	-2	534
65+	39	50	51	43	+12	472
College grad+	42	48	44	46	+2	694
Some college	41	45	48	43	+7	427
HS or less	38	49	42	47	+4	538
\$75,000+	48	42	48	42	0	509
\$50-\$74,999	48	44	51	40	+3	261
\$30-\$49,999	44	47	41	53	-3	276
Under \$30,000	27	60	38	50	+11	314
Protestant	47	42	50	41	+3	937
White evangelical	63	27	71	20	+8	414
White mainline	45	43	48	40	+3	345
Catholic	38	49	47	47	+9	363
White non-Hisp	43	43	51	43	+8	308
Unaffiliated	23	66	29	51	+6	231

Based on registered voters. Figures read across. Q210.

Favorability of Congress Sinks

Public evaluations of Congress are now at an all-time low, with 37% saying they have a favorable impression of Congress. That represents a sharp downturn from April (50%), though is only slightly lower than in January (40%).

Congress' current favorability rating is lower than at several key points over the past two decades, including just prior to the 2006 midterm (41% favorable), during the impeachment trial of former President Clinton (48% in January 1999), and during the government shutdown in late 1995 (42% in January 1996).

	January		April		August		Apr-Aug change in fav
	Fav %	Unfav %	Fav %	Unfav %	Fav	Unfav	
Total	40	52	50	43	37	52	-13
18-29	43	49	53	37	53	36	0
30-49	45	47	52	41	35	53	-17
50-64	36	57	51	47	32	59	-19
65+	27	58	38	47	28	60	-10
Republican	23	68	29	65	25	67	-4
Democrat	60	36	66	26	55	36	-11
Independent	32	61	47	46	31	58	-16
<i>Household income</i>							
\$75k or more	32	61	44	52	37	58	-7
\$30k to \$74,999	44	48	50	45	38	54	-12
Less than \$30,000	43	48	57	35	40	44	-17
Figures read across. Q.212c.							

Congress's favorability now stands at 55% among Democrats, down from 66% in April and 60% in January. Among independents, positive ratings have fallen 16 points since April, from 47% to 31%; in January, 32% of independents had a positive view of Congress. Opinions of Congress among Republicans remain overwhelmingly negative; currently, 25% say they have a favorable opinion while 67% have a negative view.

Young people continue to be the only age group in which a majority expresses a favorable opinion of Congress; 53% currently do so, unchanged from April. By contrast, positive views have declined among all other age groups.

Party Images and Issues

The Democratic Party's overall image has slipped since earlier this year, but the party has retained advantages over the Republicans on many traits and issues. Compared with the fall of 2007, the Democrats continue to have double-digit leads over the GOP in key areas such as concern about the disadvantaged, empathy, ability to bring about needed change, the quality of its candidates, and ethics and honesty.

However, the party has lost its advantage over the Republican Party as better able to manage the federal government. On the eve of the 2006 elections, the public preferred the Democrats by 10 points (44% to 34%) as the party better able to manage the government. This lead swelled to 16 points early in 2007. Today the Democrats hold a statistically insignificant 38% to 34% advantage on this question. Independents – who in recent years had viewed the Democrats as better managers – are now divided (32% Democrat vs. 29% Republican).

But the Democrats remain solidly ahead in other areas. By 51% to 27% they are viewed as the party “more concerned about people like me,” an advantage that has changed little over the past five years. Similarly, Democrats, more than Republicans, are still seen as best able to bring about the kinds of changes the country needs (47% to 25%). And the party is still seen as governing in a more ethical and honest way (42% vs. 26%), an advantage that has not changed in nearly three years.

Democrats Run Even on Management, Still Lead on Concern, “Change”				
<i>Which party...</i>	Dem	Rep	Both/ Neither/ DK	<i>Dem</i>
Can better manage the government	<u>Party</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>adv.</u>
	%	%	%	
August 2009	38	34	28	+4
October 2007	44	32	24	+12
October 2006	44	34	22	+10
October 2005	41	35	24	+6
July 2004	40	37	23	+3
Is more concerned about people like me				
August 2009	51	27	21	+24
October 2007	54	25	21	+29
October 2006	55	27	18	+28
October 2005	52	30	18	+22
July 2004	50	30	20	+20
Can bring needed change				
August 2009	47	25	27	+22
October 2007	48	26	26	+22
October 2006	48	28	24	+20
October 2005	48	32	20	+16
July 2004	46	35	19	+11
Selects better candidates				
August 2009	46	28	27	+18
October 2007	41	32	27	+9
Is more honest and ethical				
August 2009	42	26	33	+16
October 2007	40	26	34	+14
October 2006	41	27	32	+14
October 2005	40	30	30	+10
July 2004	37	34	29	+3

Figures read across. Survey conducted Aug. 27-30, 2009. N=1,005. Q3a-e.

Democrats continue to be preferred on most specific issues, but their advantages on many have narrowed. On two issues holding center stage today – health care reform and the economy – the Democratic Party retains an advantage, but one that is smaller than in 2008. The public says the Democratic Party can do a better job of reforming the U.S. health care system, by 46% to 27%. But that 19-point lead is down from 30 points in early 2008. Similarly, the Democrats outpace the Republicans by 10 points on the economy (42% to 32%), but their advantage in 2008 was 19 points.

Moreover, on both the budget deficit and taxes, about equal numbers of Americans now see each party as best able to handle the issue. On the budget deficit, this represents a sharp drop for the Democrats. In September 2006, the Democrats led the Republicans by 47% to 27%. Now, 36% favor the Democrats and 35% the Republicans. On taxes, the Democratic Party led the GOP by eight points in 2006 and 12 points two years later; today, as many say the Republican Party (38%) as the Democratic Party (37%) can do a better job dealing with taxes.

Democrats Still Favored on Most Issues				
<i>Which party can do a better job of...</i>	Dem Party	Rep Party	Both/ Neither/DK	<i>Dem adv.</i>
	%	%	%	
Reforming health care				
August 2009	46	27	27	+19
February 2008	56	26	18	+30
October 2006	46	25	29	+21
September 2005	51	28	21	+23
July 2004	50	23	27	+27
Dealing w/ the economy				
August 2009	42	32	27	+10
February 2008	53	34	13	+19
October 2006	45	32	23	+13
September 2005	44	38	18	+6
July 2004	46	34	20	+12
Reducing federal deficit				
August 2009	36	35	29	+1
September 2006	47	27	26	+20
October 2005	47	29	24	+18
Improving education				
August 2009	47	22	30	+25
February 2008	55	26	19	+29
October 2006	45	27	28	+18
September 2005	44	35	21	+9
July 2004	45	29	26	+16
Dealing with taxes				
August 2009	37	38	26	-1
February 2008	49	37	14	+12
October 2006	40	32	28	+8
Making wise decisions about foreign policy				
August 2009	44	31	24	+13
February 2008	45	40	15	+5
July 2004	40	38	22	+2
Dealing with the terrorist threat at home				
August 2009	32	38	31	-6
February 2008	38	45	17	-7
October 2006	33	39	28	-6
September 2005	34	45	21	-11
July 2004	30	45	25	-15

Figures read across. Survey conducted Aug. 27-30, 2009.
N=1,005. Q4a-d,f,h,j.

The Democratic Party has lost little ground as the party better able to improve education (47% favor the Democrats, 22% the Republicans) or abortion (41% to 33%). And on foreign policy, the Democrats' advantage has increased from five points in February 2008 to 13 points currently. Since then the proportion saying the Republicans can do a better job on foreign policy has declined from 40% to 31%, while the percentage favoring the Democrats is largely unchanged.

Looking across the 11 policy issues included in the current survey, the Democratic Party holds significant leads on seven, including a 37% to 28% advantage as the party better able to make wise decisions about what to do in Afghanistan. On three other issues – the budget deficit, taxes and immigration – the two parties run about even, while the Republican Party holds a slight edge on only one issue – dealing with terrorist threats at home.

Similarly, the Democrats are viewed positively on most leadership dimensions, with the notable exception of managing the government. Slightly more people see the GOP (37%), rather than the Democratic Party (31%), as more influenced by lobbyists and special interests. The perception that the Republicans are more influenced by lobbyists is somewhat less widespread than during the 2006 campaign, when 41% said the Republican Party was more influenced by special interests and lobbyists, compared with 27% who said the same about the Democratic Party.

The Republican Party continues to be widely viewed as the party concerned with the needs and interests of business; currently, 55% view the Republicans as concerned with the needs of business compared with 26% for the Democrats. These opinions have changed little since the 1990s.

Current Views of Party Strengths: Issues and Image			
	Dem Party %	Rep Party %	Dem adv.
Can do better job on issue of...			
Education	47	22	+25
Energy problems	47	25	+22
Health care	46	27	+19
Foreign policy	44	31	+13
The economy	42	32	+10
Afghanistan	37	28	+9
Abortion	41	33	+8
Immigration	36	31	+5
The budget deficit	36	35	+1
Taxes	37	38	-1
Terrorist defenses	32	38	-6
Which party...			
Is more concerned about about the disadvantaged	58	20	+38
Is more concerned about needs of people like me	51	27	+24
Can bring about the changes the country needs	47	25	+22
Selects better candidates for office	46	28	+18
Governs in a more honest and ethical way	42	26	+16
Can better manage the federal government	38	34	+4
Is more influenced by lobbyists & special interests	31	37	-6
Is more concerned about needs of business	26	55	-29

Figures read across. Survey conducted Aug. 27-30, 2009. N=1,005. Q3/Q4.

Health Care: More Tuning In

Even with Congress on its August recess, the public's attention to the health care debate has grown substantially since July. When asked about the bills in Congress to overhaul the health care system, more than half (53%) say they have heard a lot about the proposals, 40% have heard a little, and only 7% have heard nothing at all. In July, somewhat fewer (41%) reported hearing a lot about the health care bills. In addition, since late July, the health care debate in Washington has been the most closely followed story on Pew Research's weekly News Interest Index. (*See "Health Care Still the Summer's Dominant Story," Aug. 26, 2009.*)

Republicans continue to be more attentive to the health care debate than Democrats but the gap has narrowed over the past month; 58% of Republicans have heard a lot about the bills compared with 50% of Democrats. In July, 52% of Republicans and only 38% of Democrats had heard a lot. Independents continue to track more closely with Democrats; 51% have heard a lot, up 12 percentage points since July.

	July <u>22-26</u> %	Aug <u>20-27</u> %	<u>Change</u>
<i>Percent heard "a lot"</i>			
Total	41	53	+12
Republican	52	58	+6
Conservative	60	62	+2
Moderate/Liberal	37	46	+9
Democrat	38	50	+12
Conserv/Moderate	35	47	+12
Liberal	49	57	+8
Independent	39	51	+12
18-29	22	36	+14
30-49	43	52	+9
50-64	47	60	+13
65+	52	62	+10
Q215.			

Compared with July, more people across all age groups report hearing a lot about health care legislation in Congress, but wide age differences remain. Just 36% of those younger than 30 say they have heard a lot about health care; by comparison, majorities of those in older age groups say they are hearing a lot about the health care bills in Congress. Still, the percentage of those younger than 30 hearing a great deal has increased by 14 points since July.

Health Care Opinions Largely Unchanged

The overall balance of opinion about the health care reform bills before Congress has not changed since July. More Americans say they generally oppose the proposals than generally favor them (by 46% to 39%). In July, 44% opposed and 38% favored the bills.

More than three-quarters of Republicans (78%) of Republicans, including 83% of conservative Republicans, oppose the bills to overhaul health care. By contrast, 64% of Democrats favor the bills, including three-fourths (75%) of liberal Democrats. As in July, more independents oppose the bills than favor them (48% vs. 37%).

	July 22-26		Aug 20-27		Aug N
	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	
	%	%	%	%	
Total	38	44	39	46	2003
Republican	12	76	13	78	582
Conservative	6	83	8	83	415
Moderate/Liberal	21	65	26	67	153
Democrat	61	20	64	21	628
Conserv/Moderate	57	22	58	26	357
Liberal	74	16	75	11	244
Independent	34	49	37	48	681
White non-Hisp	33	49	29	56	1557
Black non-Hisp	50	31	71	15	160
18-29	44	39	45	38	270
30-49	34	47	39	49	593
50-64	45	41	41	43	597
65+	29	48	30	54	511
<i>Household income</i>					
\$75,000 or more	35	51	38	52	573
\$30,000-74,999	37	47	38	48	626
Less than \$30,000	44	36	48	34	429

Figures read across. Q216.

The balance of opinion among most demographic groups also has not changed much since July. Nearly twice as many non-Hispanic whites oppose health care legislation (56%) as favor it (29%). African Americans support the bills by an even greater margin than in July (71% to 15%). Meanwhile, opposition to health care legislation among those 65 and older, already widespread, has ticked up since July; 54% now oppose health care legislation compared with 48% last month.

The current poll also finds that there is greater intensity in opinion among opponents of the bills than among supporters. About a third (34%) of Americans oppose the bills *very strongly* while 12% oppose them not *so strongly*. By comparison, a quarter (25%) favors health care proposals in Congress very strongly and 13% not so strongly.

Fully 72% of conservative Republicans say they very strongly oppose health care legislation – far more than any other

	Favor		Oppose	
	Very strongly	Not so strongly	Very strongly	Not so strongly
	%	%	%	%
Total	25	13	34	12
Republican	8	5	63	13
Conservative	5	3	72	11
Moderate/Liberal	16	10	44	20
Democrat	44	18	11	9
Conserv/Moderate	40	17	13	12
Liberal	52	20	7	4
Independent	21	14	34	13

Figures read across. Q217.

political group. Intense support for the health care bills among liberal Democrats is less widespread: about half of liberal Democrats (52%) say they support this legislation very strongly. About a third of independents (34%) oppose health care legislation very strongly, while just 21% support the bills very strongly.

More Aware, More Opposed

As in July, opposition to health care legislation is greater among those who have heard a lot about the bills. More than half (55%) of those who have heard a lot about the bills being discussed in Congress generally oppose them while 38% favor them. Opinion is divided among those who have heard only a little or nothing at all (41% favor, 36% oppose).

Nearly nine-in-ten Republicans (87%) who have heard a lot about the health care bills oppose them – and 78% say they oppose them very strongly. Among Republicans who have heard less about the legislation, 67% are opposed and fewer than half (43%) are very strongly opposed.

<i>Health care bills in Congress...</i>	<u>Favor</u> %	<u>Oppose</u> %	<u>DK</u> %	<u>N</u>
Heard a lot	38	55	6	1183
Heard less	41	36	23	792
Republican	13	78	9	582
Heard a lot	9	87	4	365
Heard less	18	67	15	210
Democrat	64	21	15	628
Heard a lot	71	23	6	361
Heard less	59	19	22	258
Independent	37	48	15	681
Heard a lot	33	61	6	401
Heard less	41	35	24	272

Figures read across. Q216.

While independents who have heard a lot about health care reform legislation oppose them by a wide margin (61% to 33%), those who have heard a little or nothing are divided (41% favor, 35% oppose).

Among Democrats, 71% of those who have heard a lot about the health care bills favor them, including 55% who favor them strongly. Somewhat fewer (59%) of those who have heard a little or nothing about the legislation favor it, and just 34% favor it very strongly.

Gauging Potential Impact of Reform

Substantially more people are optimistic that health care reform would benefit the country than say it would help them. A plurality (39%) think reform would make the country as a whole better off, 33% say the country would be worse off, while 19% say it would make no difference. By comparison, 27% believe health care reform would make them and their families better off, 30% believe they would be worse off personally, while 36% think it would not make a difference to their situation.

The gap in people's perceptions of how health care reform would affect the country – and themselves – is greatest among those who support the legislation. Supporters of the legislation are far more optimistic about it benefiting the country as a whole (77%) than benefitting themselves (54%). By contrast, those who oppose the bills before Congress are about equally likely to say the legislation will make the country (64%) and themselves worse off (60%).

This pattern is seen in the breakdown by party as well. Republicans see health care as bad for both the country (61%) and themselves (57%). Meanwhile, 62% of Democrats see reform as good for the country, while 44% believe they themselves will benefit.

People who are younger than 30 are more likely than older people to express positive views about the bills' impact on the nation and them personally. Nearly half (46%) of young people say the country will be better off, while 37% say they will be better off – the highest percentages for any age group.

	The country as a whole %	You and your family %
Would be better off	39	27
Would be worse off	33	30
Not much different	19	36
Depends (Vol.)	4	2
Don't know	6	5

Figures read down. Q221a/b.

	The country		Yourself		Diff in 'better off'	N
	Better off %	Worse off %	Better off %	Worse off %		
Total	39	32	27	30	+12	2003
<i>Health care legislation</i>						
Favor	77	3	54	4	+23	720
Oppose	9	64	6	60	+3	993
Don't know	34	10	21	6	+13	290
<i>Party identification</i>						
Republican	15	61	9	57	+6	582
Democrat	62	11	44	8	+18	628
Independent	38	32	25	31	+13	681
<i>Age</i>						
18-29	46	25	37	22	+9	270
30-49	38	37	24	34	+14	593
50-64	40	31	28	30	+12	597
65+	33	33	19	31	+14	511
<i>Household income</i>						
\$75,000 or more	39	41	20	41	+19	573
\$30,000-74,999	36	35	28	30	+8	626
Less than \$30,000	50	18	38	17	+12	429

Figures read across. Q221a/b.

Most Are Confident in Obama on Health Care

Overall, 55% of Americans say they have either a great deal (26%) or a fair amount (30%) of confidence in Barack Obama when it comes to dealing with health care reform. This includes 83% of Democrats, 54% of independents, and 24% of Republicans.

Smaller percentages express the same level of confidence in either the Democratic leaders in Congress (45%) or Republican leaders in Congress (40%). Independents make little distinction between the congressional parties, with just 39% expressing confidence in Congressional Democrats, and 36% in Congressional Republicans.

<i>Confidence in...</i>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Ind</u>
Barack Obama	%	%	%	%
Great deal/Fair amount	55	24	83	54
Not too much/None	42	75	16	43
Dem Leaders in Congress				
Great deal/Fair amount	45	17	77	39
Not too much/None	51	81	20	57
Rep Leaders in Congress				
Great deal/Fair amount	40	70	21	36
Not too much/None	57	28	78	59
N	2003	582	628	681

Figures read down. Q220a-c.

ABOUT THE SURVEYS

Aug. 20-27 Survey

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International among a nationwide sample of 2,003 adults, 18 years of age or older, from August 20-27, 2009 (1,502 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 501 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 173 who had no landline telephone). Both the landline and cell phone samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample is weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race/ethnicity, region, and population density to parameters from the March 2008 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The sample is also 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 2008 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 sample.

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:

Group	Sample Size	Plus or minus...
Total sample	2,003	2.5 percentage points
Registered voters	1,669	3.0 percentage points
Republicans	582	4.5 percentage points
Democrats	628	4.5 percentage points
Independents	681	4.5 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.

Aug. 27-30 Survey

Results for the questions on most important problem, party traits and party issues are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International among a nationwide sample of 1,005 adults, 18 years of age or older, from Aug. 27-30 (702 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 303 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 110 who had no landline telephone). The data were weighted using similar procedure as the Aug. 20-27 survey. Both the landline and cell phone samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. The error attributable to sampling is 3.5 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence.

ABOUT THE PROJECTS

This survey is a joint effort of the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press and the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life. Both organizations are sponsored by the Pew Charitable Trusts and are projects of the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan “fact tank” that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

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. 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 the Center’s current survey results are made available free of charge.

The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life seeks to promote a deeper understanding of issues at the intersection of religion and public affairs. It studies public opinion, demographics and other important aspects of religion and public life in the U.S. and around the world. It also provides a neutral venue for discussions of timely issues through roundtables and briefings.

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**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
AND PEW FORUM ON RELIGION & PUBLIC LIFE
2009 RELIGION & PUBLIC LIFE SURVEY**

FINAL TOPLINE

Survey A: August 11-17, 2009, N=2,010

Survey B: August 20-27, 2009, N=2,003

Combined N=4,013

RANDOMIZE ORDER OF Q.201 AND Q.202

ASK ALL:

Q.201 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

NOTE: Q.201 WAS ASKED AS Q.101 IN SURVEY A, CONDUCTED MID-AUGUST 2009. Q.201 AND Q.101 ARE SHOWN SEPARATELY HERE.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Dis- approve</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
Late-August, 2009 (B)	52	37	12
Mid-August, 2009 (A)	51	37	11
July, 2009	54	34	12
June, 2009	61	30	9
Mid-April, 2009	63	26	11
Early April, 2009	61	26	13
March, 2009	59	26	15
February, 2009	64	17	19

SELECTED AUGUST TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
GW Bush: August, 2001	50	32	18
Clinton: August, 1993	39	46	15
GHW Bush: August, 1989 (<i>Gallup</i>)	64	18	18
Reagan: August, 1981 (<i>Gallup</i>)	60	30	11
Carter: August, 1977 (<i>Gallup</i>)	66	16	18
Nixon: August, 1969 (<i>Gallup</i>)	58	19	17

RANDOMIZE ORDER OF Q.201 AND Q.202

ASK ALL:

Q.202 All in all, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country today?

NOTE: Q.202 WAS ASKED AS Q.102 IN SURVEY A, CONDUCTED MID-AUGUST 2009. Q.202 AND Q.102 ARE SHOWN SEPARATELY HERE.

	Satis- fied	Dis- satisfied	(VOL.) DK/Ref		Satis- fied	Dis- satisfied	(VOL.) DK/Ref
Late-August, 2009 (B)	28	65	7	November, 2002	41	48	11
Mid-August, 2009 (A)	28	65	7	September, 2002	41	55	4
July, 2009	28	66	6	Late August, 2002	47	44	9
June, 2009	30	64	5	May, 2002	44	44	12
May, 2009	34	58	8	March, 2002	50	40	10
April, 2009	23	70	7	Late September, 2001	57	34	9
January, 2009	20	73	7	Early September, 2001	41	53	6
December, 2008	13	83	4	June, 2001	43	52	5
Early October, 2008	11	86	3	March, 2001	47	45	8
Mid-September, 2008	25	69	6	February, 2001	46	43	11
August, 2008	21	74	5	January, 2001	55	41	4
July, 2008	19	74	7	October, 2000 (RVs)	54	39	7
June, 2008	19	76	5	September, 2000	51	41	8
Late May, 2008	18	76	6	June, 2000	47	45	8
March, 2008	22	72	6	April, 2000	48	43	9
Early February, 2008	24	70	6	August, 1999	56	39	5
Late December, 2007	27	66	7	January, 1999	53	41	6
October, 2007	28	66	6	November, 1998	46	44	10
February, 2007	30	61	9	Early September, 1998	54	42	4
Mid-January, 2007	32	61	7	Late August, 1998	55	41	4
Early January, 2007	30	63	7	Early August, 1998	50	44	6
December, 2006	28	65	7	February, 1998	59	37	4
Mid-November, 2006	28	64	8	January, 1998	46	50	4
Early October, 2006	30	63	7	September, 1997	45	49	6
July, 2006	30	65	5	August, 1997	49	46	5
May, 2006	29	65	6	January, 1997	38	58	4
March, 2006	32	63	5	July, 1996	29	67	4
January, 2006	34	61	5	March, 1996	28	70	2
Late November, 2005	34	59	7	October, 1995	23	73	4
Early October, 2005	29	65	6	June, 1995	25	73	2
July, 2005	35	58	7	April, 1995	23	74	3
Late May, 2005	39	57	4	July, 1994	24	73	3
February, 2005	38	56	6	March, 1994	24	71	5
January, 2005	40	54	6	October, 1993	22	73	5
December, 2004	39	54	7	September, 1993	20	75	5
Mid-October, 2004	36	58	6	May, 1993	22	71	7
July, 2004	38	55	7	January, 1993	39	50	11
May, 2004	33	61	6	January, 1992	28	68	4
Late February, 2004	39	55	6	November, 1991	34	61	5
Early January, 2004	45	48	7	Late February, 1991 (Gallup)	66	31	3
December, 2003	44	47	9	August, 1990	47	48	5
October, 2003	38	56	6	May, 1990	41	54	5
August, 2003	40	53	7	January, 1989	45	50	5
April 8, 2003	50	41	9	September, 1988 (RVs)	50	45	5
January, 2003	44	50	6				

ASK ALL SURVEY B:

Q.210 If the elections for U.S. Congress were being held TODAY, would you vote for the Republican Party's candidate or the Democratic Party's candidate for Congress in your district?

IF ANSWERED '3' OTHER OR '9' DON'T KNOW IN Q.210, ASK:

Q.211 As of TODAY, do you LEAN more to the Republican or the Democrat?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=1,669]:

	<u>Rep/ Lean Rep</u>	<u>Dem/ Lean Dem</u>	<u>Other/ Undecided</u>
Late-August, 2009	44	45	10
2008 Election			
June, 2008	37	52	11
2006 Election			
November, 2006	40	48	12
Late October, 2006	38	49	13
Early October, 2006	38	51	11
September, 2006	39	50	11
August, 2006	41	50	9
June, 2006	39	51	10
April, 2006	41	51	8
February, 2006	41	50	9
Mid-September, 2005	40	52	8
2004 Election			
June, 2004	41	48	11
2002 Election			
Early November, 2002	42	46	12
Early October, 2002	44	46	10
Early September, 2002	44	46	10
June, 2002	44	46	10
February, 2002	46	45	9
Early November, 2001	44	44	12
2000 Election			
Early November, 2000	42	48	10
Early October, 2000	43	47	10
July, 2000	43	47	10
February, 2000	44	47	9
October, 1999	43	49	8
June, 1999	40	50	10
1998 Election			
Late October, 1998	40	47	13
Early October, 1998	43	44	13
Early September, 1998	45	46	9
Late August, 1998	44	45	11
Early August, 1998	42	49	9
June, 1998	44	46	10
March, 1998	40	52	8
February, 1998	41	50	9
January, 1998	41	51	8
August, 1997	45	48	7

Q.210/Q.211 CONTINUED...

	Rep/ <u>Lean Rep</u>	Dem/ <u>Lean Dem</u>	Other/ <u>Undecided</u>
1996 Election			
November, 1996 ¹	44	48	8
October, 1996	42	49	9
Late September, 1996	43	49	8
Early September, 1996	43	51	6
July, 1996	46	47	7
June, 1996	44	50	6
March, 1996	44	49	7
January, 1996	46	47	7
October, 1995	48	48	4
August, 1995	50	43	7
1994 Election			
November, 1994	45	43	12
Late October, 1994	47	44	9
Early October, 1994	52	40	8
September, 1994	48	46	6
July, 1994	45	47	8

ASK ALL:

Q.212 Thinking more generally ... Is your overall opinion of [INSERT ITEM, RANDOMIZE] very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? [INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN “NEVER HEARD OF” AND “CAN’T RATE.”] How about [NEXT ITEM]? [IF NECESSARY: would you say your overall opinion of [ITEM] is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable?] [INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN “NEVER HEARD OF” AND “CAN’T RATE.”]
NOTE: Q.212a AND Q.212b WERE ASKED AS Q.140a/b IN SURVEY A, CONDUCTED MID-AUGUST 2009. QUESTIONS Q.2121a/b AND Q.140 a/b ARE SHOWN SEPARATELY HERE.

	---- Favorable ----			---- Unfavorable ----			(VOL.) Never	(VOL.) Can't rate/
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Heard of</u>	<u>Ref</u>
ASK ALL:								
a. The Republican Party								
Late-August, 2009 (B)	40	6	34	50	19	31	*	10
Mid-August, 2009 (A)	40	7	33	50	18	32	*	10
Early April, 2009	40	7	33	51	17	34	0	9
January, 2009	40	5	35	55	21	34	*	5
Late October, 2008	40	10	30	50	23	27	*	10
Mid-September, 2008	47	11	36	46	22	24	*	7
August, 2008	43	9	34	49	18	31	1	7
Late May, 2008	39	7	32	53	20	33	*	8
July, 2007	39	7	32	53	22	31	0	8
Early January, 2007	41	9	32	48	21	27	1	10
Late October, 2006	41	9	32	50	20	30	*	9
July, 2006	40	10	30	52	23	29	1	7
April, 2006	40	10	30	50	21	29	*	10
February, 2006	44	11	33	50	24	26	*	6
Late October, 2005	42	12	30	49	24	25	*	9

¹ November 1996 trends based on likely voters.

Q.212 CONTINUED...

	---- Favorable ----			---- Unfavorable ----			(VOL.) Never	(VOL.) Can't rate/
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Heard of</u>	<u>Ref</u>
July, 2005	48	13	35	43	18	25	*	9
June, 2005	48	11	37	44	20	24	0	8
December, 2004	52	15	37	42	17	25	0	6
June, 2004	51	12	39	40	14	26	0	9
Early February, 2004	52	14	38	42	16	26	*	6
June, 2003	58	14	44	33	10	23	0	9
April, 2003	63	14	49	31	10	21	*	6
December, 2002	59	18	41	33	11	22	*	8
July, 2001	48	11	37	42	15	27	*	10
January, 2001	56	13	43	35	13	22	*	9
September, 2000 (RVs)	53	11	42	40	12	28	0	7
August, 1999	53	8	45	43	12	31	*	4
February, 1999	44	7	37	51	15	36	0	5
January, 1999	44	10	34	50	23	27	0	6
Early December, 1998	46	11	35	47	20	27	*	7
Early October, 1998 (RVs)	52	9	43	42	14	28	0	6
Early September, 1998	56	9	47	37	11	26	*	7
March, 1998	50	10	40	43	12	31	*	7
August, 1997	47	9	38	47	11	36	*	6
June, 1997	51	8	43	42	11	31	1	6
January, 1997	52	8	44	43	10	33	*	5
October, 1995	52	10	42	44	16	28	*	4
December, 1994	67	21	46	27	8	19	*	6
July, 1994	63	12	51	33	8	25	*	4
May, 1993	54	12	42	35	10	25	0	11
July, 1992	46	9	37	48	17	31	*	6

ASK ALL:

b. The Democratic Party								
Late-August, 2009 (B)	48	11	37	43	19	24	*	10
Mid-August, 2009 (A)	49	12	37	40	16	25	*	10
Early April, 2009	59	15	44	34	13	21	*	7
January, 2009	62	19	43	32	12	20	*	6
Late October, 2008	57	19	38	33	15	18	*	10
Mid-September, 2008	55	18	37	39	14	25	*	6
August, 2008	57	16	41	37	13	24	*	6
Late May, 2008	57	14	43	37	14	23	*	6
July, 2007	51	13	38	41	14	27	0	8
Early January, 2007	54	15	39	35	12	23	*	11
Late October, 2006	53	13	40	36	11	25	*	11
July, 2006	47	13	34	44	13	31	2	7
April, 2006	47	12	35	42	14	28	*	11
February, 2006	48	14	34	44	17	27	0	8
Late October, 2005	49	14	35	41	15	26	*	10
July, 2005	50	15	35	41	14	27	*	9
June, 2005	52	12	40	39	13	26	*	9
December, 2004	53	13	40	41	14	27	*	6
June, 2004	54	12	42	36	11	25	0	10
Early February, 2004	58	14	44	37	9	28	*	5
June, 2003	54	11	43	38	10	28	0	8

Q.212 CONTINUED...

	---- Favorable ----			---- Unfavorable ----			(VOL.) Never	(VOL.) Can't rate/
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Heard of</u>	<u>Ref</u>
April, 2003	57	13	44	36	11	25	*	7
December, 2002	54	15	39	37	10	27	*	9
July, 2001	58	18	40	34	10	24	*	8
January, 2001	60	18	42	30	9	21	1	9
September, 2000 (RVs)	60	16	44	35	12	23	*	5
August, 1999	59	14	45	37	9	28	*	4
February, 1999	58	11	47	37	11	26	0	5
January, 1999	55	14	41	38	12	26	0	7
Early December, 1998	59	18	41	34	10	24	0	7
Early October, 1998 (RVs)	56	11	45	38	9	29	*	6
Early September, 1998	60	13	47	33	8	25	*	7
March, 1998	58	15	43	36	10	26	*	6
August, 1997	52	11	41	42	10	32	0	6
June, 1997	61	10	51	33	8	25	*	6
January, 1997	60	13	47	35	7	28	*	5
October, 1995	49	9	40	48	11	37	0	3
December, 1994	50	13	37	44	13	31	*	6
July, 1994	62	13	49	34	7	27	*	4
May, 1993	57	14	43	34	9	25	0	9
July, 1992	61	17	44	33	9	24	*	6

ASK SURVEY B ONLY:

c. Congress

Late-August, 2009	37	4	33	52	20	32	*	11
Early April, 2009	50	10	40	43	15	28	*	7
January, 2009	40	5	35	52	20	32	*	8
Late May, 2008	41	6	35	51	17	34	0	8
July, 2007	41	6	35	51	16	35	0	8
Early January, 2007	53	11	42	38	9	29	1	8
Late October, 2006	41	5	36	46	15	31	*	13
February, 2006	44	6	38	47	14	33	0	9
Late October, 2005	45	7	38	45	13	32	*	10
July, 2005	49	6	43	40	11	29	*	11
June, 2005	49	6	43	40	10	30	*	11
June, 2004	56	7	49	33	7	26	*	11
July, 2001	57	7	50	32	8	24	*	11
March, 2001	56	6	50	36	10	26	1	7
January, 2001	64	10	54	23	5	18	1	12
September, 2000 (RVs)	61	8	53	32	5	27	*	7
August, 1999	63	8	55	34	7	27	*	3
June, 1999	56	9	47	39	9	30	*	5
February, 1999	52	4	48	44	8	36	0	4
January, 1999	48	7	41	45	15	30	0	7
Early December, 1998	52	11	41	41	12	29	0	7
Early October, 1998 (RVs)	62	7	55	33	8	25	0	5
Early September, 1998	66	7	59	27	5	22	0	7
October, 1997	53	5	48	44	11	33	0	3
August, 1997	50	6	44	44	11	33	0	6
June, 1997	52	4	48	42	8	34	0	6
May, 1997	49	5	44	42	10	32	*	9

Q.212 CONTINUED...

	---- Favorable ----			---- Unfavorable ----			(VOL.) Never	(VOL.) Can't rate/
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Heard of</u>	<u>Ref</u>
February, 1997	52	6	46	40	9	31	*	8
January, 1997	56	6	50	40	8	32	*	4
June, 1996	45	6	39	50	12	38	*	5
April, 1996	45	6	39	50	13	37	0	5
January, 1996	42	4	38	54	16	38	*	4
October, 1995	42	4	38	55	13	42	0	3
August, 1995	45	5	40	47	13	34	*	7
June, 1995	53	8	45	42	11	31	*	5
February, 1995	54	10	44	37	10	27	0	9
July, 1994	53	7	46	43	9	34	*	4
May, 1993	43	8	35	48	13	35	0	9
November, 1991	51	7	44	43	9	34	0	6
March, 1991	66	16	50	26	7	19	0	8
May, 1990	59	6	53	34	9	25	1	6
May, 1988	64	8	56	28	5	23	0	8
January, 1988	64	6	58	29	4	25	0	7
May, 1987	74	10	64	20	4	16	*	6
January, 1987	59	7	52	31	8	23	0	10
July, 1985	67	9	58	26	5	21	*	7

NO QUESTIONS 213 AND 214

ASK ALL SURVEY B:

Q.215 How much, if anything, have you heard about the bills in Congress to overhaul the health care system?

[READ]

		<i>Trend for comparison</i>	
		Mid-Aug. (Survey A)	July
		<u>2009²</u>	<u>2009</u>
53	A lot	48	41
40	A little [OR]	42	47
7	Nothing at all	9	10
1	Don't know/Refused [VOL. DO NOT READ]	1	1

² In July 2009, question read "the bills being proposed by President Obama and Congress to overhaul the health care system?"

ASK ALL SURVEY B:

Q.216 As of right now, do you generally favor or generally oppose the health care proposals being discussed in Congress?

ASK IF Q.216=1,2:

Q.217 Do you (favor/oppose) these health care proposals very strongly, or not so strongly?

July 2009		
39	Generally favor	38
25	Very strongly	--
13	Not so strongly	--
1	Don't know (how strongly)	--
46	Generally oppose	44
34	Very strongly	--
12	Not so strongly	--
1	Don't know (how strongly)	--
15	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	18

NO QUESTIONS 218 AND 219

ASK ALL SURVEY B:

Q.220 How much confidence do you have in [INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE] to do the right thing when it comes to dealing with health care reform – a great deal of confidence, a fair amount of confidence, not too much confidence, or no confidence at all?

		A great <u>deal</u>	A fair <u>amount</u>	Not too <u>much</u>	No confidence <u>at all</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Barack Obama	26	30	21	22	3
b.	Democratic leaders in Congress	12	33	28	24	4
c.	Republican leaders in Congress	7	32	36	21	4

ASK ALL SURVEY B:

Q.221 Do you think [INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE] would be [RANDOMIZE: better off (or) worse off] if the president and Congress passed health care reform, or don't you think it would make much difference?

	Better <u>off</u>	Worse <u>off</u>	Not much <u>different</u>	(VOL.) <u>Depends</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a. You and your family	27	30	36	2	5
b. The country as a whole	39	33	19	4	6

TREND FOR COMPARISON:

Do you think (INSERT AND ROTATE) would be (better off) or (worse off) if the president and Congress passed health care reform, or don't you think it would make much difference? (ROTATE VERBIAGE IN PARENTHESES)

	Better <u>off</u>	Worse <u>off</u>	Not much <u>different</u>	(VOL.) <u>Depends</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a. You and your family					
August, 2009 Kaiser	36	31	27	2	4
July, 2009 Kaiser	39	21	32	4	3
June, 2009 Kaiser	39	16	36	3	5
April, 2009 Kaiser	43	14	36	4	4
February, 2009 Kaiser	38	11	43	4	3
b. The country as a whole					
August, 2009 Kaiser	45	34	14	3	4
July, 2009 Kaiser	51	23	16	4	6
June, 2009 Kaiser	57	16	19	3	5
April, 2009 Kaiser	56	15	21	3	5
February, 2009 Kaiser	59	12	19	5	5

ASK ALL:

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

IF ANSWERED 3, 4, 5 OR 9 IN PARTY, ASK:

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

NOTE: PARTY/PARTYLN FOR BOTH SURVEY A AND SURVEY B ARE PRESENTED HERE.

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	No	Other	DK/	<i>Lean</i>	<i>Lean</i>
				<u>preference</u>	<u>party</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<i>Rep</i>	<i>Dem</i>
Late-August, 2009 (B)	26	32	36	3	*	3	14	16
Mid-August, 2009 (A)	23	33	38	3	*	3	16	15
July, 2009	22	34	37	5	*	2	15	14
June, 2009	25	34	34	3	*	3	11	16
May, 2009	23	39	29	4	*	4	9	14
April, 2009	22	33	39	3	*	3	13	18
March, 2009	24	34	35	5	*	2	12	17
February, 2009	24	36	34	3	1	2	13	17
January, 2009	25	37	33	3	*	2	11	16
December, 2008	26	39	30	2	*	3	8	15
Late October, 2008	24	39	32	2	*	3	11	15
Mid-October, 2008	27	35	31	4	*	3	9	16
Early October, 2008	26	36	31	4	*	3	11	15
Late September, 2008	25	35	34	3	1	2	13	15
Mid-September, 2008	28	35	32	3	*	2	12	14
August, 2008	26	34	34	4	*	2	12	17
Yearly Totals								
2008	25.3	35.8	31.7	3.8	.3	3.1	10.5	15.4
2007	25.4	32.9	33.7	4.6	.4	3.1	10.7	16.7
2006	27.6	32.8	30.3	5.0	.4	3.9	10.2	14.5
2005	29.2	32.8	30.3	4.5	.3	2.8	10.2	14.9
2004	29.7	33.4	29.8	3.9	.4	2.9	11.7	13.4
2003	29.8	31.4	31.2	4.7	.5	2.5	12.1	13.0
2002	30.3	31.2	30.1	5.1	.7	2.7	12.6	11.6
2001	29.2	33.6	28.9	5.1	.5	2.7	11.7	11.4
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	28.2	34.6	29.5	5.0	.5	2.1	11.7	12.5
2000	27.5	32.5	29.5	5.9	.5	4.0	11.6	11.6
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.5	33.2	31.9	4.6	.4	2.4	11.8	13.5
1997	28.2	33.3	31.9	4.0	.4	2.3	12.3	13.8
1996	29.2	32.7	33.0	5.2	--	--	12.7	15.6
1995	31.4	29.7	33.4	5.4	--	--	14.4	12.9
1994	29.8	31.8	33.8	4.6	--	--	14.3	12.6
1993	27.4	33.8	34.0	4.8	--	--	11.8	14.7
1992	27.7	32.7	35.7	3.9	--	--	13.8	15.8
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	4.5	--	--	14.6	10.8
1990	31.0	33.1	29.1	6.8	--	--	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
AUGUST 2009 OMNIBUS SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
 August 27-30, 2009
 N=1,005

ASK ALL:

Q.1 What do you think is the most important problem facing the country today? **[RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE. PROBE FOR CLARITY – DO NOT PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL MENTIONS. IF MORE THAN ONE MENTION, RECORD IN ORDER OF MENTION]**

		Early			Mid-					Mid-									
		Feb	Oct	July	Jan	Nov	Sept	Jan	Sept	Jan	May	Jan	July	Jan	Apr	Feb	Mar	May	Feb
		09	08	08	08	07	07	07	06	06	05	05	04	04	03	03	02	01	01 ³
27	Economy (general)	53	55	39	20	14	10	5	9	11	15	12	14	20	28	21	8	7	7
20	Health care/costs	3	4	3	10	7	7	8	4	6	7	5	5	5	3	2	2	6	7
19	Unemployment/Lack of jobs	31	9	5	5	4	3	5	4	7	7	7	8	13	10	6	4	5	6
7	Financial crisis	16	26	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
6	Deficit/National debt/Balanced budget/Govt spending	4	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	2	2	3	1	2	2	--	1	1	1
5	War/War in Iraq/War in Afghan.	3	11	17	27	32	37	42	25	23	24	32	25	16	14	34	10	--	--
5	Dissatisfaction with govt/politics/Obama/Gov't control/socialism	5	4	3	6	5	7	8	6	5	6	5	7	5	3	5	4	2	5
3	Morality/Ethics/Family values	1	1	3	2	2	3	3	2	4	3	5	4	3	4	5	8	6	12
2	Recession/Depression/Slowing down of the economy	3	1	1	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	2
2	Education/schools/affording education	1	--	4	4	2	3	4	4	3	2	3	4	3	4	1	4	8	11
1	Defense issues/Military spending/National & homeland security	1	1	3	3	2	3	1	4	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	5	1	1
1	Immigration	1	1	2	6	6	6	5	6	3	4	1	1	3	1	--	1	1	2
1	Trade/Jobs moving overseas	1	1	1	1	--	--	--	--	2	1	1	2	1	--	--	--	--	--
1	Terrorism	1	2	3	3	4	6	5	14	6	8	10	8	14	9	16	24	1	--
1	U.S. foreign policy/International affairs	1	1	2	2	3	1	--	2	3	1	1	4	2	--	--	--	2	2
1	Abortion	1	1	--	1	1	--	--	--	--	--	1	1	--	--	--	--	1	1
1	Poverty/Hunger/Starvation	1	1	1	3	2	3	3	3	7	2	3	2	3	3	1	2	3	3
1	Crime/Violence/gangs/justice system	1	--	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	4	4	8
*	Inflation/Diff. in Wages/Costs	2	5	6	3	2	1	--	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3
9	Other																		
5	Don't know/No answer	3	4	4	5	6	5	7	7	7	5	5	6	4	9	4	8	8	7
10	(NET) FOREIGN ISSUES/INTERNATIONAL	7	18	25	36	40	48	50	47	37	36	49	41	37	29	54	39	3	5
55	(NET) ECONOMIC	80	75	61	34	31	20	15	23	26	31	24	26	35	41	29	16	40	26

³ Complete trend for Q.1 not shown.

ASK IF ANSWER GIVEN IN Q.1 [N=981]:

Q.2 Which political party do you think can do a better job of handling the problem you just mentioned – the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?

	Republican Party	Democratic Party	(VOL.) No difference	(VOL.) DK/Ref
August 27-30, 2009	23	38	28	11
January, 2007	24	42	21	13
January, 2006	27	41	19	13
January, 2005	36	35	18	11
Mid-January, 2004	35	35	14	16
March, 2002	38	27	21	14
January, 1999 ⁴ (<i>Gallup</i>)	33	43	n/a	24
April, 1998 (<i>Gallup</i>)	40	42	10	8
July, 1996	36	35	18	11
April, 1995	42	32	17	9
July, 1994	36	33	16	15
June, 1993	28	35	23	14
January, 1992	32	41	12	15
May, 1990 (<i>RVs</i>)	29	30	31	10
May, 1988	26	38	22	14
January, 1988	30	35	24	11
May, 1987	28	38	24	10

RANDOMIZE Q.3 AND Q.4

ASK ALL:

Thinking about the political parties for a moment...

Q.3 Please tell me if you think each phrase I read better describes the REPUBLICAN Party and its leaders or the DEMOCRATIC Party and its leaders. (First,) which party do you think is better described by the phrase... **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]**?

	Republican Party	Democratic Party	(VOL.) Both equally	(VOL.) Neither	(VOL.) DK/Ref
a. Can better manage the federal government					
August 27-30, 2009	34	38	4	14	10
October, 2007	32	44	5	9	10
March, 2007	31	47	3	8	11
Early October, 2006	34	44	3	9	10
April, 2006 ⁵	35	39	3	15	8
January, 2006	34	40	4	12	10
Early October, 2005	35	41	3	13	8
July, 2004	37	40	4	9	10
Early September, 1998	37	32	8	12	11
August, 1997	39	33	4	16	8
July, 1996	45	32	4	12	7
April, 1995	49	30	3	13	5
July, 1994	43	31	4	17	5
May, 1993	36	32	2	17	13
July, 1992	30	36	1	23	10

⁴ In January 1999, the “no difference” and “don’t know” categories are combined.

⁵ In April 2006 and earlier, the item was worded: “Able to manage the federal government well.”

Q.3 CONTINUED ...

	Republican	Democratic	(VOL.) Both	(VOL.) Neither	(VOL.) DK/Ref
	<u>Party</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>equally</u>		
May, 1990	28	20	12	31	9
May, 1988	33	30	10	17	10
January, 1988	30	28	12	20	10
May, 1987	24	25	13	28	10
b. Governs in a more honest and ethical way					
August 27-30, 2009	26	42	4	20	9
October, 2007	26	40	6	19	9
March, 2007	25	43	4	18	10
Early October, 2006	27	41	4	18	10
April, 2006 ⁶	28	36	4	23	9
January, 2006	30	37	4	19	10
Early October, 2005	30	40	6	18	6
July, 2004	34	37	5	15	9
Early September, 1998	31	28	6	23	12
March, 1998	28	32	7	24	9
August, 1997	28	33	5	26	8
July, 1996	38	37	2	18	5
April, 1995	35	36	4	19	6
July, 1994	32	35	6	21	6
c. Can bring about the kind of changes the country needs					
August 27-30, 2009	25	47	5	13	9
October, 2007	26	48	5	11	10
March, 2007	26	52	4	9	9
Early October, 2006	28	48	4	10	10
April, 2006	32	47	2	12	7
Early October, 2005	32	48	4	9	7
July, 2004	35	46	3	7	9
Early September, 1998	34	40	7	8	11
March, 1998	32	45	7	8	8
August, 1997	38	40	4	11	7
July, 1996	39	46	2	7	6
April, 1995	51	34	4	7	4
July, 1994	39	42	4	10	5
May, 1993	30	49	2	10	9
July, 1992	24	47	2	16	11
May, 1990	27	31	13	18	11
May, 1988	27	43	9	11	10
January, 1988	28	37	14	11	10
May, 1987	26	36	14	14	10

⁶ In April 2006 and earlier, the item was worded: "Governs in an honest and ethical way."

Q.3 CONTINUED ...

			(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	Republican	Democratic	Both	(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	<u>Party</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>equally</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
d.	Is more concerned with the needs of people like me				
	August 27-30, 2009	51	4	10	7
	October, 2007	54	4	8	9
	March, 2007	55	2	7	10
	Early October, 2006	55	3	8	7
	April, 2006 ⁷	52	3	10	7
	Early October, 2005	52	5	7	6
	July, 2004	50	5	8	7
	Early September, 1998	46	5	9	9
	March, 1998	51	4	8	7
	August, 1997	49	3	10	7
	July, 1996	50	2	7	6
	April, 1995	49	2	7	3
	July, 1994	49	4	8	4
	May, 1990	42	12	18	7
	May, 1988	51	8	11	7
	January, 1988	47	11	13	7
e.	Selects better candidates for office				
	August 27-30, 2009	46	3	13	11
	October, 2007	41	6	10	11
	July, 1998	33	9	12	12
	March, 1998 ⁸	33	12	12	11
	July, 1994	36	6	13	5
	May, 1990	22	21	17	8
	May, 1988	30	13	19	10
	January, 1988	24	18	18	9
	May, 1987	26	25	13	9
f.	Is more influenced by lobbyists and special interests				
	August 27-30, 2009	31	17	3	12
	March, 2007	30	15	1	14
	Early October, 2006	27	16	2	14
	April, 2006	28	14	2	11
g.	Is concerned with the needs and interests of the disadvantaged				
	August 27-30, 2009	58	6	7	9
	October, 2005	61	5	5	7
	July, 2004	57	5	6	9
	Early September, 1998	57	5	5	13
	March, 1998	64	6	6	8
	July, 1996	63	3	5	6
	July, 1994	65	4	5	5
	May, 1990	56	12	10	8
	May, 1987	61	14	7	7

⁷ In April 2006 and earlier, the item was worded: "Is concerned with the needs of people like me."

⁸ In March 1998 and earlier, the item was worded: "Selects good candidates for office."

Q.3 CONTINUED ...

	Republican <u>Party</u>	Democratic <u>Party</u>	(VOL.) <u>Both</u> <u>equally</u>	(VOL.) <u>Neither</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
h. Is concerned with the needs and interests of business					
August 27-30, 2009	55	26	7	4	8
October, 2005	61	23	8	2	6
October, 2005 ⁹	59	22	6	3	10
July, 2004	61	22	6	3	8
Early September, 1998	57	23	8	2	10
March, 1998	63	20	7	2	8
July, 1996	65	19	8	2	6
July, 1994	66	23	5	1	5
May, 1990	57	15	15	5	8
May, 1987	58	15	16	3	8

RANDOMIZE Q.3 AND Q.4

ASK ALL:

Q.4 Next, please tell me if you think the REPUBLICAN Party or the DEMOCRATIC Party could do a better job in each of the following areas... (First,) which party could do a better job of... **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]** How about **[NEXT ITEM]**?¹⁰

	Republican <u>Party</u>	Democratic <u>Party</u>	(VOL.) <u>Both</u> <u>Equally</u>	(VOL.) <u>Neither</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a. Dealing with the economy					
August 27-30, 2009	32	42	6	12	9
February, 2008	34	53	2	5	6
October, 2006	32	45	4	5	14
September, 2006	32	46	5	5	12
February, 2006	36	46	5	5	8
Mid-September, 2005	38	44	5	7	6
July, 2004	34	46	5	5	10
Late October, 2002 (RVs)	37	40	5	6	12
Early October, 2002 (RVs)	37	41	4	5	13
Early September, 2002	36	36	9	6	13
January, 2002	43	34	--	5	18
May, 2001 ¹¹	33	44	8	5	10
June, 1999	37	43	8	3	9
March, 1999	39	44	5	3	9
Early September, 1998	40	38	8	4	10
March, 1998	40	40	12	3	5
October, 1994	45	33	5	7	10
Gallup: October, 1992 (RVs)	36	45	10	--	9
Gallup: October, 1990	37	35	--	--	28

⁹ In July 2004 and earlier, the item was worded: "In concerned with the needs and interests of business and other powerful groups."

¹⁰ In January 1999, January 2001, January 2002, and May 2002, the question was worded: "Please tell me which party you think has the best ideas on... the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?"

¹¹ In May 2001 and earlier, the item was worded: "... keeping the country prosperous?"

Q.4 CONTINUED ...

			(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	Republican	Democratic	Both	(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	<u>Party</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Equally</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
b.	Improving the educational system				
	August 27-30, 2009	47	8	12	10
	February, 2008	26	55	6	6
	October, 2006	27	45	5	6
	September, 2006	28	46	7	6
	February, 2006	33	44	8	7
	Mid-September, 2005	35	44	6	7
	July, 2004	29	45	7	7
	January, 2002	37	34	--	6
	May, 2001	36	38	11	6
	January, 2001	40	41	--	7
	June, 1999	29	52	7	5
	March, 1999	33	46	6	5
	January, 1999	26	46	--	7
	Early September, 1998	34	42	10	4
	March, 1998	29	49	10	5
	July, 1994	37	46	4	5
	January, 1992	28	48	--	10
	May, 1990	30	42	--	14
c.	Dealing with the terrorist threat at home				
	August 27-30, 2009	38	32	10	9
	February, 2008	45	38	6	4
	October, 2006	39	33	7	6
	September, 2006	41	32	7	6
	February, 2006	46	30	8	7
	Mid-September, 2005	45	34	7	6
	July, 2004	45	30	6	6
	Late October, 2002 (RVs)	44	27	11	6
	Early October, 2002 (RVs)	44	28	7	5
	Early September, 2002	44	22	14	6
	January, 2002	48	18	--	6
d.	Dealing with taxes				
	August 27-30, 2009	38	37	4	11
	February, 2008	37	49	2	5
	October, 2006	32	40	5	7
	September, 2006	30	45	4	9
	February, 2006	35	46	5	6
	May, 2001	37	40	8	6
	June, 1999	38	38	5	7
	September, 1998	41	37	7	5
	March, 1998	39	40	6	7
	October, 1994	43	34	5	9

Q.4 CONTINUED ...

			(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	Republican	Democratic	Both	(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	<u>Party</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Equally</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
e.	Making wise decisions about what to do in Afghanistan				
	August 27-30, 2009	28	37	7	14
					13
	TREND FOR COMPARISON:				
	Making wise decisions about what to do in Iraq				
	February, 2008	37	47	3	5
	October, 2006	31	39	5	8
	September, 2006	33	40	5	8
	February, 2006	38	41	3	8
	Mid-September, 2005	38	43	5	6
	July, 2004	38	40	4	6
	Late October, 2002 (RVs)	42	33	6	6
	Early October, 2002 (RVs)	46	30	7	4
					13
f.	Reforming the U.S. health care system				
	August 27-30, 2009	27	46	4	14
	February, 2008	26	56	3	8
	October, 2006	25	46	4	8
	September, 2006	24	48	5	10
	February, 2006	27	49	6	9
	Mid-September, 2005	28	51	4	10
	July, 2004	23	50	4	10
	Early July, 2003	31	38	6	10
	January, 2002 ¹²	20	45	--	6
	January, 2001	30	47	--	7
	January, 1999	25	46	--	7
	Early September, 1998	31	43	7	7
	March, 1998	25	53	6	8
	October, 1994	34	41	5	10
	July, 1994	34	48	2	8
	December, 1993	25	47	--	10
	January, 1992	21	56	--	8
	May, 1990	20	50	--	16
					14
g.	Dealing with the nation's energy problems				
	August 27-30, 2009	25	47	7	9
	February, 2008	23	57	5	5
	October, 2006	28	44	5	6
	September, 2006	27	47	4	7
	February, 2006	32	45	6	7
	Mid-September, 2005	31	44	6	8
	May, 2001	36	34	10	7
					13

¹² From 1999 to 2002, the item was worded: "Regulating health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and managed health care plans." In December 1993, the item was worded: "Reforming health care." In January 1992 and May 1990 the item was worded: "Improving health care in the U.S."

Q.4 CONTINUED ...

		Republican <u>Party</u>	Democratic <u>Party</u>	(VOL.) <u>Both</u> <u>Equally</u>	(VOL.) <u>Neither</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
h.	Making wise decisions about foreign policy					
	August 27-30, 2009	31	44	7	8	9
	February, 2008	40	45	4	4	7
	July, 2004	38	40	4	4	14
	Early September, 2002	40	30	10	6	14
	May, 2001	39	34	11	3	13
	June, 1999	37	36	7	6	14
	March, 1999	42	37	6	4	11
	Early September, 1998	40	31	11	5	13
	March, 1998	41	33	12	4	10
	October, 1994	47	30	7	5	11
	July, 1994 ¹³	51	31	4	6	8
	December, 1993	49	23	--	10	18
	May, 1990	39	28	--	17	16
i.	Dealing with immigration					
	August 27-30, 2009	31	36	6	13	13
	February, 2008	38	43	4	6	9
	October, 2006	35	33	6	8	18
	September, 2006	32	37	5	10	16
	April, 2006	27	43	6	11	13
	February, 2006	34	38	8	9	11
j.	Reducing the federal budget deficit					
	August 27-30, 2009	35	36	6	13	10
	September, 2006	27	47	4	8	14
	February, 2006	33	45	6	9	7
	Early October, 2005 ¹⁴	29	47	6	10	8
	June, 1999	37	41	5	8	9
	July, 1994	42	36	2	13	7
	December, 1993	31	36	--	18	15
k.	Representing your views on abortion					
	August 27-30, 2009	33	41	3	9	14
	September, 2006	33	44	2	6	15
	January, 1992 ¹⁵	29	39	--	11	21
	August, 1990	30	40	--	12	18

¹³ In July 1994 and May 1990, the item was worded "Making wise decisions about the country's defense policies."

¹⁴ In Early October 2005, the item was asked as a stand alone question. In June 1999, the item was worded: "Keeping the federal budget balanced." In December 1993 the item was worded: "Reducing the budget deficit."

¹⁵ In January 1992 and August 1990, the item was worded, "Which political party - the Republican Party or the Democratic party do you think could do a better job of?"

ASK ALL:

D3 In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

- 23 Republican
- 34 Democrat
- 37 Independent
- 4 No preference
- 1 Other party (**VOL.**)
- 2 Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)