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Unabated Economic Gloom, Divides on Afghanistan and Health Care
MIXED VIEWS OF OBAMA AT YEAR'S END

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Unabated Economic Gloom, Divides on Afghanistan and Health Care **MIXED VIEWS OF OBAMA AT YEAR'S END**

Public opinion about President Barack Obama and his major policies continues to be divided as the year comes to a close. His overall approval rating is 49%, which is largely unchanged from November (51%). However, the percentage expressing at least a fair amount of confidence in Obama to do the right thing when it comes to fixing the economy has slipped from 59% in October to 52% currently. Smaller percentages express confidence in Obama on health care reform (44%) and reducing the budget deficit (41%).

Opinions about Afghanistan also are mixed: 50% express confidence in Obama to do the right thing regarding the situation in Afghanistan, which is unchanged from October. About the same percentage (51%) supports his decision to send more U.S. troops to Afghanistan. While an increasing percentage of Americans say the U.S. military effort in Afghanistan is going well, just 36% say Obama has a clear plan to bring the situation there to a successful conclusion.

The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted Dec. 9-13 among 1,504 adults reached on landlines and cell phones, finds that while views about Obama are mixed, opinions about the national economy are not. Just 8% say economic conditions are excellent or good while 91% say they are only fair or poor. Views of the national economy have changed little over the past six months.

Persistent Divisions over Obama, Continuing Gloom about Economy			
	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
<i>Obama job rating...</i>			
Approve	52	51	49
Disapprove	36	36	40
Don't know	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>11</u>
	100	100	100
<i>Great deal/fair amount of confidence in Obama to do right thing on...</i>			
Fixing the economy	59	--	52
Situation in Afghanistan	50	--	50
Global climate change	--	--	48
Health care reform	50	--	44
Reducing budget deficit	--	--	41
<i>Rating of national economy...</i>			
Excellent/Good	9	8	8
Only fair/Poor	91	91	91
Don't know	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
	100	100	100
<i>Health care proposals in Congress...</i>			
Generally favor	34	38	35
Generally oppose	47	47	48
Don't know	<u>19</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>17</u>
	100	100	100

Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

A plurality (39%) says that Obama's economic policies have not had an effect so far; as in October, somewhat more say his policies have made things better (30%) than worse (24%). But when asked which party is more responsible for current economic conditions, far more people continue to say the Republican Party (39%) rather than the Democratic Party (27%) is responsible.

Opinions about the health care proposals in Congress have shown little movement over the past few months. As has been the case in most Pew Research Center surveys since July, there is currently more opposition than support for the proposals. Nearly half (48%) say they generally oppose the proposals in Congress to overhaul the health care system while 35% generally favor them. However, when asked for their reactions if the health care bills were enacted, nearly as many say they would be very happy or pleased (41%) as say they would be disappointed or angry (45%).

Opponents and supporters of health care reform point to familiar reasons for their positions. A third of opponents (33%) cite too much government involvement in health care as the most important reason for opposing the legislation. Other factors – such as health care reform being too expensive (17%) or that people’s own health care might suffer (13%) – are cited as most important by fewer of the bills’ opponents.

Among supporters of the health care bills, 37% cite expanding health coverage to the uninsured as the most important reason for their views. Nearly a quarter (24%) says the most important reason for their support is assuring that no one is denied coverage because of pre-existing conditions while smaller percentages cite other factors, including 6% who point to a government-provided “public option.”

Health Care Reform: Reasons For and Against	
<i>Most important reason for opposing health care bills*...</i>	<u>Among opposers*</u>
	%
Too much gov't involvement in health care	33
Health care reform is too expensive	17
Your own health care may suffer	13
It could mean cuts in Medicare	11
Plan might cover illegal immigrants	10
Gov't money might pay for abortions	8
Other/None/Don't know	<u>8</u>
	100
<i>Most important reason for supporting health care bills**...</i>	<u>Among supporters**</u>
Expanding health coverage to uninsured	37
Assuring no one denied coverage because of pre-existing conditions	24
Current system costs too much	14
Insurance companies doing a bad job	7
Creating a gov't-provided “public option”	6
It will improve your own health coverage	5
Other/None/Don't know	<u>6</u>
	100
Q28 & Q30. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.	
* Generally oppose health care proposals (N=773).	
** Generally favor health care proposals (N=505).	

The survey finds that as Obama nears the end of his first year in office, he gets high approval ratings from many of the same groups that strongly supported his election last year – African Americans and Democrats.

Fully 88% of non-Hispanic African Americans approve of Obama's job performance, compared with 39% of non-Hispanic whites. Obama continues to draw broad support from his Democratic base: comparable percentages of liberal Democrats (85%) and conservative and moderate Democrats (82%) approve of the way he is handling his job. By contrast, Republicans overwhelmingly disapprove (19% approve vs. 73% disapprove); among conservative Republicans just 12% approve of Obama's job performance while 82% disapprove. (*For more detailed breakdowns of Obama's ratings, see the table at the end of this report.*)

Obama's overall ratings – as well as his ratings among most subgroups in the population – have changed only modestly in recent months. While independents overall are divided in their views of Obama's job performance (42% approve vs. 44% disapprove), there is a sharp divide among those who lean Democratic and those who lean Republican: 69% of Democratic-leaning independents approve of Obama's performance compared with only 17% of Republican-leaning independents.

Liberal Backing

Yet there a number of indications, aside from his approval ratings, that Obama retains strong support from his Democratic base. In particular, there is little evidence that liberal Democrats are becoming disillusioned with Obama.

When those who approve of Obama's performance are asked if there is anything that disappointed them, just 29% of liberal Democrats who approve of Obama's job say there is something he has done to make them unhappy; two-thirds of liberal Democrats (67%)

Obama Approval: Strong Base Support But Independents Are Divided		
	<u>App- rove</u> %	<u>Dis- approve</u> %
Total	49	40
Men	47	43
Women	51	37
White, non-Hispanic	39	48
Black, non-Hispanic	88	6
18-29	54	33
30-49	52	38
50-64	48	43
65+	42	47
Republican	19	73
Conserv Rep	12	82
Mod/Lib Rep	35	53
Independent	42	44
Democrat	83	11
Conserv/Mod Dem	82	11
Liberal Dem	85	10

Q1. Figures read across.

Liberal Democrats Not Disillusioned...					
	<u>All Dems</u> %	<u>Lib- eral</u> %	<u>Mod/ Cons</u> %		
<i>Approve of Obama's job performance but...</i>					
Been disappointed w/things	27	29	27		
Can't think of anything	70	67	70		
Don't know	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>		
	100	100	100		
N	374	144	220		
<i>Obama job standing up for traditional Dem. positions</i>					
Excellent/Good	74	84	69		
Only fair/Poor	24	15	29		
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>		
	100	100	100		
N	456	167	274		
But Few Think Obama Listens to Them					
	Among liberal Democrats				
<i>Who is Obama listening to more?</i>	<u>Apr</u> %	<u>Jun</u> %	<u>Jul</u> %	<u>Oct</u> %	<u>Dec</u> %
Liberals in his party	28	41	36	27	20
Moderates in his party	44	42	45	45	54
Don't know	<u>27</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>25</u>
	100	100	100	100	100
N	166	166	163	160	167

Q1a, Q50, Q11. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

say they cannot think of anything that has disappointed them. This is little different from the views of all Democrats who approve of Obama’s performance (27% disappointed by something, 70% not).

Moreover, an overwhelming proportion of liberal Democrats (84%) say Obama is doing an excellent or good job “in standing up for the traditional positions of the Democratic Party.” A smaller majority of conservative and moderates (69%) say that Obama does an excellent or good job in advocating for the party’s traditional positions.

At the same time, however, there has been a decline since June in the percentage of liberal Democrats who say that Obama mostly listens to liberals in his party, rather than the party’s moderates. Currently, 20% of liberal Democrats say he is listening more to the party’s liberals compared with 54% who say he listens more to the party’s moderates. In June, as many liberal Democrats said that Obama was listening more to those in their wing of the party as said he was listening more to Democratic moderates (41% vs. 42%).

The survey also finds unusual political cross-currents about Obama’s handling of Afghanistan in the wake of his decision to increase the number of U.S. forces in the country. Fully 65% of Republicans support Obama’s decision, compared with just 49% of independents and 45% of Democrats.

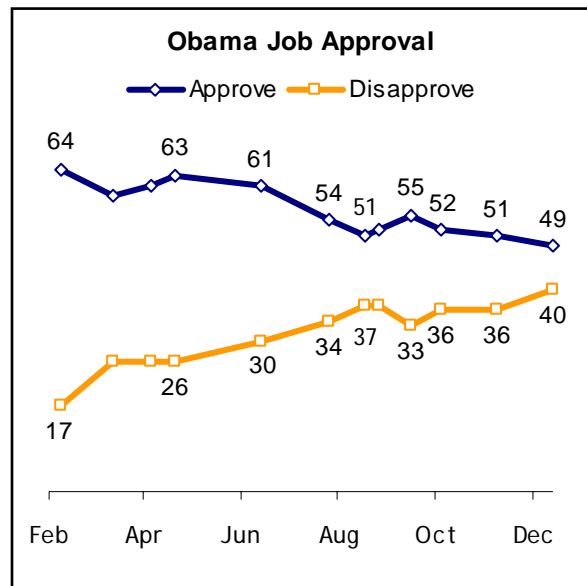
Nonetheless, Democrats express greater confidence in his handling of the situation in Afghanistan and are more likely to say he has a clear plan for successfully ending the war. About half of Democrats (51%) say he has a clear plan for bringing the situation in Afghanistan to a successful conclusion, compared with 35% of independents and only 18% of Republicans.

Republicans Favor Troop Decision, But Say Obama Lacks “Clear Plan”				
<i>Decision to send more U.S. troops</i>	<u>Total</u> %	<u>Rep</u> %	<u>Dem</u> %	<u>Ind</u> %
Favor	51	65	45	49
Oppose	39	29	44	41
Don't know	<u>10</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>9</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Confidence in Obama to handle Afghanistan</i>				
Great deal/Fair amount	50	38	69	46
Not too much/None	41	55	23	48
Don't know	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Obama...</i>				
Has clear plan for success	36	18	51	35
Does not	51	72	36	52
Don't know	<u>13</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>
	100	100	100	100
Q14, Q4c, Q36F1. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.				

Obama's Year-End Rating

A 49% plurality of the public approves of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president, while 40% disapprove. Obama's job approval rating has been relatively stable over recent months, though the percentage disapproving has edged up four points, from 36% in November to 40% in the current survey.

Over the course of the year, Obama's approval rating has declined substantially. In February, 64% approved of his job performance while just 17% disapproved. Obama's job approval rating first fell below 60% in July and in recent months has remained at around 50%.



Obama's current rating is far below George W. Bush's at a comparable point in his first year in office. In November 2001, 84% of the public approved of Bush's job performance; Bush's approval rating, which was at 51% shortly before the 9/11 attacks surged in the weeks and months after the attack. George H.W. Bush also had a much higher rating in December of his first year (71%) than Obama does today. On the other hand, Obama's ratings are very close to those of Bill Clinton (48% approval) and Ronald Reagan (49%) near their first anniversaries in office.

		Approve %	Disapprove %
Obama	Dec. 2009	49	40
G.W. Bush	Nov. 2001	84	9
Clinton	Dec. 1993	48	36
Bush, Sr.	Dec. 1989*	71	20
Reagan	Dec. 1981*	49	41

* 1981 and 1989 data from Gallup Organization.

Negatives and Positives

Overall, a large majority (66%) of those who approve of Obama's job performance say they cannot think of anything that they have been disappointed or unhappy with, but as many as 30% pointed to something that had disappointed them. When asked to elaborate, no single concern or complaint predominates among those who generally approve of Obama's performance: 9% cite Afghanistan or the troop increase and 7% cite health care as what has disappointed them.

The survey also finds that nearly three-fourths (73%) of those who disapprove of Obama's job performance cannot think of anything he had done that they have been happy with, while 24% of disapprovers say there are some things that Obama has done that have made them

happy. Among those who disapprove of Obama's performance, 7% cite Afghanistan and 6% cite economic issues, including the stimulus, as things he has done that have made them happy.

Beyond Job Approval: Any Disappointments or Positives?			
<i>Among those who approve of Obama's job performance (49% of public)</i>		<i>Among those who disapprove of Obama's job performance (40% of public)</i>	
	<u>%</u>		<u>%</u>
Been disappointed w/ things	30	Been happy with things	24
Afghanistan/Troop Increase	9	Afghanistan	7
Health care	7	Economy/Stimulus	6
Not firm enough/No results	4	Health care	3
End war(s)/Troops home	3	Other foreign policy	3
Economy/Deficit/Taxes/Jobs	3	Speeches/Communication	3
Banks/Corporate bailouts	3		
Iraq	2		
Gay rights	2		
Can't think of anything	66	Can't think of anything	73
Don't know	4	Don't know	3
	100		100
N	697	N	655

Q1a-d. Specific issues from open-ended questions with multiple responses accepted. See topline for full results.

Confidence on Issues

About half (52%) say they have either a great deal (20%) or a fair amount (32%) of confidence in Obama to do the right thing when it comes to the economy. Similar percentages express confidence in Obama's ability to handle the situation in Afghanistan (50%) and global climate change (48%).

However, the balance of opinion is reversed when it comes to health care reform and the federal budget deficit. More (51%) say they have not too much or no confidence in Obama on health care than say they are confident in the president (44%). Similarly, 53% express little confidence in Obama's ability to reduce they federal budget deficit, while just 41% are confident.

<i>Obama will do right thing when it comes to...</i>	Confidence in Obama on the Issues		
	<u>Great deal/ Fair amount</u>	<u>Not too much/ No confidence</u>	<u>DK</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Fixing the economy	52	44	4=100
Situation in Afghanistan	50	41	8=100
Global climate change	48	39	13=100
Dealing with health care reform	44	51	5=100
Reducing federal budget deficit	41	53	5=100

Q4a-e. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

There continue to be wide partisan differences in evaluations of Obama's handling of top issues. Just 15% of Republicans express confidence in Obama when it comes to health care reform, compared with 76% of Democrats and 38% of independents. Similar party gaps exist on other issues, including the economy and federal budget deficit. The partisan divide is much smaller when it comes to Obama's handling of the situation in Afghanistan. About four-in-ten (38%) Republicans express confidence in the president on this issue along with 46% of independents and 69% of Democrats.

	Great deal/Fair amount of confidence			R-D diff
	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %	
Obama will do right thing when it comes to ...				
Dealing with health care reform	15	76	38	-61
Fixing the economy	23	82	47	-59
Reducing federal budget deficit	14	73	33	-59
Global climate change	27	70	46	-43
Situation in Afghanistan	38	69	46	-31

Q4a-e.

Obama's New Approach

Most Americans (53%) still say Barack Obama has a "new approach" to politics in Washington, but fewer say this now than in September. At the same time, the percentage saying that Obama's approach to politics is "business as usual" has increased by seven points: from 30% in September to 37% in the current survey.

	Feb	Apr	Sep	Dec	Sept-Dec
	%	%	%	%	change
Obama has a new approach to politics	66	63	63	53	-10
Obama's approach is 'business as usual'	25	27	30	37	+7
Don't know	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>10</u>	
	100	100	100	100	

Q5. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

This shift in opinion has been driven in large part by Republicans and independents. In September, by nearly two-to-one, more independents said Obama's approach to politics was new (62%) than said it was business as usual (34%). In the current survey, 48% of independents view Obama's as approach new compared with 42% who say it is business as usual. And among Republicans, the percentage saying Obama has a new approach to politics has declined from 50% in September to 39% today.

While more liberal Democrats say Obama is listening to moderates in the party than to party liberals, the overall balance of opinion on this measure has changed little since spring. Currently, 43% of the public says that Obama listens more to Democratic liberals while 31% say he listens more to party moderates. Republicans (66%) and,

Obama is listening more to...	Jan	March	April	June	July	Oct	Dec
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Liberals in his party	34	44	40	39	41	44	43
Moderates in his party	44	30	33	35	31	32	31
Don't know	<u>22</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Q11. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

to a lesser extent, independents (47%) are inclined to see Obama listening more to liberals in his party than to moderates. By contrast, more Democrats (48%) say Obama is listening to moderates rather than to liberals (24%).

Obama Overextended?

Currently, 45% say that Obama is trying to address too many issues at once, compared with 42% who say he is doing about right; just 8% say he is focusing on too few issues. Opinion is unchanged from October, but has shifted since the spring. However, in April just 34% said Obama was overextended while 56% said he was doing about right.

<i>So far do you think Obama is...</i>	<u>April</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Dec</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Addressing too many issues	34	41	45	45
Focusing on too few issues	4	3	9	8
Doing about right	56	48	41	42
Don't know	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>
	100	100	100	100

Q10. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Slightly more than a third of the public (36%) thinks that Obama has kept almost all (8%) or most (28%) of his campaign promises; 57% say he has kept only a few (33%) or almost none (24%). As might be expected, there is a sizable partisan divide how well Obama has done in living up to his campaign promises. Most Democrats (59%) say he has kept at least most of his campaign promises while 79% of Republicans say he has kept only a few or almost none. Notably, independents views about this issue are closer to those of Republicans than Democrats: 63% of independents say Obama has kept at most only a few of his campaign promises compared with 29% who say he has kept almost all or most of his promises.

<i>Has he kept ...</i>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Ind</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Almost all	8	3	13	6
Most	28	13	46	23
Only a few	33	39	26	36
Almost none	24	40	7	27
Don't know	<u>8</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100	100

Q12. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Congressional Leadership Ratings

Approval ratings for Republican congressional leaders, while weak, have improved modestly since October. Currently, 29% approve of the job Republican leaders in Congress are doing while 51% disapprove. In October, just 24% approved and 60% disapproved.

Views of Republican Party leaders have improved among the Republican base. By 51% to 35%, more Republicans now approve than disapprove of the job being done by GOP congressional leaders. Two months ago, Republicans were evenly split over the performance of their party's congressional leaders (42% approve vs. 41% disapprove). In addition, while just 24% of independents approve of GOP leaders' job performance, which is little changed from October (20%), there has been a decline in the proportion of independents disapproving (from 61% to 51%).

Overall, Democratic leaders in Congress receive better job ratings than do Republican leaders. Nonetheless, the ratings of Democratic leaders are far from glowing: 36% approve of the job they are doing, compared with 47% who disapprove.

As with Republicans, rank-and-file Democrats have become somewhat more favorable toward their congressional leaders over the past few months; currently, 71% approve of the job they are doing, up from 57% in October. Independents have also softened their views of Democratic leaders somewhat: overall, 51% of independents disapprove of congressional Democratic leaders, down from 60% two months ago. As was the case in October, independents give comparable ratings for Republican leaders (24% approve, 51% disapprove) as for Democratic leaders (26% approve, 51% disapprove).

Ratings for Republican and Democratic Leaders in Congress				
Republican Leaders				
	<u>Jun</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Oct-Dec</u> <u>change</u>
Total	%	%	%	
Approve	29	24	29	+5
Disapprove	56	60	51	-9
Among...				
Republicans				
Approve	47	42	51	+9
Disapprove	41	41	35	-6
Independents				
Approve	25	20	24	+4
Disapprove	60	64	51	-13
Democrats				
Approve	21	15	19	+4
Disapprove	67	70	66	-4
Democratic Leaders				
	<u>Jun</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Oct-Dec</u> <u>change</u>
Total	%	%	%	
Approve	42	33	36	+3
Disapprove	45	53	47	-6
Among...				
Democrats				
Approve	71	57	71	+14
Disapprove	18	30	19	-11
Independents				
Approve	33	24	26	+2
Disapprove	53	60	51	-9
Republicans				
Approve	17	12	12	0
Disapprove	75	76	77	+1
Q2 & 3. Figures read down.				

Who Leads the GOP?

Just one-in-four (25%) Americans, including 28% of Republicans, can name someone who they think of as the leader of the Republican Party these days. Roughly three-quarters (77%) say they don't know who leads the party, or volunteer that nobody does.

Of the names offered as the GOP's leader, John McCain continues to be mentioned more than any other. About one-in-ten Americans (9%) – and the same number of Republicans – offer McCain's name as the leader of the party. Only two other names are mentioned by more than 1% – Rush Limbaugh (3%) and Sarah Palin (2%). Interestingly, Palin has risen to second on the list among Republicans, with 5% naming her as the party's leader, up from 1% in March. Meanwhile, fewer Republicans name Rush Limbaugh as the party's leader (1% down from 4% in March).

	GOP Still Leaderless			
	Total		Republicans	
	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Dec</u>
	%	%	%	%
Named someone	27	25	32	28
John McCain	11	9	12	9
Rush Limbaugh	5	3	4	1
Sarah Palin	1	2	1	5
Mitch McConnell	1	1	1	2
Michael Steele	2	1	3	1
Dick Cheney	*	1	*	1
Mike Huckabee	*	1	*	1
Newt Gingrich	2	1	4	2
George W. Bush	*	1	*	*
Mitt Romney	1	1	1	2
Other	4	4	6	5
Nobody is (Vol.)	15	22	18	22
Don't know (Vol.)	<u>57</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>50</u>
	100	100	100	100

Q15. Open-ended question: Who do you think of as the leader of the Republican Party these days?
 Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Conservatives Back Obama on Afghanistan

Barack Obama's decision to additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan was received far more positively among Republicans – especially conservative Republicans – than any other political group. Fully 71% of conservative Republicans favored the decision. That compares with 49% of independents and 45% of Democrats. Liberal Democrats are the only political group where more oppose (50%) than favor (42%) Obama's troop decision.

Younger Americans, who continue to give Obama the strongest job approval ratings overall, are less supportive than older people of the decision to increase troop levels in Afghanistan. Just 39% of people under age 30 favor the troop increase, while 52% are opposed. There is majority support for the decision among all older age groups. In addition, men are substantially more likely than women (57% vs. 46%) to support Obama's decision to send more troops to Afghanistan. And college graduates back the decision by nearly two-to-one (59% favor, 31% oppose) while people with no college education are divided evenly (44% favor, 46% oppose).

Conservative Republicans Back Troop Increase				
	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>N</u>
	%	%	%	
Total	51	39	10=100	1504
<i>Party/Ideology</i>				
Conserv Rep	71	24	5=100	303
Mod/Lib Rep	52	40	7=100	104
Independent	49	41	9=100	561
Cons/Mod Dem	47	39	13=100	274
Liberal Dem	42	50	8=100	167
<i>Obama job</i>				
Approve	49	40	11=100	697
Disapprove	55	38	7=100	655
<i>Demographics</i>				
Men	57	35	7=100	685
Women	46	42	12=100	819
18-29	39	52	9=100	213
30-49	53	37	10=100	468
50-64	55	37	7=100	450
65+	55	31	14=100	345
College grad	59	31	10=100	581
Some college	56	35	10=100	413
H.S. or less	44	46	10=100	504
<i>Heard about troop decision</i>				
Heard a lot	61	32	7=100	879
Little/Nothing	40	47	13=100	600

Q14. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Those who have heard a lot about Obama's decision are far more supportive of the increase in troop levels than those who heard little or nothing about it. Those who heard a lot about the decision favor it by a 61% to 32% margin. Those who heard only a little or nothing are more likely to oppose (47%) than favor (40%) the decision.

Obama receives substantially higher ratings for having a clear plan for Afghanistan than George W. Bush did following the announcement of the “surge” in January of 2007. At that time, just 22% of Americans thought Bush had a clear plan for Iraq, and only 31% favored the decision to increase troop levels. Today, 36% believe Obama has a clear plan, and 51% favor the decision.

The difference is from outside of Obama’s political base. While only 18% of Republicans believe Obama has a clear plan for Afghanistan, that compares to just 7% of Democrats who believed this about Bush following the announcement of the “surge” in 2007. And currently 35% of independents believe Obama has a clear plan for Afghanistan, compared with just 19% who said the same about Bush nearly three years ago.

Public opinion about the situation in Afghanistan has also improved following Obama’s announced troop increase. A month ago, just 36% said the military effort there was going very or fairly well. Today, 46% offer a favorable assessment. And roughly six-in-ten Americans (59%) believe that the U.S. will either definitely or probably succeed in achieving its goals in Afghanistan. This is nearly as high as the share who believes the U.S. will ultimately succeed in achieving its goals in Iraq (63%).

Obama’s “Surge” Gets Better Reception than Bush’s in 2007

	Bush/ Iraq Jan 2007	Obama/ Afghanistan Dec 2009
<i>Heard about troop decision</i>		
A lot	43	53
A little	43	36
Nothing	13	9
Don't know	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100
<i>Decision to send more troops</i>		
Favor	31	51
Oppose	61	39
Don't know	<u>8</u>	<u>10</u>
	100	100
<i>Obama/Bush</i>		
Has a clear plan	22	36
Does not	70	51
Don't know	<u>8</u>	<u>13</u>
	100	100

Q13, Q14, Q36F1. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

More See Things Going Well in Afghanistan

	Jan 2009	Nov 2009	Dec 2009
<i>Military effort in Afghanistan is going...</i>			
Very/Fairly well	45	36	46
Not too/Not at all well	45	57	43
Don't know	<u>10</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>10</u>
	100	100	100
<i>U.S. will succeed/fail in achieving goals</i>			
Succeed	62	--	59
Fail	29	--	32
Don't know	<u>9</u>	--	<u>10</u>
	100	100	100

Q34 & Q35. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

These evaluations of the situation in Afghanistan are far more upbeat than the public's expectations about Iraq when Bush announced the troop increase there. In February of 2007, just three-in-ten (30%) believed the military effort in Iraq was going very or fairly well, and fewer than half (47%) thought the U.S. would ultimately succeed there. It took nearly two years – or until George W. Bush was leaving office – for public reactions to the situation in Iraq to turn in a decidedly favorable direction.

Iraq Opinion Before and After Bush's "Surge" Speech							
	Summer 2006	Pre- speech	Post- speech	9 mos later	1 year later	2 years later	3 years later
	<u>6/06</u>	<u>12/06</u>	<u>2/07</u>	<u>9/07</u>	<u>2/08</u>	<u>1/09</u>	<u>12/09</u>
<i>Military effort in Iraq is going...</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very/Fairly well	53	32	30	41	48	59	55
Not too/Not at all well	43	64	67	54	48	36	36
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>U.S. will succeed/fail in achieving goals</i>	<u>8/06</u>	<u>11/06</u>	<u>2/07</u>	<u>9/07</u>	<u>2/08</u>	<u>1/09</u>	<u>12/09</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Succeed	54	53	47	42	53	61	63
Fail	40	41	46	47	39	29	29
Don't know	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Q38F1/39F1. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

One major difference in public evaluations of the two situations is in how essential military success is to U.S. security. Currently, 52% of Americans say that success in Afghanistan is very important to preventing terrorist attacks against the United States, and another 30% say it is somewhat important. Only 16% believe success in Afghanistan is not too or not at all important in this regard. The balance of public opinion about Iraq was the reverse three years ago. Though the question is different, just 37% felt America's safety from terrorism depended on success in Iraq, while 57% said that it did not.

Health Care Reform Still Hard to Understand

The debate over health care reform continues to attract the public's attention. About half (51%) say they have heard a lot about the bills in Congress to overhaul the health care system; another 39% have heard a little and only 9% have heard nothing at all. Pew Research's weekly News Interest Index found that the health care debate was once again the week's most closely followed news story.

However, after months of debate over health care, a large majority of Americans (69%) say they find the issue hard to understand, which is slightly higher than in late July (63%). (For more from the latest weekly News Interest Index survey, see ["Public Closely Tracking Health Care Debate,"](#) released December 16, 2009).

By a 48% to 35% margin, more people say they generally oppose than say they generally favor the health care proposals being discussed in Congress. In four of six previous surveys dating back to July, there has been more opposition than support for the health care proposals.

A majority of Democrats (59%) favor the health care bills being discussed in Congress, compared with only 11% of Republicans. About a third (32%) of independents favor the proposals, but there is a substantial divide within independents; 56% of Democratic-leaning independents support the bills compared with only 9% of Republican-leaning independents.

A majority (58%) of those who have heard a lot about the bills oppose them while only 32% favor them. By comparison, opinion among those who have heard a little or nothing at all is evenly divided (38% favor, 38% oppose and 25% are unsure). There are no significant differences by gender or income, but there continue to be substantial age differences in opinion about the health care bills. Fewer than a quarter (23%) of those ages 65 and

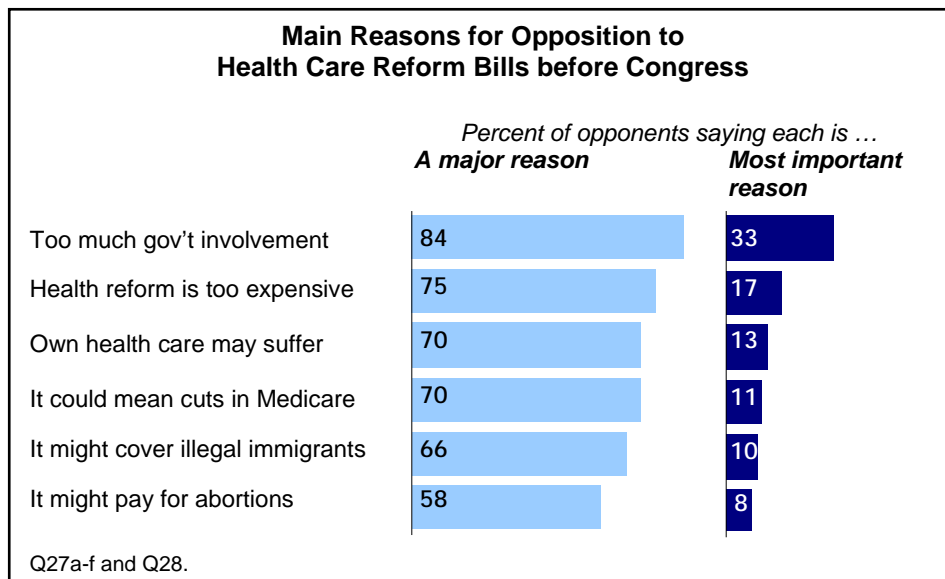
	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Early Nov	Mid Nov	Dec	Dec N
<i>% who favor health care bills</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	
Total	38	39	42	34	38	42	35	1504
Republican	12	13	17	14	15	21	11	416
Democrat	61	64	68	59	61	65	59	456
Independent	34	37	37	26	33	33	32	561
Republican-leaning	15	14	15	15	18	14	9	224
Democratic-leaning	59	63	62	42	58	57	56	198
Men	37	39	39	33	35	42	35	685
Women	39	40	45	36	41	42	34	819
White, non-Hispanic	33	29	37	30	30	36	30	1134
Black, non-Hispanic	50	71	68	58	62	66	61	155
18-29	44	45	48	40	39	54	39	213
30-49	34	39	42	35	41	41	38	468
50-64	45	41	43	33	38	41	34	450
65+	29	30	34	30	31	33	23	345
<i>Family income</i>								
\$75,000 or more	35	38	46	34	37	38	37	436
\$30,000-74,999	37	38	38	35	38	46	36	508
Less than \$30,000	44	48	48	35	44	50	36	358
College grad+	39	43	50	40	43	43	40	581
Some college	38	37	41	34	36	42	33	413
HS or less	38	39	38	32	36	42	33	504
Have health insurance	37	--	--	34	37	--	33	1328
No health insurance	44	--	--	37	44	--	43	172
Q25.								

older favor them compared with more than a third in all other age groups. Just a third (33%) of those who say they have health insurance favor the health care proposals. While support is somewhat greater among those who do not have insurance, fewer than half in this group (43%) favors the bills before Congress.

When asked how they would feel if the proposed health care bills are passed into law, 41% say they would be pleased (29%) or very happy (12%) and 45% say they would be disappointed (25%) or angry (20%); another 14% are unsure how they would feel. These percentages are little changed from August.

Opponents Cite Too Much Government

Among opponents of the health care bills, 84% say too much government involvement in health care is a major reason for their opposition and 75% say health care reform is too expensive for the country. Seven-in-ten cite possible cuts in Medicare and concern that their own health care may suffer as major reasons for their opposition. About two-thirds (66%) of opponents say the possibility of covering illegal immigrants is a major reason they oppose the bills and 58% say a major reason is the possibility that government money might pay for abortions.



Most opponents cite multiple reasons as major factors in their opposition; 96% say one or more are major reasons and 71% cite four or more as major reasons. When asked a follow-up question about the *most* important reason why they oppose the bills, 33% cite too much government involvement in health care, 17% say health care reform is too expensive for the country, and 13% say their own health care may suffer as the most important reason for their opposition. About one-in-ten cite possible cuts in Medicare (11%) as the most important reason

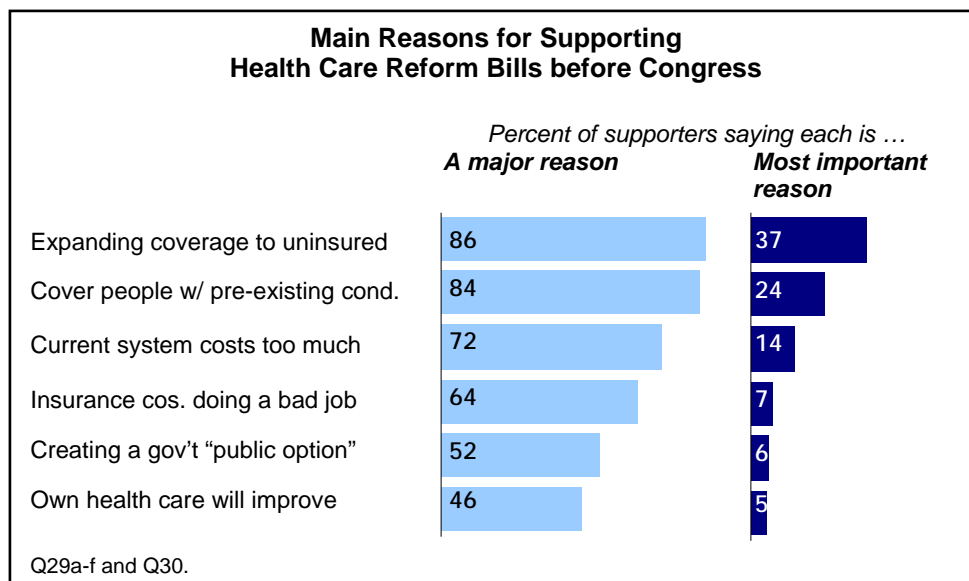
they oppose the bills and that the plan might cover illegal immigrants (10%). Only 8% say that government money possibly paying for abortions is the most important reason for their opposition.

There are significant differences in opinion by age. Those ages 50 and older are more likely than those under 50 to say that possible cuts in Medicare are a major reason for their opposition (82% vs. 59%) and that this is the most important reason for their opposition (16% vs. 8%). However, even among this age group, the issue of possible Medicare cuts ranks far lower than too much government involvement in health care; 33% of those 50 and older say this is the most important reason for their opposition. Opponents 50 and older are also more likely than those under 50 to say health care reform is too expensive, that it might cover illegal immigrants and that it would mean too much government involvement in health care are major reasons for their opposition.

There are few differences among most demographic groups about other reasons for opposition to the bills, including on whether people think their own health care may suffer. Women are somewhat more likely than men to say this is a major reason (74% vs. 66%) and that this is the most important reason for their opposition (16% vs. 10%).

Supporters Cite Expanding Coverage

Among supporters of the health care bills, 86% say expanding health coverage to the uninsured is a major reason for their support and 84% cite assuring that no one is denied coverage because they have pre-existing conditions as a major reason. About seven-in-ten (72%) say the current system costs too much and 64% say insurance companies doing a bad job are major reasons for their support.



Smaller percentages cite the creation of a government “public option” (52%) and improvements in their own health care coverage (46%) as major reasons for supporting the bills.

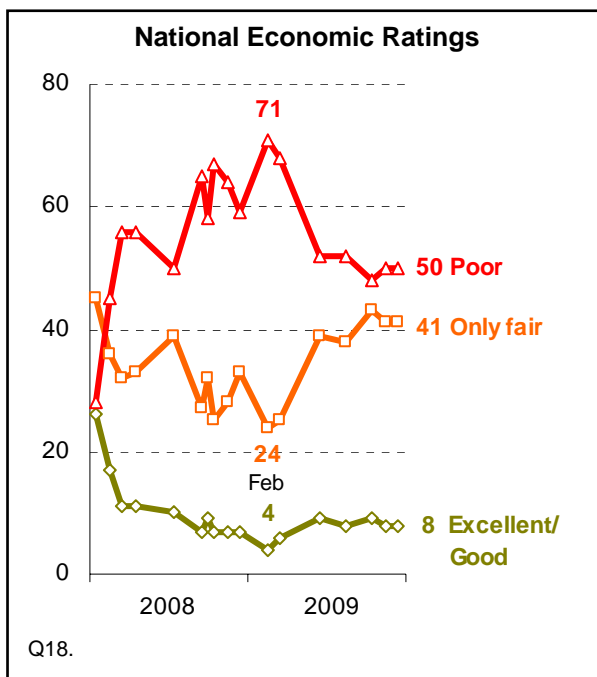
As is the case with opponents, most supporters cite multiple reasons as major factors for why they favor the bills; 94% say one or more are major reasons and 67% cite four or more as major reasons. When asked a follow-up question about the most important reason why they support the bills, 37% say expanding coverage to the uninsured and 24% cite assuring coverage for people with pre-existing conditions. Fewer say the current system costs too much (14%), that insurance companies are doing a bad job (7%), it will create a government “public option” (6%) and their own health care will improve (5%) are the most important reasons for their support of the bills.

Far more supporters without health insurance than those with health insurance say improved health care coverage is a major reason why they favor the bills (83% vs. 37%). Similarly, 61% of those with annual family incomes less than \$50,000 say this is a major reason for their support compared with 31% of those with annual incomes of \$50,000 or more.

Unabated Economic Gloom

Ratings of the national economy are virtually unchanged from November: Currently, just 8% say national economic conditions are either excellent (1%) or good (7%) while 91% say they are only fair (41%) or poor (50%).

There has been a substantial decline in the proportion of Americans saying the economy is poor: 71% in February and 68% in March expressed this view. That fell to 52% in June and has remained at about that level since then (50% currently). However, positive ratings of the economy have not increased significantly over this period.



Similarly, opinions about whether the economy will improve over the next year have changed little in recent months. In the current survey, 42% say they expect economic conditions will be better a year from now; 39% said that a month ago. Optimism that economic conditions will improve reached a high for the year of 48% in June.

As 2009 comes to a close, a majority of Americans (53%) say they think their personal financial situation will improve a lot (9%) or some (44%) over the next year; 27% expect their finances to get worse. As for current views of personal finances, just 35% say they are in excellent (7%) or good shape (28%) while 63% say their finances are only fair (39%) or poor (24%). Measures of personal financial optimism and current evaluations have changed little in recent months.

Spending Cutbacks Still Common

As has been since last year, large percentages of Americans say they are cutting back on spending, delaying or canceling major purchases, and making changes in long-term investments.

Fully 70% say they are cutting back on holiday spending, which is largely unchanged from last December (73%). Indeed, despite recent signs of recovering consumer confidence, there is no evidence in the poll that the public is more willing to spend in any of several areas than it was a year ago.

Public Still Reluctant to Spend		
<i>Done any of the following lately...</i>	Dec 2008	Dec 2009
	%	%
Spending cutbacks		
Cut back on holiday spending	73	70
Cut back on vacation spending	57	59
Eat out less often	55	56
Delayed/canceled buying major home item	44	43
Delayed/canceled buying a new car	33	36
Any spending cutback	84	84
Long-term investment changes		
Changed investments/savings	48	52
Delayed/canceled buying a home or making major improvements	36	38
Adjusted retirement plans	27	32
Any investment change	65	69

Q22. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

More than eight-in-ten (84%) say they have either cut back on holiday or vacation spending, been eating out less often, or delayed or canceled plans for buying a new car or making a major home purchase; that is unchanged from December 2008 (84%). Similarly, 69% say they have either changed their savings or investments, delayed or canceled buying a new home or adjusted their retirement plans, which also is little changed from a year ago (65%).

Cutbacks Continue to Be Mostly Driven by Fears about the Future		
<i>Cutting back on spending because...</i>	Dec 2008	Dec 2009
	%	%
Finances have worsened	28	30
Finances might get worse	57	49
Both/Other/Don't know	14	20
	100	100

Q23. Based on respondents who are cutting back on holiday spending, eating out less or have delayed or canceled planned vacations, home item purchases or new car purchases.

Since last year, Pew Research surveys have consistently found that worry over future finances, rather than actual economic hardship, is a bigger factor in decisions to scale back spending. Currently, 30% of those who have changed spending habits say they have done so because their financial situation has gotten worse, while substantially more (49%) say they have cut back on spending because they worry their financial situation might get worse in the future. This is

modestly changed from last December, when 28% said financial setbacks had caused them to spend less or rethink buying decisions and 57% said such changes were motivated by worry about the future.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International among a national sample of 1,504 adults living in the continental United States, 18 years of age or older, from December 9-13, 2009 (1,001 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 503 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 182 who had no landline telephone). 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 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 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:

Group	Sample Size	Plus or minus...
Total sample	1,504	3.0 percentage points
Form 1	779	4.5 percentage points
Form 2	725	4.5 percentage points
Republicans	416	6.0 percentage points
Democrats	456	6.0 percentage points
Independents	561	5.0 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 CENTER

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
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Robert Suls, Shawn Neidorf, Leah Christian, Jocelyn Kiley and Alec Tyson, Research Associates
Jacob Poushter, Research Assistant

PRESIDENTIAL JOB APPROVAL TABLE

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president?

	November			December			(N)
	Approve %	Dis- approve %	(VOL.) DK/Ref %	Approve %	Dis- approve %	(VOL.) DK/Ref %	
TOTAL	51	36	13	49	40	11	1504
SEX							
Men	48	39	13	47	43	10	685
Women	54	34	12	51	37	12	819
AGE							
18-49	54	33	13	53	36	11	681
50+	47	41	12	46	45	10	795
DETAILED AGE							
18-29	59	29	12	54	33	14	213
30-49	51	36	13	52	38	10	468
50-64	48	41	10	48	43	8	450
65+	44	41	15	42	47	11	345
SEX BY AGE							
Men 18-49	49	37	14	47	42	11	321
Men 50+	47	42	11	47	46	7	354
Women 18-49	59	30	12	58	30	12	360
Women 50+	46	40	14	44	44	12	441
RACE							
White NH	40	46	14	39	48	12	1134
Total Non-White	75	15	10	73	20	7	358
Black NH	91	5	4	88	6	6	155
EDUCATION							
College grad	53	39	8	54	37	9	581
Some college	43	40	17	44	45	11	413
HS or less	53	33	14	50	39	11	504
INCOME							
\$75,000+	44	47	9	49	43	8	436
\$30,000-\$74,999	48	36	16	49	40	11	508
<\$30,000	60	30	10	53	36	11	358
DETAILED INCOME							
\$100,000+	44	45	10	46	47	7	267
\$75,000-\$99,999	44	49	7	55	36	9	169
\$50,000-\$74,999	46	38	16	53	40	7	244
\$30,000-\$49,999	49	35	16	46	40	14	264
<\$30,000	60	30	10	53	36	11	358
REGISTERED VOTER	50	39	10	49	43	9	1253
PARTY ID							
Republican	22	66	12	19	73	8	416
Democrat	79	12	9	83	11	7	456
Independent	45	39	16	42	44	14	561
PARTY AND IDEOLOGY							
Conservative Republican	14	76	11	12	82	6	303
Mod/Lib Republican	42	44	15	35	53	13	104
Mod/Cons Democrat	76	14	10	82	11	8	274
Liberal Democrat	86	7	6	85	10	4	167

PRESIDENTIAL JOB APPROVAL TABLE (CONT.)

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president?

	November			December			(N)
	<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>	<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>	
RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE							
Total White NH Prot.	34	52	14	35	51	14	636
White NH evang. Prot.	28	61	11	27	59	14	351
White NH mainline Prot.	41	42	17	46	40	14	284
Total Catholic	52	34	14	55	39	7	303
White NH Cath.	42	44	14	44	50	5	225
Unaffiliated	60	25	15	53	33	15	242
CHURCH ATTENDANCE							
More than once a week	41	48	12	35	55	10	216
Once a week	49	39	12	44	47	8	415
Once or twice a month	50	37	13	52	37	11	191
A few times a year	52	35	13	55	37	8	254
Seldom/Never	56	30	14	56	30	14	403
REGION							
Northeast	54	37	10	57	35	8	271
Midwest	48	39	13	47	40	14	356
South	48	38	13	44	46	10	560
West	56	30	14	54	35	11	317
MARITAL STATUS							
Married	45	43	12	43	46	10	856
Not married	58	29	13	57	32	11	634
MARITAL STATUS BY SEX							
Married men	42	46	12	41	50	8	404
Married women	48	40	12	45	43	12	452
Unmarried men	56	31	14	54	35	11	274
Unmarried women	59	28	13	59	29	12	360
EMPLOYMENT							
Employed	50	38	12	51	39	10	838
Not employed	52	34	14	47	42	12	659
AMONG REPUBLICANS							
Men	18	69	13	21	75	4	188
Women	26	63	11	18	72	11	228
18-49	28	61	12	22	70	8	179
50+	16	72	12	17	76	7	233
AMONG DEMOCRATS							
Men	80	13	7	82	11	7	176
Women	79	12	10	83	10	7	280
18-49	80	11	9	86	8	7	205
50+	78	14	8	79	14	7	246
AMONG INDEPENDENTS							
Men	44	39	17	40	48	12	287
Women	45	40	14	45	38	17	274
18-49	50	35	15	45	40	15	269
50+	37	48	16	38	50	12	279

PRESIDENTIAL JOB APPROVAL TABLE (CONT.)

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president?

	November			December			(N)
	<u>Approve</u> %	Dis- <u>approve</u> %	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u> %	<u>Approve</u> %	Dis- <u>approve</u> %	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u> %	
AMONG WHITES							
Men	38	48	14	33	56	11	491
Women	43	44	14	44	42	14	643
18-49	43	43	14	42	44	14	465
50+	38	48	14	37	53	10	651
College grad	46	47	7	49	42	9	471
Some college or less	38	45	17	35	51	14	660
\$75,000+	40	51	9	41	49	9	346
\$30,000-\$74,999	40	45	15	42	47	11	389
<\$30,000	42	44	14	40	47	14	248
Republican	19	70	12	18	74	8	374
Democrat	72	18	11	75	17	9	279
Independent	39	45	16	36	48	16	436
East	46	43	11	51	42	7	219
Midwest	40	45	15	41	43	16	301
South	33	52	15	31	58	11	399
West	48	38	14	41	44	15	215

AFGHANISTAN & HEALTH CARE TABLE

Q.14 Do you favor or oppose Obama's decision to send more U.S. troops to Afghanistan?

Q.25 As of right now, do you generally favor or generally oppose the health care proposals being discussed in Congress?

	Afghanistan Decision			Health Care Proposals			(N)
	Favor	Oppose	DK/Ref	Favor	Oppose	DK/Ref	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
TOTAL	51	39	10	35	48	17	1504
SEX							
Men	57	35	7	35	50	14	685
Women	46	42	12	34	46	19	819
AGE							
18-49	48	42	10	39	47	15	681
50+	55	35	10	29	50	21	795
DETAILED AGE							
18-29	39	52	9	39	45	16	213
30-49	53	37	10	38	48	14	468
50-64	55	37	7	34	51	14	450
65+	55	31	14	23	48	29	345
SEX BY AGE							
Men 18-49	54	40	7	37	51	11	321
Men 50+	63	29	8	32	48	19	354
Women 18-49	43	45	13	40	42	18	360
Women 50+	49	40	12	27	51	22	441
RACE							
White NH	53	37	10	30	55	16	1134
Total Non-White	46	43	11	48	32	20	358
Black NH	47	43	10	61	18	21	155
EDUCATION							
College grad	59	31	10	40	50	10	581
Some college	56	35	10	33	55	13	413
HS or less	44	46	10	33	44	23	504
INCOME							
\$75,000+	61	32	7	37	54	8	436
\$30,000-\$74,999	53	40	7	36	49	15	508
<\$30,000	41	47	11	36	43	20	358
DETAILED INCOME							
\$100,000+	60	31	9	33	56	10	267
\$75,000-\$99,999	63	32	5	43	52	6	169
\$50,000-\$74,999	60	31	8	40	49	11	244
\$30,000-\$49,999	48	46	6	33	48	19	264
<\$30,000	41	47	11	36	43	20	358
REGISTERED VOTER	55	35	10	34	50	16	1253
PARTY ID							
Republican	65	29	6	11	79	11	416
Democrat	45	44	12	59	20	21	456
Independent	49	41	9	32	52	16	561
PARTY AND IDEOLOGY							
Conservative Republican	71	24	5	5	86	9	303
Mod/Lib Republican	52	40	7	24	64	12	104
Mod/Cons Democrat	47	39	13	55	22	24	274
Liberal Democrat	42	50	8	69	14	17	167

AFGHANISTAN & HEALTH CARE TABLE (CONT.)

Q.14 Do you favor or oppose Obama's decision to send more U.S. troops to Afghanistan?

Q.25 As of right now, do you generally favor or generally oppose the health care proposals being discussed in Congress?

	Afghanistan Decision (VOL.)			Health Care Proposals (VOL.)			(N)
	<u>Favor</u> %	<u>Oppose</u> %	<u>DK/Ref</u> %	<u>Favor</u> %	<u>Oppose</u> %	<u>DK/Ref</u> %	
RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE							
Total White NH Prot.	58	32	10	23	61	16	636
White NH evang. Prot.	58	33	10	15	68	17	351
White NH mainline Prot.	58	31	11	35	50	15	284
Total Catholic	51	42	7	37	48	15	303
White NH Cath.	54	40	6	30	56	14	225
Unaffiliated	40	50	10	46	37	17	242
CHURCH ATTENDANCE							
More than once a week	54	36	10	21	62	16	216
Once a week	55	34	10	28	55	17	415
Once or twice a month	47	44	9	40	47	13	191
A few times a year	51	41	8	40	45	15	254
Seldom/Never	48	41	11	41	39	20	403
REGION							
Northeast	46	46	8	44	43	13	271
Midwest	52	38	10	33	52	15	356
South	51	40	9	30	52	18	560
West	55	33	12	36	43	21	317
MARITAL STATUS							
Married	56	35	9	30	55	15	856
Not married	46	44	10	41	40	19	634
MARITAL STATUS BY SEX							
Married men	59	34	7	29	57	14	404
Married women	53	36	11	30	54	16	452
Unmarried men	55	38	7	43	42	15	274
Unmarried women	37	50	13	39	38	23	360
EMPLOYMENT							
Employed	52	39	9	36	48	16	838
Not employed	50	39	11	33	49	19	659
AMONG REPUBLICANS							
Men	66	30	4	11	77	11	188
Women	64	28	8	10	80	10	228
18-49	64	31	4	12	80	8	179
50+	66	26	8	9	77	13	233
AMONG DEMOCRATS							
Men	53	37	10	63	19	18	176
Women	38	49	13	56	20	24	280
18-49	38	50	12	65	18	18	205
50+	52	37	11	51	22	26	246

AFGHANISTAN & HEALTH CARE TABLE (CONT.)

Q.14 Do you favor or oppose Obama's decision to send more U.S. troops to Afghanistan?

Q.25 As of right now, do you generally favor or generally oppose the health care proposals being discussed in Congress?

	Afghanistan Decision			Health Care Proposals			(N)
	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>	
	%	%	(VOL.) %	%	%	(VOL.) %	
AMONG INDEPENDENTS							
Men	55	39	6	31	57	12	287
Women	42	44	14	33	47	19	274
18-49	47	44	9	35	50	15	269
50+	53	37	10	27	56	17	279
AMONG WHITES							
Men	59	34	7	27	60	13	491
Women	49	40	12	32	51	17	643
18-49	52	40	9	34	53	13	465
50+	55	34	10	24	57	19	651
College grad	61	30	9	39	53	8	471
Some college or less	50	40	10	25	56	19	660
\$75,000+	63	30	7	32	61	7	346
\$30,000-\$74,999	56	38	7	30	56	14	389
<\$30,000	43	47	10	30	50	20	248
Republican	66	27	7	10	79	11	374
Democrat	44	45	11	57	24	19	279
Independent	50	39	11	29	55	16	436
East	50	42	8	39	47	14	219
Midwest	55	37	9	29	55	16	301
South	53	35	12	24	61	15	399
West	55	36	9	31	53	16	215

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
DECEMBER 2009 POLITICAL SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
December 9-13, 2009
N=1504

ASK ALL:

Q.1 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]**

	<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 9-13, 2009	49	40	11
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	51	36	13
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	52	36	12
Sep 10-15, 2009	55	33	13
Aug 20-27, 2009	52	37	12
Aug 11-17, 2009	51	37	11
Jul 22-26, 2009	54	34	12
Jun 10-14, 2009	61	30	9
Apr 14-21, 2009	63	26	11
Mar 31-Apr 6, 2009	61	26	13
Mar 9-12, 2009	59	26	15
Feb 4-8, 2009	64	17	19

IF APPROVE (1 IN Q.1) ASK:

Q.1a While you approve of Obama's performance overall, are there any things he has done that you have been disappointed or unhappy with, or can't you think of anything?

IF DISAPPOINTED/UNHAPPY (1 IN Q.1A) ASK:

Q.1b What have you been disappointed or unhappy with? [OPEN END – PROBE ONCE FOR ADDITIONAL ANSWER: "Anything else?"]

BASED ON THOSE WHO APPROVE OF THE WAY OBAMA IS HANDLING HIS JOB AS PRESIDENT [N=697]:

Dec 9-13

2009

30	Been disappointed or unhappy with things
9	Afghanistan/Troop increase
7	Health care
4	Not firm enough/No results
3	End war/Troops home
3	Economy/Spending/Deficit/Taxes/Jobs
3	Banks/Corporations/Bonuses/Bailouts/Wall Street
2	Iraq
2	Gay rights
1	Abortion
1	Other foreign policy
1	Other style
0	Other
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
15	DOMESTIC POLICY (NET)
14	FOREIGN POLICY (NET)
5	STYLE (NET)
66	Can't think of anything
4	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

IF DISAPPROVE (2 IN Q.1) ASK:

Q.1c While you disapprove of Obama's performance overall, are there any things he has done that you have been happy with, or can't you think of anything?

IF HAPPY WITH ANYTHING (1 IN Q.1c) ASK:

Q.1d What have you been happy with? [OPEN END – PROBE ONCE FOR ADDITIONAL ANSWER: "Anything else?"]

BASED ON THOSE WHO DISAPPROVE OF THE WAY OBAMA IS HANDLING HIS JOB AS PRESIDENT [N=655]:

Dec 9-13

2009

24	Been happy with things
7	Afghanistan
6	Economy/Stimulus/Taxes/Benefits
3	Health care
3	Other foreign policy
3	Speeches/Communication
1	Other domestic policy
1	Other style
1	Reaching out/Willing to talk/Uniting
1	Iraq
*	Effort/Trying
1	Other
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
11	FOREIGN POLICY (NET)
9	DOMESTIC POLICY (NET)
5	STYLE (NET)
73	Can't think of anything
3	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

RANDOMIZE Q.2 AND Q.3

ASK ALL:

Q.2 Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Dis- approve</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>		<u>Approve</u>	<u>Dis- approve</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
Dec 9-13, 2009	29	51	20	May, 1999	38	44	18
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	24	60	17	March, 1999	38	47	15
Jun 10-14, 2009	29	56	15	February, 1999	37	51	12
Mar 9-12, 2009	28	51	21	January, 1999	38	50	12
Feb 4-8, 2009	34	51	15	Early December, 1998	38	49	13
Early October, 2006	33	56	11	November, 1998	41	48	11
June, 2006	30	53	17	Early September, 1998	44	37	19
March, 2006	32	50	18	Early August, 1998	43	37	20
January, 2006	33	52	15	June, 1998	42	38	20
Early November, 2005	33	50	17	May, 1998	40	41	19
Early October, 2005	32	52	16	April, 1998	41	40	19
Mid-September, 2005	36	49	15	March, 1998	43	39	18
Mid-May, 2005	35	50	15	January, 1998	43	41	16
Mid-March, 2005	39	44	17	November, 1997	41	43	16
Early February, 2004	41	42	17	August, 1997	42	44	14
January, 2003	48	37	15	June, 1997	33	50	17
June, 2002	50	34	16	May, 1997	40	44	16
May, 2002	49	34	17	April, 1997	40	44	16
February, 2002	56	24	20	February, 1997	44	42	14
Early September, 2001	43	39	18	January, 1997	38	47	15
June, 2001	40	40	20	November, 1996	40	43	17
May, 2001	45	36	19	July, 1996	38	48	14
April, 2001	45	30	25	June, 1996	36	50	14
January, 2001	43	36	21	April, 1996	39	46	15
July, 2000	36	46	18	March, 1996	35	51	14
May, 2000	40	42	18	February, 1996	33	53	14
March, 2000	38	43	19	January, 1996	36	54	10
February, 2000	40	43	17	October, 1995	36	51	13
January, 2000	39	41	20	September, 1995	36	50	14
December, 1999	38	42	20	August, 1995	38	45	17
October, 1999	34	50	16	June, 1995	41	45	14
Late September, 1999	34	46	20	April, 1995	44	43	13
August, 1999	40	44	16	March, 1995	43	39	18
July, 1999	36	45	19	December, 1994	52	28	20
June, 1999	37	46	17				

RANDOMIZE Q.2 AND Q.3

ASK ALL:

Q.3 Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Democratic leaders in Congress are doing? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the job the Democratic leaders in Congress are doing? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 9-13, 2009	36	47	17
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	33	53	15
Jun 10-14, 2009	42	45	13
Mar 9-12, 2009	47	35	18
Feb 4-8, 2009	48	38	14
August, 2008	31	58	11
January, 2008	31	53	16
November, 2007	35	50	15
October, 2007	31	54	15
July, 2007	33	54	13
June, 2007	34	49	17
April, 2007	36	43	21
March, 2007 ¹	37	42	21
February, 2007	41	36	23
Mid-January, 2007	39	34	27
Early October, 2006	35	53	12
June, 2006	32	50	18
March, 2006	34	46	20
January, 2006	34	48	18
Early November, 2005	36	44	20
Early October, 2005	32	48	20
Mid-September, 2005	36	45	19
Mid-May, 2005	39	41	20
Mid-March, 2005	37	44	19
Early February, 2004	38	42	20
June, 2002	47	36	17
May, 2002	42	37	21
February, 2002	49	30	21
Early September, 2001	49	30	21
June, 2001	50	28	22

ASK ALL:

Q.4 How much confidence do you have in Barack Obama to do the right thing when it comes to **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]**? Would you say you have a great deal, a fair amount, not too much, or no confidence at all?... How about when it comes to **[NEXT ITEM]**?

	<u>A great deal</u>	<u>A fair amount</u>	<u>Not too much</u>	<u>No confidence at all</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a. Fixing the economy					
Dec 9-13, 2009	20	32	17	27	4
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	21	38	18	21	2
Mar 31-Apr 6, 2009 ²	32	38	13	13	4
Jan 7-11, 2009	33	42	14	7	4

1 In March 2007 the question was worded: "Do you approve or disapprove of the policies and proposals of the Democratic leaders in Congress?"
 2 Item asked in a list about confidence in Obama, Democratic leaders in Congress, and Republican leaders in Congress.

Q.4 CONTINUED...

		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>
b.	Dealing with health care reform					
	Dec 9-13, 2009	19	25	19	32	5
	Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	20	30	21	27	2
	Aug 20-27, 2009 ³	26	30	21	22	3
c.	The situation in Afghanistan					
	Dec 9-13, 2009	15	35	21	20	8
	Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	16	34	24	21	6
d.	Reducing the federal budget deficit					
	Dec 9-13, 2009	14	27	20	33	5
e.	Global climate change					
	Dec 9-13, 2009	16	32	17	22	13

ASK ALL:

Q.5 Do you think that [READ AND RANDOMIZE]:

		Sept 10-15 <u>2009</u>	Apr 14-21 <u>2009</u>	Feb 4-8 <u>2009</u>
53	Barack Obama has a new approach to politics in Washington [OR]	63	63	66
37	Barack Obama's approach to politics in Washington is 'business as usual'?	30	27	25
10	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	7	10	9

NO QUESTIONS 6 THROUGH 8

ASK ALL:

Q.9 Since taking office, have Barack Obama's economic policies made economic conditions better, worse, or not had an effect so far?

Dec 9-13 <u>2009</u>		Sep 30-Oct 4 <u>2009</u>	Jul 22-26 <u>2009</u>	Jun 10-14 <u>2009</u>	Apr 14-21 <u>2009</u>	Mar 9-12 <u>2009</u>
30	Better	31	24	26	26	14
24	Worse	20	21	16	17	15
39	No effect so far	42	46	49	47	64
3	Too soon/early to tell (VOL.)	4	3	4	6	4
4	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	3	6	4	4	3

3 Item asked in a list about confidence in Obama, Democratic leaders in Congress, and Republican leaders in Congress.

ASK ALL:

Q.10 So far, do you think Barack Obama is... [READ AND RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1 & 2, WITH OPTION 3 ALWAYS LAST]

Dec 9-13		Sep 30-Oct 4	Jul 22-26	Apr 14-21	Mar 9-12
<u>2009</u>		<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>
45	Trying to address too many issues at once	45	41	34	35
8	Focusing on too few issues [OR]	9	3	4	4
42	Doing about right	41	48	56	56
5	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	6	8	6	5

ASK ALL:

Q.11 When it comes to national policy, who do you think Barack Obama is listening to more... [READ, RANDOMIZE]

Dec 9-13		Sep 30-Oct 4	Jul 22-26	Jun 10-14	Apr 14-21	Mar 9-12	Jan 7-11
<u>2009</u>		<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>
43	Liberal members of his party [OR]	44	41	39	40	44	34
31	Moderate members of his party	32	31	35	33	30	44
25	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	24	27	26	27	26	22

ASK ALL:

Q.12 Would you say that Barack Obama has kept almost all of his campaign promises, most campaign promises, only a few campaign promises or almost none of his campaign promises?

Dec 9-13	
<u>2009</u>	
8	Almost all
28	Most
33	Only a few
24	Almost none
8	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK ALL:

Q.13 How much, if anything, have you read or heard about Barack Obama's decision to send an additional 30,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan? [READ]

TREND FOR COMPARISON
G.W. BUSH SENDING ADDITIONAL TROOPS TO IRAQ

Dec 9-13		March ⁴	Feb	Jan
<u>2009</u>		<u>2007</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2007</u>
53	A lot	52	42	43
36	A little	38	47	43
9	Nothing at all	9	10	13
2	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	1	1	1

4 In March 2007 question read "How much, if anything, have you read or heard about George W. Bush's decision to send more U.S. troops to Iraq?" In January and February 2007, the question was worded: "How much, if anything, have you read or heard about George W. Bush's plan that will send an additional 21,000 U.S. troops to Iraq?"

ASK ALL:

Q.14 Do you favor or oppose Obama’s decision to send more U.S. troops to Afghanistan?

TREND FOR COMPARISON
G. W. BUSH SENDING ADDITIONAL TROOPS TO IRAQ

Dec 9-13 <u>2009</u>		Feb ⁵ <u>2007</u>	Jan <u>2007</u>
51	Favor	31	31
39	Oppose	63	61
10	Don’t know/Refused (VOL.)	6	8

ASK ALL:

Q.15 Thinking about the Republican Party, who do YOU think of as the leader of the Republican Party these days... [SINGLE RESPONSE, DO NOT READ OPTIONS. USE PRECODES AS APPROPRIATE; ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.]

Dec 9-13 <u>2009</u>		Mar 9-12 <u>2009</u>
9	John McCain	11
3	Rush Limbaugh	5
2	Sarah Palin	1
1	Mitch McConnell	1
1	Michael Steele	2
1	Dick Cheney	0
1	Mike Huckabee	*
1	Newt Gingrich	2
1	George W. Bush	*
1	Mitt Romney	1
4	Other	4
22	Nobody is	15
55	Don’t know/Refused	57

NO QUESTIONS 16 AND 17

RANDOMIZE Q.18-Q.19/Q.20-Q.21 IN BLOCKS

ASK ALL:

Now thinking about the nation’s economy...

Q.18 How would you rate economic conditions in this country today... as excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
Dec 9-13, 2009	1	7	41	50	1
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	*	8	41	50	1
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	1	8	43	48	1
Aug 11-17, 2009	*	8	38	52	2
Jun 10-14, 2009	1	8	39	52	1
Mar 9-12, 2009	*	6	25	68	1
Feb 4-8, 2009	*	4	24	71	1
December, 2008	*	7	33	59	1
November, 2008	1	6	28	64	1
Late October, 2008	*	7	25	67	1
Early October, 2008	1	8	32	58	1
Late September, 2008	*	7	27	65	1
July, 2008	1	9	39	50	1

5 In February and January 2007 question read “Do you favor or oppose Bush’s plan to send more U.S. troops to Iraq?”

Q.18 CONTINUED...

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
April, 2008	1	10	33	56	*
March, 2008	1	10	32	56	1
Early February, 2008	1	16	36	45	2
January, 2008	3	23	45	28	1
November, 2007	3	20	44	32	1
September, 2007	3	23	43	29	2
June, 2007	6	27	40	25	2
February, 2007	5	26	45	23	1
December, 2006	6	32	41	19	2
Early November, 2006 (RVs)	9	35	37	17	2
Late October, 2006	6	27	40	25	2
September, 2006	5	32	41	20	2
March, 2006	4	29	44	22	1
January, 2006	4	30	45	19	2
Early October, 2005	2	23	45	29	1
Mid-September, 2005	3	28	44	24	1
Mid-May, 2005	3	29	47	20	1
January, 2005	3	36	45	15	1
December, 2004	3	33	43	20	1
Early November, 2004 (RVs)	5	31	37	26	1
Mid-September, 2004	4	34	40	20	2
August, 2004	3	30	45	21	1
Late April, 2004	4	34	38	22	2
Late February, 2004 ⁶	2	29	42	26	1

RANDOMIZE Q.18-Q.19/Q.20-Q.21 IN BLOCKS

ASK ALL:

Q.19 A year from now, do you expect that economic conditions in the country as a whole will be better than they are at present, or worse, or just about the same as now?

	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	<u>Same</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 9-13, 2009	42	17	38	3
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	39	19	39	2
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	45	15	38	3
Aug 11-17, 2009	45	19	33	3
Jun 10-14, 2009	48	16	34	2
Mar 9-12, 2009	41	19	37	3
Feb 4-8, 2009	40	18	38	4
December, 2008	43	17	36	4
Early October, 2008	46	16	30	8
July, 2008	30	21	41	8
March, 2008	33	22	39	6
January, 2008	20	26	48	6
September, 2007	19	23	53	5
June, 2007	16	24	55	5
February, 2007	17	20	58	5
December, 2006	22	18	56	4
September, 2006	16	25	55	4
January, 2006	20	22	55	3

6 Earlier trends available from Gallup.

Q.19 CONTINUED...

	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	<u>Same</u>	<u>(VOL.)</u> <u>DK/Ref</u>
Early October, 2005	20	32	45	3
Mid-September, 2005	18	37	43	2
Mid-May, 2005	18	24	55	3
January, 2005	27	18	52	3
August, 2004	36	9	47	8
Late February, 2004	39	12	41	8
September, 2003	37	17	43	3
May, 2003	43	19	35	3
Late March, 2003	33	23	37	7
January, 2003	30	20	44	6
January, 2002	44	17	36	3
January, 2001 <i>Newsweek</i>	18	33	44	5
June, 2000	15	24	55	6
Early October, 1998 (<i>RVs</i>)	16	22	57	5
Early September, 1998	18	17	61	4
May, 1990	18	31	45	6
February, 1989	25	22	49	4
September, 1988 (<i>RVs</i>)	24	16	51	9
May, 1988	24	20	46	10
January, 1988	22	26	45	7
January, 1984 <i>Newsweek (RVs)</i>	35	13	49	3

RANDOMIZE Q.18-Q.19/Q.20-Q.21 IN BLOCKS

ASK ALL:

Now thinking about your own personal finances...

Q.20 How would you rate your own personal financial situation? Would you say you are in excellent shape, good shape, only fair shape or poor shape financially?

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>(VOL.)</u> <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 9-13, 2009	7	28	39	24	2
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	5	30	40	25	1
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	6	32	38	22	1
Aug 11-17, 2009	6	31	36	26	2
Jun 10-14, 2009	6	32	39	22	1
Feb 4-8, 2009	5	33	41	20	1
December, 2008	6	32	40	21	1
Early October, 2008	6	35	40	18	1
July, 2008	9	33	37	19	2
April, 2008	8	35	39	16	2
March, 2008	8	39	34	17	2
Early February, 2008	9	36	37	16	2
January, 2008	10	39	34	15	2
November, 2007	9	41	34	15	1
September, 2007	10	38	34	16	2
February, 2007	8	41	36	14	1
December, 2006	8	40	35	16	1
Late October, 2006	9	40	33	16	2
March, 2006	9	39	36	15	1
January, 2006	7	39	37	15	2
Mid-May, 2005	7	37	39	16	1
January, 2005	10	41	34	14	1

Q.20 CONTINUED...

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	Only <u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
August, 2004	9	42	34	14	1
September, 2003	10	38	36	15	1
Late March, 2003	10	43	31	12	4
January, 2003	7	38	39	15	1
Early October, 2002	7	39	37	16	1
June, 2002	5	40	37	16	2
Late September, 2001	7	40	37	14	2
June, 2001	6	38	39	16	1
June, 2000	9	43	35	11	2
August, 1999	6	43	41	9	1
May, 1997	7	43	38	11	1
September, 1996 (RVs)	8	47	34	10	1
February, 1995	8	39	38	14	1
March, 1994	5	41	40	13	1
December, 1993	5	34	45	15	1
January, 1993 <i>U.S. News</i>	4	33	46	16	1
October, 1992 <i>U.S. News</i>	6	34	40	19	1
August, 1992 <i>U.S. News</i>	5	30	47	17	1
May, 1992 <i>U.S. News</i>	4	35	45	15	1
January, 1992 <i>U.S. News</i>	4	32	45	18	1

RANDOMIZE Q.18-Q.19/Q.20-Q.21 IN BLOCKS

ASK ALL:

Q.21 Over the course of the next year, do you think the financial situation of you and your family will improve a lot, improve some, get a little worse or get a lot worse?

	Improve <u>a lot</u>	Improve <u>some</u>	Get a <u>little worse</u>	Get a lot <u>worse</u>	(VOL.) Stay the <u>same</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 9-13, 2009	9	44	19	8	15	4
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	6	50	19	8	13	4
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	10	49	17	6	13	4
Aug 11-17, 2009	8	47	17	8	15	5
Jun 10-14, 2009	9	54	17	7	9	4
Feb 4-8, 2009	7	47	22	7	13	4
December, 2008	7	49	21	6	13	4
Early October, 2008	8	51	20	6	9	6
July, 2008	7	44	21	7	14	7
March, 2008	10	45	20	7	13	5
January, 2008	11	49	16	6	14	4
September, 2007	10	52	14	4	16	4
February, 2007	11	52	12	3	19	3
December, 2006	10	57	13	3	14	3
January, 2006	10	51	14	5	16	4
Mid-May, 2005	10	51	15	5	15	4
January, 2005	10	54	14	4	15	3
August, 2004	13	57	9	3	12	6
September, 2003	11	53	15	4	14	3
Late March, 2003	12	51	15	4	11	7
January, 2003	9	51	18	5	13	4
Early October, 2002	10	54	13	5	12	6
June, 2002	11	55	15	4	11	4

Q.21 CONTINUED...

	Improve <u>a lot</u>	Improve <u>some</u>	Get a <u>little worse</u>	Get a lot <u>worse</u>	(VOL.) Stay the <u>same</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
January, 2002	12	53	15	5	11	4
Late September, 2001	9	46	16	4	17	8
June, 2001	11	52	15	4	14	4
January, 2001	11	46	18	9	12	4
January, 1999	17	55	7	3	14	4
May, 1997	12	56	10	2	17	3
February, 1995	11	53	13	3	17	3
March, 1994	10	57	11	3	16	3
October, 1992 <i>U.S. News</i>	9	51	14	3	15	8
August, 1992 <i>U.S. News</i>	6	50	20	5	14	5
May, 1992 <i>U.S. News</i>	8	49	22	4	13	4
January, 1992 <i>U.S. News</i>	9	46	19	5	16	5

ASK ALL:

Q.21a Who do you think is more responsible for the current economic conditions **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**?

*TREND FOR COMPARISON
CNN/Opinion Research Corporation Poll ⁷:*

Dec 9-13 <u>2009</u>		Nov 13-15 <u>2009</u>	Aug 28-31 <u>2009</u>	Jul 31-Aug 3 <u>2009</u>	May 14-17 <u>2009</u>	Jan 12-15 <u>2009</u>
39	The Republican Party	38	41	44	53	50
27	The Democratic Party	27	27	23	21	22
19	Both (VOL.)	27	26	24	22	20
6	Neither/Other (VOL.)	6	4	7	4	6
9	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	2	1	3	1	1

ASK ALL:

Q.22 And thinking about your personal finances, have you done any of the following lately? (First.) Have you **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]** or not? **[IF RESPONDENT SAYS THIS DOES NOT APPLY, CODE AS NO]**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a. Delayed or canceled plans to buy a new home or make major home improvements			
Dec 9-13, 2009	38	62	1
Aug 11-17, 2009	36	63	1
Jun 10-14, 2009	40	58	2
Feb 4-8, 2009	37	62	1
December, 2008	36	63	1
b. Delayed or canceled plans to make a major purchase for your household, such as a computer or appliance			
Dec 9-13, 2009	43	56	1
Aug 11-17, 2009	42	58	*
Jun 10-14, 2009	40	59	1

7 CNN/Opinion Research Corporation question was worded "Do you think the Democrats or the Republicans are more responsible for the country's current economic problems?"

Q.22 CONTINUED...

		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>(VOL.)</u> <u>DK/Ref</u>
	Feb 4-8, 2009	44	55	1
	December, 2008	44	56	*
c.	Cut back on planned spending for vacation travel			
	Dec 9-13, 2009	59	40	1
	Aug 11-17, 2009	59	40	*
	Jun 10-14, 2009	59	41	*
	Feb 4-8, 2009	59	41	*
	December, 2008	57	42	1
d.	Been eating out at restaurants less often			
	Dec 9-13, 2009	56	44	1
	Aug 11-17, 2009	55	44	1
	Jun 10-14, 2009	56	44	*
	Feb 4-8, 2009	55	44	1
	December, 2008	55	44	1
e.	Delayed or canceled plans to buy a new car			
	Dec 9-13, 2009	36	63	1
	Aug 11-17, 2009	38	62	*
	Jun 10-14, 2009	36	63	*
	Feb 4-8, 2009	37	62	1
	December, 2008	33	67	*
f.	Adjusted your plans for retirement			
	Dec 9-13, 2009	32	66	2
	Jun 10-14, 2009	30	69	1
	Feb 4-8, 2009	29	70	1
	December, 2008	27	72	1
g.	Changed the way your money is saved or invested			
	Dec 9-13, 2009	52	46	1
	Jun 10-14, 2009	57	42	1
	Feb 4-8, 2009	53	46	1
	December , 2008	48	51	1
h.	Cut back on how much you will spend on holiday gifts this year			
	Dec 9-13, 2009	70	29	1
	December, 2008	73	27	*

ASK IF CHANGED SPENDING HABITS (1 IN Q.22b, Q.22c, Q.22d or Q.22e or Q.22h) [N=1239]:

Q.23 You mentioned making some cutbacks in spending. Have you been cutting back because your financial situation has GOTTEN worse and made such cutbacks necessary, or because you worry that your financial situation MIGHT GET worse in the future?

Dec 9-13 <u>2009</u>		Aug 11-17 ⁸ <u>2009</u>	Jun 10-14 <u>2009</u>	Feb 4-8 <u>2009</u>	Dec <u>2008</u>
30	Financial situation has gotten worse	34	36	30	28
49	Worry that it might get worse in the future	47	50	56	57
8	Both (VOL.)	6	5	5	4
8	Other (VOL.)	9	6	6	5
4	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	3	3	3	5

ASK ALL:

Now thinking about health care...

Q.24 How much, if anything, have you heard about the bills in Congress to overhaul the health care system? Have you heard...[READ]

Dec 9-13 <u>2009</u>		Oct 28-Nov 8 <u>2009</u>	Sep 30-Oct 4 <u>2009</u>	Sep 10-15 <u>2009</u>	Aug 20-27 <u>2009</u>	Jul 22-26 <u>2009</u>
51	A lot	49	46	60	53	41
39	A little [OR]	42	43	34	40	47
9	Nothing at all	7	10	5	7	10
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	1	1	1	1	1

ASK ALL:

Q.25 As of right now, do you generally favor or generally oppose the health care proposals being discussed in Congress?

Dec 9-13 <u>2009</u>		Nov 12-15 <u>2009</u>	Oct 28- Nov 8 <u>2009</u>	Sep 30- Oct 4 <u>2009</u>	Sep 10-15 <u>2009</u>	Aug 20-27 <u>2009</u>	July 22-26 <u>2009</u>
35	Generally favor	42	38	34	42	39	38
48	Generally oppose	39	47	47	44	46	44
17	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	19	15	19	14	15	18

ASK ALL:

Q.26 If the health care bills being proposed by Barack Obama and Congress are passed into law, would you be [READ IN REVERSE ORDER FOR RANDOM HALF OF SAMPLE]

Dec 9-13 <u>2009</u>		Aug 11-17 <u>2009</u>
12	Very happy	15
29	Pleased	29
25	Disappointed	22
20	Angry	18
14	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	16

8 "Cut back on how much you will spend on holiday gifts this year" item was not asked in August, June, and February 2009, and thus was not included as part of the filter for this question. In December 2008, the beginning of the question was worded: "In general, have you been cutting back on spending because...".

ASK THOSE WHO OPPOSE HEALTH CARE REFORM (Q.25=2) [N=773]

Q.27 As I read some reasons people have given for opposing health care reform, please tell me if each one is a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason why you oppose the health care reform proposals being discussed in Congress. First **[INSERT AND RANDOMIZE]**. Is this a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason (why you oppose health care reform)? How about **[NEXT ITEM]**.

		<u>Major reason</u>	<u>Minor reason</u>	<u>Not a reason</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
a.	Too much government involvement in health care				
	Dec 9-13, 2009	84	11	4	1
	Nov 12-15, 2009	85	7	7	2
b.	Your own health care may suffer				
	Dec 9-13, 2009	70	16	12	2
	Nov 12-15, 2009	70	16	13	1
c.	Health care reform is too expensive for the country				
	Dec 9-13, 2009	75	15	8	2
	Nov 12-15, 2009	78	13	8	1
d.	Government money might pay for abortions				
	Dec 9-13, 2009	58	18	22	2
	Nov 12-15, 2009	56	21	22	1
e.	The plan might cover illegal immigrants				
	Dec 9-13, 2009	66	18	14	2
	Nov 12-15, 2009	67	20	14	*
f.	It could mean cuts in Medicare				
	Dec 9-13, 2009	70	20	8	2

IF MORE THAN ONE ITEM IN Q.27a-f IS GIVEN AS A “MAJOR REASON” ASK:

Q.28 And of the ones you mentioned as major reasons, which is the most important reason why you oppose the health care reform proposals **[READ ONLY THE ITEMS MENTIONED AS MAJOR REASON. READ IN SAME ORDER AS IN Q.27. DO NOT READ FULL LIST IF RESPONDENT VOLUNTEERS A RESPONSE]**

BASED ON ALL THOSE WHO OPPOSE [N=773]

Dec 9-13
2009

33	Too much government involvement in health care
17	Health care reform is too expensive for the country
13	Your own health care may suffer
11	It could mean cuts in Medicare
10	The plan might cover illegal immigrants
8	Government money might pay for abortions
3	Other reason (VOL.)
2	None (<i>Oppose, but no major reason cited</i>)
3	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK THOSE WHO FAVOR HEALTH CARE REFORM (Q.25=1) [N=505]

Q.29 As I read some reasons people have given for supporting health care reform, please tell me if each one is a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason why you support the health care reform proposals being discussed in Congress. First **[INSERT AND RANDOMIZE]**. Is this a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason (why you support health care reform)? How about **[NEXT ITEM]**.

		<u>Major reason</u>	<u>Minor reason</u>	<u>Not a reason</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
a.	Expanding health coverage to the uninsured Dec 9-13, 2009	86	9	5	1
b.	The current system costs too much Dec 9-13, 2009	72	16	9	2
c.	Insurance companies are doing a bad job Dec 9-13, 2009	64	23	10	3
d.	Creating a government provided “public option” Dec 9-13, 2009	52	31	14	3
e.	It will improve your own health care coverage Dec 9-13, 2009	46	27	25	2
f.	Assuring that no one is denied coverage because they have pre-existing conditions Dec 9-13, 2009	84	11	3	1

IF MORE THAN ONE ITEM IN Q.29a-f IS GIVEN AS A “MAJOR REASON” ASK:

Q.30 And of the ones you mentioned as major reasons, which is the most important reason why you support the health care reform proposals **[READ ONLY THE ITEMS MENTIONED AS MAJOR REASON. READ IN SAME ORDER AS IN Q.29. DO NOT READ FULL LIST IF RESPONDENT VOLUNTEERS A RESPONSE]**

BASED ON ALL THOSE WHO FAVOR [N=505]

Dec 9-13

2009

37	Expanding health coverage to the uninsured
24	Assuring that no one is denied coverage because they have pre-existing conditions
14	The current system costs too much
7	Insurance companies are doing a bad job
6	Creating a government provided “public option”
5	It will improve your own health care coverage
1	Other reason (VOL.)
3	None (<i>Favor, but no major reason cited</i>)
2	Don’t know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK ALL:

Q.31 Are you, yourself, now covered by any form of health insurance or health plan or do you not have health insurance at this time? [**READ IF NECESSARY:** A health plan would include any private insurance plan through your employer or a plan that you purchased yourself, as well as a government program like Medicare or Medicaid]

Dec 9-13 <u>2009</u>		Oct 28-Nov 8 <u>2009</u>	Sep 30-Oct 4 <u>2009</u>	Jul 22-26 <u>2009</u>	Jun 10-14 <u>2009</u>
83	Covered by health insurance	80	80	81	81
16	Not covered by health insurance	20	20	19	18
*	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	*	*	*	*

NO QUESTIONS 32 AND 33

Thinking again about Afghanistan...

ASK ALL:

Q.34 How well is the U.S. military effort in Afghanistan going? [**READ IN ORDER**]

Dec 9-13 <u>2009</u>		Oct 28-Nov 8 <u>2009</u>	Jan 7-11 <u>2009</u>	Feb <u>2008</u>
7	Very well	4	7	10
39	Fairly well	32	38	38
32	Not too well	41	34	31
11	Not at all well	16	11	10
10	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	6	10	11

ASK ALL:

Q.35 Regardless of what you think about the original decision to use military force in Afghanistan, do you now believe that the United States will definitely succeed, probably succeed, probably fail, or definitely fail in achieving its goals in Afghanistan?

Dec 9-13 <u>2009</u>		Jan 7-11 <u>2009</u>
11	Definitely succeed	13
48	Probably succeed	49
25	Probably fail	23
7	Definitely fail	6
10	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	9

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=779]:

Q.36F1 Do you think Barack Obama has a clear plan for bringing the situation in Afghanistan to a successful conclusion, or don't you think so?

	Has a clear <u>plan</u>	Doesn't have <u>a clear plan</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 9-13, 2009	36	51	13
TREND FOR COMPARISON GEORGE W. BUSH - IRAQ:⁹			
February, 2007	21	72	7
January, 2007	22	70	8
Mid-November, 2006	19	74	7
March, 2006	23	70	7

⁹ In February 2007 and before the question read "Do you think George W. Bush has a clear plan for bringing the situation in Iraq to a successful conclusion, or don't you think so?"

Q.36F1 CONTINUED...

	Has a clear <u>plan</u>	Doesn't have <u>a clear plan</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
December, 2005	28	66	6
Mid-September, 2005	30	63	7
July, 2005	27	64	9
February, 2005	32	61	7
Early October, 2004	35	55	10
Early September, 2004	36	55	9
August, 2004	36	58	6
July, 2004	34	59	7
June, 2004	37	55	8
Late April, 2004	36	54	10
Early April, 2004	32	57	11
December, 2003	44	45	11
October, 2003	35	54	11
September, 2003	32	58	10

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=725]:

Q.37F2 How important do you think success in Afghanistan is to preventing terrorist attacks against the United States? Is it **[READ]**

Dec 9-13

2009

52	Very important
30	Somewhat important
10	Not too important
6	Not at all important
3	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=779]:

Now thinking about Iraq...

Q.38F1 How well is the U.S. military effort in Iraq going? **[READ IN ORDER]**

	Very <u>well</u>	Fairly <u>well</u>	Not too <u>well</u>	Not at all <u>well</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 9-13, 2009	10	45	24	12	8
Jan, 2009	16	43	26	10	5
Mid-October, 2008	17	40	26	12	5
September, 2008	19	39	24	13	5
June, 2008	10	34	31	21	4
April, 2008	10	34	28	24	4
Late February, 2008	12	36	25	23	4
Late December, 2007	11	30	31	23	5
November, 2007	11	37	29	19	4
October, 2007	10	34	29	22	5
September, 2007	9	32	30	24	5
July, 2007	8	28	34	25	5
June, 2007	7	27	33	28	5
April, 2007	7	31	34	25	3
March, 2007	10	30	32	24	4
February, 2007	5	25	38	29	3
Mid-January, 2007	7	28	32	30	3
December, 2006	4	28	37	27	4
Mid-November, 2006	6	26	34	30	4
Early November, 2006 (RVs)	7	30	32	27	4
Late October, 2006	5	30	34	25	6

Q.38F1 CONTINUED...	Very <u>well</u>	Fairly <u>well</u>	Not too <u>well</u>	Not at all <u>well</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Early October, 2006	8	29	33	25	5
Early September, 2006	8	39	28	20	5
August, 2006	8	33	32	23	4
June, 2006	16	37	25	18	4
April, 2006	13	34	29	21	3
March, 2006	9	34	30	21	6
February, 2006	13	38	29	17	3
January, 2006	12	39	27	17	5
December, 2005	14	37	29	17	3
Early October, 2005	9	35	31	22	3
Mid-September, 2005	12	41	26	18	3
July, 2005	14	38	27	17	4
June, 2005	9	41	27	19	4
February, 2005	14	40	25	17	4
January, 2005	9	39	29	20	3
December, 2004	10	40	28	18	4
Mid-October, 2004	13	38	26	17	6
September, 2004	12	40	26	18	4
August, 2004	12	41	28	16	3
July, 2004	13	42	26	16	3
June, 2004	16	41	25	14	4
May, 2004	10	36	32	19	3
Late April, 2004	12	43	26	15	4
Early April, 2004	14	43	26	13	4
Mid-March, 2004	16	45	26	11	2
Early February, 2004	17	46	23	11	3
Mid-January, 2004	22	51	18	6	3
Early January, 2004	23	47	18	7	5
December, 2003	28	47	16	6	3
October, 2003	16	44	25	11	4
September, 2003	15	47	26	9	3
August, 2003	19	43	24	11	3
Early July, 2003	23	52	16	5	4
<i>April 10-16, 2003</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>April 8-9, 2003</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>April 2-7, 2003</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>March 25-April 1, 2003</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>March 23-24, 2003</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>March 20-22, 2003</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>7</i>

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=779]:

Q.39F1 Regardless of what you think about the original decision to use military force in Iraq, do you now believe that the United States will definitely succeed, probably succeed, probably fail, or definitely fail in achieving its goals in Iraq?

	Definitely <u>succeed</u>	Probably <u>succeed</u>	Probably <u>fail</u>	Definitely <u>fail</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 9-13, 2009	11	52	22	7	8
Jan, 2009	15	46	22	7	10
September, 2008	18	40	24	10	8
June, 2008	12	38	31	11	8
April, 2008	12	35	30	16	7
Late February, 2008	13	40	26	13	8
Late December, 2007	10	35	31	14	10

Q.39F1 CONTINUED...

	Definitely <u>succeed</u>	Probably <u>succeed</u>	Probably <u>fail</u>	Definitely <u>fail</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
November, 2007	11	37	33	13	6
October, 2007	11	35	31	13	10
September, 2007	8	34	32	15	11
July, 2007	9	34	32	17	8
April, 2007	9	36	30	16	9
February, 2007	7	40	34	12	7
November, 2006	12	41	28	13	6
Mid-September, 2006	13	44	26	9	8
August, 2006	14	40	28	12	6

Q.N1 THROUGH Q. 44 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

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?

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	(VOL.) <u>No preference</u>	(VOL.) <u>Other party</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>	<i>Lean <u>Rep</u></i>	<i>Lean <u>Dem</u></i>
Dec 9-13, 2009	25	32	38	2	*	2	14	15
Oct 28-Nov 30, 2009	25	32	33	5	*	5	13	13
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	27	35	32	3	*	2	13	13
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	23	34	37	3	1	3	16	14
Sep 10-15, 2009	23	34	34	4	*	5	13	17
Aug 20-27, 2009	26	32	36	3	*	3	14	16
Aug 11-17, 2009	23	33	38	3	*	3	16	15
Jul 22-26, 2009	22	34	37	5	*	2	15	14
Jun 10-14, 2009	25	34	34	3	*	3	11	16
Apr 28-May 12, 2009	23	39	29	4	*	4	9	14
Mar 31-Apr 21, 2009	22	33	39	3	*	3	13	18
Mar 9-12, 2009	24	34	35	5	*	2	12	17
Feb 4-8, 2009	24	36	34	3	1	2	13	17
Jan 7-11, 2009	25	37	33	3	*	2	11	16
Yearly Totals								
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
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

PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED...

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	(VOL.) No <u>preference</u>	(VOL.) Other <u>party</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>	<i>Lean</i> <u>Rep</u>	<i>Lean</i> <u>Dem</u>
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	--	--	--	--	--

ASK DEMOCRATS AND DEMOCRATIC LEANERS ONLY (PARTY=2 OR PARTYLN=2) [N=667]:

Q.50 Would you say Barack Obama is doing an excellent job, a good job, only a fair job or a poor job in standing up for the traditional positions of the Democratic Party?

Dec 9-13

2009

24	Excellent
45	Good
23	Only fair
5	Poor
2	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)