

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER**  
**October 17-20, 2013 OMNIBUS**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**N=1,001**

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.1 As I read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past week, please tell me if you happened to follow each news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. First, **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE] [IF NECESSARY "Did you follow [ITEM] very closely, fairly closely, not too closely or not at all closely?"]**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
a. Congress reaching an agreement to end the government shutdown and raise the debt limit					
October 17-20, 2013	49	30	12	9	*
October 3-6, 2013: <i>The shutdown of the federal government</i>	43	30	15	11	*
September 25-29, 2013: <i>Congress working on a budget agreement to avoid a government shutdown at the end of September</i>	36	25	16	23	*
September 19-22, 2013	25	24	21	30	1
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
March 14-17, 2013: <i>Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit and national debt</i>	24	26	20	29	1
March 7-10, 2013: <i>Automatic spending cuts that began on March 1st</i>	31	26	18	25	1
February 21-24, 2013: <i>News about automatic cuts to federal spending that will take effect next week, unless the president and Congress act</i>	25	26	19	29	1
January 24-27, 2013: <i>Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit and national debt</i>	23	28	19	29	1
January 3-6, 2013: <i>Congress and the president passing legislation to avoid the Fiscal Cliff</i>	38	26	16	21	1
December 13-16, 2012: <i>The debate in Washington over automatic spending cuts and tax increases that would take effect in January unless the President and Congress act</i>	37	28	16	18	1
December 6-9, 2012	37	26	17	20	1
November 29-December 2, 2012	40	26	14	20	1
November 15-18, 2012	33	24	16	25	1
November 8-11, 2012	38	20	20	20	*
July 19-22, 2012	23	21	22	33	1
November 3-6, 2011: <i>Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit and national debt</i>	24	31	21	24	1
October 27-30, 2011	25	28	21	25	1
October 13-16, 2011: <i>The debate in Washington over jobs and the deficit</i>	29	32	15	24	1
September 29-October 2, 2011: <i>Congress working on a budget extension to avoid a government shutdown</i>	31	26	20	22	*
September 22-25, 2011: <i>The debate in Washington over jobs and the deficit</i>	35	26	19	19	1

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
September 15-18, 2011: <i>The debate in Washington over President Obama's jobs legislation</i>	31	28	19	21	2
September 8-11, 2011: <i>Barack Obama's speech about jobs to a joint session of Congress</i>	28	18	17	36	1
July 28-31, 2011: <i>Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit and national debt</i>	41	27	15	17	*
July 21-24, 2011	38	28	17	17	*
July 14-17, 2011	34	29	18	19	*
June 16-19, 2011: <i>Debate in Washington over whether to raise the federal debt limit</i>	24	26	22	28	*
June 2-5, 2011	23	24	22	31	*
May 26-29, 2011: <i>Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit</i>	25	26	20	29	*
May 12-15, 2011	21	26	24	28	1
May 5-8, 2011: <i>Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit and national debt</i>	29	28	22	20	1
April 21-25, 2011	30	31	18	21	*
April 14-17, 2011	36	27	18	19	1
April 7-10, 2011: <i>The threat of a government shutdown because of budget disagreements in Washington</i>	47	26	15	12	*
March 31-April 3, 2011: <i>Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit</i>	30	27	21	22	*
March 17-20, 2011	24	25	24	26	1
March 3-6, 2011	26	29	19	26	1
February 17-20, 2011	27	30	17	25	1
December 2-5, 2010	35	25	21	17	2
December 2-5, 2010: <i>The debate in Washington over the federal income tax cuts passed when George W. Bush was president</i>	39	26	17	17	1
November 11-14, 2010: <i>Proposals made by leaders of the federal budget deficit commission</i>	15	21	21	41	1
September 16-19, 2010: <i>The debate in Washington over competing Democratic and Republican tax plans</i>	21	24	21	34	*
September 9-12, 2010	16	19	22	42	1
May 8-11, 2009: <i>The debate in Washington over the federal budget</i>	22	28	19	31	*
March 27-30, 2009: <i>Debate over Barack Obama's budget proposal</i>	28	34	18	19	1
March 6-9, 2009: <i>Obama proposing a \$630 billion fund for overhauling health care</i>	41	32	13	14	*
February 27-March 2, 2009: <i>Barack Obama's budget proposal for next year that raises taxes on wealthy Americans and increases spending on health care, education and other programs</i>	47	34	9	10	*
February 27-March 2, 2009: <i>The Obama administration's plan to help homeowners facing foreclosure which could cost as much as \$275 billion</i>	31	36	19	13	1

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
February 20-23, 2009: <i>The \$780 billion economic stimulus legislation approved by Congress and signed into law by President Obama</i>	41	37	14	8	*
February 13-16, 2009: <i>Congress passing Barack Obama's economic stimulus plan</i>	50	32	13	5	*
February 6-9, 2009: <i>The debate in Congress over Barack Obama's economic stimulus plan</i>	41	33	15	11	*
January 30-February 2, 2009	36	29	22	13	*
January 16-19, 2009: <i>Debate in Washington over what the government should do about the nation's economic problems</i>	35	33	17	15	*
January 9-12, 2009: <i>Projections of a record high federal budget deficit this year</i>	35	30	19	16	*
December 19-22, 2008: <i>The Bush administration's plan to provide billions in emergency loans to U.S. automakers</i>	37	33	16	13	1
December 12-15, 2008: <i>The debate over a government bailout for the U.S. auto industry</i>	40	33	18	9	*
December 5-8, 2008: <i>The debate in Congress over a government bailout for the U.S. auto industry</i>	34	38	17	11	*
November 21-24, 2008	41	26	17	15	1
October 3-6, 2008: <i>The debate in Washington over a plan to use government funds to stabilize financial markets</i>	62	26	7	5	*
September 26-29, 2008	60	22	10	8	*
September 12-15, 2008: <i>The federal government taking control of the mortgage companies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac</i>	28	35	19	17	1
March 20-24, 2008: <i>The buyout of Wall Street investment bank Bear Stearns</i>	21	26	21	32	*
February 8-11, 2008: <i>President Bush and Congress agreeing on an economic Stimulus plan</i>	22	33	23	21	1
January 25-28, 2008	24	36	19	21	*
February, 2003: <i>George W. Bush's tax cut and economic stimulus plan</i>	26	33	23	16	2
February, 2003	26	33	23	16	2
January, 2003	28	34	21	15	2
February, 2002: <i>The debate in Congress over George W. Bush's budget and tax cut plan</i>	17	31	28	23	1
April, 2001	24	38	20	18	*
February, 2001: <i>George W. Bush's tax cut plan</i>	31	35	19	14	1
August, 1997: <i>The debate in Washington about the federal budget</i>	14	34	25	26	1
May, 1997	16	38	23	22	1
February, 1997	19	28	22	29	2
March, 1996	24	35	23	18	*
January, 1996	32	42	17	9	*
September, 1995	20	35	27	18	*
August, 1995: <i>The debate in Congress over the federal budget</i>	18	34	27	20	1

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	Very closely	Fairly closely	Not too closely	Not at all closely	(VOL.) DK/Ref
February, 1995: <i>The debate in Congress over the Balanced Budget Amendment</i>	12	31	28	28	1
August, 1993: <i>The debate in Congress over Bill Clinton's budget bill</i>	30	36	21	13	*
June, 1993	12	38	31	18	1
February, 1993: <i>Bill Clinton's economic plan</i>	49	36	10	5	*
September, 1992 (RV): <i>George Bush's plan to improve the economy by cutting government spending and cutting taxes</i>	28	44	18	9	1
November, 1990: <i>Congressional and administration efforts to reach a budget deficit agreement</i>	34	33	20	11	2
October, 1990: <i>Attempts by Congress and the administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit</i>	34	37	17	12	*
August, 1989: <i>Passage of a bill to bailout ailing savings and loan institutions</i>	26	30	20	23	1
b. News about health insurance exchanges opening around the country as part of the 2010 health care law					
October 17-20, 2013	33	28	22	17	*
October 3-6, 2013	33	24	22	20	1
August 29-September 1, 2013: <i>News about parts of the health care law that are about to take effect</i>	23	25	21	30	*
July 18-21, 2013	25	25	19	30	*
June 28-July 1, 2012: <i>The Supreme Court decision on the 2010 health care law</i>	45	21	14	19	*
March 29-April 1, 2012: <i>Supreme Court hearings about the 2010 health care reform law</i>	29	27	17	27	*
November 17-20, 2011: <i>The U.S. Supreme Court agreeing to hear legal challenges to last year's health care reform law</i>	18	24	24	33	1
February 3-6, 2011: <i>A federal judge ruling that part of the new health care law is unconstitutional</i>	25	28	19	28	1
January 20-23, 2011: <i>News about Republican efforts to repeal last year's health care law</i>	29	29	20	21	1
December 16-19, 2010: <i>A federal judge ruling that parts of the new health care law are unconstitutional</i>	28	24	17	30	1
September 23-26, 2010: <i>News about portions of this year's health care reform law beginning to take effect</i>	37	31	17	14	1
April 16-19, 2010: <i>News about the new health care reform law</i>	40	30	16	14	*
April 9-12, 2010	46	27	15	12	*
April 1-5, 2010	42	27	14	16	*
March 26-29, 2010: <i>Debate over health care reform</i>	49	29	12	10	*
March 19-22, 2010	51	24	11	14	*
March 12-15, 2010	40	31	16	13	*
March 5-8, 2010	42	27	17	15	*
February 26-March 1, 2010	29	29	19	22	*
February 19-22, 2010	33	28	19	19	*

**PEW.1 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
January 29-February 1, 2010	39	27	16	17	*
January 22-25, 2010	41	32	15	11	*
January 15-18, 2010	37	27	19	18	*
January 8-11, 2010	39	26	20	15	*
December 18-21, 2009	42	27	16	14	*
December 11-14, 2009	42	30	15	14	*
December 4-7, 2009	42	28	15	14	1
November 20-23, 2009	42	29	14	15	*
November 13-16, 2009	38	26	17	17	1
November 6-9, 2009	35	28	15	22	1
October 30-November 2, 2009	32	26	19	23	*
October 23-26, 2009	40	27	16	17	1
October 16-19, 2009	36	28	15	21	*
October 9-12, 2009	37	29	14	19	1
October 2-5, 2009	39	29	16	16	*
September 25-28, 2009	45	31	12	12	0
September 18-21, 2009	44	26	19	11	*
September 11-14, 2009	44	27	14	15	*
September 3-6, 2009	40	26	16	17	0
August 28-31, 2009	40	28	17	14	1
August 21-24, 2009	49	24	12	15	1
August 14-17, 2009	39	31	15	15	1
August 7-10, 2009: <i>Debate in Washington over health care reform</i>	40	27	17	15	1
July 31-August 3, 2009	47	26	14	13	1
July 24-27, 2009	44	28	15	13	*
July 17-20, 2009	33	31	13	21	2
July 10-13, 2009	24	29	20	27	*
June 26-29, 2009	29	26	20	25	1
June 19-22, 2009	28	28	20	23	*
June 12-15, 2009	29	26	18	26	*
May 15-18, 2009: <i>Debate over Barack Obama's health care plans</i>	25	30	20	24	*
March 6-9, 2009: <i>Obama proposing a \$630 billion fund for overhauling health care</i>	41	32	13	14	*
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
September, 1994: <i>The Clinton administration's health care reform proposals</i>	32	41	18	9	*
June, 1994	34	40	19	7	*
May, 1994	37	37	16	9	1
January, 1994	38	38	15	9	*
Early January, 1994	40	40	14	6	*
December, 1993	45	35	12	7	1
October, 1993	44	32	17	6	1
September, 1993	49	34	11	6	*
August, 1993: <i>Reports about the White House task force on health care reform headed by Hillary Clinton</i>	27	32	25	15	1
June, 1993	28	38	19	15	*
May, 1993	30	30	25	14	1
c. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy					
October 17-20, 2013	41	31	16	12	*
October 3-6, 2013	34	30	19	16	1
September 25-29, 2013	35	30	16	18	*
September 19-22, 2013	28	33	20	19	1
September 12-15, 2013	28	34	17	20	*

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>closely</u>	Fairly <u>closely</u>	Not too <u>closely</u>	Not at all <u>closely</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
August 1-4, 2013	28	35	19	17	1
July 18-21, 2013	28	29	20	23	1
June 20-23, 2013	28	30	19	22	1
June 13-16, 2013	30	32	15	22	*
June 6-9, 2013	33	31	15	21	*
May 16-19, 2013	30	31	20	19	*
May 9-12, 2013	28	30	21	20	1
March 28-31, 2013	30	30	17	22	1
March 7-10, 2013	35	30	16	19	*
January 31-February 3, 2013	33	33	16	16	1
January 17-20, 2013	36	32	15	16	*
January 3-6, 2013	34	32	18	16	1
December 6-9, 2012	38	30	16	14	1
November 8-11, 2012	41	31	15	12	1
November 1-4, 2012	38	30	16	14	1
October 25-28, 2012	44	30	14	11	1
October 18-21, 2012	39	36	12	12	1
October 12-14, 2012	42	28	14	15	1
October 4-7, 2012	40	29	13	17	*
September 27-30, 2012	34	37	13	15	1
September 20-23, 2012	36	32	17	15	*
September 13-16, 2012	38	32	17	12	1
September 7-9, 2012	36	31	17	15	2
August 31-September 3, 2012	33	31	20	16	1
August 23-26, 2012	38	30	15	16	1
August 16-19, 2012	33	32	16	19	*
August 9-12, 2012	30	31	20	18	1
August 2-5, 2012	33	29	20	17	1
July 26-29, 2012	32	30	20	19	*
July 19-22, 2012	39	29	16	16	*
July 12-15, 2012	32	33	18	17	1
July 5-8, 2012	34	28	18	19	1
June 28-July 1, 2012	38	28	15	18	1
June 21-24, 2012	33	32	17	17	*
June 14-17, 2012	39	28	15	17	*
June 7-10, 2012	35	32	15	18	*
May 31-June 3, 2012	37	34	13	14	1
May 24-27, 2012	33	31	19	16	1
May 17-20, 2012	35	30	16	19	*
May 10-13, 2012	40	26	16	17	*
May 3-6, 2012	38	29	13	20	*
April 26-29, 2012	34	32	17	16	1
April 19-22, 2012	35	35	13	14	2
April 12-15, 2012	39	28	16	17	1
April 5-8, 2012	37	31	16	16	1
March 29-April 1, 2012	34	33	15	18	1
March 22-25, 2012	36	29	16	18	1
March 15-18, 2012	40	35	11	14	1
March 8-11, 2012	37	32	14	17	*
March 1-4, 2012	41	27	15	17	1
February 23-26, 2012	37	33	14	15	1
February 16-20, 2012	33	32	16	17	1
February 9-12, 2012	42	30	14	13	1
February 2-5, 2012	38	32	16	13	1
January 26-29, 2012	35	31	16	19	*
January 19-22, 2012	35	30	16	19	1
January 12-15, 2012	33	32	14	20	1
January 5-8, 2012	39	31	15	15	*

SEE TREND FOR PREVIOUS YEARS: <http://www.people-press.org/files/2013/01/NII-Economy-trend.pdf>

**NO QUESTION PEW.2****ASK ALL:**

PEW.3 If you had to use one single word to describe your impression of the government shutdown and debt limit debate, what would that one word be? **[IF "DON'T KNOW" PROBE ONCE: It can be anything, just the first word that comes to mind...]** **[OPEN END: ENTER VERBATIM RESPONSE]**

**NOTE:** The numbers listed represent the number of respondents who offered each response; the numbers are not percentages.

Oct 17-20

2013

77	Ridiculous	3	Aggravating
74	Stupid/Stupidity	3	Avoidable
46	Disgusting/Disgusted/Disgust	3	Awful
42	Unnecessary	3	Debacle
37	Disappointed/Disappointment/Disappointing	3	Discouraging
24	Terrible	3	Fiasco
20	Frustrating/Frustration	3	Foolish
19	Childish	3	Greed/Greedy
18	Pathetic	3	Morons/Moronic
16	Irresponsible	3	Nonsense
14	Bad	3	Obama
14	Idiotic/Idiots	3	Absurd
14	Sad	3	Silly
13	Disaster/Disastrous	3	Un-American
13	Disgraceful	3	Upset/Upsetting
13	Mess/Messy/Messed up	3	Useless
13	Poor	3	Wrong
13	Sucks	232	Other
12	Bullcrap	31	Don't know/Refused
11	Crazy		
11	Horried/Horrible/Horrendous	<i>N=1001</i>	
11	Joke		
10	Embarrassing/Embarrassment		
9	Incompetence		
9	Pitiful		
9	Unfortunate		
8	Confused/Confusing/Confusion		
7	Crap		
7	Unbelievable		
7	Waste/Wasteful		
6	Asinine		
6	Dysfunctional		
6	Shame/Shameful		
6	Stinks		
5	Chaos/Chaotic		
5	Despicable		
5	Dumb		
5	Good		
5	Immature		
5	Lousy		
5	Tragic		
5	Unfair		
4	Anger/Angry		
4	Appalling		
4	Fire/Fired/Fire `em		
4	Ludicrous		
4	Outrageous		
4	Scare/Scary		
4	Screwed/Screwed up		
4	Selfish		

**PEW.3 TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:**

*If you had to use one single word to describe your impression of the budget negotiations in Washington, what would that one word be? [IF "DON'T KNOW" PROBE ONCE: It can be anything, just the first word that comes to mind...] [OPEN END: ENTER VERBATIM RESPONSE]<sup>1</sup>*

Jul 28-31 <u>2011</u>		Apr 9-10 <u>2011</u>
66	Ridiculous	29
42	Disgust/Disgusted/Disgusting	22
36	Stupid/Stupidity	13
26	Frustrated/Frustrating	14
25	Poor/Poorly	7
25	Terrible	7
24	Disappointing/Disappointment/Disappointed	13
23	Childish	6
22	Mess/Messy	14
22	Joke	
17	Pathetic	4
16	Confusing	4
14	Crazy	
13	Bad	
12	Idiot/Idiotic	5
11	Disaster	
11	Suck/Sucks	4
10	Sad	
9	Bull/Bull****	12
9	Chaos/Chaotic	4
9	Disgrace	
8	Lousy	
7	Politics/Political	4
7	Stinks	5
7	Outrageous	
7	Pitiful	
7	Scary	
6	Compromise	
5	Fair	5
5	Horrible	5
5	Difficult	
5	Juvenile	
5	Ludicrous	
5	Selfish	
5	Stalemate	
5	Complicated	
5	Incapable/incompetent	
5	Screwed up	
4	Concerned	
4	Futile	
4	Greed	
4	Sorry	
4	Asinine	
4	Awful	
4	Obama	
4	Stubborn	
4	Unfair	
305	Other	202
119	Don't know/Refused	45

*NOTE: The numbers listed represent the number of respondents who offered each response; the numbers are not percentages.*

*Words with fewer than 4 mentions not shown.*

*In April, 2011 this question was asked Saturday and Sunday only (N=427).*

<sup>1</sup> PEWWP.1 and PEWWP.2a-e asked in conjunction with *The Washington Post*.