

## **Romney Rebounds Among Conservatives, But GOP Contenders All Stay Underwater**

Mitt Romney's rebounded among strong conservatives since his wins in the Michigan and Arizona primaries, potentially bolstering his prospects in the race for the Republican nomination. But he and his GOP opponents face continued challenges in popularity more broadly.

All four Republican contenders remain underwater in overall favorability in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll, marking the difficulties the survivor may face against Barack Obama. More Americans hold negative than positive views of Romney by a 10-point margin, Rick Santorum by 8 points, Ron Paul by 9 points and Newt Gingrich by a whopping 33 points.

Among customarily swing-voting independents, moreover, all but Paul are seen more unfavorably than favorably in this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#). And Paul's got trouble, as does Gingrich, within the GOP itself.

Overall ratings are little changed from previous measurements. Notably, though, Romney has improved among both "very" and "somewhat" conservative Americans, as well as among conservative Republicans in particular – up by 12, 10 and 11 points in these groups, respectively, vs. a week ago. His gain among very conservatives comes from the ranks of the undecided in this group; among somewhat conservatives, by contrast, negative views moved to positive ones.

	Views of Romney	
	Favorable	Unfavorable-No opinion
	Now	2/26
Liberals	18-64-17%	19-64-17
Moderates	34-48-18	35-43-22
Somewhat conservatives	52-34-14	42-43-15
Very conservatives	50-38-12	38-41-20
Conservative Republicans	67-27-6	56-37-8

Indeed Romney, after falling to new lows among conservatives before the Michigan and Arizona contests, has moved back to parity with Santorum among some conservative groups, notably conservative Republicans. In this group, 67 percent now see Romney favorably; Santorum, 68 percent.

Slight shifts in group sizes largely wash out Romney's changes overall. Among all adults, 35 percent see Romney favorably, 45 percent unfavorably, essentially unchanged from his 33-46 percent score last week. Among groups, Romney's popularity is 11 points higher among seniors than among adults under 30, and also 11 points higher among people with mid-level or higher incomes than among those earning less than \$50,000.



Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

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Full results follow.

1. Overall, do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of (ITEM)? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat? (ITEMS SCRAMBLED)

a. Mitt Romney

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
3/4/12	35	9	26	45	20	25	20
2/26/12	33	6	27	46	22	24	21
2/19/12	37	10	27	44	21	23	19
2/12/12	36	9	27	43	18	24	22
1/22/12	31	6	25	49	25	23	21
1/8/12	39	10	28	34	18	16	28
11/27/11	38	9	29	38	20	17	25
10/16/11	33	8	26	36	20	15	31
9/18/11	33	5	27	31	16	14	37

b. Rick Santorum

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
3/4/12	32	10	22	40	16	23	28
2/26/12	34	10	24	37	15	22	29
2/19/12	36	12	24	34	16	18	30
2/12/12	36	11	24	31	14	18	33
1/8/12	27	7	20	29	15	14	44

c. Ron Paul

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
3/4/12	32	8	23	41	25	15	27
1/8/12	31	6	25	38	19	19	31
12/18/11	32	9	23	35	20	15	33
11/27/11	32	8	24	35	20	15	33
9/25/11	25	6	19	27	17	10	49

d. Newt Gingrich

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
3/4/12	23	6	17	56	21	35	21
2/19/12	26	8	19	54	21	33	20
1/22/12	29	8	20	51	20	31	20
12/11/11	35	12	23	48	21	27	18
11/27/11	35	11	24	42	18	24	23
11/13/11	32	10	21	43	21	21	26
11/1/98	34	NA	NA	58	NA	NA	9
8/21/98	34			46			19
7/12/98	31			47			22
5/12/98	34			53			13
4/4/98	34			43			23

1/31/98	27			46			27
1/30/98	27			46			27
1/19/98	32			49			19
9/10/97	26			52			22
4/24/97	23			59			18
9/4/96	RV 26			55			19
6/30/96	25			57			18
10/30/95	29			45			26
7/17/95	34			46			20
6/8/95	32			51			18
3/19/95	31	"	"	46	"	"	23

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