

Majority Expects Obama to Lose Re-election

A majority of Americans expect Barack Obama to be a one-term president, an assessment on which, in past elections, the public more often has been right than wrong.

Just 37 percent in a new ABC News/Washington Post poll say they expect Obama to win re-election in November 2012; 55 percent instead expect the eventual Republican nominee to win. ABC's George Stephanopoulos is asking the president about that result in an interview today.

It's a challenging finding for the president because expectations can fuel voter enthusiasm – precisely the ingredient that led the GOP to its broad success in the 2010 midterms, when charged-up conservatives turned out, while dispirited Democrats stayed home.

Democrats do expect Obama to win, but they say so only by 58-33 percent – a comparatively tepid vote of confidence within his own party. Republicans, by contrast, smell victory by a vast 83-13 percent. And independents – the linchpin of national politics – by 54-36 percent expect the Republican candidate to beat Obama.

This poll, produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#), finds that the divisions among ideological groups tell a similar story. Conservatives are far more confident about the Republican nominee than are liberals about Obama, and moderates, albeit narrowly, are more likely to expect the challenger to win.

	Expect to win:	
	Obama	Rep candidate
All	37%	55
Democrats	58	33
Independents	36	54
Republicans	13	83
Leaned Democrats	57	33
Leaned Republicans	14	81
Liberals	58	32
Moderates	42	49
Conservatives	22	72

There is, though, a difference by education groups – a less-bad outlook for Obama on the off-chance that schooling leads to more precise punditry. Americans who lack a college degree think, by 57-35 points, that the Republican nominee will beat Obama. Those with a college degree think so too, but by a narrower 49-41 percent.

The public does not always nail such prognostications, and with the election more than a year away – and the Republican contest still highly unsettled – much can change. In a New York

Times/CBS News poll in March 1992, 76 percent expected the first President Bush to beat Bill Clinton. But Bush quickly lost support as the flush of success in the first Gulf War faded and economic discontent took hold, and Clinton unseated him.

Nonetheless, in November 1999, also in a Times/CBS poll, the public by 52-32 percent expected the eventual Republican nominee to beat the Democrat, as he did; in September 2003, the public by 50-35 percent expected Bush 43 to be re-elected, as he was; and in March 2007, 61 percent correctly expected the eventual Democratic nominee to beat the eventual GOP nominee.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Sept. 29-Oct. 2, 2011, among a random national sample of 1,002 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 4 points. The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York, N.Y.

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.

*= less than 0.5 percent.

1-40, 42 held for release.

41. Just your best guess, who do you think will win the presidential election next year - (Obama) or (the Republican candidate)?

	Obama	Rep candidate	No opinion
10/2/11	37%	55	8

END