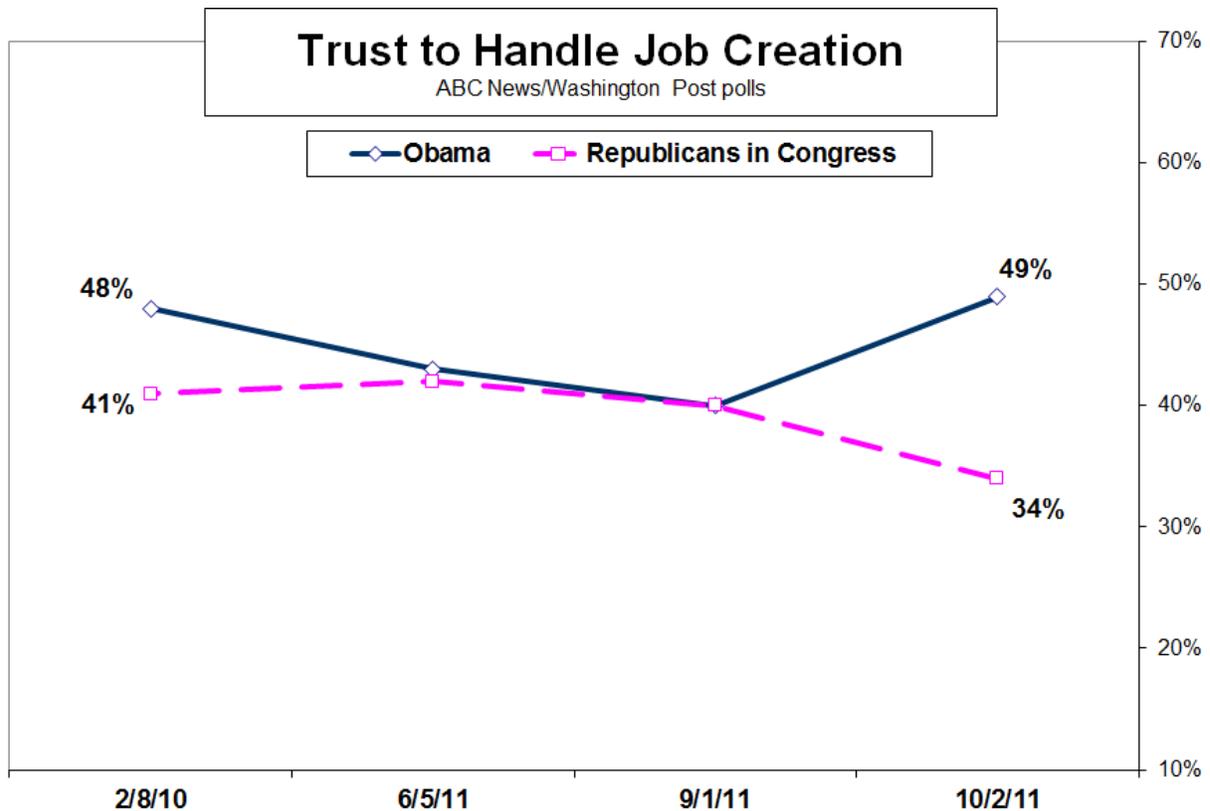


Obama Gains vs. GOP on Jobs As Congress Hits a New Low

Barack Obama has jumped to a 15-point lead over the Republicans in Congress in trust to handle job creation, a sign the beleaguered president's \$450 billion jobs package has hit its mark in public opinion. Fifty-two percent support the plan – and most say it just might work.

Overall approval of the U.S. Congress, meanwhile, has dropped to its lowest in polls back to the mid-1970s. And of the eight in 10 Americans who are dissatisfied with the way the country's political system is working, more blame the Republicans in Washington than the president.

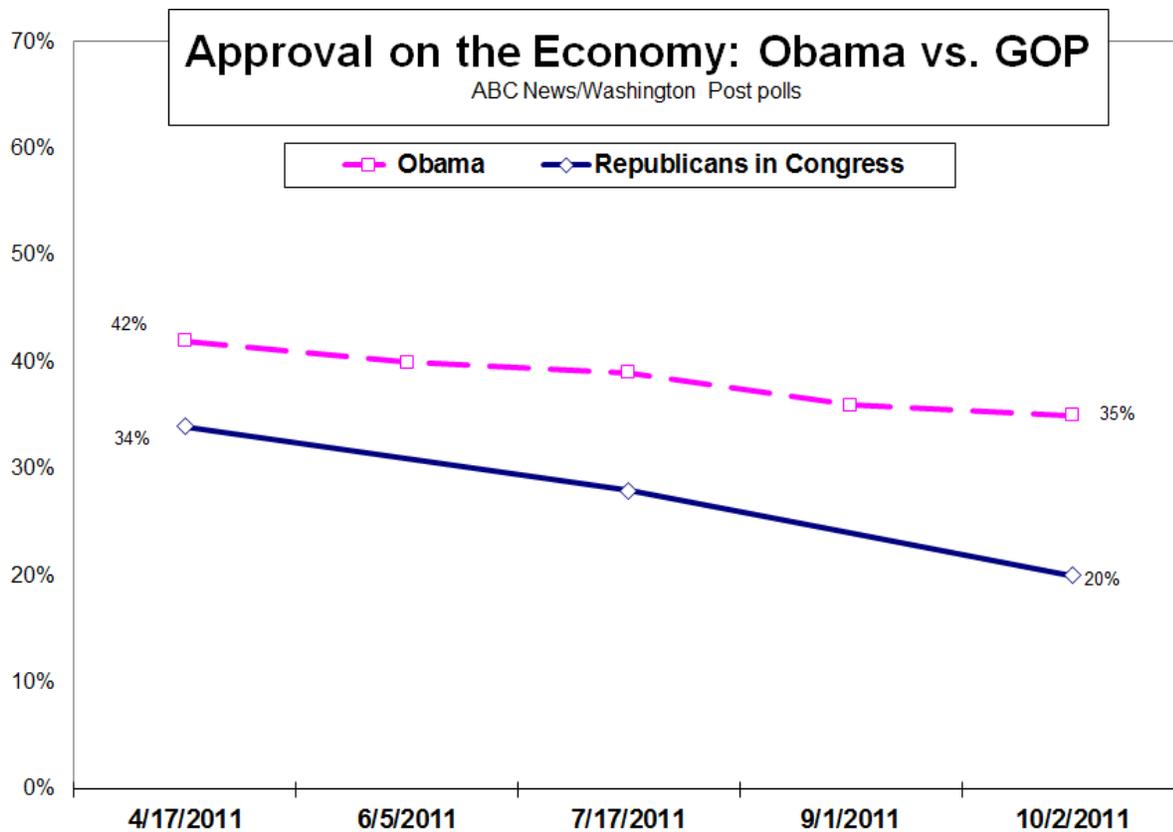
For all of Obama's well-documented woes, these and other results in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll underscore that politics are comparative, the public's economic ire is omnidirectional – and it's possible to move the bar.



A month ago, Americans divided evenly, 40-40 percent, on whom they trusted more to handle job creation, Obama or the congressional Republicans. Now, after his jobs proposal and ongoing promotion of his plan, it's 49-34 percent, Obama's first significant advantage over the GOP on jobs in ABC/Post polling since early 2010.

The president's also maintained a large advantage over the Republicans in Congress in being seen as more concerned with the interests of middle-class Americans, now 52-32 percent. And the GOP, by a vast 70-17 percent, is seen as being more concerned than Obama with protecting the interests of the wealthy – a sentiment on which Obama has capitalized with his proposed millionaires' tax.

THE WOODS – The president's hardly out of the woods. This poll, produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#), finds that just 35 percent approve of his handling of jobs, and an identical 35 percent approve of his handling of the economy in general, both new lows.

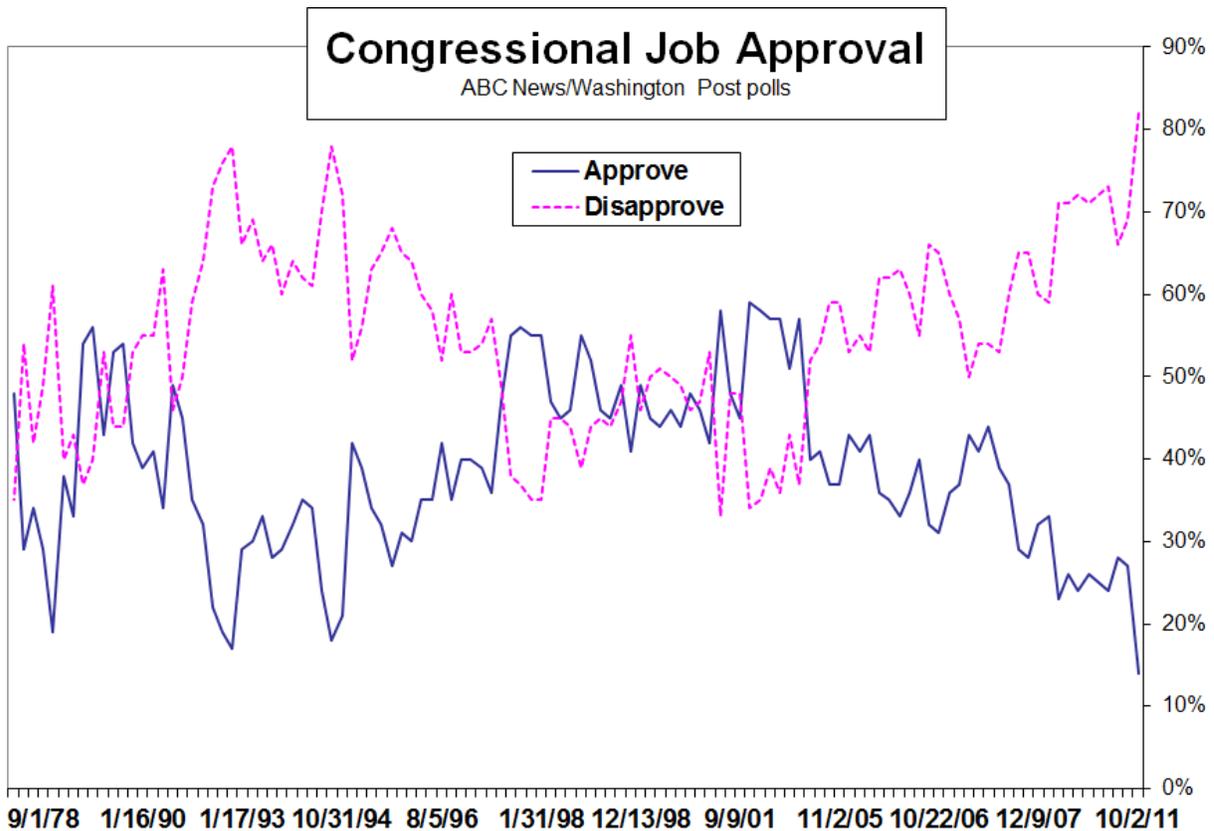


But there are no bragging rights here for the GOP. Many fewer Americans, 20 percent, approve of the way the Republicans in Congress are handling the economy. Even among Republicans and very conservative adults, 51 percent disapprove of congressional Republicans on the economy. Among conservatives overall, 65 percent disapprove – up 16 points from July. Among people who support the Tea Party political movement, 62 percent disapprove – up 17 points from July. Among independents and moderates, it's 79 and 80 percent, respectively.

Still, while Obama's gained the edge on jobs, the price of his proposals hasn't escaped notice: congressional Republicans now lead him by a slight 7 points, 46-39 percent, in trust to handle taxes, a turnaround from last spring and the Republicans' first advantage on this issue. (Obama's approval rating on handling taxes, 42 percent, is another new low.)

CONGRESS – While the president and the opposition party do battle, the Congress overall is much the worse for wear. Just 14 percent of Americans approve of the way it's doing its job, compared with Obama's 42 percent approval. That's the lowest for Congress in polls by ABC and the Post, and Gallup previously, back to 1974.

Congress customarily is rated lower than the president, there being something there for almost everyone to dislike. But the gap today is far wider than usual – 28 points in the president's favor, compared with an average of 15 points. While the point discrepancy has been bigger, the ratio of presidential approval to congressional approval is now its largest on record (again, in data to the 1970s). Obama's approval rating is three times higher than that of Congress. The average is 1.5 times, the previous high, 2.7 times, in October 1994.



The intensity of the public's ill-will toward Congress is especially powerful: Sixty-two percent strongly disapprove of its performance, compared with 40 percent strong disapproval of Obama.

Partisanship's a key reason: Democrats and Republicans alike are annoyed with Congress, while Obama still maintains substantial support within his own party.

Still, the Republicans in Congress have earned disproportionate animus. Seventy-nine percent of Americans say they're dissatisfied with the way the political system is working. Asked whom they mainly blame for that, 39 percent pick the congressional Republicans, 25 percent Obama. An additional 27 percent blame both equally.

JOBS and TAXES – The economy's the problem, with the weekly Bloomberg Consumer Comfort Index a point from its record low in more than 25 years. As noted, Obama's jobs proposal has won some positive notice: Fifty-two percent of Americans support it, with 36 percent opposed and the rest withholding opinion. Even 21 percent of Republicans like the idea, as do 47 percent of independents (vs. 38 percent opposed) and more than eight in 10 Democrats.

Notably, somewhat more, 58 percent, think Obama's jobs package, if it passed Congress, in fact would do a great deal or somewhat to create jobs – including 91 percent of Democrats, 52 percent of independents and a quarter of Republicans. (The slight gap between support for the package and the belief it'll create jobs may reflect a cost-benefit evaluation.)

Of those who don't think the plan will work, moreover, there's an even division in whether that's because it's a bad plan – or because the problem is too big for government to solve.

Among the elements of Obama's plan, one theme especially hits its populist mark: Seventy-five percent of Americans support raising taxes on Americans with annual incomes over \$1 million. (Not quite what Obama suggested, but conceptually similar.)

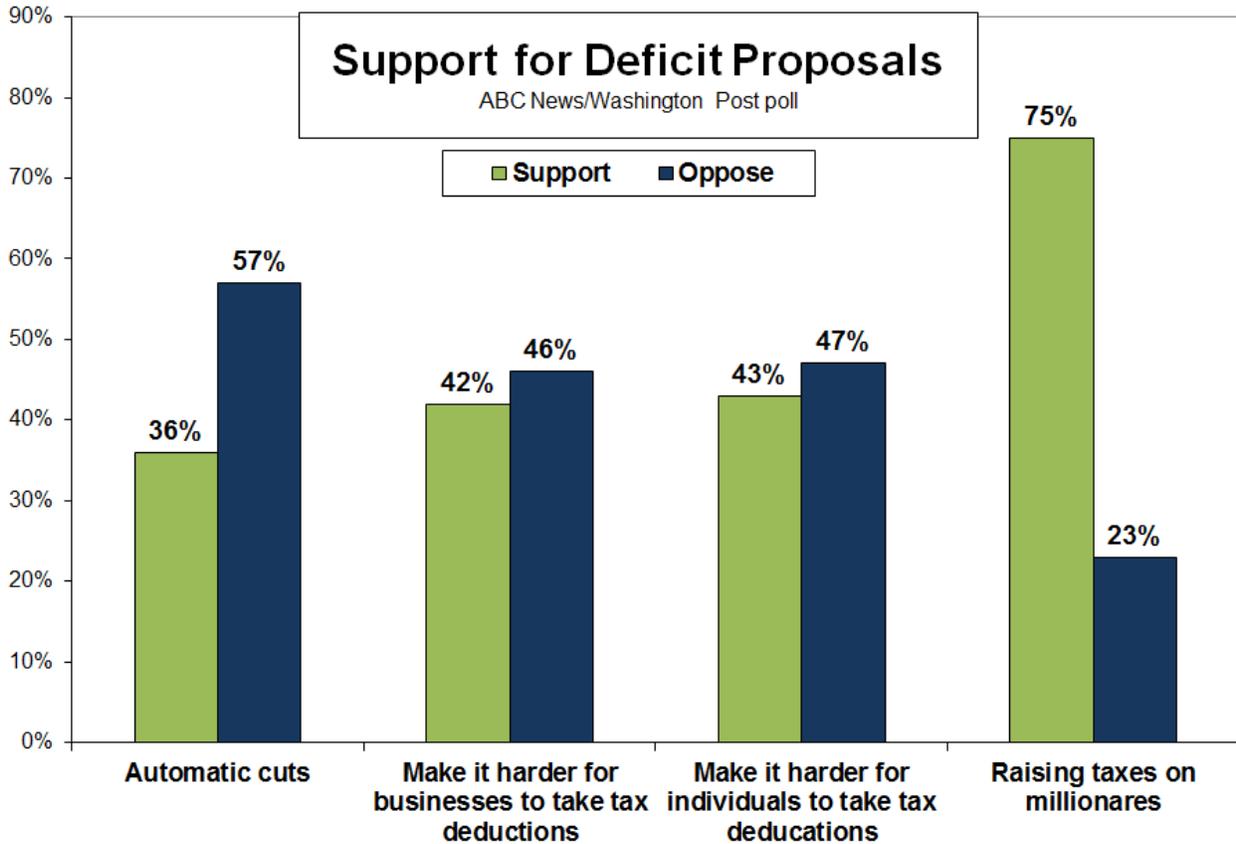
Taxing millionaires in fact is one of the rare political issues to draw bipartisan majority support – 57 percent from Republicans, 75 percent among independents and 89 percent among Democrats. Even among supporters of the Tea Party political movement, 55 percent support raising taxes on millionaires, although this drops to 36 percent of “strong” Tea Party backers.

SUPERCOMMITTEE – Tax and spending measures are hot on the desk of the so called supercommittee in Congress, formed in the summer's default-avoidance deal to come up with \$1.5 trillion in 10-year deficit reduction by late next month. Among attitudes on its work:

- By 2-1, 64 percent to 31 percent, Americans say it should hit its mark through a combination of spending cuts and tax increases, rather than by spending cuts alone. (That may be more fodder for Obama vs. the GOP in the deficit debate; however, more generally, Americans divide in trust to find the right balance between budget cutting and needed spending, Obama vs. the Republicans, 44-39 percent – so the GOP has some pushback.)
- At the same time, suggestions that Democrats may seek a revision of the tax code to reduce available tax deductions does not draw broad support – just 43 percent favor reducing personal tax deductions; about the same, 42 percent, support reducing business

tax deductions. (Given support for taxing millionaires, views on removing tax deductions may be movable based on who takes the hit.)

- Reflecting the public's low confidence in all things congressional, 74 percent do not think the supercommittee will reach agreement on a plan.



If the committee doesn't strike a deal; the cuts are set to start automatically in January 2013, half from domestic spending, half from the military – an outcome 57 percent of Americans oppose, holding out the prospect of further ire directed at Congress and the White House alike.

DIRECTIONS – One take-away from these results is that Obama's likely to shout out his jobs plan often and loudly in the months ahead, for the simple reason that, in a presidency short of punching power, this one's working. Another is that the Republicans have their own resonance on taxes (the question of millionaires aside), as well as on right-sizing the government.

And the third is that Obama, in the election year ahead, may try his best not to run against his eventual Republican opponent – but, a la Harry Truman, against the Republicans in Congress.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Sept. 29 to 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 for the full sample. 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>.

Media contacts: Media Contacts: [David Ford](#), (212) 456-7243, and [Julie Townsend](#), (212) 456-4934.

Full results follow.

*= less than 0.5 percent

1, 18-42 previously released.

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Obama is handling [ITEM]? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

10/2/11 - Summary Table*

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
a. The economy	35	17	19	61	13	48	4
b. Taxes	42	22	20	51	14	37	7
c. Creating jobs	35	17	18	60	14	47	4

*Full sample asked item a; half sample asked item b; other half sample asked item c.

Trend:

a. The economy

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
10/2/11	35	17	19	61	13	48	4
9/1/11	36	15	21	62	15	47	2
7/17/11	39	18	22	57	15	43	3
6/5/11	40	20	20	59	10	49	2
5/2/11*	40	18	22	55	16	39	4
4/17/11	42	23	19	57	11	46	2
3/13/11	43	22	21	55	13	41	2
1/16/11	46	22	24	51	13	38	2
12/12/10	43	21	22	54	15	39	3
10/28/10 RV	44	21	23	54	15	39	3
10/3/10	45	22	23	53	13	41	2
9/2/10	41	20	21	57	13	44	2
7/11/10	43	20	23	54	13	41	4
6/6/10	50	26	24	49	12	37	2
4/25/10	49	24	25	49	10	39	2
3/26/10	45	23	22	52	12	40	3
2/8/10	45	22	23	53	15	38	2
1/15/10	47	22	24	52	13	39	1
12/13/09	46	23	24	52	12	40	2
11/15/09	51	26	25	47	12	36	2

10/18/09	50	29	22	48	13	35	1
9/12/09	51	28	24	46	13	33	2
8/17/09	52	27	25	46	13	33	2
7/18/09	52	29	23	46	10	35	3
6/21/09	56	28	28	41	13	27	3
4/24/09	58	31	28	38	13	25	4
3/29/09	60	34	25	38	12	26	3
2/22/09	60	NA	NA	34	NA	NA	6

*Washington Post/Pew Research Center

b. Taxes

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
10/2/11	42	22	20	51	14	37	7
7/17/11	45	24	21	47	13	34	8
1/16/11	50	23	27	44	14	31	6
8/17/09	51	23	28	40	12	28	8
4/24/09	56	NA	NA	38	NA	NA	6

c. Creating jobs

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
10/2/11	35	17	18	60	14	47	4
9/1/11	36	15	21	62	18	45	2
7/17/11	41	16	25	52	13	39	7
2/8/10	47	25	22	51	15	35	3

3. Do you approve or disapprove of the way the U.S. Congress is doing its job? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
10/2/11	14	3	11	82	20	62	4
3/13/11	27	7	20	69	24	45	4
1/16/11	28	6	21	66	24	43	7
10/28/10 RV	23	6	17	74	21	53	3
10/28/10 LV	21	5	16	77	19	58	2
10/3/10	24	6	18	73	22	51	3
9/2/10	25	5	20	72	21	51	4
6/6/10	26	7	20	71	20	51	2
3/26/10	24	7	18	72	18	54	4
2/8/10	26	NA	NA	71	NA	NA	3
7/13/08	23			71			6
2/1/08	33			59			8
12/9/07	32			60			8
11/1/07	28			65			7
9/30/07	29			65			6
7/21/07	37			60			4
6/1/07	39	"	"	53	"	"	8
4/15/07	44	8	36	54	25	29	3
2/25/07	41	NA	NA	54	NA	NA	5
1/19/07	43			50			8

Call for full trend.

4. Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Republicans in Congress are handling the economy? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

----- Approve ----- ----- Disapprove ----- No

	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
10/2/11	20	4	16	76	21	54	4
7/17/11	28	NA	NA	67	NA	NA	5
4/17/11	34			62			3
11/4/90 LV*	26	"	"	69	"	"	5

* "the nation's economy"

5. When it comes to finding the right balance between [cutting government spending that is not needed] and [continuing government spending that is needed], who do you trust to do a better job - (Obama) or (the Republicans in Congress)?

	Obama	Reps	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/2/11	44	39	1	14	2
6/5/11	41	44	2	11	2
4/17/11	45	44	2	7	2
3/13/11	43	42	2	10	3

6. Who do you trust to do a better job [ITEM] - (Obama) or (the Republicans in Congress)?

10/2/11 - Summary Table*

	Obama	Reps	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
a. Handling the economy	43	42	1	11	2
b. Handling taxes	39	46	1	11	2
c. Creating jobs	49	34	1	14	3

*Full sample asked item a; half sample asked item b; other half sample asked item c.

Trend:

a. Handling the economy

	Obama	Reps	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/2/11	43	42	1	11	2
9/1/11	42	39	1	16	2
6/5/11	42	45	2	9	2
3/13/11	46	34	2	15	4
1/16/11	46	41	3	7	3
12/12/10	44	45	2	7	2
4/25/10	49	38	1	9	2
2/8/10	47	42	1	7	2
12/13/09	48	36	1	12	3
11/15/09	52	37	1	8	1
9/12/09	48	37	1	12	2
7/18/09	56	33	1	9	2
6/21/09	55	31	2	9	2
4/24/09	61	24	2	11	2
3/29/09	58	25	1	14	2
2/22/09	61	26	1	9	3

b. Handling taxes

	Obama	Reps	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/2/11	39	46	1	11	2
4/17/11	47	42	1	8	2
1/16/11	44	42	2	9	4
12/12/10	43	44	1	7	5

c. Creating jobs

	Obama	Reps	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/2/11	49	34	1	14	3
9/1/11	40	40	1	17	2
6/5/11	43	42	2	11	2
2/8/10	48	41	2	8	2

7. Who do you think cares more about protecting the economic interests of [ITEM] - (Obama) or (the Republicans in Congress)?

10/2/11 - Summary Table

	Obama	Reps	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
a. Middle class Americans	52	32	1	12	3
b. Wealthy Americans	17	70	5	6	2

Trend:

a. Middle class Americans

	Obama	Reps	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/2/11	52	32	1	12	3
7/17/11	53	35	1	9	2

b. No trend.

8. How satisfied are you with the way this country's political system is working - would you say very satisfied, mostly satisfied, mostly dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

	---- Satisfied ----			--- Dissatisfied --			No opinion
	NET	Very	Mostly	NET	Mostly	Very	
10/2/11	20	2	18	79	38	41	1
8/9/11*	21	2	19	78	33	45	1
11/23/09	38	4	34	61	30	31	1
6/3/07	34	5	29	64	34	30	1

*Washington Post

9. (IF DISSATISFIED) Who do you mainly blame for that - (Obama) or (the Republicans in Congress)?

	Obama	Reps	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/2/11	25	39	27	8	1

6/7 NET:

	----- Satisfied -----			----- Dissatisfied -----				
	Satisfied	NET	Blame Obama	Blame Reps	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.	No opinion
10/2/11	20	79	19	31	21	6	1	1

10. A committee of (Democrats) and (Republicans) in Congress has until late November to propose ways to cut the federal deficit by one-point-two trillion dollars over the

next 10 years. Do you think this should be done by (cutting federal spending), by (increasing taxes), or by a combination of both?

	Cutting federal spending	Increasing taxes	Combination of both	No opinion
10/2/11	31	3	64	2

Compare to: Overall, what do you think is the best way to reduce the federal budget deficit - (by cutting federal spending), (by increasing taxes), or by a combination of both?

	Cutting federal spending	Increasing taxes	Combination of both	No opinion
7/17/11	32	4	62	3
6/5/11	37	4	57	2
4/17/11	36	3	59	2
3/13/11	31	3	64	3
12/12/10	36	2	60	1

11. How likely do you think it is that (Democrats) and (Republicans) in Congress will agree on a deficit-reduction plan - very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely?

	----- Likely -----			----- Unlikely -----			No opinion
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very	
10/2/11	25	3	22	74	37	37	1

12. If a deficit-reduction plan is not agreed on, automatic cuts of one-point-two trillion dollars in federal spending will take effect in January 2013, half from (military programs) and half from (domestic programs). Would you support or oppose these automatic cuts if there is no agreement?

	Support	Oppose	No opinion
10/2/11	36	57	7

I have a few questions on taxes...

13. Do you support or oppose raising taxes on Americans with incomes over one million dollars a year?

	Support	Oppose	No opinion
10/2/11	75	23	2

14. (HALF SAMPLE) Would you support or oppose changing federal tax law to make it harder for businesses to reduce their taxes by taking tax deductions?

	Support	Oppose	No opinion
10/2/11	42	46	11

15. (HALF SAMPLE) Would you support or oppose changing federal tax law to make it harder for individuals to reduce their taxes by taking tax deductions?

	Support	Oppose	No opinion
10/2/11	43	47	11

16. Obama recently proposed a 450 billion dollar package aimed at creating jobs. Given what you know about it, do you support or oppose the plan? Is that support/oppose strongly or somewhat?

	----- Support -----			----- Oppose -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
10/2/11	52	26	26	36	10	25	13

17. Just your best guess, if Obama's jobs package passes Congress, do you think it would improve the jobs situation in the country a great deal, somewhat, not much or not at all?

	----- Improve -----			---- Not improve ---			No
	NET	Great deal	Somewhat	NET	Not much	None	opinion
10/2/11	58	11	47	39	20	20	3

17a. (IF NOT MUCH OR NOT AT ALL) Is that because (the plan is a bad one) or because (the problem is too big for government to solve)?

	Plan is a	Problem is too big	Both	Other	No
	bad one	for gov't to solve	(vol.)	(vol.)	opinion
10/2/11	41	41	11	5	2

17/17a NET:

	----- Improve -----			----- Not improve -----				
	NET	Plan is a	Problem is too big	Both	Other	No	No	
		bad one	for gov't to solve	(vol.)	(vol.)	op.	opinion	
10/2/11	58	39	16	16	4	2	1	3

END