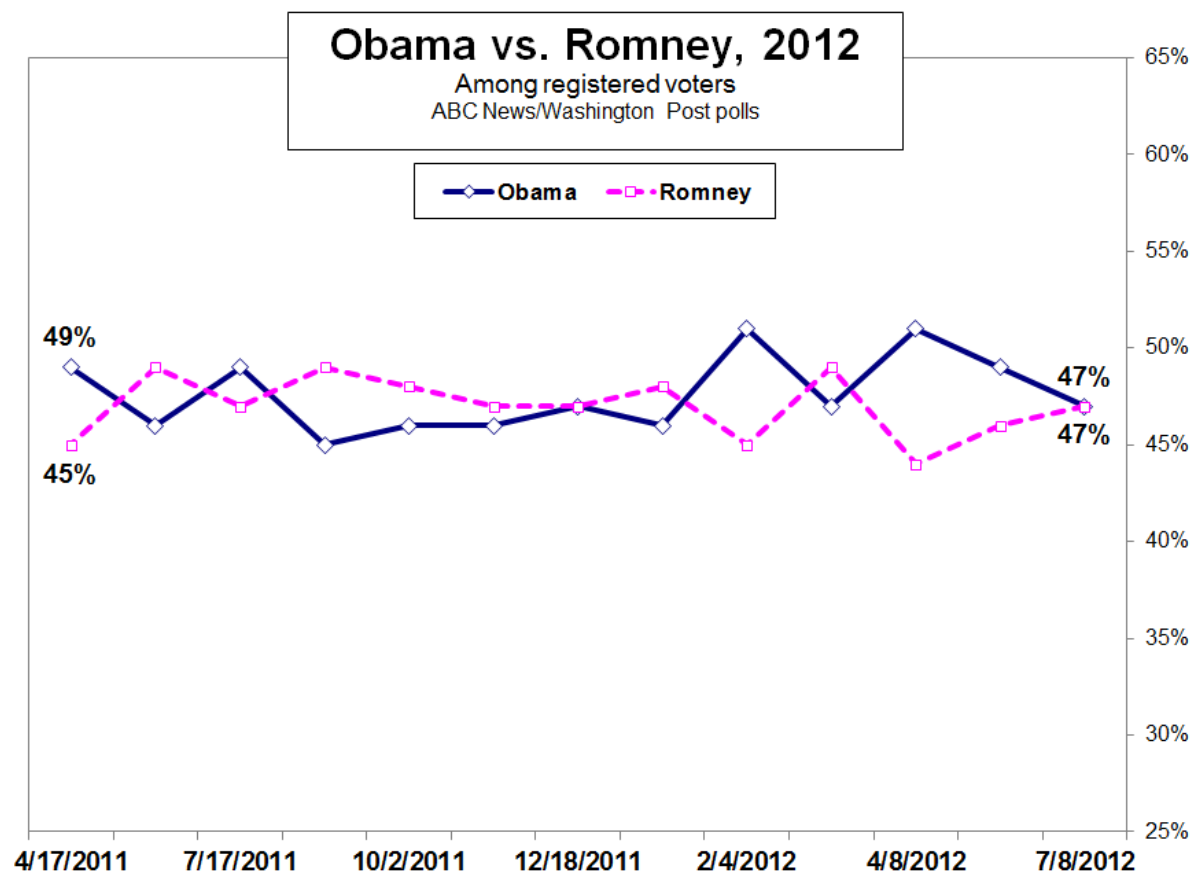


Dead Heat in Vote Preferences Presages an Epic Battle Ahead

Economic discontent and substantial dissatisfaction with Barack Obama's performance in office are keeping Mitt Romney competitive in the presidential race – but not by enough of a margin to overcome Obama's stronger personal profile. The result: A dead heat in voter preferences at the midsummer stage, with the prospect of an epic battle ahead.

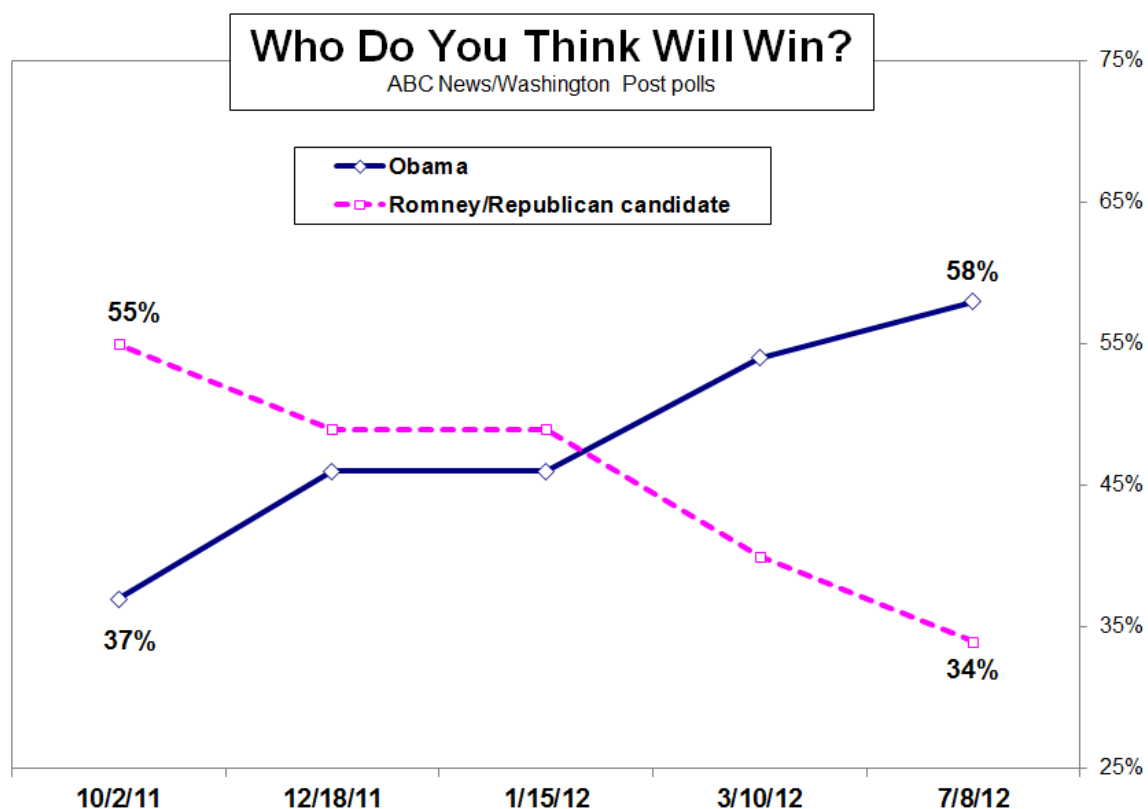
While most Americans continue to disapprove of Obama's handling of the economy, that's not his only problem. More than half fault him on health care and immigration as well. Sixty-three percent say the country's headed in the wrong direction, an unhelpful view for an incumbent. And among groups, he's losing swing-voting independents by a record 14 percentage points.



Yet Romney faces significant challenges of his own in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll. His supporters are more apt to be against Obama than explicitly for Romney – a “negative” vote that can be less compelling than an affirmative one. His supporters are less strongly

enthusiastic than Obama's. While Obama is vulnerable on the economy, Romney is weakly rated on having offered a clear economic plan. And Obama leads on a range of personal attributes – empathy, standing up for his beliefs and, especially, basic likeability.

Obama also continues to prevail in expectations: Despite his troubles, this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), finds that Americans by 58-34 percent expect him ultimately to defeat Romney and win a second term. That's Obama's best on this gauge to date (previously measured against "the Republican nominee"), a sharp difference from last October, when, with economic discontent at a higher pitch, 55 percent thought Obama would lose. Today, even among Romney's supporters, a quarter think Obama will win.



With a 47-47 percent Obama-Romney contest among registered voters, the overall results point to a sharply defined race: On one hand Obama, the more personally popular candidate, with a larger and more energized partisan base, yet weak performance scores; on the other Romney, his opportunities to capitalize on Obama's vulnerabilities complicated by his difficulties in capturing the public's imagination.

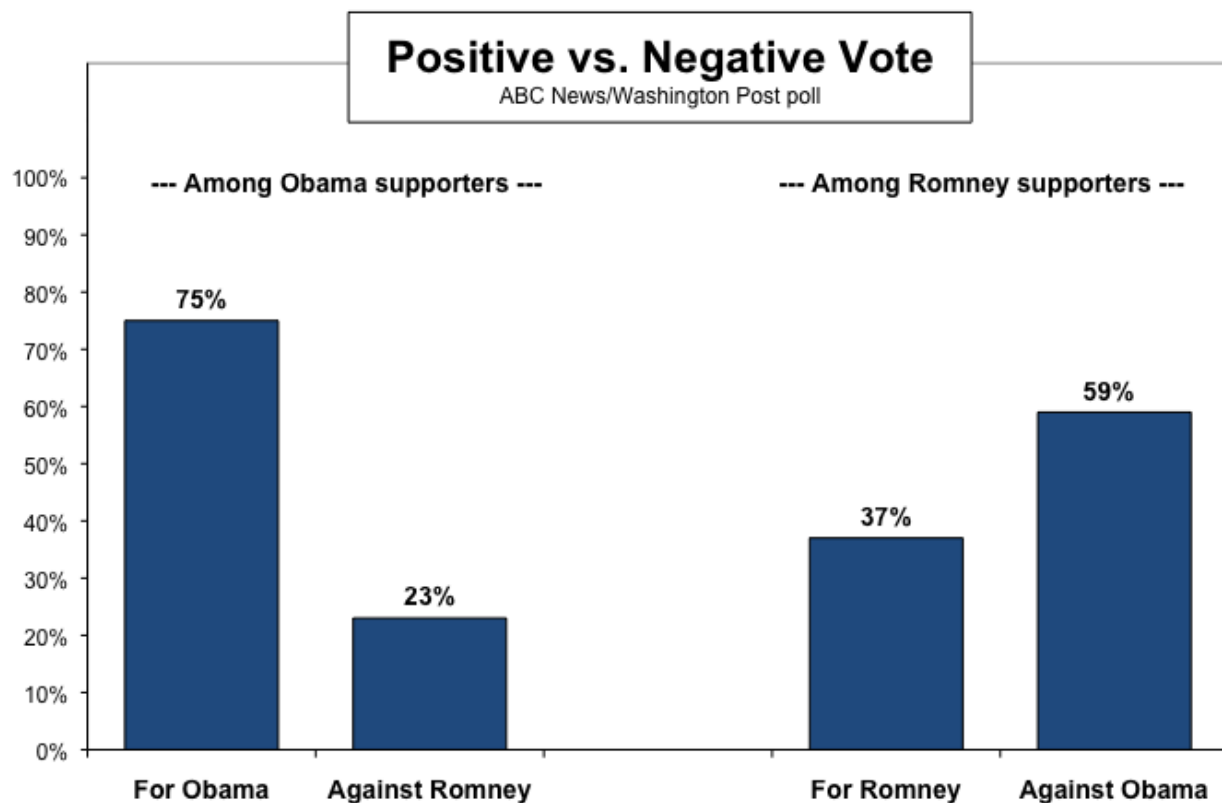
Helpful to Obama, given the economy, is the fact that in deciding their vote, Americans by 51-33 percent are focused more on what he'd do in his second term as president than on what he's done in his first. Among registered voters who are more concerned about what Obama's done so far, Romney leads by 18 points, 55-37 percent. Among those more focused on what he'd do if

elected to a second term, by contrast, Obama leads by 59-36 percent, a 23-point margin. It marks why he's trying to point ahead ("Forward" is the campaign slogan); Romney, back.

ROOM – There's room to move: One in five of Romney's current supporters, and one in six of Obama's, say there's a chance they could change their mind and support the other candidate. Very few, though, say there's a "good chance" they could shift – a mere 4 percent of Obama's supporters, 8 percent of Romney's.

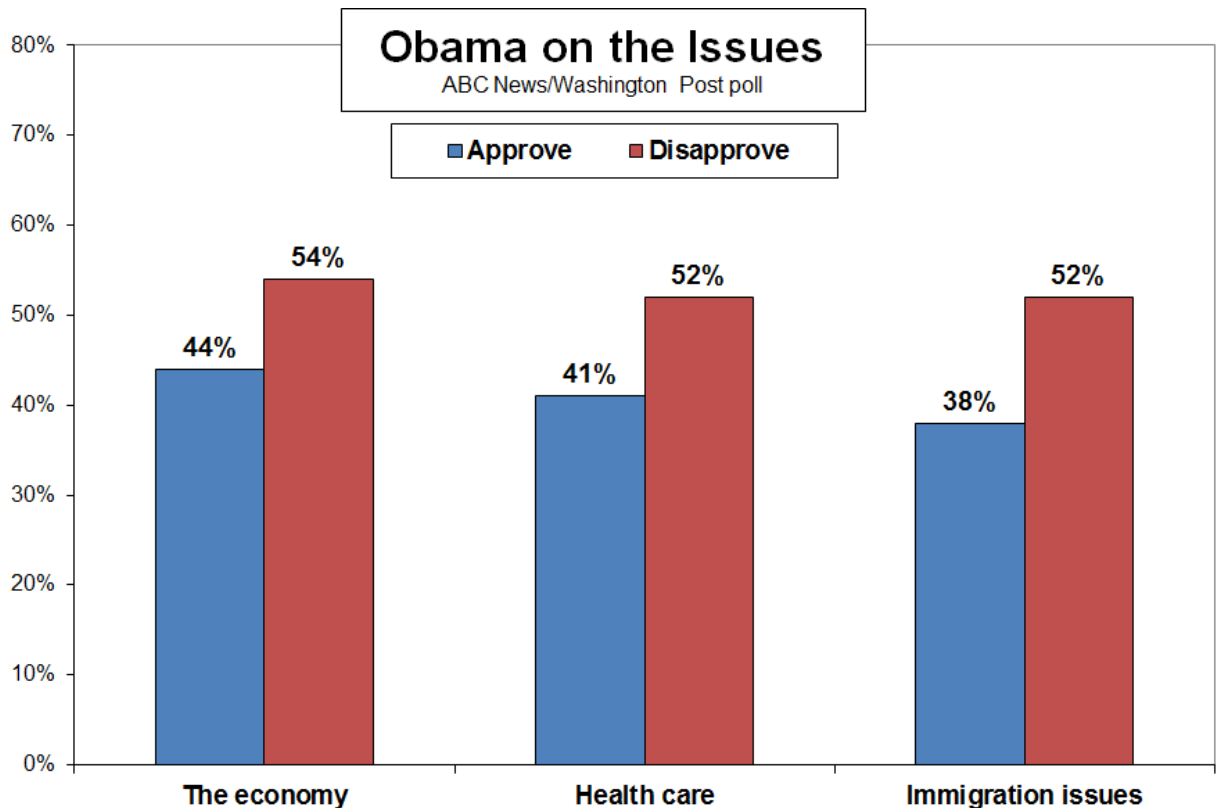
That suggests that more than changing minds, the contest likely is to be about motivating turnout – and here Obama has an edge. Among registered voters, half of his supporters (51 percent) are "very" enthusiastic, vs. 38 percent of Romney's. It can matter: Strong enthusiasm is a measure on which Obama crushed John McCain in 2008, and on which George W. Bush beat John Kerry in 2004. Still, while lagging, Romney's strong enthusiasm has improved by a dozen points since spring.

In another measure, moreover, 75 percent of Obama's supporters say they mainly are for him, rather than against his opponent. For Romney that shifts dramatically – just 37 percent of his supporters mainly are for him, while 59 percent say they're chiefly opposed to Obama.



To some extent that's what happens in a re-election race – largely a referendum on the incumbent. But it can be harder to motivate voters who lack an affirmative reason to support a candidate; Romney's numbers on this measure resemble Kerry's in 2004.

PERFORMANCE and ISSUES – While Romney’s difficulties include atmospherics such as expectations, Obama’s are more performance-based. His overall job rating is 47-49 percent, approve-disapprove (the same as in May). It’s majority negative on his handling of the economy, 44-54 percent; health care, 41-52 percent (a numerical low in approval, with no bump from last month’s Supreme Court ruling); and immigration, 38-52 percent (also bumpless despite his initiative halting enforcement against many illegal immigrants who arrived as minors).



The “wrong track” number, at 63 percent, is hazardous to Obama, but not dispositive. It was worse on the way to George H.W. Bush’s losing re-election bid in 1992 (83 percent that June). But it also was worse than it is now (70 percent negative) in June 1996, the year Bill Clinton went on to win a second term; the sentiment subsided as the campaign progressed. And it was negative, as well, (55 percent “wrong track”) days before the 2004 election, when the second President Bush won regardless.

The question is whether Romney can do better, and on a range of issues the call is a close one. The economy’s the big kahuna – 89 percent say it’s important in their vote choice, 53 percent “extremely” important – and Romney and Obama are close in trust to handle it, 49-44 percent (48-45 percent among registered voters). They’re also close in another question, being seen as having presented the clearer plan for dealing with the economy, 43-38 percent, Obama-Romney.

Still, the public, by a 7-point margin, 43-36 percent, calls Obama's handling of the economy a major reason to oppose rather than to support him. And among registered voters who call the economy "extremely" important in their vote choice, Romney leads in vote preference by 54-41 percent. Those results underscore the extent to which Obama needs the economy to improve or – an equally difficult task – the subject to change.

Health care, the deficit and taxes trail the economy as top issues among those tested in this survey, followed by Supreme Court appointments and immigration. Romney has a 10-point advantage in trust to deal with the deficit; Obama, 11 points on appointments to the high court. On each of the rest, they're essentially even.

	Important (Net)	Extremely important	Trust to handle Obama-Romney
Economy	89%	53%	44-49%
Health care	77	42	46-45
Deficit	70	36	42-52
Taxes	65	32	46-45
Supreme Court	49	26	48-37
Immigration	48	18	45-45

TAXES, JOBS and BAIN – One notable result is the fact that Obama and Romney are rated evenly in trust to handle taxes, usually a strong issue for Republican candidates (although Obama's seen better, leading on taxes in February, as well as vs. McCain in 2008.) It's a competitiveness Obama may have had in mind in pressing Monday to extend Bush-era tax cuts for those with incomes less than \$250,000.

Obama's biggest issue shortfall is on a related matter, the deficit; among registered voters who call it extremely important in their choice he trails Romney by a vast 25-70 percent. That said, with unemployment stubbornly at 8.2 percent, deficit concerns are countered by economic woe: The public divides, 48-45 percent, on whether it's more important for the government to spend money to try to create jobs, or to hold down the deficit. These views, naturally, cut sharply to vote.

Spending on jobs has risks, given Obama's vulnerability to the "big government" tag: The public by an 11-point margin, 37-26 percent, sees his views on the size and role of government as a major reason to oppose rather than support him. (The rest say it's not a major factor.)

There's no such net negative in views of Romney's background buying and restructuring businesses – an even split on whether his Bain Capital background is a major reason to support or oppose him (23-24 percent), with 50 percent saying it makes no difference.

There's a close division, as well, on whether Romney at Bain Capital did more to create or cut U.S. jobs, 36-40 percent – a complication in his efforts to take the jobs issue to Obama.

HEALTH CARE – On another issue, health care, the candidates' best path is unclear. While Obama shows no advantage on the issue, his law itself has gotten something of a boost –

Americans now divide evenly on it, 47-47 percent, support-oppose. It was 39-53 percent in April, before the Supreme Court upheld the law's individual mandate.

With support for the law divided and Obama's approval rating on handling health care weak, there's opportunity for Romney; he gets 9 points more support than opposition, 38-29 percent, from his call to repeal the law (with the rest saying it's not a major factor). But there's little support for complete repeal in and of itself – just 18 percent overall. Other critics of the law divide evenly between a preference to repeal only parts of it, or to wait and see its impact first.

In any case, positioning on the law may not change many votes: Americans divide exactly evenly, 28-28 percent, on whether they'd be more likely to support or oppose a candidate for Congress who supports the health care reform law. Four in 10 say it won't make much difference.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES – Beyond the issue wars, as noted, Obama retains advantages over Romney in personal qualities, including a vast 36-point advantage in being seen as more friendly and likeable, and a more important albeit narrower 10-point lead as better understanding the economic problems Americans are experiencing.

Obama also holds a slight 9-point edge as being more apt to stand up for what he believes; the two are closer on who's the stronger leader. All these have held essentially steady since spring.

	Obama-Romney
Is more friendly/likeable	63-27%
Better understands the economic problems people are having	50-40
Stands up for what he believes	48-39
Is the stronger leader	47-42

GROUPS – Vote preferences among groups, as noted, include Romney's best showing to date among registered voters who identify themselves as independents, 53-39 percent. Obama comes back to parity overall because Democrats account for a larger share of the pie than Republicans, 36 percent of registered voters vs. 27 percent.

Among other groups, preferences among married women who are registered to vote continue to be unsettled; they now divide very closely, 44-47 percent, Obama-Romney, after a better result for Obama in April and for Romney in May. Obama's support meanwhile is a bit softer than usual among unmarried women, but his best to date among unmarried men. The gender gap more generally is back – Obama up by 8 points among women, Romney by 7 among men.

Romney, for his part, ties his best result so far among senior citizens, 57-37 percent, and runs evenly with Obama among college graduates, a group in which Obama did better earlier this year.

Combined with the closeness of the contest, the sharp differences among groups make the 2012 election look like one in which broad themes are likely to matter less than either a breakout event – or, more likely, each campaign's eventual proficiency at persuading its supporters to vote.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone July 5-8, 2012, among a random national sample of 1,003 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 4 points for the full sample and registered voters. 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: [David Ford](#), (212) 456-7243, and [Julie Townsend](#), (212) 456-4934.

Full results follow.

*= less than 0.5 percent

1. I'd like you to rate the chances that you will vote in the presidential election in November: Are you absolutely certain to vote, will you probably vote, are the chances 50-50, or less than that?

	Certain to vote	Probably vote	Chances 50/50	Less than that	Don't think will vote (vol.)	No opinion
7/8/12	69	10	9	7	4	1
7/8/12 RV	81	9	8	2	*	*

Call for trend.

2. If the presidential election were being held today and the candidates were (Barack Obama, the Democrat) and (Mitt Romney, the Republican), for whom would you vote? Would you lean toward (Obama) or toward (Romney)?

NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE – GEN POP

	Obama	Romney	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
7/8/12	46	46	*	3	2	3
5/20/12	49	45	1	3	2	1
4/8/12	51	43	*	2	3	1
3/10/12	46	47	*	2	3	2
2/4/12	52	43	*	1	2	2
1/15/12	46	47	*	2	3	2
12/18/11	49	46	*	2	2	1
11/3/11	48	45	*	3	2	1
10/2/11	47	46	*	3	1	2
9/1/11	46	47	*	2	3	2
7/17/11	51	44	*	2	1	2
6/5/11	47	47	*	2	1	2
4/17/11	49	45	*	3	1	2

NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE – RVs

		Obama	Romney	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
7/8/12	RV	47	47	*	2	*	4
5/20/12	RV	49	46	*	3	1	1
4/8/12	RV	51	44	*	2	3	1

3/10/12	RV	47	49	*	1	2	2
2/4/12	RV	51	45	*	1	1	1
1/15/12	RV	46	48	*	2	2	2
12/18/11	RV	47	47	*	2	2	1
11/3/11	RV	46	47	*	3	2	1
10/2/11	RV	46	48	*	2	1	2
9/1/11	RV	45	49	*	2	2	2
7/17/11	RV	49	47	*	2	1	1
6/5/11	RV	46	49	*	2	1	2
4/17/11	RV	49	45	*	3	1	1

3. (ASKED IF NAMED CANDIDATE) Will you definitely vote for (NAMED CANDIDATE), or is there a chance you could change your mind and vote for someone else? (IF CHANCE CHANGE MIND) (Is there a GOOD CHANCE) you'll change your mind, or (is it a PRETTY UNLIKELY chance)?

		Definitely vote for	-Chance change mind - NET	Good	Unlikely	No opinion
7/8/12		77	21	8	13	3
7/8/12	RV	79	19	6	13	2
11/3/08	LV	94	5	2	3	1
10/11/08	LV	88	11	4	7	1
9/29/08	RV	82	17	8	9	1
9/22/08	RV	83	16	8	8	1
9/7/08	RV	79	20	8	12	1
8/22/08	RV	73	24	11	13	3
7/13/08	RV	72	25	10	15	3
6/15/08	RV	72	26	11	16	2
5/11/08	RV	69	28	15	14	3
9/26/04	RV	82	16	4	12	2
9/8/04	RV	84	14	6	8	2
8/29/04	RV	81	18	7	11	1
8/1/04	RV	80	19	7	12	1
7/25/04	RV	78	20	7	13	2
7/11/04	RV	79	21	7	13	1
6/20/04	RV	73	26	12	14	*

Barack Obama:

		Definitely vote for	-Chance change mind - NET	Good	Unlikely	No opinion
7/8/12		80	17	4	13	2
7/8/12	RV	81	17	4	13	2
11/3/08	LV	95	5	2	3	*
10/11/08	LV	90	9	3	6	1
9/29/08	RV	83	16	7	9	1
9/22/08	RV	85	14	8	7	1
9/7/08	RV	78	21	9	12	1
8/22/08	RV	74	23	7	15	4
7/13/08	RV	72	23	9	14	5
6/15/08	RV	71	26	7	19	3
5/11/08	RV	71	25	13	13	4

Mitt Romney:

		Definitely vote for	-Chance change mind - NET	Good	Unlikely	No opinion
7/8/12		73	24	12	12	3
7/8/12	RV	77	21	8	13	2

Compare to: John McCain:

		Definitely vote for	NET	-Chance change mind - Good	Unlikely	No opinion
11/3/08	LV	94	5	3	3	1
10/11/08	LV	86	14	4	9	*
9/29/08	RV	81	18	9	9	1
9/22/08	RV	81	18	9	9	2
9/7/08	RV	80	19	8	11	2
8/22/08	RV	72	25	14	11	2
7/13/08	RV	71	28	12	17	1
6/15/08	RV	72	27	14	12	1
5/11/08	RV	66	32	17	15	2

Call for full trend.

4. (IF SUPPORT OBAMA OR ROMNEY) Would you say you are very enthusiastic about supporting (Obama/Romney) somewhat enthusiastic, not so enthusiastic, or not enthusiastic at all?

		--- Enthusiastic --- NET	Very	Somewhat	--- Not enthusiastic --- NET	Not so	Not at all	No opinion
7/8/12		85	41	44	14	9	6	1
5/20/12		83	36	46	17	10	7	1
7/8/12	RV	88	44	44	12	8	4	*
5/20/12	RV	84	39	45	16	9	6	*

Obama:

7/8/12		90	48	43	9	6	3	1
5/20/12		91	48	43	9	4	5	*

7/8/12	RV	91	51	40	8	5	3	1
5/20/12	RV	93	51	41	7	4	4	0

Romney:

7/8/12		79	34	46	20	12	8	1
5/20/12		73	23	50	25	16	9	1

7/8/12	RV	85	38	47	15	11	4	*
5/20/12	RV	75	26	48	25	15	9	1

5a. (IF LEANED OBAMA) Is your vote more FOR Obama, or more AGAINST Romney?

		For Obama	Against Romney	No opinion
7/8/12		74	24	2
7/8/12	RV	75	23	3

Compare to:

		For Obama	Against McCain	No opinion
7/13/08	RV	81	16	3

		For Kerry	Against Bush	No opinion
9/8/04	RV	41	55	4
7/25/04	RV	41	56	3
6/20/04	RV	43	55	1
5/23/04		38	61	1
3/7/04		38	61	1

5b. (IF LEANED ROMNEY) Is your vote more FOR Romney, or more AGAINST Obama?

		For Romney	Against Obama	No opinion
7/8/12		35	59	6
7/8/12	RV	37	59	4

Compare to:

		For McCain	Against Obama	No opinion
7/13/08	RV	70	28	2

		For Bush	Against Kerry	No opinion
9/8/04	RV	84	14	2
7/25/04	RV	81	17	2
6/20/04	RV	82	17	1
5/23/04		77	21	1
3/7/04		86	13	2

6. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Obama is handling his job as president? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

		----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion	
7/8/12	47	24	24	49	15	34	4	
5/20/12	47	26	21	49	13	36	3	
4/8/12	50	30	20	45	10	35	6	
3/10/12	46	28	18	50	11	39	4	
2/4/12	50	29	22	46	11	36	3	
1/15/12	48	25	23	48	11	37	4	
12/18/11	49	25	24	47	13	34	4	
11/3/11	44	22	22	53	15	37	3	
10/2/11	42	21	21	54	14	40	4	
9/1/11	43	21	22	53	16	38	3	
8/9/11*	44	18	26	46	9	37	10	
7/17/11	47	25	22	48	14	35	5	
6/5/11	47	27	20	49	13	37	4	
5/2/11**	56	29	27	38	14	24	6	
4/17/11	47	27	21	50	12	37	3	
3/13/11	51	27	24	45	12	33	4	
1/16/11	54	30	23	43	15	28	3	
12/12/10	49	24	25	47	15	32	4	
10/28/10	50	27	23	45	11	34	5	
10/3/10	50	26	24	47	13	34	3	
9/2/10	46	24	22	52	14	38	3	
7/11/10	50	28	22	47	12	35	3	
6/6/10	52	30	22	45	12	33	4	
4/25/10	54	31	23	44	11	33	3	
3/26/10	53	34	20	43	8	35	3	
2/8/10	51	29	22	46	12	33	3	
1/15/10	53	30	24	44	13	32	2	
12/13/09	50	31	18	46	13	33	4	
11/15/09	56	32	23	42	13	29	2	
10/18/09	57	33	23	40	11	29	3	
9/12/09	54	35	19	43	12	31	3	
8/17/09	57	35	21	40	11	29	3	
7/18/09	59	38	22	37	9	28	4	
6/21/09	65	36	29	31	10	22	4	
4/24/09	69	42	27	26	8	18	4	
3/29/09	66	40	26	29	9	20	5	
2/22/09	68	43	25	25	8	17	7	

*Washington Post

**Washington Post/Pew Research Center

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

7/8/12 - Summary Table*

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	op.
a. The economy	44	21	23	54	13	41	2
b. Health care	41	25	16	52	11	41	7
c. Immigration issues	38	20	18	52	18	34	10

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

Trend:

a. The economy

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
7/8/12	44	21	23	54	13	41	2
5/20/12	42	20	22	55	11	44	2
4/8/12	44	23	21	54	12	42	2
3/10/12	38	20	18	59	9	50	2
2/4/12	44	23	22	53	11	41	3
1/15/12	41	19	22	57	11	46	2
12/18/11	41	17	24	56	13	43	2
11/3/11	38	18	20	61	13	48	2
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. Health care

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
7/8/12	41	25	16	52	11	41	7
1/16/11	43	26	18	52	11	41	5

7/11/10	45	27	19	50	10	40	5
4/25/10	49	29	20	49	9	40	1
3/26/10	48	33	15	49	6	43	3
2/8/10	43	24	19	53	11	43	3
1/15/10	44	24	21	52	9	43	4
12/13/09	44	27	18	53	10	43	3
11/15/09	47	28	19	49	8	41	3
10/18/09	48	30	18	48	10	38	4
9/12/09	48	32	15	48	10	38	4
8/17/09	46	27	19	50	8	42	5
7/18/09	49	25	24	44	11	33	7
6/21/09	53	27	26	39	10	29	9
4/24/09	57	NA	NA	29	NA	NA	13

c. Immigration issues

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
7/8/12	38	20	18	52	18	34	10
6/6/10	39	17	23	51	14	37	10
3/26/10	33	14	19	43	15	28	23
4/24/09	48	NA	NA	35	NA	NA	18

8. Do you think things in this country (are generally going in the right direction) or do you feel things (have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track)?

	Right direction	Wrong track	No opinion
7/8/12	33	63	4
4/8/12	33	64	3
1/15/12	30	68	2
11/3/11	22	74	3
9/1/11	20	77	3
6/5/11	32	66	2
1/16/11	38	60	3
12/12/10	31	67	2
10/28/10 RV	27	71	2
6/6/10	37	60	3
3/26/10	38	60	2
1/15/10	37	62	1
11/15/09	44	55	2
10/18/09	44	54	2
8/17/09	44	55	1
6/21/09	47	50	3
4/24/09	50	48	2
3/29/09	42	57	1
2/22/09	31	67	2
1/16/09	19	78	3
12/14/08	15	82	3
10/25/08 LV	13	85	2
10/11/08 RV	8	90	2
9/22/08 RV	14	83	3
8/22/08	19	78	2
6/15/08	14	84	2
5/11/08	16	82	2
1/12/08	21	77	2
11/1/07	24	74	2
6/1/07	25	73	2
1/19/07	26	71	3

Call for full trend.

9. What do you think is more important right now - (having the federal government spend money to try to encourage job creation, even if that increases the federal budget deficit); or (having the federal government hold down the federal budget deficit, even if it means not spending money to try to encourage job creation)? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	-Encourage job creation -			--- Hold down deficit ---			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
7/8/12	48	32	16	45	14	31	7
11/3/11	46	31	15	49	19	31	4

10. For each item I name, please tell me how important it will be in your vote for president this year. Will it be an extremely important issue, very important, somewhat important or less important than that?

7/8/12 - Summary Table*

	----- Important -----			-Not as important--			No
	NET	Extremely	Very	NET	Somewhat	Less	op.
a. The economy	89	53	36	11	10	1	*
b. Health care policy	77	42	35	23	18	5	1
c. Immigration issues	48	18	30	51	37	14	1
d. The federal budget deficit	70	36	34	29	24	5	1
e. Taxes	65	32	33	33	27	6	2
f. Appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court	49	26	23	47	32	15	4

*Full sample asked items a and b; half sample asked items c and d; other half asked e and f.

Trend:

a. The economy

	----- Important -----			-Not as important--			No
	NET	Extremely	Very	NET	Somewhat	Less	op.
7/8/12	89	53	36	11	10	1	*
7/13/08	92	50	41	8	7	1	0

b. Health care policy

	----- Important -----			-Not as important--			No
	NET	Extremely	Very	NET	Somewhat	Less	op.
7/8/12	77	42	35	23	18	5	1
7/13/08*	78	39	39	22	15	7	*

*7/13/08 "Health care"

c. Immigration issues

	----- Important -----			-Not as important--			No
	NET	Extremely	Very	NET	Somewhat	Less	op.
7/8/12	48	18	30	51	37	14	1
7/13/08	63	27	36	37	29	7	1

d. The federal budget deficit

	----- Important -----			-Not as important--			No
	NET	Extremely	Very	NET	Somewhat	Less	op.
7/8/12	70	36	34	29	24	5	1
7/13/08	72	34	38	27	21	5	1

e. Taxes

	----- Important ----			-Not as important--			No
	NET	Extremely	Very	NET	Somewhat	Less	op.
7/8/12	65	32	33	33	27	6	2
7/13/08	70	30	40	30	23	6	1

f. Appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court

	----- Important ----			-Not as important--			No
	NET	Extremely	Very	NET	Somewhat	Less	op.
7/8/12	49	26	23	47	32	15	4
7/13/08	60	26	35	36	25	11	3

11. Regardless of who you support, which candidate do you trust to do a better job
[ITEM] - (Obama) or (Romney)?

7/8/12 - Summary Table*

	Obama	Romney	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
a. Handling the economy	44	49	1	4	3
b. Handling health care policy	46	45	1	5	3
c. Handling immigration issues	45	45	1	5	5
d. Dealing with the federal budget deficit	42	52	1	3	2
e. Handling taxes	46	45	*	5	4
f. Making appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court	48	37	2	6	7

*Full sample asked items a and b; half sample asked items c and d; other half sample asked items e and f.

Trend:

a. Handling the economy

	Obama	Romney	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
7/8/12	44	49	1	4	3
5/20/12	46	47	*	3	3
4/8/12	43	47	1	5	5
2/4/12	45	48	1	4	2

b. Handling health care policy

	Obama	Romney	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
7/8/12	46	45	1	5	3
4/8/12	48	38	*	7	6

c. No trend.

d. Dealing with the federal budget deficit

	Obama	Romney	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
7/8/12	42	52	1	3	2
4/8/12	38	51	*	5	6
2/4/12	41	51	*	4	4

e. Handling taxes

	Both	Neither	No
--	------	---------	----

	Obama	Romney	(vol.)	(vol.)	opinion
7/8/12	46	45	*	5	4
4/8/12	45	42	*	7	5
2/4/12	52	42	*	3	3

f. No trend.

12. In thinking about your vote for president, what's more important - the things Obama has done as president in his first term, or the things you think he would do if elected to a second term?

	Things Obama has done in first term	Things Obama will do in second term	Both (vol.)	No opinion
7/8/12	33	51	10	6

13. Regardless of who you may support, who do you think [ITEM] - (Obama) or (Romney)?

7/8/12 - Summary Table*

	Obama	Romney	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
a. Better understands the economic problems people in this country are having	50	40	2	6	3
b. Is the stronger leader	47	42	3	2	6
c. Seems like the more friendly and likeable person	63	27	5	2	4
d. Is more likely to stand up for what he believes in	48	39	5	5	3
e. Has presented a clearer plan for dealing with the economic situation	43	38	2	12	5

*Full sample asked item a; half sample asked items b and c; other half asked d and e.

Trend:

a. Better understands the economic problems people in this country are having

	Obama	Romney	Both (vol.)	Neither vol.)	No opinion
7/8/12	50	40	2	6	3
5/20/12	48	40	2	7	3
4/8/12	49	37	2	9	4
2/4/12	53	36	2	7	3

b. Is the stronger leader

	Obama	Romney	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
7/8/12	47	42	3	2	6
4/8/12	46	40	1	6	7

c. Seems like the more friendly and likable person

	Obama	Romney	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
7/8/12	63	27	5	2	4
4/8/12	64	26	3	2	4

d. Is more likely to stand up for what he believes in

	Obama	Romney	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
7/8/12	48	39	5	5	3
5/20/12	51	38	3	4	4

e. Has presented a clearer plan for dealing with the economic situation

	Obama	Romney	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
7/8/12	43	38	2	12	5

Compare to:

	Obama	McCain	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/19/08 LV	50	32	2	13	3

14. On another subject, overall, do you support or oppose the federal law making changes to the health care system? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	Support			Oppose			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
7/08/12	47	27	20	47	14	33	6
4/8/12	39	23	17	53	13	40	8
3/10/12	41	24	17	52	11	41	7

Compare to: Overall, given what you know about them, would you say you support or oppose the changes to the health care system that have been enacted by (Congress) and (the Obama administration)?

	Support			Oppose			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
1/16/11	45	25	20	50	14	36	5
12/12/10	43	22	21	52	14	37	6
10/3/10	47	26	21	48	13	35	5
3/26/10	46	32	13	50	10	40	4
2/8/10*	46	22	25	49	11	38	5
1/15/10	44	22	22	51	12	39	5
12/13/09	44	25	19	51	11	40	5
11/15/09	48	30	18	49	10	39	3
10/18/09	45	26	19	48	12	36	7
9/12/09	46	30	16	48	12	36	6
8/17/09	45	27	18	50	10	40	5

*2/8/10 and prior: "proposed changes...that are being developed by"

15. Regardless of your feeling about the law itself, do you approve or disapprove of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on the health care law last week? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	Approve			Disapprove			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
7/8/12	42	25	17	44	11	33	14

16. (ASKED IF DO NOT SUPPORT HEALTH CARE CHANGES) What do you think is the best approach to the health care reform law: repeal all of it, repeal parts of it, or wait and see before deciding?

	Repeal all of it	Repeal parts of it	Wait and see	No opinion
7/8/12	33	30	34	3
1/16/11	33	35	30	3

12/12/10	29	30	38	3
----------	----	----	----	---

14/16 NET:

		----- Do not support (Oppose/DK/Ref) -----				
	Support	NET	Repeal all of it	Repeal parts of it	Wait and see	No opinion
7/8/12	47	53	18	16	18	2
1/16/11	45	55	18	19	17	2
12/12/10	43	58	17	17	22	2

17. If a candidate for U.S. Congress supports the federal health care law, would that make you more likely to support that candidate, more likely to oppose that candidate or wouldn't it make much difference in your vote? (IF SUPPORT/OPPOSE) Is that much more likely to support/oppose that candidate or somewhat more likely?

	---- Support ----			---- Oppose ----			No difference	No opinion
	NET	Much	Smwt	NET	Smwt	Much		
7/8/12	28	18	10	28	9	20	41	2
7/8/12 RV	30	20	11	31	9	22	37	2
7/11/10 RV*	39	25	15	37	6	31	21	2

*Part of a list item: "the new health care reform law"

Compare to: Say a candidate for Congress voted FOR the changes to the health care system recently enacted by (Congress) and (the Obama administration). Would that make you more likely to [support] that candidate for Congress, more likely to [oppose] that candidate, or wouldn't it make much difference in your vote? (IF SUPPORT/OPPOSE) Are you much more likely to support/oppose that candidate or somewhat more?

	---- Support ----			---- Oppose ----			No difference	No opinion
	NET	Much	Smwt	NET	Smwt	Much		
3/26/10	26	16	9	32	6	27	40	2
3/26/10 RV	27	17	9	35	5	29	36	2
1/15/10*	22	12	10	31	7	24	45	2
11/15/09	25	13	12	29	8	20	45	1
9/12/09	22	12	10	23	7	17	54	1
8/17/09	23	14	9	32	6	26	43	2

*1/15/10 and prior: "supports the proposed changes...being developed"

18. Just your best guess, who do you think will win the presidential election this year - (Obama) or (Romney)?

	Obama	Romney	Other (vol.)	No opinion
7/8/12	58	34	1	8

Compare to: Just your best guess, who do you think will win the presidential election this year - (Obama) or (the Republican candidate)?

	Obama	Rep. candidate	No opinion
3/10/12	54	40	6
1/15/12	46	49	5
12/18/11	46	49	5
10/2/11	37	55	8

19. For each item I name, please tell me if it is a major reason for you to (support) that candidate, a major reason for you to (oppose) that candidate, or not a major factor in your vote?

7/8/12 - Summary Table

	Major reason to support	Major reason to oppose	Not a major factor	No op.
a. Romney's work buying and restructuring companies before he went into politics	23	24	50	4
b. Obama's handling of the economy	36	43	19	2
c. Romney's call to repeal the new federal health care law	38	29	29	3
d. Obama's views on the size and role of government	26	37	34	3

Trend:

a. Romney's work buying and restructuring companies before he went into politics

	Major reason to support	Major reason to oppose	Not a major factor	No opinion
7/8/12	23	24	50	4
5/20/12	21	21	54	4

b. Obama's handling of the economy

	Major reason to support	Major reason to oppose	Not a major factor	No opinion
7/8/12	36	43	19	2
4/8/12	32	46	19	3
2/4/12	39	47	13	2

c. No trend.

d. Obama's views on the size and role of government

	Major reason to support	Major reason to oppose	Not a major factor	No opinion
7/8/12	26	37	34	3
4/8/12	22	39	34	5

20. In his work as a corporate investor, do you think Romney did more to (create jobs) or more to (cut jobs) in the United States?

	Create jobs	Cut jobs	No opinion
7/8/12*	36	40	24
2/4/12	32	36	32

*7/8/12 added "in the United States"

21-32 held for release.

*** END ***