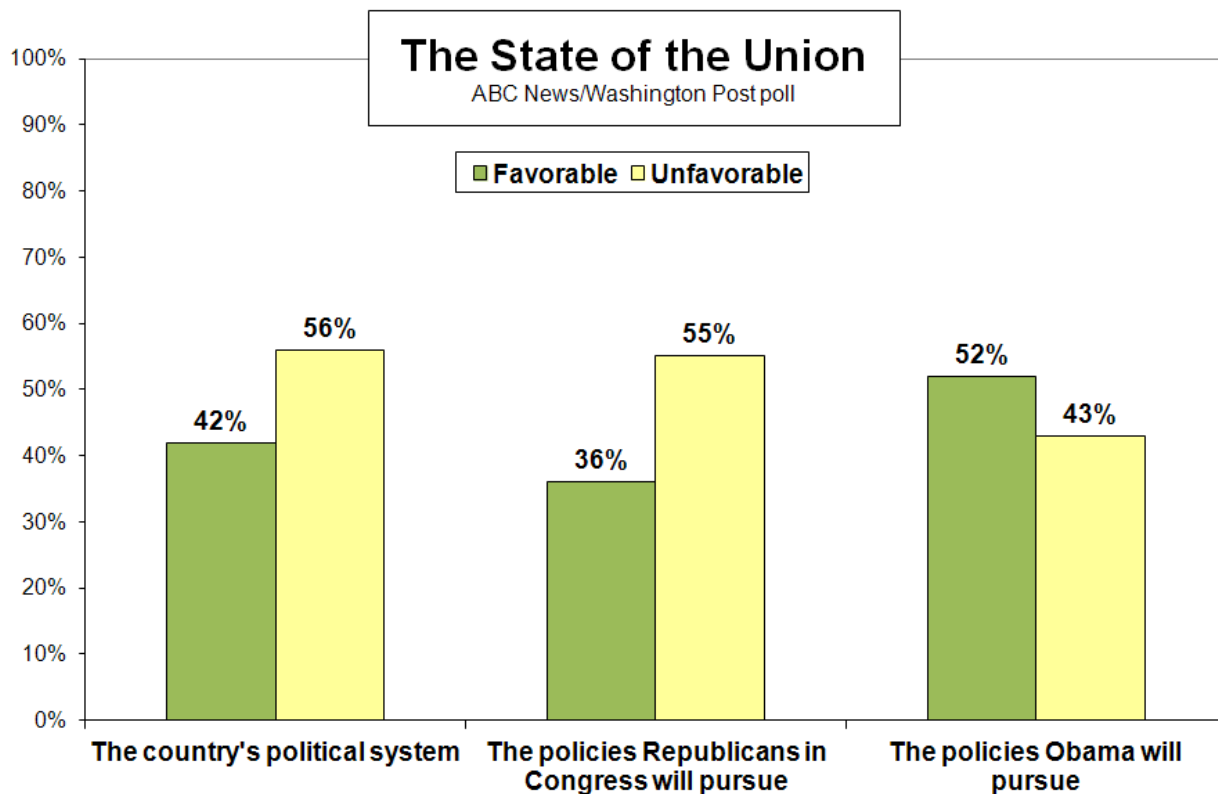


Americans Unhappy With System Overall, But Obama's Policies Beat Out GOP's

As politicians ponder the state of the union, the union's looking back at the state of politics. And it's none too thrilled.

Fifty-six percent of Americans in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll express an unfavorable opinion of the nation's political system. About as many, 55 percent, hold a negative view of the policies they expect the Republicans in Congress to offer in the next four years.

Barack Obama does better, but not great: Fifty-two percent have a favorable opinion of the policies he'll pursue in his second term, while 43 percent see them unfavorably. That's similar to the 51-45 percent optimism-pessimism rating Americans gave the expected policies of George W. Bush heading into his second term.



Intensity of sentiment in this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), also is better for the president. While similar numbers have a “strongly” negative opinion of all three, roughly twice as many see Obama’s plans strongly positively as say the same of the GOP’s plans and the political system overall, 30 percent vs. 14 and 16 percent, respectively.

The results come as the president prepares for his State of the Union address and the Republicans for their rebuttal this evening. With unemployment stubbornly high, the public’s broad discontent with the political system likely reflects longstanding economic gloom as well as dissatisfaction with politics itself. Moreover, deep partisan and ideological differences in assessments of Obama and the GOP’s policy plans underscore the sharp divisions in the country that make the middle ground a tough place to claim.

PARTY – As things stand, 73 percent of Republicans approve of their own party’s plans for the next four years. But following the 2012 election, nearly two-thirds are negative about the political system overall, and 86 percent see Obama’s plans negatively.

Even Democrats only split about evenly, 51-47 percent favorable-unfavorable, on the political system overall. Nearly nine in 10 see Obama’s agenda positively, while nearly eight in 10 respond negatively to the GOP’s plans.

Obama also outpaces the GOP in intensity of support for his policy plans among the party faithful. While 57 percent of Democrats are “strongly” positive about the president’s plans, only 32 percent of Republicans say the same about the plans of congressional Republicans.

Independents are better aligned with Obama, but not impressively so; they split evenly on Obama’s prospective policies, while a majority looks askance at the GOP’s plans. And when it comes to the political system overall, independents view it negatively by a 17-point margin.

Though majorities across the ideological spectrum see the present state of politics negatively, liberals are more positive about Obama’s plans than are conservatives about the Republicans’. Moderates, for their part, are broadly supportive of Obama’s agenda, but not the GOP’s.

	Favorable-unfavorable		
	Political system	Policies Obama will pursue	Policies GOP will pursue
All	42-56%	52-43	36-55
Democrats	51-47	87-11	14-78
Republicans	34-65	11-86	73-21
Independents	41-58	48-45	36-55
Liberals	46-53	76-21	24-69
Moderates	44-54	63-33	28-63
Conservatives NET	39-60	30-67	54-39
Somewhat cons.	39-59	36-61	51-42
Very cons.	39-60	20-76	57-33

GROUPS – Apart from political allegiances, most Americans are in agreement that the political system is in a bad state. One notable exception, however, is Hispanics, who may be responding positively to their newfound electoral influence and the long-awaited movement on immigration reform: Sixty-two percent of Hispanics express a positive view of the political system overall, compared with only 45 percent of blacks and 37 percent of whites.

Eight in 10 Hispanics see the president’s plans for his second term positively, and they divide 41-47 percent favorable-unfavorable on those of congressional Republicans. Majorities of whites see the plans of both sides negatively, while overwhelming majorities of blacks respond positively to Obama’s direction, and negatively to the GOP’s.

	Favorable-unfavorable		
	Political system	Policies Obama will pursue	Policies GOP will pursue
All	42-56%	52-43	36-55
Whites	37-61	39-57	39-53
Blacks	45-52	93- 3	12-82
Hispanics	62-38	80-16	41-47
Men	41-57	48-48	36-57
Women	43-56	56-39	37-52
College grad	45-54	57-41	33-60
Non-grad	41-57	50-44	38-53
Less than \$50K	43-55	59-37	34-57
\$50-100K	44-55	47-51	41-51
\$100K-plus	38-61	49-50	38-55
Less than 50	42-57	58-38	38-55
50-plus	42-56	44-50	36-55

Among other groups, half or more of both sexes and across all age groups, regions, income and education brackets have an unfavorable opinion of the policies they expect Congressional Republicans will pursue. Obama, by contrast, has majorities among many groups on board with his plans, including women, single adults, those younger than 50 and those in the lower- to middle-income bracket. It puts him in the leadership position for the term ahead – albeit not by the commanding margin he might want.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cell phone Feb. 6-10, 2013, among a random national sample of 1,021 adults. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points. The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by SSRS/Social Science Research Solutions of Media, Pa.

Analysis by Gregory Holyk.

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?

2/10/13 - Summary Table

	NET	Favorable Strongly	Smwt	NET	Unfavorable Smwt	Strongly	No op.
a. this country's political system	42	16	26	56	25	31	2
b. the policies Barack Obama will pursue in his second term	52	30	23	43	13	30	5
c. the policies the Republicans in Congress will pursue in the next four years	36	14	23	55	23	32	9

Trend:

a. this country's political system

	NET	Favorable Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Unfavorable Somewhat	Strongly	No opinion
2/10/13	42	16	26	56	25	31	2

Compare to: 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?

	NET	Satisfied Very	Mostly	NET	Dissatisfied Mostly	Very	No opinion
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

b-c. No trend.

*** END ***