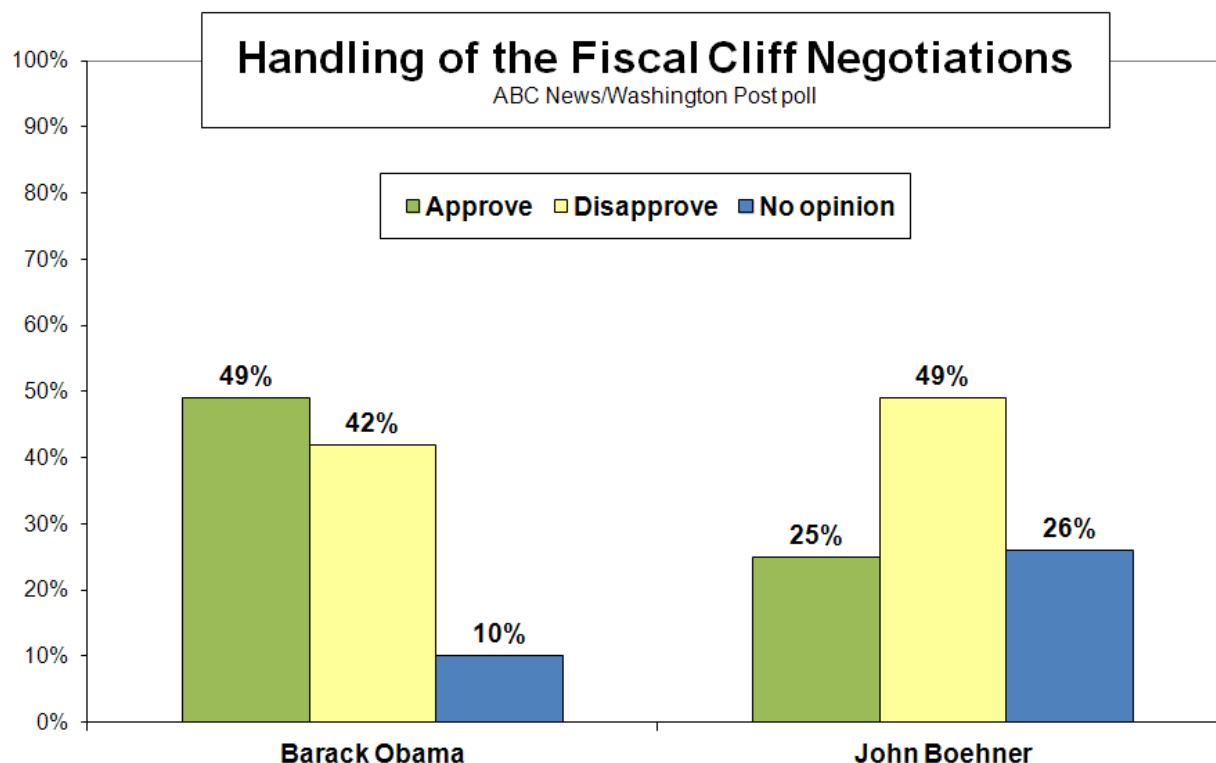


## **Obama Tops Boehner on Budget Talks, With Much Broader Core Support**

Barack Obama holds a substantial advantage over John Boehner in handling budget negotiations to avoid the fiscal cliff: Nearly twice as many Americans in a new ABC News/Washington Post poll approve of the president's work on the issue so far as favor the speaker's approach.

That's at least in part because many more people are in the dark about Boehner's efforts, underscoring a president's greater ability to command the spotlight to make his case – and to draw more unified backing from his party's core supporters.

Obama's rating is hardly overwhelming: More Americans approve rather than disapprove of how he's handling the cliff talks by a narrow 7-point margin, 49-42 percent. But Boehner wins approval from just 25 percent in this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), while 49 percent disapprove; an additional 26 percent don't know enough to say.



Obama is notably stronger in his base, marking the way in which a president often is better positioned than a less well-known legislative leader to draw loyalty from his party's adherents.

While about eight in 10 Democrats and liberals alike approve of how Obama is handling the talks, far fewer Republicans and conservatives, 38 and 35 percent, say the same about Boehner.

Independents, for their part, split evenly on Obama’s efforts, vs. a nearly 2-1 negative rating on Boehner’s, 25-46 percent approve-disapprove. Among political moderates majorities approve of Obama’s performance (53-36 percent) and disapprove of Boehner’s (22-54 percent).

Notably, the speaker gets more than 40 percent approval for his handling of the fiscal cliff talks only among two related groups: very conservative Americans (46 percent) and conservative Republicans (41 percent). Obama, by contrast, has approval from 78 percent of liberals and 83 percent of liberal Democrats.

	Ratings on the fiscal cliff talks		
	Approve-Disapprove-No opin.		
	Obama	Boehner	
All	49-42-10%	25-49-26	
Democrats	80-14- 6	19-64-18	
Republicans	8-83- 9	38-36-27	
Independents	45-44-11	25-46-29	
Liberals	78-17- 5	21-58-21	
Moderates	53-36-11	22-54-24	
Conservatives NET	25-67- 8	35-42-23	
Somewhat cons.	25-66- 9	29-45-27	
Very cons.	24-70- 6	46-37-17	
Whites	39-51- 9	23-50-26	
Nonwhites	68-21-11	30-45-25	
College grad	54-40- 7	20-60-20	
Non-grad	47-42-11	27-45-28	
Less than \$50K	51-38-11	26-43-31	
\$50-100K	45-47- 8	20-60-20	
\$100K-plus	52-44- 4	34-53-13	
Less than 65	51-39-11	24-48-27	
65-plus	38-56- 5	30-51-19	

While Boehner has room to improve, intensity of sentiment currently is another problem for him. Only 8 percent of Americans “strongly” approve of his handling of the budget negotiations, while three in 10 strongly disapprove. Strong views on Obama divide more closely, 27 vs. 30 percent.

Beyond partisanship and ideology, approval of Obama’s work on the fiscal cliff negotiations is higher among groups including nonwhites and adults younger than 65, and he does slightly better on the issue with college-educated adults than others. Boehner’s approval peaks, albeit just at 30 and 34 percent, respectively, among seniors and more affluent Americans.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cell phone Dec. 5-9, 2012, among a random national sample of 1,018 adults. 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 SSRS/Social Science Research Solutions of Media, Pa.

Analysis by Damla Ergun.

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.

1. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way (ITEM) is handling budget negotiations to avoid the so-called "fiscal cliff?" Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

12/9/12 - Summary Table

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
a. Barack Obama	49	27	22	42	11	30	10
b. House Speaker John Boehner	25	8	17	49	20	29	26

\*\*\* END \*\*\*