

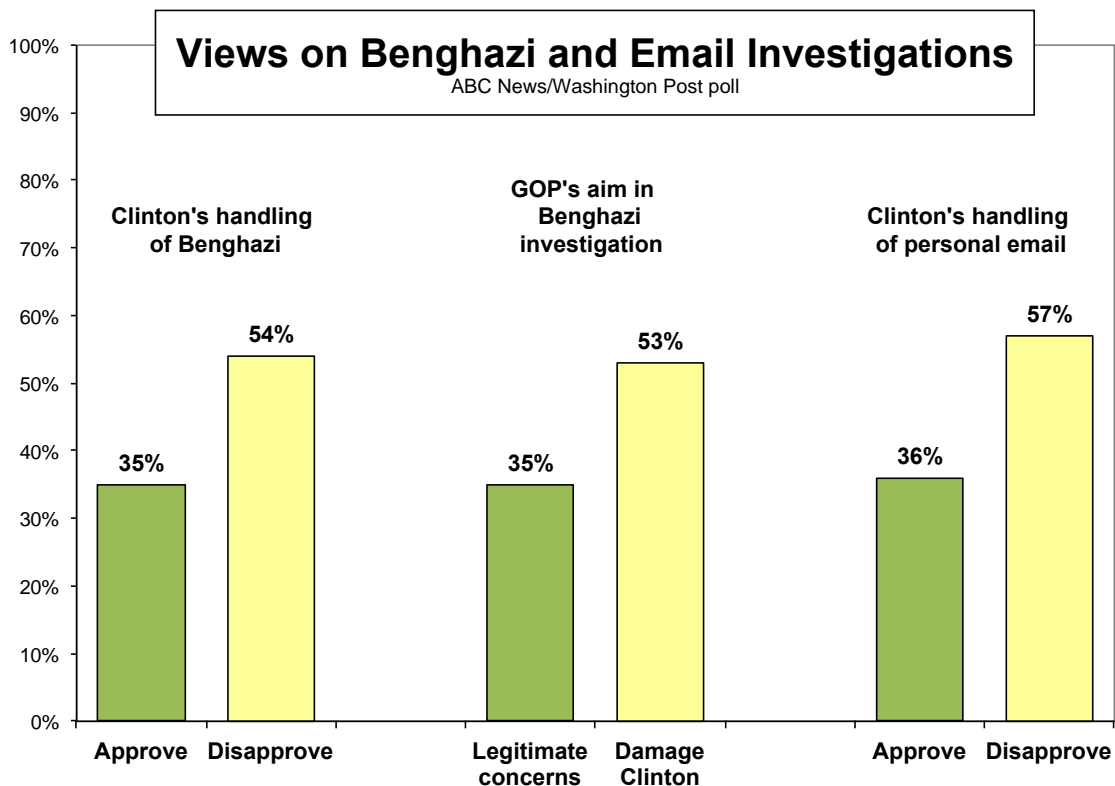
## **Both Clinton and GOP Viewed Negatively on Benghazi**

More than half of Americans in a new ABC News/Washington Post poll disapprove of Hillary Clinton's handling of questions on the Benghazi attack – yet as many also say the Republicans in Congress are investigating it chiefly to damage her politically.

With Clinton on Capitol Hill to testify before the House Select Committee on Benghazi today, 54 percent disapprove of how she's dealt with questions on the issue. But 53 percent also think the ongoing investigation mainly reflects Republican efforts to harm her reputation.

Just 35 percent say that Republicans are raising legitimate concerns about the 2012 attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya. This result follows a comment by House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy suggesting that the investigation had hurt Clinton's popularity. (He later said he had not meant that this was its purpose.)

None of this has helped Clinton's own rating on the issue. Indeed her 54 percent disapproval for handling questions on Benghazi compares with 50 percent in May – not significantly worse, but no better. Further, 57 percent disapprove of her handling of questions about her use of personal email while she was secretary of state.



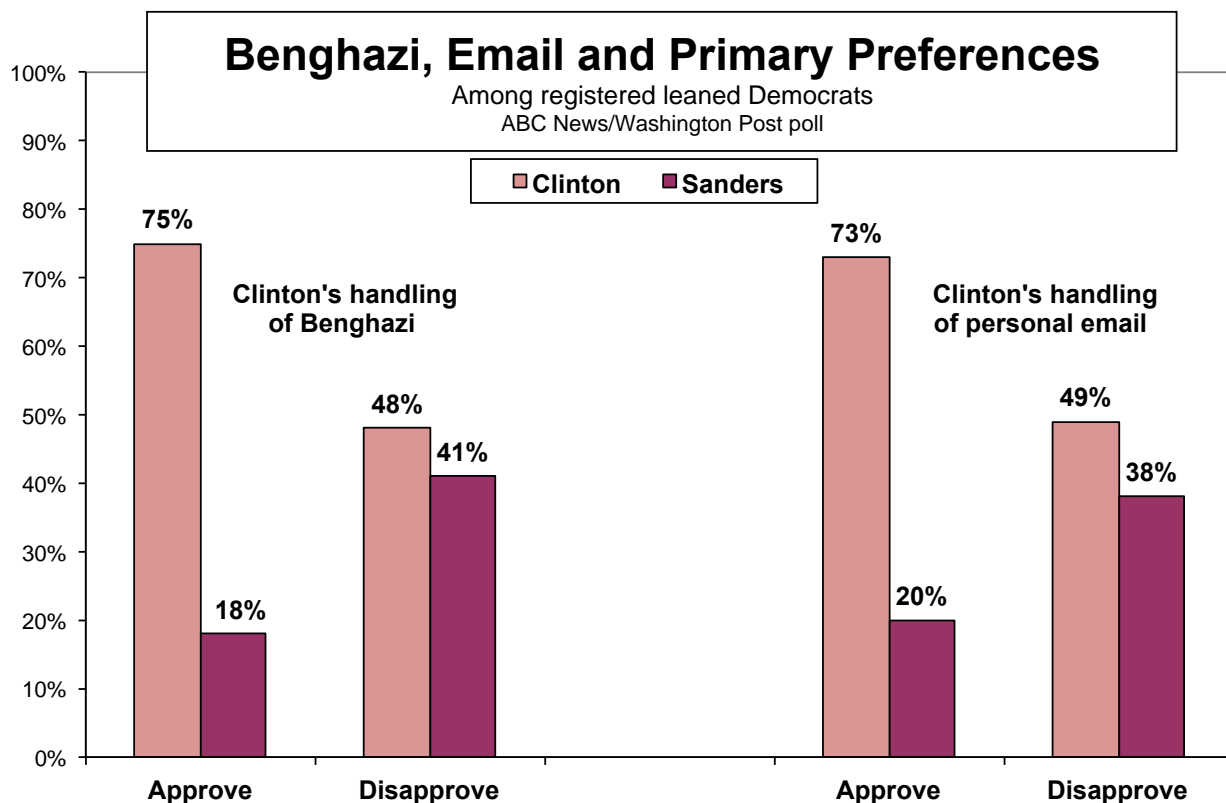
THE ELECTION – Clinton’s weak ratings on these issues are potential stumbling blocks for her presidential campaign. This poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), finds that six in 10 independents and 53 percent of moderates disapprove of her handling of questions about her email; disapproval on Benghazi questions reaches 55 and 49 percent in these groups.

These views relate to expectations about who is most likely to win the election. Among those who approve of her handling of these issues, more than six in 10 think she’ll be the next president. That plummets to just two in 10 among those who disapprove. And this difference is not simply due to partisanship: among independents and moderates who disapprove, only a quarter predict that she’ll win next November.

While other Democratic candidates have mainly steered clear of criticizing Clinton on this front, it remains a potentially potent line of attack: Only small majorities of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents approve of her handling of questions on either issue.

The continuing controversies also feed into [questions about Clinton’s honesty](#). Large majorities of leaned Democrats favor Clinton over the second-place Democratic candidate, Bernie Sanders, on the issues overall, electability and empathy. But they split on who is most honest and trustworthy – with especially low ratings for Clinton on this attribute among those who question her handling of the Benghazi and email issues. (Directionality, of course, may go both ways.)

Indeed, though Clinton regained her footing in this poll with a wider 39-point lead against Sanders, her margin substantially declines among leaned Democrats who disapprove of her handling of questions about her use of personal email and the situation in Benghazi.



**GROUPS** – As noted, views of Clinton’s and the GOP’s handling of the matter break strongly along political lines. At least 85 percent of Republicans disapprove of Clinton on Benghazi and the emails alike, while just three in 10 Democrats do so, with independents in between. Similar patterns emerge among ideological groups, although the differences are somewhat more muted.

	Clinton on Benghazi		Clinton on email		Republican investigations	
	Appr.	Disap.	Appr.	Disap.	Legit.	Political
All	35%	54	36%	57	35%	53
Democrats	60	30	63	31	12	81
Republicans	9	85	9	89	65	19
Independents	35	55	34	60	35	53
Liberals	58	33	55	39	19	74
Moderates	39	49	40	53	31	58
Conservatives	20	73	21	73	50	36

A near mirror image emerges in response to the GOP’s investigations. Eight in 10 Democrats and a bare majority of independents view the Republicans as mainly trying to damage Clinton politically. In contrast, 65 percent of Republicans think that the investigations are raising legitimate concerns.

**METHODOLOGY** – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone Oct. 15-18, 2015, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,001 adults. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points, including the survey’s design effect. Partisan divisions are 30-24-39 percent, Democrats-Republicans-independents.

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. See details on the survey’s methodology [here](#).

Analysis by Chad P. Kiewiet de Jonge.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

Media contacts: [Heather Riley](#), (212) 456-4396, or [Van Scott](#), (212) 456-7243.

Full results follow:

1-15 previously released; 18-20 held for release.

16. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Hillary Clinton is handling questions about [ITEM]?

10/18/15 - Summary Table

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
a. Her use of personal email while she was secretary of state	36	57	7
b. The attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi,			

Libya, in 2012 while she was secretary of state 35 54 11

Trend:

a. Her use of personal email while she was secretary of state?

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
10/18/15	36	57	7
9/10/15	34	55	11
5/31/15	31	55	14

b. The attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya, in 2012 while she was secretary of state

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
10/18/15	35	54	11
5/31/15	33	50	17

17. Do you think Republicans in Congress are (mainly raising legitimate concerns) in their investigation of what occurred in Benghazi, or are they (mainly trying to damage Clinton politically)?

	Raising legitimate concerns	Damage Clinton politically	Both (vol.)	No opinion
10/18/15	35	53	6	7

Compare to:

Republicans in Congress have criticized the way the Obama administration handled the attack that killed a U.S. ambassador in Benghazi, Libya last fall. Do you think Republicans in Congress are (raising legitimate concerns), or are they (just political posturing)?

	Raising legitimate concerns	Just political posturing	Both (vol.)	No opinion
5/19/13	44	45	2	9

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