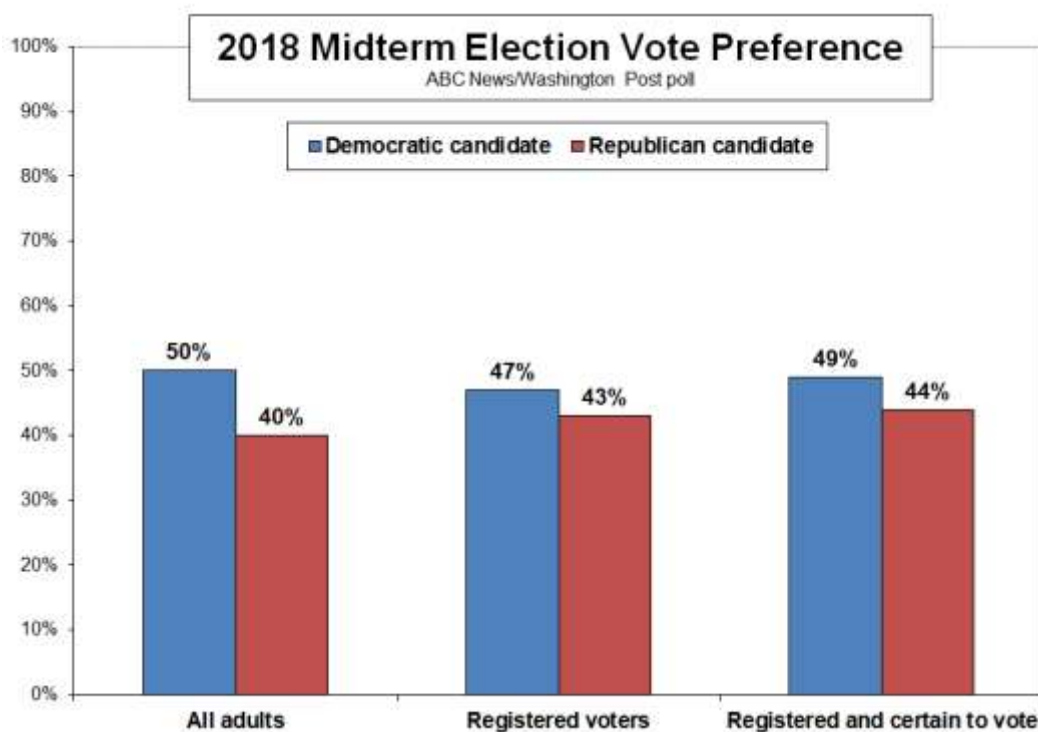


2018 Vote Margin Narrows as Democratic Engagement Slips

A Democratic advantage in the upcoming midterm elections has narrowed in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll, within indications of lessened engagement on the out-party side.

A 10-point Democratic lead among all adults narrows to 4 points among registered voters and 5 points among those who say they're both registered and certain to vote; neither of those is statistically significant. In January, by contrast, Democrats held similar margins in all three groups – 13, 12 and 15 points, respectively.

Factors at play include a slide in self-reported registration among Democrats, a sign of waning engagement; consolidation among Republicans in their base; and better results for the GOP among less-educated Americans generally, and non-college-educated white women in particular.



Among other results, the poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), finds more than three quarters of Americans looking for a congressional candidate who agrees with them on gun policy; fewer, but still half, calling it important for them to back a candidate who shares their

view of Donald Trump; and even fewer, about a third, looking for someone who agrees with them on Nancy Pelosi, the House Democratic leader.

GENERIC BALLOT – The generic ballot – asking people if they’d vote for the Republican or the Democratic candidate in their congressional district – is a rough gauge, in part because so many seats are not seriously contested (often with help from gerrymandering). Further, turnout in November is the real question, and a longstanding challenge for Democrats, whose often less-engaged voters tend to lag in midterm participation.

Self-reported registration is one indicator. It’s less a measure of actual registration than one of political engagement. And the share of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents who report being registered to vote has slipped from 84 percent in November to 79 percent in January and 75 percent now. That compares to 87 percent among Republicans and Republican-leaning independents, up slightly from 82 percent three months ago.

Further, among Republican likely voters, 95 percent say they’d vote for their party’s candidate (it was 89 percent in January), now matching its level among Democrats, 95 percent.

Three months ago, moreover, the two parties ran about evenly among registered voters with no more than a high school diploma, and white women without college degrees. GOP candidates now lead in both groups, by 11 and 15 points, respectively. That could reflect economic improvement making its way to less-educated, lower-income groups; in a weekly survey by Bloomberg, consumer sentiment was its best in 17 years last week.

PRIORITIES – Seventy-eight percent of Americans and registered voters alike say it’s important to them to support a candidate who shares their opinion on gun policy, including four in 10 who say it’s “extremely” important. That includes roughly equal numbers on both sides of the issue – whether they prioritize enacting new laws to reduce gun violence or protecting the right to own guns. On one hand there are more who emphasize new gun laws; on the other, those focused on protecting gun rights are more likely to say it’s “extremely” important to them to back a candidate who agrees with them, 49 vs. 40 percent among registered voters.

Trump, meanwhile, is a potential concern for some GOP candidates. His average approval rating at 15 months in office is the lowest on record for any president in polling dating to the Truman administration. And 52 percent of registered voters say it’s extremely or very important to them to support a candidate who shares their view of Trump, rising to 60 percent of likely voters.

Fifty-four percent of those who approve of Trump are looking for a candidate who agrees with them, a similar share to the 53 percent of Trump disapprovers who say the same; the difference is that disapprovers outnumber approvers by 10 points among registered voters.

Using another gauge, registered voters who see Trump favorably as a person are 10 points more likely than those who see him unfavorably to seek a candidate who agrees with them. But many more registered voters are unfavorable toward Trump than favorable, keeping Trump more of a GOP vulnerability.

Republicans have sought to balance that risk by tying Democratic candidates to Pelosi. Thirty-five percent of registered voters in this poll say it's important to them to support a candidate who shares their view on Pelosi, including 43 percent of those who see her favorably and 38 percent of those who see her unfavorably.

Overall, she's seen more unfavorably than favorably by 48-33 percent among registered voters; one in five have no opinion. (This is much less negative than Trump's 57-36 percent unfavorable-favorable score, albeit with a substantially higher share of don't knows.) As such, Pelosi's impact looks like a wash overall – except, potentially, in terms of motivating the Republican base. Among registered voters, 76 percent of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents see Pelosi negatively, surpassing her positive score among Democrats and Democratic leaners by 19 points.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone April 8-11, 2018, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,002 adults and 865 registered voters. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points, including the design effect. Partisan divisions are 32-25-35 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 Associates of Rockville, Md. See details on the survey's methodology [here](#).

Analysis by Sofi Sinozich and Gary Langer.

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

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Full results follow.

11-21 held for release. 1, 2, 7a, 10, 22-27 previously released.
 *= less than 0.5 percent.

3. Most people skip the congressional elections in off-years when there's no presidential race. How about you - did you vote in the congressional election in 2014, or did you skip that like most people?

	Did vote	Did not vote	Too young to vote (vol.)	No opinion
4/11/18	53	38	6	3
1/18/18	53	39	5	3
11/1/17	48	46	3	3
7/13/17	54	43	NA	3

4. How likely are you to vote in the congressional election in 2018 - 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 50/50	Don't think will vote (vol.)	No opinion
4/11/18	58	14	15	7	3	2
1/18/18	54	19	15	9	3	1
11/1/17	56	20	16	6	2	1
7/13/17	58	17	13	8	4	1
4/11/18 RV	67	13	13	5	1	1
1/18/18 RV	62	17	14	5	1	*
11/1/17 RV	62	19	14	3	1	*
7/13/17 RV	66	17	11	4	1	1

Compare to:

I'd like you to rate the chances that you will vote in the Congressional election the week after next: 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 50/50	Don't think will vote (vol.)	Already voted (vol.)	No op.
10/26/14 RV	59	15	11	7	1	6	*
10/12/14* RV	63	15	15	5	2	1	0
9/7/14 RV	71	16	9	2	1	NA	*
6/1/14 RV	74	12	9	4	1	"	*
4/27/14 RV	68	15	12	4	1	"	*
10/28/10 RV	64	13	11	5	1	7	0
10/3/10 RV	70	15	9	5	2	NA	*
9/2/10 RV	70	14	14	1	1	"	0
7/11/10 RV	73	13	11	2	*	"	*
6/6/10 RV	72	14	11	3	*	"	0
11/4/06 RV	70	11	7	4	2	5	*
10/22/06 RV	75	14	7	3	*	1	2

*10/12/14 "next month," 9/7/14 and previous "in November," except for 10/28/10 and 11/04/06 "next week's Congressional election"

5. If the election for the U.S. House of Representatives were being held today, would you vote for (the Democratic candidate) or (the Republican candidate) in your congressional district? Would you lean toward the (Democratic candidate) or toward the (Republican candidate)?

NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE - REG VOTERS

	Dem cand.	Rep cand.	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
4/11/18	47	43	1	3	*	5
1/18/18	51	39	1	2	1	6
11/1/17	51	40	1	3	1	4
10/24/16 LV	47	46	1	1	1	4
10/13/16	48	42	1	3	1	5
5/19/16	45	45	*	3	1	6
10/26/14	47	44	1	2	1	5
10/12/14	46	44	1	3	1	5
9/7/14	46	44	1	4	1	4
6/1/14	47	45	1	3	1	4
4/27/14	45	44	1	2	1	7
3/2/14	46	45	1	3	*	5
1/23/14	45	46	1	3	1	5
12/15/13	47	45	1	4	1	3
10/20/13	48	40	1	5	1	4

5/19/13	48	40	2	4	1	6
10/28/10	49	44	1	2	*	3
10/3/10	47	43	1	3	1	5
9/2/10*	45	47	1	2	1	5
7/11/10	46	47	*	2	*	5
6/6/10	47	44	2	2	1	4
4/25/10	48	43	1	2	1	6
3/26/10	48	44	1	2	*	4
2/8/10	45	48	*	3	*	4

*9/2/10 and previous: "Will not vote (vol.)"
Call for full trend.

6. Is supporting a candidate who shares your opinion on [ITEM] important to you in the congressional election this fall, or not important? (IF IMPORTANT) Would you say it's extremely important to you, very important, or somewhat important?

4/11/18 - Summary Table

	--- More important ---			-- Less important --			No op.
	NET	Extremely	Very	NET	Somewhat	Not	
a. Donald Trump	50	28	22	49	15	34	1
b. Gun policy	78	40	38	22	10	11	1
c. Nancy Pelosi, the Democratic leader of the House	34	16	18	58	16	42	7

7. Do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of [ITEM]? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

b. Nancy Pelosi

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
4/11/18	32	11	21	44	15	29	24
10/28/10 RV	29	12	17	58	17	41	13
12/11/06	46	16	30	33	16	17	21

8. Did you happen to vote in the last presidential election, when Donald Trump ran against Hillary Clinton, Gary Johnson and Jill Stein, or did you skip that one?

	Did vote	Did not vote	No opinion
4/11/18	74	26	*
11/1/17	73	27	0
4/20/17	74	26	*

9. (ASK IF VOTED IN LAST PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION) Which candidate did you vote for?

	Donald Trump	Hillary Clinton	Gary Johnson	Jill Stein	Someone else (vol.)	No opinion
4/11/18	43	46	4	1	4	2
11/1/17	43	46	3	1	4	2
4/20/17	43	46	4	2	3	2

*** END ***