

## **Fans of Congressional Gridlock Cheer the Election's Outcome**

As many Republicans favor gridlock as oppose it, complicating the lives of leaders of the victorious party in this month's congressional elections.

While the phrase customarily is taken as a negative, this ABC News/Yahoo! News polls finds that Republican registered voters in fact divide evenly, 42-43 percent, on whether gridlock is a bad thing, because it prevents good legislation from being passed – or a good thing, because it blocks bad laws.

The split underscores many Republicans' skepticism of active government. But it may make it difficult for GOP leaders to push their own legislative agenda. And it raises questions about the durability of the party's appeal to independent registered voters, who favored Republicans by a record margin Nov. 2, but who see gridlock as a negative by a 2-1 margin, 57-28 percent.

Democratic registered voters even more broadly see gridlock as a negative, and among all registered voters combined it's viewed negatively by 56-31 percent, again nearly 2-1.

	Gridlock:	
	Good thing	Bad thing
All	31%	56
Republicans	43	42
Independents	28	57
Democrats	22	67

(Among registered voters)

Whatever they think of it, most believe it's coming: This poll, produced for ABC and Yahoo! News by [Langer Research Associates](#), finds that 81 percent of Americans overall think gridlock is likely to occur in the next Congress. However fewer, just more than a third, say it's very likely.

JOY – Beyond Republicans, the November election has brought particular joy to gridlock fans. Among Americans who see gridlock as a good thing, 55 percent think the results of the election will move the country in the right direction. Among critics of gridlock, that dives to 22 percent.

The election outcome – with historic gains for the GOP in the House – gets more positive than negative marks overall, albeit with a healthy degree of skepticism. Thirty-four percent of adults (especially Republicans, as well as gridlock fans) think the results will move the country in the right direction. Twenty-one percent think it will head the nation the wrong way.

But 40 percent, a plurality, don't think the outcome of the election will make a difference in the

country's direction at all. That view's especially prevalent among independents, a customarily politically skeptical group. They see the election results as a positive by 30-14 percent, but 51 percent of independents don't think it'll make much difference.

	Effect of election results		
	Right direction	Wrong direction	No difference
All	34%	21	40
Republicans	65	6	24
Democrats	11	45	41
Independents	30	14	51
Gridlock good	55	14	30
Gridlock bad	22	29	46
Age 65+	52	16	27
Age 18-29	21	27	46
Income <\$50K	28	24	43
Income \$50K+	42	19	35

**GROUPS** – Beyond partisan preferences, there are difference among other groups on these issues. Among seniors, another group that voted for Republicans for House by a broad margin, 52 percent think the outcome is likely to move the country in the right direction; vs. just 16 percent wrong direction. Young adults, under 30, are much less apt to think the election results will help the country's direction (21 percent say so); more instead think it won't make a difference.

Income's a differentiator, too; Americans with household incomes of \$50,000 year or more are more likely than their less well-off counterparts, by a 16-point margin, to think the election will move the country in the right direction. In exit poll results, better-off Americans were 12 points more apt than those with incomes below \$50,000 to vote Republican.

**METHODOLOGY** – This ABC News/Yahoo News! poll was conducted Nov. 10-16, 2010, among a random national sample of 1,048 adults. Respondents were selected using an address-based sample design. Households for which a phone number could be ascertained were contacted by phone; others were contacted by mail and asked to complete the survey via a toll-free inbound phone number or the internet. See details [here](#). Results for the full sample have a 4-point error margin. Click [here](#) for a detailed description of sampling error.

This survey was produced by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y, with sampling, data collection and tabulation by SSRS of Media, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

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

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Full results follow.

1. Thinking about the outcome of the elections this month, in which the Republicans took control of the House of Representatives while the Democrats retained control of the Senate: Overall, do you think the results of this election are more likely to move the country in the (right) direction, move the country in the (wrong) direction, or make no difference?

	Right direction	Wrong direction	No difference	No opinion
11/16/10	34	21	40	5

2. There's a concept called gridlock, meaning the two political parties in Washington cannot agree and as a result no meaningful legislation gets passed. How likely do you think it is that gridlock will occur in the next Congress - do you think it's very likely, somewhat likely, not so likely or not likely at all?

	----- Likely ----			----- Not likely ----			No opinion
	NET	Very	Smwht	NET	Not so	At all	
11/16/10	81	36	45	14	9	5	4

3. Do you personally think of gridlock as more of a (bad thing, because it mainly means good legislation fails), or as more of a (good thing, because it mainly means bad legislation fails)?

	Bad	Good	Depends	No opinion
11/16/10	53	31	5	10

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