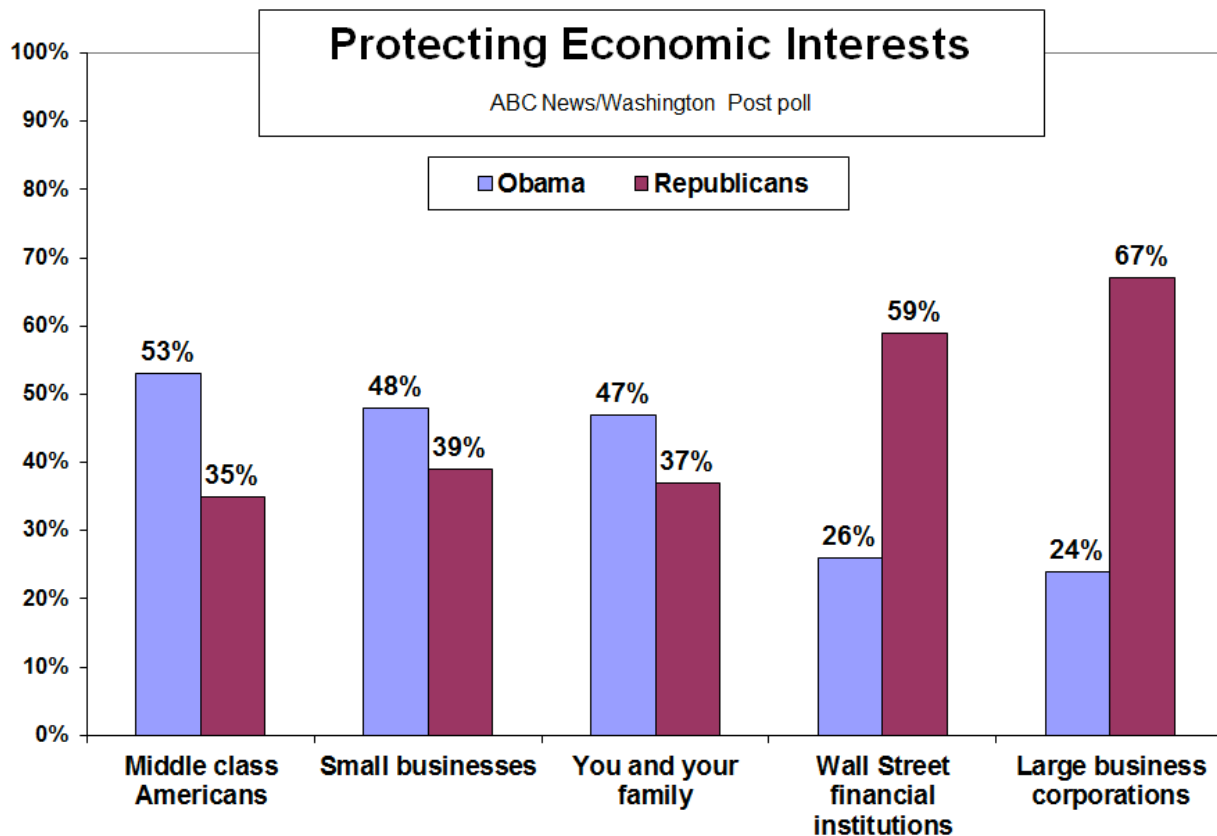


## **Advantage on Aiding the Middle Class Helps Keep Obama’s Approval Afloat**

Most Americans think the Republicans in Congress have got Wall Street and large corporations’ backs, while President Obama prevails on protecting the middle class and small businesses – an edge that helps explain his better-than-dismal job approval in the teeth of a terrible economy.

By a wide 59-26 percent, the public sees congressional Republicans as more concerned than Obama with protecting the economic interests of Wall Street financial institutions, a new ABC News/Washington Post poll finds. Americans even more broadly, by 67-24 percent, put the GOP ahead when it comes to looking out for the interests of large business corporations.

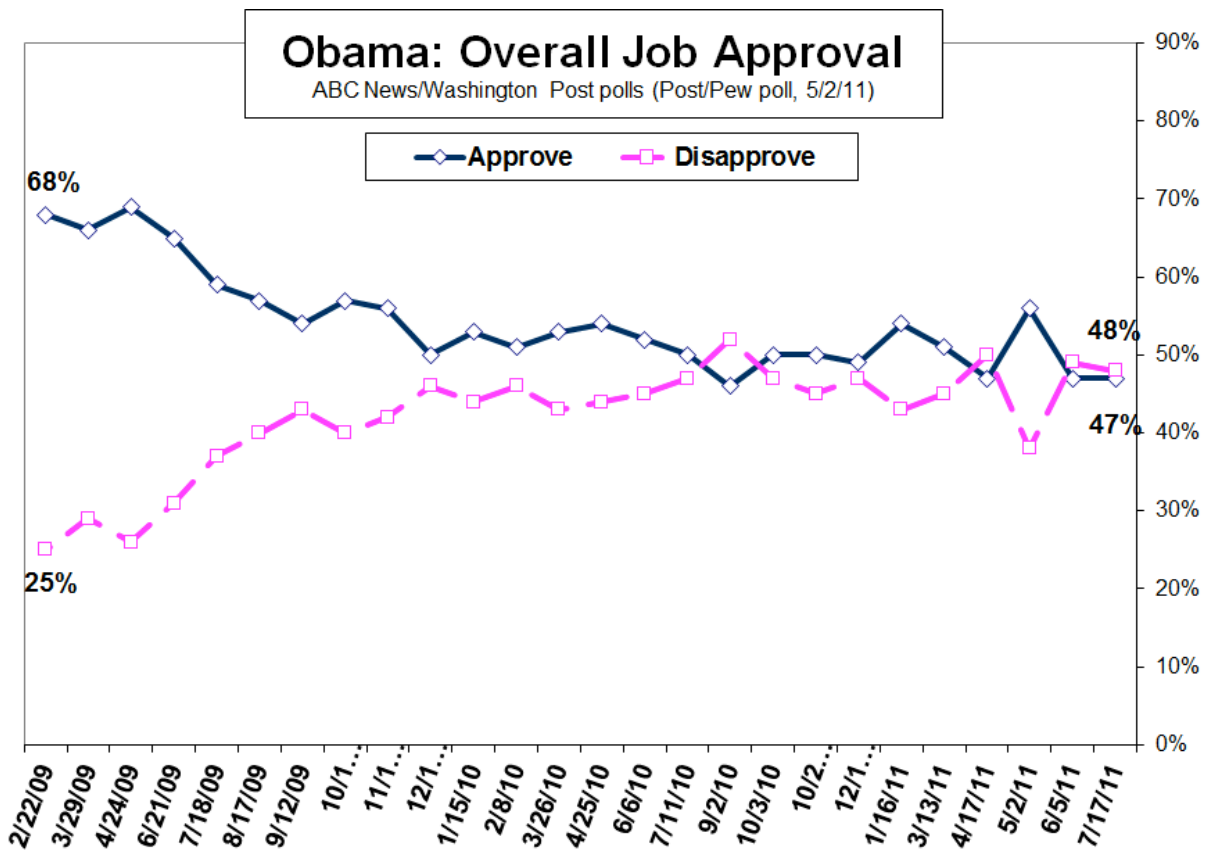
The tables turn – albeit with much narrower margins – on other measures. Obama leads the GOP by 18 points in looking out for middle-class Americans, 53-35 percent. He also has a 10-point advantage, 47-37 percent, as being more concerned with the economic interests of “you and your family.” And he leads by 9 points, 48-39 percent, on protecting small businesses.



The president’s advantage on small businesses is particularly notable, given the GOP’s efforts to portray his policies as damaging to small-business job-creation. While Republicans are fully aboard, independents, the linchpin of national politics, say by 46-39 percent that Obama cares more than GOP leaders about the economic interests of small businesses – a fairly close call, but with a tilt in the president’s direction.

This poll, produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#), finds that Obama also leads among independents by 19 points on aiding the middle class, 52-33 percent, and by 11 points as caring more about the economic interests of and “you and your family.”

APPROVAL – Obama has a 47 percent overall job approval rating, steady since April (excepting a bump in the immediate aftermath of the killing of Osama bin Laden). While just a point from his career low last fall, that’s better than might be expected, given persistent high unemployment, the broader economy and frustration with the budget debate in Washington.



In summer 1992, for example, the last time economic discontent ran this high, the first President Bush plummeted to 33 percent approval, en route to losing his re-election bid.

The perception that Obama’s looking out for average folks looks to be a key element of his comparative durability. His approval rating exceeds 75 percent among people who think he cares more about protecting their economic interests, as well as those of the middle class and small

businesses alike. Views on who's better for Wall Street and corporate America, by contrast, don't interact nearly as strongly with the president's approval rating.

It matters in part because of Obama shortfalls in his base. At 77 percent, his approval rating among Democrats is at a career low in numerical terms; it's been in the 70s just twice previously, 78 and 79 percent last September and December. At 73 percent, his approval from liberals is a point from the low. Across the spectrum he's got a mere 9 percent approval from Republicans, down 7 points from last month, and just 21 percent among conservatives, another low.

In the middle, though, 55 percent of moderates and 48 percent of independents – the latter 6 points better than the low – approve of the president's work, enough to keep him steady overall.

**METHODOLOGY** – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone July 14-17, 2011, among a random national sample of 1,001 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. 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 Abt-SRBI of New York, N.Y.

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.

\*= less than 0.5 percent

2-4, 6-35 held for release.

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
7/17/11	47	25	22	48	14	35	5
6/5/11	47	27	20	49	13	37	4
5/2/11*	56	29	27	38	14	24	6
4/17/11	47	27	21	50	12	37	3
3/13/11	51	27	24	45	12	33	4
1/16/11	54	30	23	43	15	28	3
12/12/10	49	24	25	47	15	32	4
10/28/10	50	27	23	45	11	34	5
10/28/10 LV	46	31	15	52	8	44	2
10/3/10	50	26	24	47	13	34	3
9/2/10	46	24	22	52	14	38	3
7/11/10	50	28	22	47	12	35	3
6/6/10	52	30	22	45	12	33	4
4/25/10	54	31	23	44	11	33	3
3/26/10	53	34	20	43	8	35	3
2/8/10	51	29	22	46	12	33	3
1/15/10	53	30	24	44	13	32	2
12/13/09	50	31	18	46	13	33	4

11/15/09	56	32	23	42	13	29	2
10/18/09	57	33	23	40	11	29	3
9/12/09	54	35	19	43	12	31	3
8/17/09	57	35	21	40	11	29	3
7/18/09	59	38	22	37	9	28	4
6/21/09	65	36	29	31	10	22	4
4/24/09	69	42	27	26	8	18	4
3/29/09	66	40	26	29	9	20	5
2/22/09	68	43	25	25	8	17	7

\*Washington Post/Pew Research Center poll

5. Who do you think cares more about protecting the economic interests of [ITEM] - (Obama) or (the Republicans in Congress)?

7/17/11 - Summary Table

	Obama	Reps	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
a. You and your family	47	37	2	12	2
b. Wall Street financial institutions	26	59	4	4	7
c. Small businesses	48	39	2	8	3
d. Middle class Americans	53	35	1	9	2
e. Large business corporations	24	67	3	3	3

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