

CBS NEWS/NEW YORK TIMES POLL
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CONGRESS, POLITICS AND THE 2006 ELECTION
July 21-25, 2006

Four months before Election Day, continued low approval ratings for Congress and the President translate into a Democratic lead in the expected vote this fall. If the midterm elections for the U.S. House of Representatives were held today, 45% of registered voters say they would support the Democratic candidate, while 35% would support the Republican.

2006 CONGRESSIONAL VOTE
(Among registered voters)

| | |
|------------|-----|
| Democrat | 45% |
| Republican | 35 |

More than half of voters do not think of their vote as about party control. But among registered voters who do, the Democrats have an advantage. 29% see their vote as a vote to help put Democrats in control of Congress, while just 18% say their vote is a vote to help keep Republicans in control.

VOTE FOR CONGRESS WILL BE:
(Among registered voters)

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| To help Democrats gain control | 29% |
| To help Republicans keep control | 18 |
| About something else | 51 |

About as many voters say President Bush will have an impact on their vote. 47% of voters say that the President will be a factor, and by more than two to one those people will be voting against him. This is a reversal from the last midterm elections in 2002, when 26% of voters said their Congressional vote was a vote for George W. Bush, and 16% said they were voting against him.

VOTE FOR CONGRESS WILL BE:
(Among registered voters)

| | Now | 7/2002 |
|-------------------|-----|--------|
| Vote for Bush | 14% | 26% |
| Vote against Bush | 33 | 16 |
| Not about Bush | 48 | 51 |

Voters were less likely in previous midterm elections to say presidents would be factors in their votes than they are today. And in the past those voters who said they would be were either positive or evenly divided.

PAST PRESIDENTS: WILL YOUR VOTE FOR CONGRESS BE A...

(Among registered voters)

| | Now (GW Bush) | 9/1998 (Clinton) | 10/1990 (GHW Bush) | 9/1986 (Reagan) |
|----------------------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Vote for the President | 14% | 17% | 19% | 26% |
| Vote against the President | 33 | 15 | 15 | 16 |
| Not about the President | 48 | 63 | 61 | 51 |

Congressional job approval remains low. 28% of Americans now approve of the job Congress is doing, up just two points from last month. Republicans and Democrats alike disapprove.

CONGRESS' JOB APPROVAL

| | Now | 6/2006 | 5/2006 | 7/2002 | 8/1994 |
|------------|-----|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Approve | 28% | 26% | 23% | 49% | 22% |
| Disapprove | 58 | 60 | 64 | 38 | 67 |

Approval ratings of Congress were higher in the summer prior to the 2002 midterm elections, when Republicans gained six seats. Back then, 49% approved of the job Congress was doing. In August 1994, just months before the Republican takeover of Congress, only 22% of Americans approved of the job Congress was doing.

As is typically the case, while Americans disapprove of the legislature's performance, they give their own representative better marks. 57% now approve of the job their representative is doing, up from 53% in May. Two months before the 1998 midterm elections, 69% of Americans approved of their member of Congress - the highest ever in the CBS News/New York Times Poll. Today's number is closer to that in September 1994 when Americans gave their own representative a 56% approval rating.

OWN REPRESENTATIVE'S JOB APPROVAL

| | Now | 5/2006 | 9/1998 | 9/1994 |
|------------|-----|--------|--------|--------|
| Approve | 57% | 53% | 69% | 56% |
| Disapprove | 27 | 31 | 16 | 17 |

Overall, Americans continue to say the country is on the wrong track. 66% say so, while 28% say it is on the right path. These are about the same sentiments as last month.

PARTIES AND POLITICS

52% of Americans have a favorable view of the Democratic Party, compared to 43% who view the Republicans favorably. While views of Democrats have changed little since May, Republicans have made some gains.

VIEWS OF THE PARTIES

| | Now | 5/2006 |
|-------------------------|-----|--------|
| <u>Democratic Party</u> | | |
| Favorable | 52 | 55% |
| Unfavorable | 41 | 37 |
| | | |
| <u>Republican Party</u> | | |
| Favorable | 43 | 37% |
| Unfavorable | 51 | 57 |

Democrats continue to hold their lead over the Republicans as the party best able to make the right decisions about the war in Iraq, but that lead has narrowed since May. Democrats enjoy a 6-point lead on the issue today, compared to their 18-point advantage two months ago. Republicans continue to have the edge on dealing with terrorism. On ensuring a strong economy, where Democrats have historically held a significant lead, the Democrats now have a 12-point advantage.

WHICH PARTY IS BETTER AT...?

| | Republican | Democratic |
|---------------------------|------------|------------|
| Dealing w/ terrorism | 42% | 36 |
| Ensuring a strong economy | 36% | 48 |
| Handling the war in Iraq | 36% | 42 |

PARTY LEADERS AND CANDIDATES

Views of some key party leaders are similar to what they were in May. On the Democratic side, Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton receives somewhat more negative views than she did in the spring. Also, the release of former Vice President Al Gore's documentary on global warming has not improved his favorable ratings. He continues to receive mostly negative reviews from the public.

VIEWS OF DEMOCRATS

| | <u>Hillary Clinton</u> | | <u>Al Gore</u> | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------|----------------|--------|
| | Now | 5/2006 | Now | 5/2006 |
| Favorable | 32% | 34% | 30% | 28% |
| Unfavorable | 39 | 35 | 37 | 39 |
| Undecided/ No opinion | 29 | 32 | 32 | 33 |

When it comes to Republicans, President Bush's unfavorable ratings continue to be higher than his favorable ratings, as is the case for Vice President Dick Cheney. Senator John McCain receives positive views from the public, but nearly six in 10 Americans are undecided or have no opinion of this potential 2008 presidential candidate.

VIEWS OF REPUBLICANS

| | <u>George W. Bush</u> | | <u>Dick Cheney</u> | | <u>John McCain</u> | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------|--------------------|--------|--------------------|--------|
| | Now | 5/2006 | Now | 5/2006 | Now | 5/2006 |
| Favorable | 32% | 29% | 20% | 20% | 28% | 31% |
| Unfavorable | 50 | 55 | 44 | 49 | 13 | 15 |
| Undecided/ No opinion | 16 | 16 | 36 | 31 | 58 | 53 |

This poll was conducted among a nationwide random sample of 1127 adults, interviewed by telephone July 21-25, 2006. The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus three percentage points. Error for subgroups may be higher.

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q2 Do you feel things in this country are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?

| | *** TOTAL RESPONDENTS *** | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| | **** Party ID **** | | | | |
| | Total | Rep | Dem | Ind | Jun06a |
| | % | % | % | % | % |
| Right direction | 28 | 55 | 7 | 23 | 27 |
| Wrong track | 66 | 38 | 88 | 70 | 69 |
| DK/NA | 6 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 4 |

q9 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job?

| | | | | | |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Approve | 28 | 36 | 24 | 24 | 26 |
| Disapprove | 58 | 52 | 63 | 61 | 60 |
| DK/NA | 14 | 12 | 13 | 15 | 14 |

q10 How about the representative in Congress from your district? Do you approve or disapprove of the way your representative is handling his or her job?

| | | | | | May06a |
|------------|----|----|----|----|--------|
| Approve | 57 | 65 | 56 | 51 | 53 |
| Disapprove | 27 | 23 | 27 | 31 | 31 |
| DK/NA | 16 | 12 | 17 | 18 | 16 |

q13 If the 2006 election for U.S. House of Representatives were being held today, would you vote for the Republican candidate or the Democratic candidate in your district?

| | *** REGISTERED VOTERS *** | | | | May06a |
|-------------------|---------------------------|----|----|----|--------|
| Republican | 35 | 79 | 3 | 24 | 33 |
| Democratic | 45 | 9 | 88 | 36 | 44 |
| Other (Vol.) | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Won't vote (Vol.) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Depends (Vol.) | 13 | 7 | 5 | 26 | 13 |
| DK/NA | 5 | 4 | 3 | 11 | 9 |

q14 Do you think of your vote for Congress this fall as a vote for George W. Bush, a vote against George W. Bush, or don't you think of your vote this fall as being about George W. Bush's presidency?

| | | | | | May06a |
|-------------------|----|----|----|----|--------|
| Vote for Bush | 14 | 30 | 4 | 8 | 13 |
| Vote against Bush | 33 | 11 | 59 | 27 | 36 |
| Bush not a factor | 48 | 55 | 31 | 57 | 45 |
| DK/NA | 5 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 6 |

q15 Do you think of your vote for Congress this fall as a vote to help put Democrats in control of Congress, a vote to help keep Republicans in control of Congress, or will your vote be about something else?

| | | | | |
|----------------|----|----|----|----|
| Put Dems in | 29 | 4 | 65 | 16 |
| Keep Reps in | 18 | 44 | 2 | 8 |
| Something else | 51 | 49 | 32 | 72 |
| DK/NA | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 |

q16 Is your opinion of George W. Bush favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about George W. Bush yet to have an opinion?

| | *** TOTAL RESPONDENTS *** | | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| | **** Party ID **** | | | | |
| | Total | Rep | Dem | Ind | May06a |
| | % | % | % | % | % |
| Favorable | 32 | 69 | 6 | 24 | 29 |
| Not favorable | 50 | 17 | 80 | 51 | 55 |
| Undecided | 15 | 13 | 11 | 22 | 13 |
| Haven't heard enough | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Refused | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

q17 Is your opinion of Dick Cheney favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about Dick Cheney yet to have an opinion?

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Favorable | 20 | 44 | 4 | 13 | 20 |
| Not favorable | 44 | 14 | 71 | 44 | 49 |
| Undecided | 20 | 24 | 13 | 22 | 19 |
| Haven't heard enough | 16 | 16 | 12 | 20 | 12 |
| Refused | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

q18 Is your opinion of Hillary Rodham Clinton favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about Hillary Rodham Clinton yet to have an opinion?

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Favorable | 32 | 10 | 56 | 29 | 34 |
| Not favorable | 39 | 71 | 13 | 34 | 35 |
| Undecided | 21 | 13 | 26 | 23 | 23 |
| Haven't heard enough | 8 | 6 | 5 | 13 | 9 |
| Refused | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

q19 Is your opinion of John McCain favorable, not favorable, undecided or haven't you heard enough about John McCain yet to have an opinion?

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Favorable | 28 | 34 | 23 | 29 | 31 |
| Not favorable | 13 | 17 | 13 | 10 | 15 |
| Undecided | 29 | 23 | 34 | 28 | 25 |
| Haven't heard enough | 29 | 27 | 29 | 32 | 28 |
| Refused | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

q20 Is your opinion of Al Gore favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about Al Gore yet to have an opinion?

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Favorable | 30 | 10 | 51 | 29 | 28 |
| Not favorable | 37 | 66 | 12 | 35 | 39 |
| Undecided | 24 | 17 | 27 | 27 | 25 |
| Haven't heard enough | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| Refused | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

q32 In general, is your opinion of the Democratic party favorable or not favorable?

| | | | | | |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Favorable | 52 | 21 | 85 | 49 | 55 |
| Not favorable | 41 | 75 | 11 | 38 | 37 |
| DK/NA | 7 | 4 | 4 | 13 | 8 |

q33 In general, is your opinion of the Republican party favorable or not favorable?

| | *** TOTAL RESPONDENTS *** | | | | |
|---------------|---------------------------|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| | **** Party ID **** | | | | |
| | Total | Rep | Dem | Ind | May06a |
| | % | % | % | % | % |
| Favorable | 43 | 85 | 11 | 37 | 37 |
| Not favorable | 51 | 14 | 85 | 52 | 57 |
| DK/NA | 6 | 1 | 4 | 11 | 6 |

q34 Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is more likely to make the right decisions about the war in Iraq?

| | | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Republican party | 36 | 75 | 6 | 30 | 30 |
| Democratic party | 42 | 12 | 77 | 36 | 48 |
| Both (Vol.) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Neither (Vol.) | 7 | 3 | 7 | 9 | 5 |
| DK/NA | 14 | 9 | 9 | 23 | 14 |

q35 Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is more likely to ensure a strong economy?

| | | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Republican party | 36 | 71 | 10 | 31 | 36 |
| Democratic party | 48 | 20 | 80 | 44 | 46 |
| Both (Vol.) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Neither (Vol.) | 4 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| DK/NA | 11 | 6 | 6 | 17 | 11 |

q36 Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is more likely to make the right decisions when it comes to dealing with terrorism?

| | | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Republican party | 42 | 81 | 14 | 34 | 40 |
| Democratic party | 36 | 9 | 66 | 33 | 35 |
| Both (Vol.) | 4 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 6 |
| Neither (Vol.) | 4 | 0 | 5 | 6 | 4 |
| DK/NA | 14 | 7 | 11 | 21 | 15 |

| | <u>UNWEIGHTED</u> | <u>WEIGHTED</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Total Respondents | 1127 | |
| Total Republicans | 351 | 351 |
| Total Democrats | 390 | 374 |
| Total Independents | 386 | 402 |