



CBS News/New York Times Poll
 For release: Thursday August 4, 2011
 6:30 PM EDT

**The Aftermath of the Debt Ceiling Debate
 August 2-3, 2011**

- Just 14% now approve of Congress, and disapproval is at an all-time high. Majorities disapprove of how both parties have handled the debt ceiling negotiations, and 84% are dissatisfied or angry with the government in Washington.
- Americans are split on how President Barack Obama handled the negotiations, and on his approval rating overall.
- Americans are also divided on the agreement reached to raise the debt ceiling itself: 46% approve and 45% disapprove.
- Just under half think the spending cuts mandated in the agreement did not go far enough; Republicans and Tea Party supporters are especially likely to feel that way.
- 86% say the economy is in bad shape, the highest percentage in two years, and most don't think the debt ceiling deal will make it better.

The Political Fallout

In the days immediately following the hard-fought agreement to raise the country's debt ceiling, Americans voice an historic level of criticism of Congress, and disillusionment with leaders in Washington. 82% now disapprove of the way Congress is doing its job -- the highest percentage in CBS News/New York Times Poll history dating back to 1977. The previous high of 77% occurred in May 2010. Only 14% now approve.

Congress' Job Rating

	Now	6/2011	5/2010	10/2008	11/1995	7/1992	8/1980	7/1977
Approve	14%	20%	15%	12%	22%	20%	32%	31%
Disapprove	82	70	77	74	68	75	51	49

Congress' handling of the debt ceiling debate may be partly responsible for their low approval rating. 66% of Americans disapprove of how the Democrats in Congress handled the negotiations, and 72% disapprove of how the Republicans in Congress handled them.

President Obama fares somewhat better, but still, Americans are divided: 46% approve, while 47% disapprove, of how he handled the negotiations.

Handling the Debt Ceiling Debate

	Approve	Disapprove
Democrats in Congress	28%	66
Republicans in Congress	21%	72
Barack Obama	46%	47

Views fall along partisan lines, but nearly half disapprove of how their own party's delegation handled the negotiations.

The public calls into question the motivations of political leaders during the debate. Majorities of all partisan stripes say the debt ceiling disagreements were mostly about scoring political points rather than doing what is best for the country.

Disagreements About Debt Ceiling Mostly About...

	All	Reps	Dems	Inds	Tea Party
Doing what's best for the country	14%	13%	16%	12%	8%
Gaining political advantage	82	82	79	84	87

The poll also finds some criticism about political leaders' willingness to compromise during the debate. 52% of Americans think the Republicans in Congress compromised too little during the negotiations. The public is more divided when assessing President Obama and the Democrats on this measure: 34% say President Obama and the Democrats in Congress compromised too little, while 26% say they compromised too much, and another 32% say they compromised about the right amount.

Compromise and the Debt Ceiling Debate

	Too Much	Too Little	Right Amount
Republicans in Congress	15%	52	26
Obama/ Democrats in Congress	26%	34	32

More Democrats think their own party compromised too much (41%) than too little (20%). For Republicans the opposite is true: more Republicans think their own party compromised too little (34%) rather than too much (26%).

In a choice between the Republicans in Congress and President Obama and the Democrats in Congress, Americans place more of the blame for the budget standoff on the Republicans.

Blame More for the Debt Ceiling Standoff

	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Republicans in Congress	47%	18%	76%	42%
Obama/Democrats in Congress	29	61	11	25
Both (vol.)	20	18	11	27

And there has been an increase in disapproval of how Speaker of the House John Boehner is doing his job. 30% of Americans now approve of the job he's doing, while more, 57%, disapprove – a rise of 16 percentage points since April.

Boehner's Job Approval Rating

	Now	4/2011
Approve	30%	32%
Disapprove	57	41
Don't know	13	27

The Agreement

Overall, Americans are divided on the debt ceiling deal reached in Congress and signed into law by President Obama: 46% approve and 45% disapprove. But there's strong sentiment among those opposing it – many of them strongly disapprove. Very few strongly approve.

Views on the Debt Ceiling Deal	
Strongly approve	4%
Somewhat approve	42

Total Approve	46%
Somewhat disapprove	26
Strongly disapprove	19

Total Disapprove	45%

Looking across the partisan ranks, Democrats and independents are mixed on the deal, while 52% of Republicans oppose it. Tea Party backers similarly disapprove.

Partisan Views on the Debt Deal					
	All	Reps	Dems	Inds	Tea Party
Approve	46%	42%	49%	45%	38%
Disapprove	45	52	44	41	56

The reason: Republicans – along with many Americans - don't think the deal went far enough in cutting spending. Six in ten Republicans wanted more cuts, as did almost half of independents. Tea Party supporters, in particular, were unsatisfied with the level of spending cuts. Democrats were more mixed; 26% felt the cuts went too far, 28% thought they did not go far enough, and 37% thought they were about right.

Spending Cuts in the Deal: Too Far or Not Far Enough?					
	All	Reps	Dems	Inds	Tea Party
Too far	15%	4%	26%	13%	8%
Not far enough	44	62	28	46	73
About right	29	25	37	27	12

Conservatives are more likely than liberals to feel their goals are unmet, though neither got all it wanted. Only 18% of conservatives say the deal cut the right amount of spending; 38% of liberals say it did.

Half of the public – 50% - wanted to see increased taxes to go along with the spending cuts as part of the agreement. 44% did not.

Given a choice, Americans voice a mixture of relief and frustration now at the outcome. 44% are mostly just relieved a deal is done, while 45% feel mostly frustrated by the results.

But there's no consensus on whether the debt deal will help the economy: 46% think it will have no impact at all; the rest are divided as to whether it will be good or bad for an economy that most see as already bad.

How Will Debt Ceiling Deal Impact the Economy?

No effect	46%
Make it better	22
Make it worse	24

But either way, the debate captured America’s attention: 85% said they followed it at least somewhat closely.

The President

Americans are divided on whether President Obama showed strong qualities of leadership during the debate: 49% say he did, but 48% say he did not.

**Did Obama Show Strong Leadership
In Debt Ceiling Debate?**

	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Yes	49%	29%	72%	42%
No	48	71	24	54

Similarly, Americans remain divided over their assessment of how President Obama is handling his job overall: 48% approve and 47% disapprove.

Obama’s Job Approval Rating

	Now	6/2011	4/2011	2/2011	10/2010
Approve	48%	47%	46%	48%	45%
Disapprove	47	44	45	41	47

The Tea Party

Spending cuts have been a priority for the Tea Party, but this debate may have cost the movement in public opinion – including among Republicans. The percentage that views the movement favorably has dropped six points to 20%, while unfavorable views jumped 11 points since April to 40% - the highest recorded. Among Republicans the drop is steeper: favorable views of the Tea Party dropped 18 points since April to 41% today.

Opinion of the Tea Party

	All Americans		Republicans	
	Now	4/2011	Now	4/2011
Favorable	20%	26%	41%	59%
Not favorable	40	29	19	10
Undecided/Don’t know	39	43	39	31

The percentage that thinks the Tea Party has too much influence on the Republican Party has also risen. Now 43% say so, up from 27% in April and the highest it has been since the question was first asked in 2010. Among Republicans, it has risen from just 9% in April to 22% now.

Influence of the Tea Party on the Republican Party

	All Americans		Republicans	
	Now	4/2011	Now	4/2011
Too much	43%	27%	22%	9%
Too little	17	18	26	23
Right amount	24	32	41	53

Meanwhile, the percentage of Americans who identify themselves as supporters of the Tea Party has dropped to 18%. This number was at 31% right after the 2010 midterm elections.

Are You a Tea Party Supporter?

	Now	7/2011	4/2011	11/2010	4/2010
Yes	18%	22%	24%	31%	18%
No	73	68	66	58	62

Of those who do identify themselves as Tea Party supporters, 51% approve of the job Speaker Boehner is doing, but they are split on how the Republicans handled the debt-ceiling negotiations: 48% approve and 48% disapprove. Most are not satisfied with the results. 56% of Tea Party supporters disapprove of the agreement, and 63% are more frustrated than relieved with the outcome. 73% do not think the spending cuts went far enough. Still, 72% place the blame for the stand-off on President Obama and the Democrats.

Feelings about Washington

In the aftermath of the contentious debate, Americans express more discontent than ever with Washington. 84% are now dissatisfied or angry about the way things are going in the nation's capital – a record high in the CBS News/New York Times Poll. Only 15% of Americans are enthusiastic or satisfied about Washington, the lowest percentage since the question was first asked in February 2010.

Feelings About How Things are Going in Washington

	Now	7/2011	5/2011	5/2010	2/2010
Enthusiastic	1%	3%	1%	5%	3%
Satisfied	14	14	22	23	26
Dissatisfied	56	51	54	48	53
Angry	28	28	19	22	17

Majorities of Americans across the political spectrum are unhappy with Washington overall, and with Congress.

Discontent with Washington and Congress

	Reps	Dems	Inds	Tea Party
Dissatisfied with Washington	61%	56%	52%	49%
Angry with Washington	28%	21%	33%	43%
Approve of Congress	17%	14%	14%	16%
Disapprove of Congress	80	82	83	79

That may mean trouble for incumbents in next year's Congressional elections. Right now, 75% of Americans, and 74% of registered voters, do not think most members of Congress deserve to be re-elected.

Most Members of Congress Deserve to be Re-Elected?

	All	Registered Voters
Yes	15%	14%
No	75	74

And the debt ceiling negotiations have made Americans cynical about Congress' ability to deal with future issues. 66% are pessimistic about that, while only 12% are optimistic.

Ability of Congress to Deal with Future Issues

	All	Reps	Dems	Inds	Tea Party
Optimistic	12%	11%	14%	11%	11%
Pessimistic	66	62	69	66	68
No effect	19	26	14	18	19

Further, Americans think the prolonged debt ceiling negotiations have tarnished the United States' image in the world. 71% think they have made the image of America worse.

Debt Ceiling Negotiations Have Made America's Image in World...

	All	Reps	Dems	Inds	Tea Party
Better	5%	3%	4%	7%	5%
Worse	71	68	75	70	74
No effect	22	27	19	21	19

In general, Americans think compromise is better for the country. 85% say Republicans and Democrats should compromise some of their positions in order to get things accomplished.

The Economy

With losses on Wall Street, an unemployment rate that continues to hover just over 9%, and concerns about a new recession, the public's views of the economy have become worse. 86% of Americans now say the economy is in bad shape – the highest number in two years. Only 12% say the condition of the economy is good.

Rating the Economy

	Now	6/2011	11/2010	2/2010	7/2009
Good	12%	18%	20%	17%	14%
Bad	86	81	79	83	86

For more than a year, President Obama has received less than 50% approval for his handling of the economy, but more Americans trust him (47%) than the Republicans in Congress (33%) to be its steward. Views are highly partisan: three in four Republicans trust members of their own party in Congress, while 83% of Democrats trust the president. Independents are more divided – and 22% of them trust neither.

Trust More to Make Decisions about Economy

	All	Reps	Dems	Inds
Republicans in Congress	33%	76%	5%	31%
President Obama	47	12	83	39
Both	3	2	1	5
Neither	14	9	8	22

Americans continue to blame the deficit on the previous administration. 44% say the Bush administration is most to blame for the current deficit; 15% blame the Obama administration. Another 15% blame Congress.

And jobs remain a higher economic priority than cutting government spending. 62% say that creating jobs should be the higher priority for the nation now; 29% choose government spending. Nearly half of Republicans choose cutting government spending as the higher priority; just 19% of Democrats and 26% of independents say the same.

Which Should be Higher Priority?

	All	Reps	Dems	Inds
Cutting government spending	29%	48%	19%	26%
Creating jobs	62	42	74	65

While the debt ceiling agreement did not include an increase in revenues, by two to one Americans support raising taxes on the wealthiest. 63% think that in order to lower the budget deficit, taxes should be raised on households earning \$250,000 or more. 34% think the government should address the deficit without increasing taxes on those households.

This poll was conducted by telephone on August 2-3, 2011 among 960 adults nationwide who were first interviewed in two polls: a CBS News/New York Times Poll conducted June 24-28, 2011 and a CBS News Poll conducted July 15-17, 2011. Phone numbers were dialed from samples of both standard land-line and cell phones. The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus three percentage points. The error for subgroups is higher. This poll release conforms to the Standards of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

CBS NEWS/NEW YORK TIMES POLL
The Aftermath of the Debt Ceiling Debate
August 2-3, 2011

q1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **				
	*** Party ID ***				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Jun11c
	%	%	%	%	%
Approve	48	20	77	42	47
Disapprove	47	78	16	52	44
DK/NA	5	2	7	6	9

q2 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama has handled the negotiations on the debt ceiling?

Approve	46	24	69	40
Disapprove	47	70	20	53
DK/NA	7	6	11	7

q3 Which comes closest to your feelings about the way things are going in Washington -- enthusiastic, satisfied but not enthusiastic, dissatisfied but not angry, or angry?

					Jul11a
Enthusiastic	1	1	1	1	3
Satisfied, not enthusiastic	14	10	20	12	14
Dissatisfied but not angry	56	61	56	52	51
Angry	28	28	21	33	28
DK/NA	1	0	2	2	4

q4 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job?

					Jun11c
Approve	14	17	14	14	20
Disapprove	82	80	82	83	70
DK/NA	4	3	4	3	10

q5 Do you approve or disapprove of the way John Boehner is handling his job as Speaker of the House of Representatives?

					Apr11a
Approve	30	50	15	30	32
Disapprove	57	38	71	57	41
DK/NA	13	12	14	13	27

q6 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Republicans in Congress have handled the negotiations on the debt ceiling?

Approve	21	45	12	14
Disapprove	72	49	82	78
DK/NA	7	6	6	8

q7 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Democrats in Congress have handled the negotiations on the debt ceiling?

** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **

*** Party ID ***

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Approve	28	20	48	18
Disapprove	66	76	46	76
DK/NA	6	4	6	6

q8 Given what you have seen so far, do you think most members of Congress deserve re-election next year, or don't you think they deserve re-election?

Deserve re-election	15	18	17	12
Don't deserve	75	74	71	77
DK/NA	10	8	12	11

q9 How would you rate the condition of the national economy these days? Is it very good, fairly good, fairly bad, or very bad?

					Jun11c
					%
Very good	0	0	0	0	1
Fairly good	12	10	20	8	17
Fairly bad	46	41	48	48	43
Very bad	40	49	30	43	38
DK/NA	2	0	2	1	1

q10 BLANK

q11 Who do you trust more to make the right decisions about the nation's economy -- the Republicans in Congress or Barack Obama?

Republicans in Congress	33	76	5	31
Barack Obama	47	12	83	39
Both (vol.)	3	2	1	5
Neither (vol.)	14	9	8	22
DK/NA	3	1	3	3

q12 Which do you think is better for the country? Should the Democrats and Republicans compromise some of their positions in order to get things done, or stick to their positions even if it means not getting as much done?

Compromise	85	79	89	85
Stick to positions	12	20	8	11
DK/NA	3	1	3	4

q13 Who do you think is mostly to blame for most of the current federal budget deficit -- 1. the Bush administration, 2. the Obama administration, 3. Congress, or 4. someone else?

** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **

*** Party ID ***

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Apr11a
	%	%	%	%	%
Bush administration	44	18	69	41	41
Obama administration	15	34	1	15	14
Congress	15	22	9	16	18
Someone else	10	13	7	11	12
All of the above (vol.)	9	9	7	11	7
Combination (vol.)	3	3	4	3	7
DK/NA	4	1	3	3	1

q14 Which of these should be the higher priority for the nation right now -- cutting government spending or creating jobs?

					Mar11b
Cutting spending	29	48	19	26	26
Creating jobs	62	42	74	65	63
Both (vol.)	8	9	6	9	11
DK/NA	1	1	1	0	0

q15 BLANK

q16 How closely have you been following news about the debt ceiling debate and agreement in Washington? Would you say you have followed it very closely, somewhat closely or not too closely?

					Jul11a*
Very	34	36	37	31	29
Somewhat	51	50	51	52	52
Not too	14	13	12	17	19
DK/NA	1	1	0	0	0

Wording change: omits "and agreement"

q17 Do you feel mostly relieved that an agreement on the debt ceiling has been reached, or mostly frustrated about the outcome of the negotiations?

Relieved	44	46	51	39
Frustrated	45	45	39	49
Both (vol.)	4	3	6	4
DK/NA	7	6	4	8

q18 The debt ceiling agreement calls for more than \$2 trillion in spending cuts over 10 years, a new Congressional committee to recommend a deficit-reduction proposal by late November, and a two-stage increase in the debt ceiling. From what you've heard or read, do you approve or disapprove of the debt ceiling agreement?

IF APPROVE, ASK: Do you strongly approve or somewhat approve?

IF DISAPPROVE, ASK: Do you somewhat disapprove or strongly disapprove?

Strongly approve	4	2	7	3
Somewhat approve	42	40	42	42
Somewhat disapprove	26	27	31	21
Strongly disapprove	19	25	13	20
DK/NA	9	6	7	14

q19 From what you know so far, do you think the debt ceiling agreement should have included some increase in tax revenue or should it have relied entirely on cuts in government spending?

** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **

*** Party ID ***

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Increase in tax revenue	50	30	67	50
Cuts in spending	44	67	27	44
DK/NA	6	3	6	6

q20 Do you think the spending cuts included in the debt ceiling agreement went too far, didn't go far enough, or are they about right?

Too far	15	4	26	13
Not far enough	44	62	28	46
About right	29	25	37	27
DK/NA	12	9	9	14

q21 In general, do you think the debt ceiling agreement will make the economy better, make the economy worse or have no impact on the economy?

Better	22	19	26	20
Worse	24	19	23	28
No effect	46	53	42	46
DK/NA	8	9	9	6

q22 Do you think the recent disagreements in Washington about raising the debt ceiling were mostly about doing what was best for the country or mostly about gaining political advantage?

Best for country	14	13	16	12
Political advantage	82	82	79	84
Some of each (vol.)	2	2	2	2
DK/NA	2	3	3	2

q23 As a result of the debt ceiling negotiations in Washington, do you think the image of United States in the world has gotten better, gotten worse, or have the debt ceiling negotiations had no effect on the United States' image in the world?

Better	5	3	4	7
Worse	71	68	75	70
No effect	22	27	19	21
DK/NA	2	2	2	2

q24 During the recent debt ceiling negotiations in Washington, do you think Barack Obama has shown strong qualities of leadership, or not?

Strong qualities	49	29	72	42
Not strong	48	71	24	54
DK/NA	3	0	4	4

q25 Who do you blame more for the difficulties in reaching an agreement on the debt ceiling -- the Republicans in Congress or Barack Obama and the Democrats in Congress?

** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **

*** Party ID ***

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Republicans in Congress	47	18	76	42
Barack Obama and Democrats	29	61	11	25
Both (vol.)	20	18	11	27
Neither (vol.)	0	0	0	1
DK/NA	4	3	2	5

q26 In negotiations about the debt ceiling, did the Republicans in Congress compromise with Barack Obama and the Democrats in Congress too much, too little, or the right amount?

Too much	15	26	7	16
Too little	52	34	67	50
Right amount	26	35	23	23
DK/NA	7	5	3	11

q27 In negotiations about the debt ceiling, did Barack Obama and the Democrats in Congress compromise with the Republicans in Congress too much, too little, or the right amount?

Too much	26	18	41	19
Too little	34	47	20	37
Right amount	32	30	35	31
DK/NA	8	5	4	13

q28 Looking ahead, have the negotiations over the debt ceiling made you optimistic about the ability of this Congress to deal with future issues affecting the country, have they made you pessimistic, or has the debate had no effect on your outlook for how this Congress will deal with future issues?

Optimistic	12	11	14	11
Pessimistic	66	62	69	66
No effect	19	26	14	18
DK/NA	3	1	3	5

q29 In order to lower the nation's budget deficit, do you think taxes should be increased on households earning \$250,000 a year or more or should the government address the budget deficit without increasing taxes on those households?

Increase taxes	63	52	80	57
Don't increase taxes	34	45	18	40
DK/NA	3	3	2	3

q30 BLANK

q31 Is your opinion of the Tea Party movement favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about the Tea Party movement yet to have an opinion?

**** TOTAL RESPONDENTS ****

***** Party ID *****

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Apr11a
	%	%	%	%	%
Favorable	20	41	4	19	26
Not favorable	40	19	59	38	29
Undecided	18	20	11	21	21
Haven't heard enough	21	19	23	20	22
Refused	1	1	3	2	2

q32 Do you think the Tea Party movement has too much influence, too little influence, or the right amount of influence in the Republican Party?

Too much	43	22	63	39	27
Too little	17	26	8	19	18
Right amount	24	41	14	23	32
DK/NA	16	11	15	19	23

q33 Do you consider yourself to be a supporter of the Tea Party movement, or not?

					Jul11a
Yes	18	37	5	16	22
No	73	50	90	72	68
DK/NA	9	13	5	12	10

	<u>UNWEIGHTED</u>	<u>WEIGHTED</u>
Total Respondents	960	
Total Republicans	247	232 (24%)
Total Democrats	321	310 (32%)
Total Independents	392	417 (44%)