



Low Marks for Congress
 September 10-15, 2011

- Job approval of Congress has now reached 12% - matching the lowest ever recorded by the CBS News/New York Times Poll.
- Most Americans disapprove of the job both parties are doing in Congress, but they disapprove of Republicans (72%) more than Democrats (63%).
- Looking ahead, just 6% of voters - the lowest percentage recorded in this poll - think most members of Congress deserve re-election, and 84% think they don't. 57% think their own representative does not deserve re-election.

In the midst of a bleak economic landscape and after a bruising battle over the federal budget deficit, approval of Congress now matches its all-time low. Just 12% of Americans approve of the job Congress is doing – the same as the lowest percentage recorded in this poll, reached in October 2008, right before the November elections.

	Job Rating of Congress				
	Now	8/2011	2/2011	3/2009	10/2008
Approve	12%	14%	24%	30%	12%
Disapprove	80	82	62	56	74

Dissatisfaction with Congress cuts across party lines. Republicans, Democrats, and independents all overwhelmingly disapprove of the job Congress is doing.

	Job Rating of Congress			
	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Approve	12%	12%	9%	14%
Disapprove	80	81	84	76

And though most Americans disapprove of both parties in Congress, they disapprove of Republicans more. 72% of Americans disapprove of the job Republicans in Congress are doing, compared to 63% who disapprove of the Democrats in Congress.

	Job Rating of the Parties in Congress	
	Republicans in Congress	Democrats in Congress
Approve	19%	28%
Disapprove	72	63

Among Democrats, more approve than disapprove of the job Democrats in Congress are doing. That is reversed for Republicans – more of them disapprove than approve of the job members of their own party are doing in Congress. Independents disapprove of both parties in Congress.

In keeping with Congress' dismal approval rating, just 6% of registered voters think most members of Congress deserve re-election – the lowest percentage ever in CBS News Polls

over the past 20 years and a lower percentage than the 9% who thought so right before the 2010 midterms.

Americans are usually more positive when assessing their own representative in Congress. That's true now, too – 33% say their representative deserves re-election - but nearly six in 10 registered voters do not think their own representative in Congress deserves re-election. That percentage is close to the highest found in CBS News Polls.

Does Congress Deserve Re-Election?

(Among registered voters)

	<u>Most Members</u>		<u>Own Representative</u>	
	Now	10/2010	Now	10/2010
Deserve re-election	6%	9%	33%	31%
Time for new people	84	80	57	59

This poll was conducted among a random sample of 1,452 adults nationwide, interviewed by telephone September 10-15, 2011. 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. An oversample of Republicans was also conducted for this poll, for a total of 781 interviews among this group. The results were then weighted in proportion to the average party distributions in previous 2011 CBS News and CBS News/New York Times Polls and in the random sample in this poll. The margin of error for Republicans is plus or minus four percentage points.

CBS NEWS/NEW YORK TIMES POLL
Congress
September 10-15, 2011

q6 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **				Aug11a
	Total	**** Party ID ****			
	Rep	Dem	Ind		
	%	%	%	%	
Approve	12	12	9	14	14
Disapprove	80	81	84	76	82
DK/NA	8	7	7	10	4

q8 Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Democrats in Congress are handling their job?

					Sept10b
Approve	28	5	50	24	30
Disapprove	63	91	43	62	58
DK/NA	9	4	7	14	12

q9 Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Republicans in Congress are handling their job?

Approve	19	41	3	19	20
Disapprove	72	50	95	66	68
DK/NA	9	9	2	15	12

q33 Do you think most members of Congress have done a good enough job to deserve re-election, or do you think it's time to give new people a chance?

	** REGISTERED VOTERS **				Oct10e
Deserve re-election	6	7	5	6	9
Time for new people	84	84	83	86	80
Depends on candidates (Vol.)	5	6	5	4	7
Don't know/No answer	5	3	7	4	4

q34 Do you think the representative in Congress from your district has performed his or her job well enough to deserve re-election, or do you think it's time to give a new person a chance?

Deserve re-election	33	44	30	27	31
Doesn't deserve	57	48	60	62	59
Depends on candidates (vol.)	2	1	2	2	2
DK/NA	8	7	8	9	8

	<u>Unweighted</u>	<u>Weighted</u>	
Total Respondents	1452		
Total Registered Voters	1356		
Total Republicans	781	383	(26%)
Total Democrats	315	485	(33%)
Total Independents	356	584	(41%)