



CBS NEWS POLL
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CURRENT ISSUES:
THE DEBATE OVER SCHIP AND THE WAR IN IRAQ
October 12-16, 2007

As Democratic leaders in Congress attempt to wrangle enough votes to override President Bush's veto of legislation that would expand the coverage of SCHIP - the State Children's Health Insurance Program - a majority of Americans not only favor expanding the program, but say they are willing to pay more in taxes to see it through.

Most Americans continue to believe the war is going badly and want troops out of Iraq within the next few years, though most Americans do not see that as likely to happen. Most Americans think the U.S. should have stayed out of Iraq in the first place, but are split as to whether or not the U.S. should confront countries that promote terrorism in the Middle East generally.

THE DEBATE OVER SCHIP

Americans overwhelmingly support expanding SCHIP to include more middle-class uninsured children. Eight in 10 Americans favor expanding the program, including large majorities of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents, as well as liberals, moderates, and conservatives.

WOULD YOU FAVOR OR OPPOSE EXPANDING SCHIP?

Favor	81%
Oppose	15

Despite President Bush's concerns about the additional cost of expanding SCHIP, those who favor the proposal would be willing to pay more in taxes to fund the expansion of the program.

WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO PAY MORE TAXES TO EXPAND SCHIP?

(Among those who favor expanding SCHIP)

Yes	74%
No	17

Most Republican, Democrats, and Independents who support expanding the program would be willing to have their taxes increased to see more children covered.

More generally, only about one in five Americans approve of the President's handling of health care overall - lower even than his handling of the war in Iraq. Bush's overall approval rating is 30%, similar to last month.

BUSH'S JOB APPROVALS

	Approve	Disapprove
Overall	30%	61
Terrorism	41%	51
War in Iraq	26%	67
Health Care	22%	65

Still, it doesn't appear that Congress has gained any leverage with the American public either. Only 27% of Americans approve of the way Congress is handling its job - a number that hasn't changed since last month and is slightly below the President's approval rating.

CONGRESS JOB APPROVAL

	Now	9/2007
Approve	27%	27%
Disapprove	59	65

Neither the President nor Congress seems to have picked up standing with the American public during the confrontation over SCHIP, but health care remains an important issue for the American people. Last month, health care ranked third among the most important problems facing the country today, and in today's poll it ranks second - nearly equal with the war in Iraq - as the issue voters most want to hear the candidates for president discuss during the 2008 presidential campaign. Jobs and the economy ranks third.

ISSUE YOU MOST WANT THE CANDIDATES TO TALK ABOUT

(Registered voters)

War in Iraq	26%
Health Care	25
Economy and jobs	11

THE ECONOMY AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Americans are divided in assessing the condition of the national economy. Half of all Americans say the economy is somewhat good, though only 5% say it is very good. Half say it is somewhat or very bad.

VIEWS OF THE ECONOMY

	Now	9/2007
Good	50%	50%
Bad	49	47

When looking ahead, 45% of Americans say the economy is getting worse, while only 9% say it is getting better. 44% say there is no difference, though most who see no change think the economy is currently in good shape.

As the oldest baby-boomers start to collect their first Social Security checks, the financial condition of Social Security remains a

concern for many Americans. 30% of Americans say that Social Security is in crisis, and another 36% say it is in serious financial trouble. Concern is up from two years ago, when only 17% of Americans said Social Security was in crisis.

CONDITION OF SOCIAL SECURITY

	Now	6/2005
In crisis	30%	17%
In serious trouble	36	38
In some trouble	26	37
Not in trouble	5	5

Republicans are more likely than Democrats and Independents to say that Social Security is in crisis, though a majority of all three say it is at least in serious trouble. Older Americans are the least likely to be concerned - only 11% of Americans over the age of 64 say that Social Security is in crisis compared to 34% of Americans under 64.

ASSESSING IRAQ

Almost two in three Americans think the war is going at least somewhat badly - the same as last month.

HOW ARE THINGS GOING FOR U.S. IN IRAQ?

	Now	9/2007	6/2007	10/2005
Well	34%	34%	22%	43%
Badly	63	63	77	55

Only one in three Americans think the recent troop surge in Iraq is making things better there. 13% say it is making things worse, while 41% say it is having no impact.

IMPACT OF U.S. TROOP SURGE

	Now	9/17/07	9/9/07	7/2007	6/2007
Made things better	33%	30%	35%	19%	17%
Made things worse	13	14	12	20	24
No impact	41	51	45	53	52

Positive evaluation of the surge rose substantially in September, and it is now twice as high as it was in June, when only 17% of Americans thought it was making things better in Iraq. Still, belief that the troop surge is improving the situation has never been above 35%.

There is little support for a long-term troop commitment in Iraq - only 23% of Americans are willing to have large numbers of U.S. troops in Iraq for longer than two years. 27% would be willing to have large numbers of troops in Iraq for one to two years, while 45% want troops to remain for less than a year.

WILLING FOR LARGE NUMBERS OF TROOPS TO REMAIN IN IRAQ FOR:

	Now	9/2007
Less than a year	45%	49%
One to two years	27	23
Two to five years	12	12
Longer than five/whatever it takes	11	10

There is a wide gap between what Americans would like to see happen, and what they think will happen. Only 34% expect troops to be in Iraq for less than two years. Most think they will be there for longer.

KEEPING LARGE NUMBERS OF TROOPS IN IRAQ

	Willing	Expect
Less than a year	45%	10%
One to two years	27	26
Two to five years	12	32
Longer than five/whatever it takes	11	24

Looking back, a slight majority of Americans - 51% - thinks the U.S. should have stayed out of Iraq in the first place, though 45% now say it was the right thing, up six points from September and more closely matching the number it has been for most of the past two years.

DID U.S. DO THE RIGHT THING GOING TO WAR WITH IRAQ?

	Now	9/2007	5/2007	10/2006	10/2005
Right thing	45%	39%	35%	44%	42%
Should've stayed out	51	53	61	51	50

Republicans differ from most Americans in their assessment of the war in Iraq. Unlike a majority of Americans, most Republicans think that the war is going at least somewhat well, that the troop surge is making things better in Iraq, and that going to war with Iraq was the right thing to do in the first place. And while they are more willing to see large numbers of U.S. troops remain in Iraq for a longer period of time, most still want them out within two years.

IRAQ AND THE WAR ON TERROR

Americans are divided as to whether or not Iraq is part of a more general war on terror. 46% of Americans say it is a part of the war on terror (including 35% who say it is a major part) and 48% say it is not. The number of Americans who think Iraq is a part of the war on terror is up slightly from last month, when a slight majority said the war in Iraq and the war on terror were separate.

IS IRAQ PART OF WAR ON TERROR?

	Now	9/2007	10/2006
Yes	46%	42%	43%
No	48	51	52

Most Republicans say the war in Iraq is a major part of the war on terror, while most Democrats and Independents say it is separate.

Americans are also divided more generally as to which long-term policy will make the U.S. safer - confronting countries that promote terrorism in the Middle East, or staying out of other countries' affairs in that region. 47% say the U.S. will be safer if it confronts countries the promote terrorism - up six points from August - while 45% say it should stay out.

THE U.S. WILL BE SAFER FROM TERRORISM IF IT...

	Now	8/2007	7/2007
Confronts countries supporting terror in the Middle East	47%	41%	38%
Stays out of other countries' affairs	45	49	54

And when asked whether or not Western and Muslim nations can coexist peacefully, 49% of Americans believe that conflicts are inevitable, though 43% say they can exist peacefully.

CAN WESTERN AND MUSLIM NATIONS COEXIST PEACEFULLY?

Conflicts inevitable	49%
Can coexist	43

Opinion on this matter reflects the division in how Americans view Islam generally. 45% of Americans think Islam encourages violence more than other religions around the world, 36% think it is the same as other religions, and another 6% think it promotes violence less than other religions. Most Americans who think Islam promotes more violence say conflict is inevitable between Western and Islamic nations, while most Americans who don't think so say Western and Muslim nations can peacefully coexist.

This poll was conducted among a random sample of 1282 adults nationwide, interviewed by telephone October 12-16, 2007. 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.

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q1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as President?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **				Sep07b
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	
	%	%	%	%	%
Approve	30	66	9	19	29
Disapprove	61	24	85	70	64
DK/NA	9	10	6	11	7

q2-3 BLANK

q4 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation with Iraq?

Approve	26	58	8	18	25
Disapprove	67	35	89	72	70
DK/NA	7	7	3	10	5

q5 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the campaign against terrorism?

Approve	41	75	19	35	40
Disapprove	51	19	73	55	54
DK/NA	8	6	8	10	6

q6 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling health care?

					Feb07b
Approve	22	42	8	19	24
Disapprove	65	41	85	65	60
DK/NA	13	17	7	16	16

q7 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job?

					Sep07b
Approve	27	24	32	25	27
Disapprove	59	65	56	57	65
DK/NA	14	11	12	18	8

q8 BLANK

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

Very good	5	10	2	4	4
Fairly good	45	58	33	45	46
Fairly bad	33	21	45	32	29
Very bad	16	9	20	18	18
DK/NA	1	2	0	1	3

q10 Do you think the economy is getting better, getting worse, or staying about the same?

Better	9	17	3	7	7
Worse	45	31	56	46	51
Same	44	51	38	45	41
DK/NA	2	1	3	2	1

q11-66 HELD FOR SEPARATE RELEASE

q67 Currently, a government program provides health insurance for some children in low-income families. Would you favor or oppose expanding this program to include some middle-class uninsured children?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **			
	*** Party ID ***			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Favor	81	70	90	81
Oppose	15	23	7	15
DK/NA	4	7	3	4

q68 Would you be willing to pay more in taxes in order to fund the expansion of this program?

	** AMONG THOSE WHO SAID FAVOR IN Q67 **			
Yes	74	68	82	71
No	17	23	13	18
Depends (Vol.)	7	9	4	8
DK/NA	2	0	1	3

q69-71 HELD FOR SEPARATE RELEASE

q72 Which of the following do you think best describes the financial situation of Social Security today-- is in crisis, it is in serious trouble, but not in crisis, it is in some trouble, or it is not really in trouble at all?

Crisis	30	36	27	28
Serious trouble	36	36	38	33
Some trouble	26	25	26	27
Not in trouble	5	2	5	6
DK/NA	3	1	4	6

q73 BLANK

q74 Looking back, do you think the United States did the right thing in taking military action against Iraq, or should the U.S. have stayed out?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **				Sep07b
Right thing	45	72	30	37	39
Stayed out	51	24	67	57	53
Don't know/No answer	4	4	3	6	8

q75 How would you say things are going for the U.S. in its efforts to bring stability and order to Iraq? Would you say things are going very well, somewhat well, somewhat badly, or very badly?

Very well	2	4	0	3	3
Somewhat well	32	53	20	28	31
Somewhat badly	30	27	34	28	29
Very badly	33	13	45	36	34
Don't know/No answer	3	3	1	5	3

q76 BLANK

q77 From what you know about the U.S. involvement in Iraq, how much longer would you be willing to have large numbers of U.S. troops remain in Iraq -- less than a year, one to two years, two to five years or longer than five years?

** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **

*** Party ID ***

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Sep07b
	%	%	%	%	%
Less than a year	45	26	56	51	49
One to two years	27	28	29	25	23
Two to five years	12	21	8	8	12
Longer than five years	5	9	1	5	5
As long as it takes (vol.)	6	12	3	4	5
Should leave now (vol.)	2	0	2	2	1
DK/NA	3	4	1	5	5

q78 How much longer do you think large numbers of U.S. troops WILL have to remain in Iraq -- for less than a year, one to two years, two to five years, or will U.S. troops have to stay in Iraq for longer than five years?

Less than a year	10	5	14	12	10
One to two years	26	26	28	24	24
Two to five years	32	36	30	30	31
Longer than five years	22	22	19	23	27
As long as it takes (vol.)	2	4	1	2	2
Should leave now (vol.)	1	0	0	3	6
DK/NA	7	7	8	6	

q79 As you may know, the U.S. has sent a troop surge to Iraq. From what you have heard or read, would you say the troop surge is making the situation in Iraq better, making it worse, or is it having no impact on the situation in Iraq so far?

Making it better	33	56	17	29	30
Making worse	13	4	17	16	14
No impact	41	25	57	39	51
DK/NA	13	15	9	16	5

q80 Do you think of the war with Iraq as part of the war on terrorism, or do you think of it as separate from the war on terrorism?

IF YES, ASK: Is it a major part of the war on terrorism, or a minor part of the war on terrorism?

Major part	35	61	22	27	31
Minor part	11	13	9	11	11
Not part	48	23	65	52	51
DK/NA	6	3	4	10	7

q81 Which comes closer to your view?...In the long run, the U.S. will be safer from terrorism if it confronts the countries and groups that promote terrorism in the Middle East. OR, In the long run, the U.S. will be safer from terrorism if it stays out of other countries' affairs in the Middle East.

					Aug07a
Confronts countries	47	70	36	38	41
Stays out of affairs	45	23	57	52	49
Don't know/No answer	8	7	7	10	10

q82 Generally speaking, do you think the Islamic religion encourages violence more than other religions around the world, about the same amount, or less than other religions around the world?

** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **

*** Party ID ***

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Apr06a
	%	%	%	%	%
More	45	56	42	40	46
Same amount	36	28	42	38	30
Less	6	4	7	8	7
Don't know/No answer	13	12	9	14	17

q83 Do you think Western nations and Muslim nations can find a way to peacefully co-exist in the world today, or do you think that violent conflict between them is inevitable?

Can coexist	43	35	50	43
Conflict inevitable	49	57	43	49
DK/NA	8	8	7	8

	UNWEIGHTED	WEIGHTED
Total Respondents	1282	
Total Republicans	406	375 (29%)
Total Democrats	426	425 (33%)
Total Independents	450	481 (38%)