



CBS NEWS POLL
 For release: Monday, March 16, 2009
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BAILING OUT BANKS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS
 March 12-15, 2009

A growing number of Americans are opposed to providing government assistance to ailing financial institutions, and many feel resentful that irresponsible banking executives could benefit.

Only 37% of Americans approve of the government giving money to banks and financial institutions as a way of trying to fix the nation's economy. More, 53%, disapprove - the highest number since CBS News starting asking about bailouts to financial institutions in December.

GOV'T PROVIDING MONEY TO BANKS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

	Now	2/23/09	2/5/09	12/2008
Approve	37%	39%	42%	46%
Disapprove	53	50	47	44

Nearly half of Americans are now mostly resentful that President Barack Obama's policies toward the nation's banks and financial institutions could benefit irresponsible managers and bankers. But 40% say they are relieved that aid to banks might cause them to start lending again.

PRES. OBAMA'S POLICIES TOWARD FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

<u>Relieved</u> banks may start lending	40%
<u>Resentful</u> irresponsible bankers could benefit	48

Along with some public resentment, 48% of Americans think the economy would improve without the government providing money to these companies; while 41% think the government aid is necessary to get the economy out of recession.

NECESSARY FOR GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE MONEY TO FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Yes	41%
No	48

Even a fifth of those who disapprove of the bailout see it as necessary.

The public puts the blame for the nation's banking problems on the institutions themselves. Three in four Americans say the banks' and financial institutions' problems are the results of their own management decisions, while few say they are mostly the result of economic conditions outside the companies' control.

**U.S. BANKS' CURRENT PROBLEMS
MAINLY CAUSED BY...**

Management decisions	75%
Conditions beyond companies' control	17

In another question, respondents were offered specific reasons for and against a government bailout of financial institutions. In this case, a majority (56%) of Americans think the government should not provide more money to ailing banks and financial institutions because the economy would be better off if these companies are allowed to succeed or fail on their own. But 37% think these institutions should receive money because they have a large impact on the U.S. economy and employ thousands.

UNEMPLOYMENT CONCERNS

Concern about unemployment, however, has dropped since last month. Now, 30% of Americans say they are very concerned that someone in their household might lose their job sometime in the next twelve months - down from a high of 44% at the beginning of February. Still, most Americans, six in 10, are at least somewhat concerned.

CONCERN ABOUT HOUSEHOLD UNEMPLOYMENT OVER THE NEXT YEAR

	Now	2/23/2009	2/5/2009	1/2009
Very concerned	30%	38%	44%	30%
Somewhat concerned	30	26	28	32
Not at all concerned	39	35	27	38

This poll was conducted among a random sample of 896 adults nationwide, interviewed by telephone March 12-15, 2009. Phone numbers were dialed from RDD samples of both standard land-lines 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 Poll

Bailing Out the Nation's Banks & Financial Institutions

March 12-15, 2009

q33 Do you approve or disapprove of the federal government providing money to banks and other financial institutions to try to help fix the country's economic problems?

	*** TOTAL RESPONDENTS ***				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Feb09b
	%	%	%	%	%
Approve	37	21	45	39	39
Disapprove	53	74	43	51	50
Depends (Vol.)	6	3	6	6	7
DK/NA	4	2	6	4	4

q34 Do you think providing government money to banks and other financial institutions is necessary to get the economy out of recession, or would the economy probably improve without doing that?

Necessary	41	20	51	43
Economy will improve without it	48	70	37	46
DK/NA	11	10	12	11

q35 Are the problems facing the banks and financial institutions mostly the result of the companies' management strategies and decisions, or are they mostly the result of economic conditions outside the companies' control?

Management decisions	75	75	73	78
Outside companies' control	17	16	22	12
Both/neither (Vol.)	4	6	2	6
DK/NA	4	3	3	4

q36 Which best describes your feelings about Barack Obama's policies toward the nation's banks and financial institutions - mostly relieved that those institutions might start lending to home buyers and businesses again, or mostly resentful that the policies could benefit irresponsible managers and bankers?

Mostly relieved	40	27	48	39
Mostly resentful	48	64	36	52
DK/NA	12	9	16	9

q47 Which do you think is a better approach to the problems facing banks and financial institutions in the U.S.: 1. The government should provide money to some companies in the financial industry, since those companies have a large impact on the U.S. economy and employ thousands of people; or 2. The government should not provide more money to those companies, because the economy will be better off if these companies are allowed to succeed or fail on their own.

Govt. should provide money	37	27	46	34
Govt. should not provide money	56	68	46	59
DK/NA	7	5	8	7

q52 How concerned are you that in the next 12 months you or someone else in your household might be out of work and looking for a job -- very concerned, somewhat concerned, or not concerned at all?

	*** TOTAL RESPONDENTS ***				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Feb09b
	%	%	%	%	%
Very concerned	30	27	33	29	38
Somewhat concerned	30	26	30	32	26
Not at all concerned	39	47	35	38	35
DK/NA	1	0	2	1	1

	<u>Unweighted</u>	<u>Weighted</u>
Total Respondents	896	
Total Republicans	239	211
Total Democrats	331	362
Total Independents	326	323