



CBS NEWS/NEW YORK TIMES POLL
 For Release: Sunday, May 4, 2007
 6:00pm EDT

THE NATIONAL ECONOMY AND THE GASOLINE TAX

May 1-3, 2008

America's view of the condition of the national economy has never been bleaker. As job losses continue into a fourth straight month and the price of oil continues to reach new heights, 83% of Americans think the condition of the national economy is bad - the highest number recorded by the CBS News/New York Times Poll since this question was first asked in 1986 - which includes 43% who say it is very bad. Only 16% say the economy is even somewhat good, also a record low.

CONDITION OF THE ECONOMY

	Now	4/30/08	3/2008	1/2008	1/1992
Good	16%	22%	25%	38%	17%
Bad	83	77	76	61	82

The number of Americans who say the economy is in good shape has dropped six points since last week, and it has dropped 22 points since the beginning of the year.

President Bush's job approval rating remains low at 28%, the same as last week. Bush's approval rating has not risen above 30% in over a year.

BUSH'S JOB APPROVAL

	Now	4/30/08
Approve	28%	28%
Disapprove	63	65

Still, many do not see lifting the federal gas tax for the summer - a proposal being advocated by presidential hopefuls Hillary Clinton and John McCain - as part of the solution to ease the burden on average Americans. 49% think lifting the tax is a bad idea, while 45% approve of the plan.

LIFTING THE GAS TAX FOR THE SUMMER

Bad idea	49%
Good idea	45

Most Republicans approve of the idea and most independents disapprove, while Democrats are divided. Americans are also divided on this issue by income: Those making under \$30,000 a year approve of a gas tax "holiday" for the summer, but most making more do not.

Americans are also skeptical of the motives of the public figures that support the idea of a temporary lifting of the federal gasoline tax: seven in 10 think they support the measure mostly to help themselves politically. Even most Americans who approve of the idea think so.

WHY DO SOME CANDIDATES WANT TO LIFT THE GAS TAX?	
To help average Americans	21%
To help themselves politically	70

This poll was conducted among a random sample of 671 adults nationwide, interviewed by telephone May 1-3, 2008. 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 four 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 **				Apr08b
	Total	*** Party ID ***			
	%	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %	%
Approve	28	55	12	22	28
Disapprove	63	29	87	67	65
DK/NA	9	16	1	11	7

q2 How would you rate the condition of the national economy these days? Is it very good, fairly good, fairly bad, or very bad?

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Apr08b
Very good	1	3	1	0	0
Fairly good	15	34	5	9	22
Fairly bad	40	37	42	40	41
Very bad	43	26	51	48	36
DK/NA	1	0	1	3	1

q49 Some people say lifting the federal tax on gasoline for the summer months is a good idea because it would lower the cost of gas and reduce expenses faced by average Americans. Others say removing the gas tax for the summer months is a bad idea because it would not create real benefits for average Americans and does not deal with the real problem of America's dependence on foreign oil. What do you think -- is removing the federal tax on gasoline for the summer months a good idea or a bad idea?

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
Good idea	45	58	47	32
Bad idea	49	37	50	60
DK/NA	6	5	3	8

q13 Do you think some candidates have proposed eliminating the gas tax this summer MAINLY because they think it is a sound proposal that will provide some relief to average Americans or MAINLY to help themselves politically?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS^ **			
Help Americans	21	24	29	10
Help themselves politically	70	66	64	78
Both (Vol.)	5	5	5	5
Neither (Vol.)	5	5	2	7

^This question was asked of 487 respondents. It was added to the survey on May 2nd and it followed q49.

	<u>UNWEIGHTED</u>	<u>WEIGHTED</u>
Total Respondents	671	
Total Republicans	194	195
Total Democrats	269	261
Total Independents	208	214