

**PRESIDENT OBAMA, THE ECONOMY AND U.S. AUTOMAKERS**  
**March 12-16, 2009**

Despite the many economic problems facing the country now, President Obama's job approval rating remains unchanged, at 62%, and a growing number of Americans think the country is headed in the right direction.

Many Americans expect it will take a while for real economic progress to occur (and nearly nine in ten say the economy is bad). But there are small signs that perhaps Americans have become somewhat more positive about the economy recently; the percentage that is very concerned about job loss has dropped, as has the percentage that says the economy is getting worse.

As they did in December, Americans oppose giving troubled U.S. automakers more government financial assistance, and blame those companies' management decisions for the automakers' financial problems.

**PRESIDENT OBAMA**

President Obama's job approval rating has not changed since he took office nearly two months ago; 62% now approve of the job he is doing as president.

**PRESIDENT OBAMA'S JOB RATING**

	Now	2/23/2009	2/5/2009
Approve	62%	63%	62%
Disapprove	24	22	15
Don't know	14	15	23

Most Democrats, and a majority of independents, approve. Fewer Republicans do.

50% of Americans think the President will be able to make real progress fixing the economy in the next one to two years. 31% thinks it will take three years or longer.

**HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE OBAMA TO FIX ECONOMY?**

	Now	2/23/2009
One year	19%	16%
Two years	31	30
Three to four years	21	29
More than four years	10	11
He never will	16	12

And 60% will remain patient for one or two years to decide if the Obama Administration's economic policies are a success. But should it take longer than that for the economy to recover, just 19% say they will be patient.

17% (mostly Republicans) say they have lost patience already.

**PATIENCE FOR OBAMA'S ECONOMIC PLANS TO WORK?**

One year	25%
Two years	35
More than 2 years	19
Already out of patience	17

**THE ECONOMY**

Most Americans still think the national economy is bad, but there is some positive news in this poll. While a majority remains concerned that someone in their household may lose a job, the percentage that is very concerned has dropped since the high reached in early February. Now, 32% are very concerned, down from 38% in late February and 44% (a record high in this poll) earlier that month.

**CONCERN ABOUT HOUSEHOLD UNEMPLOYMENT OVER THE NEXT YEAR**

	Now	2/23/2009	2/5/2009	1/2009
Very concerned	32%	38%	44%	30%
Somewhat concerned	30	26	28	32
Not at all concerned	37	35	27	38

And while 41% think the economy is getting worse, that number is down from 51% last month. The percentage that says the economy is getting better has more than doubled, from 8% in February to 19% now.

**THINK THE ECONOMY IS GETTING...**

	Now	2/23/2009
Better	19%	8%
Worse	41	51
Staying the same	37	40

The percentage that says the country is headed in the right direction has also been steadily rising this year; 35% now say that, up from a low of 7% last October and 23% last month.

**DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY**

	Now	2/5/2009	10/2008	1/2006
Right track	35%	23%	7%	32%
Wrong direction	57	68	89	61

**NO HELP FOR U.S. AUTOMAKERS**

Americans express little sympathy for U.S. automakers facing financial difficulties. Just 18% think the government should provide them with

additional financial assistance, and 76% think the government should not.

**SHOULD GOVT. GIVE U.S. AUTOMAKERS MORE ASSISTANCE?**

	Now	2/2009
Yes	18%	22%
No	76	68

Increasingly, the public blames the automakers themselves for their current problems. 63% say that the problems facing the big three auto companies are mostly the result of management strategies and decisions (up from 56% last December), while only 24% say the problems are a result of economic conditions beyond the automakers' control.

**AUTOMAKERS' PROBLEMS MAINLY CAUSED BY...**

	Now	12/2008
Their own decisions	63%	56%
Conditions beyond their control	24	28

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This poll was conducted among a random sample of 1,142 adults nationwide, interviewed by telephone March 12-16, 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.