

THE TEA PARTY MOVEMENT

February 5-10th, 2010

Americans who call themselves supporters of the Tea Party movement express strong levels of anger toward Washington generally, and great personal antipathy toward President Barack Obama specifically. They are more likely to call themselves Republicans than independents.

Despite those strong views, for most Americans the movement remains relatively unknown: most haven't heard of the Tea Party, and those who have are still unsure about its stances.

Americans who call themselves "Tea Party members" in this poll:

- Mostly consider themselves Republicans - not independents - and most view the Republican Party favorably (62%).
- Are overwhelmingly negative about President Obama personally (80%); Americans overall are more favorable.
- Are more likely to think President Obama is working mainly on behalf of the poor, and not the middle class.
- Express nearly three times more anger toward Washington (45%) than Americans overall (17%).
- Are more likely to believe President Obama has already raised taxes, while most Americans do not.

WHO ARE THE TEA PARTIERS?

Tea Party identifiers hold an overwhelmingly negative opinion of President Obama, while Americans overall are slightly positive about him personally, even if not all of them approve of his job performance.

VIEWS OF PRESIDENT OBAMA

	All	Tea Partiers
Favorable	39%	11%
Unfavorable	34	80
Undecided/ haven't heard	25	9

Tea Partiers also express much higher anger toward the government in Washington. Compared to Americans overall, nearly three times as many say they feel angry about the government.

FEELINGS TOWARD GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON

	All	Tea Partiers
Enthusiastic/satisfied	29%	9%
Dissatisfied	53	46
Angry	17	45

One-third of Tea Party identifiers think the Obama administration favors the poor, compared to just 18% of all Americans. About half of all Americans think President Obama is working for the middle class or all classes equally.

THINK THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION FAVORS...

	All	Tea Partiers
The poor	18%	33%
The middle class	24	10
The rich	22	24
Treats all equal	25	17

Most Tea Partiers hold favorable views of the Republican Party (62%); they are nearly twice as positive as Americans overall (35%). And Tea Partiers are much less favorable about the Democrats (9%) compared to Americans overall (42%).

FAVORABLE RATINGS OF DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN PARTIES

	All	Tea Partiers
Favorable view of Democrats	42%	9%
Favorable view of Republicans	35%	62%

Tea Partiers are not enthralled with Congress -- they rate it as badly as Americans overall do.

RATINGS OF CONGRESS

	All	Tea Partiers
Approve	15%	18%
Disapprove	75	77

Even more so than most Americans, Tea Partiers overwhelmingly think the government generally is run by special interests, not for the benefit of the people.

GOVERNMENT IS RUN...

	All	Tea Partiers
By a few big interests	78%	92%
For benefit of all people	18	4

While Americans blame the Bush Administration for the deficit, Tea Partiers don't; they're more likely to point to the Obama administration or Congress.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR FEDERAL DEFICIT?

	All	Tea Partiers
Bush admin.	41%	16%
Obama admin.	7	19
Congress	24	33
All	10	15

And Tea Party identifiers are more likely to believe President Obama has already raised taxes this past year. Most Americans think the President has kept them the same.

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION HAS ALREADY...

	All	Tea Partiers
Raised taxes	24%	44%
Lowered taxes	12	2
Kept taxes same	53	46

In one difference on economic policy, Tea Party supporters (and many Republicans) express greater opposition to the idea of more bank regulations, while most Americans are in favor of increased regulations.

SHOULD BANK REGULATIONS BE INCREASED?

	All	Tea Partiers
Yes	56%	42%
No	36	48

Americans who identify themselves as Tea Party members are more likely than Americans overall to live in the South, and are older (59% say they are over age 45, compared to 50% of Americans.)

TEA PARTY IDENTIFICATION BY REGION

	All Americans	Tea Partiers
Northeast	23%	16%
South	32	37
Midwest	22	19
West	24	29

Tea Party identifiers are overwhelmingly white -- 95% are white, compared to 77% of Americans.

Tea Party members' income and education is comparable to that of all Americans: they are as likely to have college educations (26%) and earn over \$50,000 per year (51%) as Americans overall.

THE TEA PARTY MOVEMENT AND AMERICANS OVERALL

A majority of Americans still say they do not know much about the Tea Party movement; more than half say they have heard not much or nothing about it.

HOW MUCH HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT TEA PARTY MOVEMENT?

A lot	18%
Some	27
Not much/none	55

Even among those Americans who say they have heard about the Tea Party, four in ten still admit they don't know much about what it stands for.

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT TEA PARTY POSITIONS?

(Among those who've heard of Tea Party)

A lot	19%
Some	41
Not much/none	40

The Tea Party movement gets mixed reviews from those who have at least heard of it, but more than half are still unsure. Republicans who've heard about it have favorable views of the Tea Party movement, but even many Republicans aren't sure.

OPINIONS OF THE TEA PARTY

(Among those who've heard of Tea Party)

	All	Reps	Dems	Inds
Favorable	26%	42%	3%	30%
Unfavorable	20	2	47	14
Undecided/unsure	54	56	50	56

Among those who've heard of the Tea Party movement, only a third thinks it reflects the views of most Americans. 21% aren't sure.

DOES THE TEA PARTY REFLECT MOST AMERICANS?

(Among those who've heard of Tea Party)

Yes	33%
No	42
Don't know	21

However, 36% of those who've heard of it say they generally agree with the Tea Party movement's positions on issues; including 60% of Republicans.

Overall, less than one in five Americans considers themselves a "member" of the Tea Party. (This is a self-identification not related to whether they have attended any rallies or events.) Tea Party ranks are dominated by Republicans: one-third of all the Republicans in this poll identify themselves as Tea Party members, as do one in five independents.

DO YOU THINK OF YOURSELF AS A TEA PARTY MEMBER?

	All	Reps	Dems	Inds
Yes	18%	35%	2%	19%
No	39	26	52	37
Don't know/ Haven't heard of it	43	39	46	44

This poll was conducted among a random sample of 1084 adults nationwide, interviewed by telephone February 5-10, 2010. Phone numbers were dialed from random digit dial samples of both standard land-line 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/NEW YORK TIMES POLL
The Tea Party Movement
February 5-10, 2010

q11 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job?

	Total %	Tea Party Supporters %
Approve	15	18
Disapprove	75	77
DK/NA	10	5

q14 Is your opinion of Barack Obama favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about Barack Obama yet to have an opinion?

Favorable	39	11
Not favorable	34	80
Undecided	19	8
Haven't heard enough	6	1
Refused	2	0

q29 Which comes closest to your feelings about the way things are going in Washington -- enthusiastic, satisfied but not enthusiastic, dissatisfied but not angry, or angry?

Enthusiastic	3	2
Satisfied, not enthusiastic	26	7
Dissatisfied but not angry	53	46
Angry	17	45
DK/NA	1	0

q30 Would you say the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?

Few big interests	78	92
All people	18	4
DK/NA	4	4

q36 Who do you think is mostly to blame for the federal budget deficit -- 1. the Bush administration, 2. the Obama administration, 3. Congress, or 4. someone else?

Bush administration	41	16
Obama administration	7	19
Congress	24	33
Someone else	10	8
All of the above (vol.)	10	15
Combination (vol.)	7	8
DK/NA	1	1

q40 In general, is your opinion of the Republican Party favorable or not favorable?

Favorable	35	62
Not favorable	57	34
DK/NA	8	4

q41 In general, is your opinion of the Democratic Party favorable or not favorable?

	Total %	Tea Party Supporters %
Favorable	42	9
Not favorable	51	89
DK/NA	7	2

q62 In general, do you think the policies of the Obama Administration favor the rich, favor the middle class, favor the poor, or do they treat all groups equally?

Favor the rich	22	24
Favor the middle class	24	10
Favor the poor	18	33
Treat all equally	25	17
DK/NA	11	16

q67 So far, do you think the Obama Administration has increased taxes for most Americans, decreased taxes for most Americans, or have they kept taxes the same for most Americans?

Increased	24	44
Decreased	12	2
Kept the same	53	46
DK/NA	11	8

q77 When it comes to government regulation of banks and financial institutions, which comes closer to your opinion: 1. The government should increase regulations on these institutions now to help prevent more financial crises from happening again in the future, OR 2. The government should NOT increase regulations on these institutions now, because that will discourage private investors and slow down economic growth.

Should increase regulations	56	42
Should not increase	36	48
DK/NA	8	10

q88 How much have you heard or read about the Tea Party movement -- a lot, some, not much or nothing at all yet?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **			
	*** Party ID ***			
	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
A lot	18	20	19	17
Some	27	28	25	27
Not much	21	22	19	22
Nothing	34	29	37	34
DK/NA	0	1	0	0

q89 How much do you know about what the Tea Party movement stands for -- lot, some, not much or nothing at all?

** AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE HEARD OF THE TEA PARTY **

	Total	*** Party ID ***		
		Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
A lot	19	20	16	22
Some	41	47	42	36
Not much	28	28	27	28
Nothing at all	12	5	15	14
DK/NA	0	0	0	0

q90 Is your opinion of the Tea Party movement favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about the Tea Party movement yet to have an opinion?

Favorable	26	42	3	30
Not favorable	20	2	47	14
Undecided	18	25	12	17
Haven't heard enough	36	31	38	39
Refused	0	0	0	0

q91 Regardless of your opinion, do you think the views of the people involved in the Tea Party movement generally reflect the views of most Americans, or not?

Reflect most Americans	33	51	6	38
Do not reflect Americans	42	21	69	38
Both/Some (vol.)	4	10	2	1
DK/NA	21	18	23	23

q92 Do you think the Tea Party movement has too much influence, too little influence, or the right amount of influence in the Republican Party?

Too much	21	5	47	15
Too little	21	31	9	23
Right amount	29	39	15	31
DK/NA	29	25	29	31

q93 Do you think the Tea Party movement will make the Republican Party stronger, will make the Republican Party weaker or will it have no effect on the Republican Party?

Stronger	30	51	15	26
Weaker	16	7	24	16
No effect	30	25	34	32
DK/NA	24	17	27	26

q94 From what you have heard or read, would you say you generally agree or disagree with the Tea Party movement's positions on most social and political issues?

Agree	36	60	9	39
Disagree	34	16	64	26
DK/NA	30	24	27	35

q95 Do you consider yourself to be a supporter of the Tea Party movement, or not?

** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **

*** Party ID ***

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Yes	18	35	2	19
No	39	26	52	37
DK/NA/Haven't heard	43	39	46	44

	<u>UNWEIGHTED</u>	<u>WEIGHTED</u>	<u>MARGIN OF ERROR</u>
Total Respondents	1084		3 pts.
Tea Party Supporters	214	198	7 pts.