



CBS NEWS POLL

For Release: Friday, April 2, 2010
6:30 pm (EDT)

HEALTH CARE REFORM, THE ECONOMY AND THE PRESIDENT

March 29 - April 1, 2010

The latest CBS News Poll finds Americans are concerned about health care and the economy. The public is increasingly skeptical of the health care reform bill signed into law last week. More Americans now disapprove of the legislation, and many expect their costs to rise and the quality of their care to worsen; few expect the reforms to help them. There are also widespread worries about the economy and job loss.

Amid these concerns, President Barack Obama's job approval rating has dropped in this poll to an all-time low of 44%. His ratings on handling the economy and health care have also fallen, and most disapprove. But he receives higher marks on his handling of international issues.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Support for the recently-passed health care reforms has dropped since the legislation was signed into law by President Obama last week. Now, 53% of Americans say they disapprove of the new reforms, including 39% who say they disapprove strongly. On the eve of passage of the historic bill in Congress, 37% said they approved and 48% disapproved.

APPROVAL OF THE HEALTH CARE BILL

	Now	3/22/2010
Approve	32%	37%
Disapprove	53	48

Republicans and independents remain opposed to the reforms, and support has dropped some among Democrats. Now 52% of Democrats approve of the new reforms, a drop from 60% just before the bill was passed by Congress.

APPROVAL OF THE HEALTH CARE BILL

	Republicans		Democrats		Independents	
	Now	3/22	Now	3/22	Now	3/22
Approve	13%	13%	52%	60%	27%	30%
Disapprove	75	80	34	24	54	54

And less than one in five Americans thinks the new health care reforms will help them personally - unchanged since before the vote in Congress. 36% think the new reforms will hurt them, while 39% think they will have little effect.

HOW WILL REFORMS AFFECT YOU PERSONALLY?

	Now	3/22/2010
Help	17%	20%
Hurt	36	35
No effect	39	38

There are also some doubts about the specific ways in which Americans expect the reforms will affect them. Half think the new health care reforms will increase their health care costs, and 39% think the quality of their health care will get worse. However, sizable percentages expect the reforms will improve or have no effect on either.

HOW WILL HEALTH CARE REFORM AFFECT ...?

The cost of your health care		
Increase		52%
Decrease		14
No effect		27
The quality of your health care		
Get better		17%
Get worse		39
No effect		38

Six in 10 Americans think the new health care reforms will increase the budget deficit, while just 13% think the reforms will decrease the deficit and another 15% expect no effect.

HOW WILL HEALTH CARE REFORM AFFECT THE BUDGET DEFICIT?

Increase	63%
Decrease	13
No effect	15

But Americans are relatively more positive about one outcome of the legislation -- the effect the new reforms will have on consumers and the health insurance industry. 35% think the reforms will increase consumer protection against health insurance companies, and just 20% expect that to decrease.

**HOW WILL HEALTH CARE REFORM AFFECT
CONSUMER PROTECTIONS AGAINST INSURANCE COMPANIES?**

Increase	35%
Decrease	20
No effect	30

Still, as was the case before the bill was passed, about half of Americans say they don't have a good understanding of how the new reforms will affect them and their family. 53% find the reforms confusing, and just 41% understand their impact.

UNDERSTAND HOW REFORMS WILL AFFECT YOUR FAMILY?

	Now	3/22/2010
Yes, understand	41%	42%
No, it's confusing	53	54

THE PRESIDENT

President Obama's job approval rating has fallen to an all-time low of 44%, down five points from late March. 41% now disapprove, unchanged from last month. The percentage who are unsure has risen five points.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S JOB APPROVAL RATING

	Now	3/22/2010	2/2010	1/2010	10/2009	4/2009
Approve	44%	49%	46%	50%	56%	68%
Disapprove	41	41	45	40	34	23
Don't know	15	10	9	10	20	9

A majority of Democrats still approves, but the President's overall approval rating with his own party identifiers has dropped four points since last week.

There is a difference between how the public evaluates the President on domestic versus international issues. More Americans approve of how President Obama is handling terrorism and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. But when it comes to health care and the economy, majorities disapprove.

OBAMA JOB APPROVAL RATINGS

	Approve	Disapprove
Overall	44%	41
Economy	42%	50
Health care	34%	55
Terrorism	54%	32
Iraq	49%	34
Afghanistan	48%	36

Approval of President Obama's handling of health care has fallen seven points since just before the House vote on health care reform, and is now at an all-time low. Only 34% approve, and a majority disapproves.

OBAMA HEALTH CARE APPROVAL

	Now	3/22/2010	2/2010	1/2010	7/2009
Approve	34%	41%	35%	40%	49%
Disapprove	55	51	55	54	37

THE ECONOMY

The public continues to view the economy negatively. More than eight in ten think the economy is bad, the same as a year ago.

	CONDITION OF THE ECONOMY				
	Now	12/2009	4/2009	2/2009	10/2008
Good	16%	22%	16%	5%	11%
Bad	84	77	84	93	89

At the same time, concern about job loss has gone up somewhat; more Americans now (35%) than in February (31%) are very concerned that someone in their household will lose a job. Nearly six in 10 Americans are at least somewhat concerned about a job loss.

	CONCERN ABOUT HOUSEHOLD JOB LOSS		
	Now	2/2010	4/2009
Very concerned	35%	31%	44%
Somewhat concerned	24	26	26
Not concerned	41	41	30

As has often been the case, lower-income Americans tend to be the most concerned about job loss.

CONGRESS AND CIVILITY

Congress' approval ratings remain low at just 16%. Approval of Congress is lower than it was a year ago.

	CONGRESS APPROVAL			
	Now	3/22/10	3/2009	10/2008
Approve	16%	14%	30%	12%
Disapprove	74	76	56	74

The lead-up to the House vote on health care reform was contentious, and most Americans believe Congress' behavior is less civil now than it was ten years ago. Democrats, Republicans and independents all share that view.

CONGRESS' CIVILITY COMPARED TO 10 YEARS AGO?	
More civil	11%
About same	27
Less civil	56

Similarly, the public also thinks civility among Americans generally has decreased; 50% say when they debate the issues of the day, ordinary Americans are less civil now than they were ten years ago.

AMERICANS' CIVILITY DEBATING ISSUES, COMPARED TO 10 YEARS AGO?	
More civil	17%
About same	29
Less civil	50

When it comes to cursing, a third says they are bothered a lot by people using swear words in conversations -- but more than a third aren't bothered much at all. Women dislike it more than men.

ARE YOU DISTURBED BY PEOPLE USING SWEAR WORDS?

	All	Men	Women
A lot	34%	27%	40%
Some	24	27	21
Not much/none	38	42	34

This poll was conducted among a random sample of 858 adults nationwide, interviewed by telephone March 29-April 1, 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 Poll
The President and Domestic Issues
March 29 - April 1, 2010

q1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?

	TOTAL RESPONDENTS				
	***** Party ID *****				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	3/22/2010
	%	%	%	%	%
Approve	44	17	79	33	49
Disapprove	41	74	9	46	41
DK/NA	15	9	12	21	10

q2 BLANK

q3 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling the economy?

Approve	42	12	71	37	45
Disapprove	50	82	20	53	45
DK/NA	8	6	9	10	10

q4 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling the situation with Iraq?

					Jan10b
Approve	49	42	64	41	48
Disapprove	34	41	23	40	38
Don't know/No answer	17	17	13	19	14

q5 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling the situation with Afghanistan?

Approve	48	35	68	41	46
Disapprove	36	49	21	40	39
Don't know/No answer	16	16	11	19	15

q6 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling health care?

					3/22/2010
Approve	34	14	56	29	41
Disapprove	55	79	31	59	51
DK/NA	11	7	13	12	8

q7 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling the threat of terrorism?

					Feb10a
Approve	54	33	75	50	55
Disapprove	32	54	10	36	34
Don't know/No answer	14	13	15	14	11

q8 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job?

					3/22/2010
Approve	16	15	24	11	14
Disapprove	74	83	66	73	76
DK/NA	10	2	10	16	10

q9-10 BLANK

q11 How would you rate the condition of the national economy these days? Is it very good, fairly good, fairly bad, or very bad?

	TOTAL RESPONDENTS				Feb10a
	***** Party ID *****				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	
	%	%	%	%	%
Very good	1	1	2	1	1
Fairly good	15	9	19	15	16
Fairly bad	42	39	48	38	44
Very bad	42	51	30	45	39
DK/NA	0	0	1	1	0

q12 BLANK

q13 From what you've heard or read, do you approve or disapprove of the new health care reform bill?

IF APPROVE, ASK: Do you strongly approve or somewhat approve?

IF DISAPPROVE, ASK: Do you somewhat disapprove or strongly disapprove?

					3/22/2010
Strongly approve	16	1	30	13	13
Somewhat approve	16	12	22	14	24
Somewhat disapprove	14	13	20	10	15
Strongly disapprove	39	62	14	44	33
DK/NA	15	12	14	19	15

q14 From what you've heard or read, do you think the new health care reform bill will mostly help you personally, will mostly hurt you personally, or don't you think it will have much of an effect on you personally?

Help	17	4	28	18	20*
Hurt	36	59	15	38	35
No effect	39	34	49	34	38
DK/NA	8	3	8	10	7

*"...the **current** health care reform bill."

q15-16 BLANK

q17 Do you feel you have a good understanding of how the new health care reform bill would affect you and your family, or is it confusing to you?

Understand	41	43	40	41	42*
Confusing	53	55	55	50	54
DK/NA	6	2	5	9	4

*"...the **current** health care reform bill."

q18 From what you've heard or read, do you think the new health care reforms will eventually increase your own health care costs, will eventually lower your own health care costs, or don't you think they will have much effect on your own health care costs?

Increase	52	75	34	51
Decrease	14	3	23	13
No effect	27	19	33	27
Don't know/No answer	7	3	10	9

q19 From what you've heard or read, do you think the new health care reforms will make the quality of health care you receive better, will make the quality of health care you receive worse, or don't you think they will have much effect on the quality of your health care?

	TOTAL RESPONDENTS			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Better	17	5	32	13
Worse	39	63	17	42
No effect	38	30	47	38
Don't know/No answer	5	3	5	7

q20-21 BLANK

q22 In the long run, do you think the new health care reforms will increase the federal budget deficit, decrease the federal budget deficit, or won't it have much of an effect on the federal budget deficit?

Increase	63	85	41	67
Decrease	13	5	22	11
No effect	15	8	24	13
DK/NA	9	2	13	9

q23 From what you've heard or read, do you think the new health insurance reforms will increase consumer protection against the health insurance companies, decrease consumer protection against the health insurance companies, or don't you think they will have much effect on consumer protections?

Increase	35	28	50	27
Decrease	20	26	11	22
No effect	30	35	26	28
DK/NA	15	11	13	23

q24 In general, when most members of Congress debate issues facing the country do you think they are more civil today compared to 10 years ago, less civil, or about as civil as they were 10 years ago?

More civil	11	3	18	12
Less civil	56	64	53	53
About as civil	27	26	23	30
DK/NA	6	7	6	5

q25 In general, when most Americans debate issues facing the country do you think they are more civil today compared to 10 years ago, less civil, or about as civil as they were 10 years ago?

More civil	17	11	22	16
Less civil	50	54	44	52
About as civil	29	31	30	27
DK/NA	4	4	4	5

q26-q27 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

q28-q29 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q30-q43 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

q44 In general, how much does it bother you when people use curse or swear words in conversations -- a lot, some, a little, or not at all?

	TOTAL RESPONDENTS			
	Total	Rep	em	Ind
	%	%	%	%
A lot	34	37	31	34
Some	24	26	22	23
A little	15	11	21	12
Not at all	23	21	22	26
Depends (Vol.)	4	5	4	4
DK/NA	0	0	0	1

q64 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	Rep	em	Ind	Feb10a %
Very concerned	35	31	43	30	31
Somewhat concerned	24	28	26	18	26
Not at all concerned	41	41	30	51	41
DK/NA	0	0	0	0	2

	<u>UNWEIGHTED</u>	<u>WEIGHTED</u>
Total Respondents	858	
Total Republicans	240	240
Total Democrats	271	294
Total Independents	347	324