



CBS NEWS POLL
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Election 2014
 May 16-19, 2014

- Voters find little to cheer about in the upcoming midterm elections. Record low percentages think most members of Congress (5%) and their own Representative (29%) deserve re-election. Many (45%) feel less enthusiastic about voting than usual.
- The poll also suggests disillusionment about elections. 45% of Americans say it doesn't matter which party controls Congress -- a new high for CBS News Polls; and 75% think the wealthy have more influence in elections than most Americans.
- Voters say the economy will be the most important issue in their vote this fall, and Republicans are seen as the party more likely to do a better job on that issue. Democrats are viewed by voters as the party more likely to care and about their needs and problems.
- Republicans and Democrats are running about even in the generic national vote for the House, but Republicans have a lead among registered voters who are the most attentive and more enthusiastic about voting.
- The Tea Party movement has lost some of its strength -- a record low of just 15% of Americans now consider themselves supporters. Among Republicans, support for the Tea party has dropped 10 points since February (42% to 32%) and is now among the lowest in CBS News Polls.

Congress and the Midterm Elections

A mere 5% of voters think most members of Congress have done a good enough job to deserve re-election. While this number has been low historically, 5% is the lowest ever recorded in CBS News Polls; nearly nine in ten say it's time to give new people a chance.

Most Members of Congress Deserve Re-Election?

(Among registered voters)

	Now	2/2010	9/2006	10/2002	10/1998
Yes, deserve re-election	5%	8%	12%	15%	24%
No, time for new people	86	81	76	70	64

And voters are only slightly happier with their own Congressional Representative. Just 29% (a record low) think their own House member deserves re-election, and 62% think it's time for someone new. In past midterm election years, more voters have supported their own representative's re-election.

Own Member of Congress Deserve Re-Election?

(Among registered voters)

	Now	9/2010	9/2006	10/2002	10/1994	10/1990
Yes, deserves re-election	29%	34%	42%	50%	38%	43%
No, time for new person	62	55	47	38	52	40

It's more than five months until this year's Congressional elections, and voters now are not especially enthusiastic about voting; more than four in 10 are less enthusiastic about voting this year compared to previous Congressional elections. There is also a partisan enthusiasm gap: 44% of Republicans say they are more enthusiastic about voting this year, compared to 36% of Democrats. Independents' level of enthusiasm is similar to that of Democrats.

Enthusiasm About Voting Compared to Past Congressional Elections

	(Among registered voters)			
	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
More	38%	44%	36%	36%
Less	45	43	46	46
Same (vol.)	14	9	16	16

Looking ahead to November, Republicans and Democrats are nearly even in the generic national vote for the House of Representatives, which asks registered voters whether they would cast their vote for the Democrat or Republican in their own district. National polls, however, are not perfect predictors of Congressional elections, since the state of the race in each individual district varies. Still, Republicans currently control the House and a draw on the generic ballot could put them in position to keep control.

Generic Ballot: 2014 Congressional Vote

	(Among registered voters)	
Republican		39%
Democrat		40
Depends/Not sure		16

Just 26% of voters are paying a lot of attention to the 2014 campaign so far. Those who are paying the most attention and are the most enthusiastic are planning to cast their vote for a Republican candidate this fall.

Generic Ballot: 2014 Congressional Vote

	(Among registered voters)		
	Total	A lot of attention	More enthusiastic about voting
Republican	39%	47%	44%
Democrat	40	38	38
Depends/Not sure	16	13	14

Along with diminished enthusiasm, there is also a sense of disillusionment among the American public. 45% of Americans -- a record high in CBS News polls -- now say they agree with the statement "It makes no real difference which party controls Congress, things go on just as they did before." Still, a slim majority thinks it matters which party controls Congress.

It Makes No Real Difference Which Party Controls Congress – Things Go On Just as They Did Before

	Now	9/2006	1/2002	6/2001	10/1998
Agree	45%	36%	42%	38%	39%
Disagree	53	62	54	58	57

Ratings of Congress remain overwhelmingly negative. 80% of Americans disapprove of the job Congress is doing, while just 12% approve. At this point in the 2010 election cycle, Congress' approval rating was 15%, not much different than it is today.

Congress Job Performance						
	Now	3/2014	2/2014	10/2013	5/2012	5/2010
Approve	12%	18%	13%	9%	15%	15%
Disapprove	80	76	80	85	77	77

The country's two major political parties are not viewed positively either, although the Democratic Party is viewed more favorably than the Republican Party. Views of the GOP are similar to what they were at this point during the 2010 election campaign, while opinions of the Democratic party are slightly improved.

Views of the Political Parties				
	Republican Party		Democratic Party	
	Now	5/2010	Now	5/2010
Favorable	33%	33%	43%	37%
Not favorable	58	55	50	54

Tea Party: Losing Support?

The Tea Party was an important factor in the 2010 elections, but there's evidence in the poll that their support may be waning. Today, just 15% of Americans say they are supporters of the Tea Party movement – the lowest since CBS News began asking about the Tea Party in February 2010.

Supporter of the Tea Party Movement								
	Now	3/2014	5/2013	5/2012	5/2011	11/2010	5/2010	2/2010
Yes	15%	22%	24%	21%	22%	31%	20%	18%
No	75	63	63	68	69	58	59	39

The movement may be losing some of its core constituency -- Republicans. 32% of self-identified Republicans now consider themselves supporters of the Tea Party – down 10 points from February and a decline of 23 points from July 2010, the summer before the Republican Party took control of the House of Representatives. The percentage of Republicans who identify as Tea Party supporters is now among the lowest in CBS News Polls.

Supporter of the Tea Party Movement									
(Among Republicans)									
	Now	3/2014	2/2014	9/2013	5/2013	5/2012	11/2010	7/2010	2/2010
Yes	32%	37%	42%	51%	46%	47%	52%	55%	50%
No	58	47	42	41	42	45	37	36	37

Nationally, 23% of Republicans say a candidate's affiliation with the Tea Party would make them more likely to back that candidate, while 13% say it would make them less likely. It wouldn't make much difference to most Republicans.

Perhaps not surprisingly, conservative Republicans are more inclined to say they would back a candidate who was affiliated with the Tea Party, but even more than half of that group says it wouldn't make a difference.

Vote Impact of Tea Party Affiliation

	(Among Republicans)		
	Total	Conservative	Moderate/Liberal
More likely to vote for	23%	28%	14%
Less likely to vote for	13	10	19
No difference	57	56	62

Most Republicans overall (as well as most conservative Republicans) think the Tea Party has either the right amount of influence on their party or too little influence.

Influence of Tea Party on the Republican Party (Among Republicans)

	Total	Conservative	Moderate/Liberal
Too much	14%	10%	23%
Too little	29	34	22
Right amount	38	39	37

Americans overall have held net negative views of the Tea Party movement for the past few years, and they continue to do so in this poll. Favorable views have dipped since February, and are now similar to what they were just after the government shutdown last fall.

Views of the Tea Party

	Now	2/2014	10/2013	9/2011	4/2011
Favorable	14%	21%	14%	21%	26%
Unfavorable	31	31	36	29	29
Undecided/haven't heard	53	47	50	49	43

As has been the case, Republicans have a more favorable view of the Tea Party movement than either Democrats or independents.

Issues and the Parties

Voters choose the economy (39%) as the issue that will be most important in deciding their vote for Congress this November, ahead of health care (22%), the federal budget deficit (11%) and the environment (9%). Fewer voters say taxes (7%) immigration (6%), and foreign policy (3%) will be most important.

While the economy is the dominant issue for voters of all political persuasions, 27% of Republicans pick health care as the issue that will matter most, compared to 18% of Democrats who choose it. The environment and immigration are more important to Democrats than to Republicans.

Most Important Issue in Vote for Congress (Among Registered Voters)

	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Economy	39%	36%	37%	43%
Health care	22	27	18	21
Budget deficit	11	17	6	11
Environment	9	2	16	6
Taxes	7	6	8	6
Immigration	6	4	10	4
Foreign policy	3	3	2	4

The poll also asked which party would be more likely to do a better job on these issues. The Republican Party has an advantage on the economy, the deficit, foreign policy and taxes. The Democratic Party leads on health care, and has a large lead on the environment. The parties are even on immigration.

Issues: Which Party Will Do a Better Job On...?

(Among Registered Voters)

	Republican	Democratic
The economy	50%	40
Budget deficit	50%	36
Foreign policy	48%	38
Taxes	47%	42
Immigration	42%	42
Health care	40%	50
Environment	27%	62

The Democratic Party has the lead on empathy. More see the Democrats as the party that cares about their needs and problems, and will help ensure all Americans have a fair chance to get ahead. The parties are more closely matched on moral values.

Characteristics: Which Political Party ...?

(Among Registered Voters)

	Republican	Democratic
Ensures all have a fair chance to get ahead	37%	47
Cares more about people like you	36%	46
Shares your moral values	43%	44

Money and Politics

Americans express some cynicism when it comes to participating in the electoral process. Three in four think wealthy Americans have a better chance than others of influencing the election process. Only 23% say all Americans have an equal chance to do so.

Influencing the Elections Process

	All	Reps	Dems	Inds
All have equal chance	23%	35%	19%	21%
Wealthy have more of a chance	75	63	78	77

Perhaps for this reason, most Americans continue to think individual contributions to political campaigns should be limited. Majorities of all partisan stripes would like to see campaign contributions limited, but Democrats and independents are more likely to hold that view than Republicans.

Campaign Contributions by Individuals

	All	Reps	Dems	Inds
Should be limited	71%	65%	76%	72%
Allow unlimited contributions	25	34	22	24

Along the same lines, most Americans say that spending by outside groups on political advertising should be limited.

Spending on Ads by Unaffiliated Groups

	All	Reps	Dems	Inds
Should be limited	76%	65%	84%	75%
Should not be limited	22	32	16	22

This poll was conducted by telephone May 16-19, 2014 among 1,009 adults nationwide. Data collection was conducted on behalf of CBS News by SSRS of Media, PA. Phone numbers were dialed from 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 may be higher. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. This poll release conforms to the Standards of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

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Q1-Q6 Released separately

Q7. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Mar14c
	%	%	%	%	%
Approve	12	14	12	11	18
Disapprove	80	77	82	81	76
Don't know/No answer	8	9	6	8	6

Q8-Q10 Released separately

Q11. In general, is your opinion of the Republican Party favorable or not favorable?

					Feb14c
Favorable	33	69	13	30	33
Not favorable	58	27	83	57	61
Don't know/No answer	8	4	5	13	5

Q12. In general, is your opinion of the Democratic Party favorable or not favorable?

Favorable	43	9	81	33	42
Not favorable	50	87	15	55	53
Don't know/No answer	8	4	4	12	5

Q13. How much attention have you been able to pay to the 2014 election campaign — a lot, some, not much or no attention so far?

	** REGISTERED VOTERS **				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Mar14c
A lot	26	32	23	24	19
Some	34	36	30	37	31
Not much	25	23	30	22	27
No attention	15	10	17	15	23
Don't know/No answer	*	-	*	1	*

Q14. HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

Q15. If the 2014 election for U.S. House of Representatives were being held today, would you vote for the Republican candidate or the Democratic candidate in your district?

	** REGISTERED VOTERS **				Mar14c
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	
	%	%	%	%	%
Republican	39	90	6	36	39
Democratic	40	1	86	25	39
Other (vol.)	2	-	*	5	3
Won't vote (vol.)	2	1	1	4	2
Depends (vol.)	6	3	3	12	8
Don't know/No answer	10	5	4	18	9

Q16. Compared to previous Congressional elections, this year are you more enthusiastic about voting than usual, or less enthusiastic?

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Oct10a
More enthusiastic	38	44	36	36	47
Less enthusiastic	45	43	46	46	34
Same (vol.)	14	9	16	16	17
Don't know/No answer	2	4	1	1	3

Q17. Do you think most members of Congress have done a good enough job to deserve re-election, or do you think it's time to give new people a chance?

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Sep11a
Deserve re-election	5	6	6	3	6
Time for new people	86	86	84	89	84
Depends on candidates (vol.)	3	4	4	2	5
Don't know/No answer	5	3	6	6	5

Q18. Do you think the representative in Congress from your district has performed his or her job well enough to deserve re-election, or do you think it's time to give a new person a chance?

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	
Deserve re-election	29	33	31	24	33
Time for new people	62	60	59	65	57
Depends on candidates (vol.)	2	1	2	3	2
Don't know/No answer	8	7	8	8	8

Q19. Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party comes closer to sharing your moral values?

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Apr08b
Republican Party	43	91	9	42	36
Democratic Party	44	4	83	35	50
Both (vol.)	2	1	1	4	1
Neither (vol.)	8	3	3	15	6
Don't know/No answer	3	1	3	4	7

Q20. Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party cares more about the needs and problems of people like yourself?

	** REGISTERED VOTERS **				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Mar91a
	%	%	%	%	%
Republican Party	36	81	5	34	26
Democratic Party	46	7	85	37	49
Both (vol.)	1	1	1	2	8
Neither (vol.)	12	8	6	21	6
Don't know/No answer	4	3	3	6	11

Q21. Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is more likely to help ensure all Americans have a fair chance to get ahead in the U.S.?

Republican Party	37	77	7	38
Democratic Party	47	12	83	37
Both (vol.)	1	1	1	1
Neither (vol.)	10	6	5	17
Don't know/No answer	5	4	4	7

Q22. Which one of the following issues will be most important in deciding your vote for Congress this November?

The Economy	39	36	37	43
Health care	22	27	18	21
Federal budget deficit	11	17	6	11
The Environment	9	2	16	6
Taxes	7	6	8	6
Immigration	6	4	10	4
Foreign policy	3	3	2	4
Something else	2	1	2	3
Don't know/No answer	1	2	1	1

Q23. Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is more likely to do a better job handling immigration issues?

Republican Party	42	77	16	43
Democratic Party	42	12	75	33
Both (vol.)	1	*	*	2
Neither (vol.)	7	5	3	13
Don't know/No answer	7	6	5	10

Q24. Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is more likely to do a better job on the economy?

	** REGISTERED VOTERS **			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Republican Party	50	92	16	52
Democratic Party	40	5	79	28
Both (vol.)	1	-	1	2
Neither (vol.)	5	1	2	11
Don't know/No answer	4	2	2	6

Q25. Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is more likely to do a better job on the federal budget deficit?

Republican Party	50	86	20	53
Democratic Party	36	5	71	25
Both (vol.)	1	-	*	3
Neither (vol.)	8	6	3	13
Don't know/No answer	6	3	6	6

Q26. Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is more likely to do a better job on health care?

Republican party	40	79	8	42
Democratic party	50	14	88	39
Both (vol.)	*	-	-	1
Neither (vol.)	5	4	1	10
Don't know/No answer	5	4	3	7

Q27. Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is more likely to do a better job on the environment?

Republican party	27	58	10	23
Democratic party	62	36	85	59
Both (vol.)	1	1	*	2
Neither (vol.)	5	2	2	9
Don't know/No answer	5	4	3	7

Q28. Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is more likely to do a better job on taxes?

Republican party	47	89	16	48
Democratic party	42	6	78	32
Both (vol.)	1	*	*	2
Neither (vol.)	6	3	2	11
Don't know/No answer	4	3	3	6

Q30. Regardless of how you usually vote, do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is more likely to do a better job on U.S. foreign policy?

	** REGISTERED VOTERS **			
	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
Republican party	48	87	17	49
Democratic party	38	8	72	26
Both (vol.)	2	*	1	4
Neither (vol.)	5	1	2	11
Don't know/No answer	7	4	7	9

Q31. Would you agree or disagree with the following statement? It makes no real difference which party controls Congress--things go on just as they did before.

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **				Sep06a
	%	%	%	%	%
Agree	45	33	38	55	36
Disagree	53	65	59	42	62
Don't know/No answer	3	2	3	3	2

Q32. Which one of the following two positions on campaign financing do you favor more: limiting the amount of money individuals can contribute to political campaigns, or allowing individuals to contribute as much money to political campaigns as they'd like?

					Jan12b
Limiting	71	65	76	72	64
Allowing	25	34	22	24	31
Don't know/ No answer	3	2	2	5	5

Q33. Currently, groups not affiliated with a candidate are able to spend unlimited amounts of money on advertisements during a political campaign. Do you think this kind of spending should be limited by law, or should it remain unlimited?

Should be limited	76	65	84	75	67
Should remain unlimited	22	32	16	22	29
Don't know/ No answer	2	3	*	3	4

Q34. Thinking about U.S. elections, do you think all Americans have an equal chance to influence the elections process, or do you think wealthy Americans have more of a chance to influence the elections process than other Americans?

Equal influence	23	35	19	21
Wealthy have more influence	75	63	78	77
Don't know/ No answer	2	2	3	2

Q35-Q61 RELEASED SEPARATELY

Q62. 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?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **				Feb14c
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	
	%	%	%	%	%
Favorable	14	35	2	13	21
Not favorable	31	11	54	24	31
Undecided	19	20	13	23	18
Haven't heard enough	34	33	30	37	29
Don't know/No answer	2	1	2	2	2

Q63. 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	35	14	58	29	37
Too little	21	29	11	24	22
Right amount	23	38	13	22	23
Don't know/No answer	21	18	18	25	18

Q64. If a political candidate said they were part of the Tea Party movement would that make you more likely to support that candidate, less likely, or wouldn't that make a difference to you?

					Sep11a
More likely	11	23	4	9	8
Less likely	32	13	54	25	30
No difference	52	57	37	59	53
Depends	1	1	1	1	3
Don't know/No answer	5	6	4	5	6

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

					Mar14c
Yes	15	32	2	15	22
No	75	58	90	73	63
Don't know/No answer	10	10	8	12	15

	Unweighted	Weighted
Total respondents	1009	
Republicans	239	228
Democrats	325	327
Independents	445	453

Margin of error: 3pts