



CBS NEWS POLL
For release: Tuesday, August 8, 2017
6:30 pm EDT

Americans Frustrated with Congress

August 3-6, 2017

The American public is frustrated that Congress hasn't gotten much done and Republicans split on whether their party is getting in the way of President Trump's agenda. Meanwhile, by two to one Americans think Congressional Democrats are doing more to get in the way of Mr. Trump's agenda, but not offering their own agenda for the country.

Congress has left Washington for summer recess, and nearly nine in 10 Americans say it didn't get much done. Most – particularly Republicans - feel frustrated about that.

This Congress Has Gotten...

Not much done	86%
A good amount done	9

Among those who say Congress didn't accomplish much, three in four are frustrated, feeling a lot of unfinished business was left behind. Frustration is evident across the political spectrum, but some Democrats (about a third) are glad Congress didn't get much done because it didn't have the right priorities.

How Do You Feel About Congress Not Getting Much Done?

(Among those who say Congress didn't get much done)

	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Glad, Congress didn't have right priorities	19%	10%	32%	15%
Frustrated, leaving behind unfinished business	73	84	61	77

Underscoring this sentiment, Congress continues to get dismal overall ratings from the public. 73% disapprove of the job they are doing, six points worse than in February.

Congress Job Rating

	Now	2/2017	1/2017
Approve	19%	22%	24%
Disapprove	73	67	71

Some Republicans express frustration with how their party in Congress is approaching the President's agenda. 56% of them say Congressional Republicans are getting in the way of that plan; just 13% think they are helping it, and another quarter feel Congress is striking the right balance on Trump's agenda. Among those Republicans who say their party is impeding Trump's agenda, nine in 10 are frustrated about that.

What Are Republicans in Congress Doing on Trump's Agenda?

(Among Republicans)

Helping it	13%
Getting in the way of it	56
Right balance	27

With many members of Congress now back home, eight in 10 Americans think it's very important that members personally attend town halls to hear from their constituents.

Important for Members of Congress to Attend Town Halls?

	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Very	81%	77%	87%	79%
Somewhat	14	16	10	15
Not very/not at all	5	7	3	5

But many Americans are uncertain that their own member of Congress would actually listen to them. 55% say their representative might be available but wouldn't listen, or else wouldn't be available at all. Fewer than four in 10 think their member of Congress would be available and hear them out.

Think Your Member of Congress Would Be Available to Listen to Your Opinion?

Available and would listen	38%
Available, but wouldn't listen	26
Not available	29

When Congress returns to Washington in September, Americans most want them to get to work on an issue they left unfinished – health care. Improving health care is the top priority for both Democrats and Republicans, far ahead of other issues like reforming the tax system and infrastructure.

Which Do You Most Want Congress to Do?

	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Improve health care	47%	45%	54%	43%
Reform the tax system	13	21	7	13
Fix infrastructure, roads, bridges	13	8	20	12
Reform immigration	13	14	12	12
Reduce the deficit	10	9	5	13

The Democratic Party

By two to one, Americans think Congressional Democrats are getting in the way of Mr. Trump's agenda, more than they're offering their own agenda for the country.

What Are Democrats in Congress Mostly Doing?

	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Getting in way of Trump's agenda	47%	76%	28%	46%
Offering own agenda for country's problems	24	14	31	25
Right balance	23	8	37	21

Nearly eight in 10 of those who feel Congressional Democrats are doing more to block Trump than offering their own agenda are frustrated by that.

Most Americans think the Democratic party is more focused on civil rights and social justice these days, but a majority thinks it should be more focused on economic opportunity. Republicans and independents are especially likely to say this.

Democrats themselves are divided over which of those their party should focus on. Liberal Democrats are more likely to say civil rights and social justice, while moderate and conservative Democrats think the party's focus should be more on economic opportunity.

The Democratic Party is More Focused On...

	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Economic opportunity	26%	18%	37%	24%
Civil rights & social justice	59	67	53	60

The Democratic Party Should be More Focused On...

	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Economic opportunity	60%	81%	46%	59%
Civil rights & social justice	28	12	40	27

Americans don't feel that either Democratic party or the GOP has the only good ideas for the economy. Many think their ideas are a mix of good and bad. Even most party stalwarts describe their party's economic ideas as a mix of good and bad.

The Parties' Ideas on the Economy

	Democratic Party	Republican Party
Good ideas	14%	14%
Bad ideas	21	16
Mix of good and bad	46	52
Not sure	18	17

Right now, Americans do not believe that the country would be better off with the Democrats in control of Congress than the Republicans. Almost four in 10 think things would be the same. Just six in 10 Democrats think things would be better.

If Democrats Controlled Congress, Things Would be...

	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Better	32%	3%	61%	28%
Worse	30	69	4	27
Same	37	27	35	43

This is underscored by the negative opinions Americans continue to have of both political parties, although the Democratic party is viewed slightly more favorably.

Views of the Political Parties

	Democratic Party	Republican Party
Favorable	39%	32%
Not favorable	55	62

The Vice President

More Americans approve than disapprove of the job Mike Pence is doing as Vice-President. His ratings are similar to what they were in February.

	Mike Pence Job Rating	
	Now	2/2017
Approve	47%	50%
Disapprove	38	35
Don't know	15	15

Pence gets very high approval ratings from his own party, while most Democrats disapprove. Independents are divided.

	Mike Pence Job Rating		
	Reps	Dems	Inds
Approve	88%	23%	42%
Disapprove	6	61	39
Don't know	7	16	19

This poll was conducted by telephone August 3-6, 2017 among a random sample of 1,111 adults nationwide. Data collection was conducted on behalf of CBS News by SSRS of Glen Mills, PA. Phone numbers were dialed from samples of both standard land-line and cell phones.

The poll employed a random digit dial methodology. For the landline sample, a respondent was randomly selected from all adults in the household. For the cell sample, interviews were conducted with the person who answered the phone.

Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish using live interviewers. The data have been weighted to reflect U.S. Census figures on demographic variables.

The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus four percentage points. The error for subgroups may be higher and is available by request. The margin of error includes the effects of standard weighting procedures which enlarge sampling error slightly.

This poll release conforms to the Standards of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

CBS NEWS POLL
Americans Frustrated with Congress
August 3-6, 2017

Q10. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Approve	19	18	22	18
Disapprove	73	76	71	73
Don't know/No answer	8	6	8	9

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

Favorable	32	75	7	26
Not favorable	62	24	88	65
Don't know/No answer	6	2	5	9

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

Favorable	39	9	75	30
Not favorable	55	89	23	59
Don't know/No answer	6	2	3	11

Q12a. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Mike Pence is handling his job as vice president?

Approve	47	88	23	42
Disapprove	38	6	61	39
Don't know/No answer	15	7	16	19

Q16. In Donald Trump's dealings with Russia do you feel he is being too tough on Russia, not being tough enough with Russia or is the balance about right?

Being too tough	7	5	8	8
Not being tough enough with Russia	44	15	68	42
Balance about right	41	75	15	41
Don't know/No answer	8	5	9	10

Q46. Do you think Donald Trump will increase taxes on people like you, decrease taxes on people like you, or will he keep taxes the same?

Increase	40	13	61	41
Decrease	19	37	9	16
Keep the same	35	44	27	37
Don't know/No answer	6	7	4	7

Q21. As you may know, Congress will now begin its annual summer recess. Do you think Congress will head home for summer recess having gotten a good amount done, or having not gotten much done?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Good amount done	9	12	9	7
Not much done	86	82	86	87
Don't know/No answer	5	6	5	5

Q21a. How do you feel about this? Are you glad, because Congress didn't have the right priorities, or are you frustrated, because Congress is leaving behind a lot of unfinished business?

AMONG THOSE WHO SAY CONGRESS HASN'T GOTTEN MUCH DONE				
Glad, because Congress didn't have the right priorities	19	10	32	15
Frustrated, because they are leaving behind a lot of unfinished business	73	84	61	77
Don't know/No answer	7	6	7	8

Q21b. In general, do you think the Republicans in Congress have been helping Donald Trump's agenda, getting in the way of Donald Trump's agenda, or providing the right amount of balance with Donald Trump's agenda?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Helping Trump's agenda	23	13	32	23
Getting in the way	38	56	24	37
Providing the right balance	30	27	35	27
Don't know/No answer	10	4	10	12

Q21c. Do you feel glad or frustrated by that?

	Total	Help Trump	In way of Trump
	%	%	%
Glad	19	20	18
Frustrated	78	77	79
Don't know/No answer	3	3	3

Q22. When Congress returns from recess, which one of the following do you most want Congress to do?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Improve health care	47	45	54	43
Reform the tax system	13	21	7	13
Fix infrastructure, roads and bridges	13	8	20	12
Reduce the deficit	10	9	5	13
Reform immigration	13	14	12	12
Something else (vol.)	1	1	1	2
Don't know/No answer	3	2	1	4

Q23. How important do you think it is for members of Congress to personally attend town halls or meetings to hear from the people they represent – very important, somewhat important, not very important, not at all important?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Very important	81	77	87	79
Somewhat important	14	16	10	15
Not very important	2	3	1	2
Not important at all	3	4	2	3
Don't know/No answer	1	-	*	1

Q24. If you wanted to voice your opinion to your own member of Congress, do you feel your own member of Congress is available and would listen to you, are they available but wouldn't listen to you, or are they not available and wouldn't listen to you?

Available and would listen	38	43	41	34
Available, but wouldn't listen	26	26	23	29
Not available	29	26	30	29
Don't know/No answer	7	5	6	8

Q26. In general, do you think the Democrats in Congress have been mostly trying to offer their own agenda for the country's problems, mostly trying to get in the way of Donald Trump's agenda, or has the balance been about right?

Offer own agenda for country's problems	24	14	31	25
Getting in way of Trump's agenda	47	76	28	46
Balance about right	23	8	37	21
Don't know/No answer	5	2	4	8

Q26a. Do you feel glad or frustrated by that?

	Total	Offer own agenda	In way of Trump
	%	%	%
Glad	25	37	19
Frustrated	72	60	78
Don't know/No answer	3	3	3

Q28. Regardless of how you usually vote, when it comes to the economy, do you think the Democratic party has generally good ideas, bad ideas, a mix of good and bad ideas, or are you not sure what the Democratic party's ideas on the economy are?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Good ideas	14	2	30	9
Bad ideas	21	49	1	20
Mix of good and bad	46	30	53	50
Not sure	18	19	16	20
Don't know/No answer	1	-	1	1

Q29. Regardless of how you usually vote, when it comes to the economy, do you think the Republican party has generally good ideas, bad ideas, a mix of good and bad ideas, or are you not sure what the Republican party's ideas on the economy are?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Good ideas	14	38	3	9
Bad ideas	16	1	33	12
Mix of good and bad	52	51	43	59
Not sure	17	9	20	18
Don't know/No answer	1	*	*	1

Q30. If the Democrats were in control of Congress instead of the Republicans, do you think things in the country would be better than they are now, worse than they are now, or about the same as they are now?

Better	32	3	61	28
Worse	30	69	4	27
Same	37	27	35	43
Don't know/No answer	2	*	1	3

Q33. What do you think the Democratic Party is focused more on these days: economic opportunity or issues of civil rights and social justice?

Economic opportunity	26	18	37	24
Civil rights and social justice	59	67	53	60
Neither (vol.)	8	12	2	9
Both equally (vol.)	3	*	4	3
Don't know/No answer	4	3	4	4

Q33a. What SHOULD the Democratic Party be focused more on these days: economic opportunity or issues of civil rights and social justice?

Economic opportunity	60	81	46	59
Civil rights and social justice	28	12	40	27
Neither (vol.)	2	2	1	2
Both equally (vol.)	8	3	12	8
Don't know/No answer	3	2	2	4

Q34. Which of the following three statements comes closest to expressing your overall view of the health care system in the United States? 1. On the whole, the healthcare system works pretty well and only minor changes are necessary to make it work better. 2. There are some good things in our health care system, but fundamental changes are needed. 3. Our healthcare system has so much wrong with it that we need to completely rebuild it.

Minor changes	19	11	27	17
Fundamental changes	43	28	55	43
Rebuild	37	60	17	38
Don't know/No answer	2	2	1	3

Q37. At the Federal Government level, who do you think is most responsible for what happens now in the U.S. health care system – the Democrats because they passed Obamacare in 2010, Donald Trump and the Republicans because they control the Presidency and Congress now, both equally, or neither?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Democrats	18	28	10	17
Trump and Republicans	31	28	42	24
Both equally	38	34	32	43
Neither	12	8	15	13
Don't know/No answer	2	2	1	3

Q37a. Should LEGAL immigration into the United States be kept at its present level, increased, or decreased?

Present level	43	36	52	41
Increased	23	17	28	23
Decreased	30	45	18	31
Don't know/No answer	4	2	2	6

Q37b. When the U.S. government is deciding which immigrants to admit to this country, should priority be given to people who have family members already living in the U.S., or should priority be given to people based on education, job skills and work experience?

People with family members	44	30	54	43
Based on background	46	59	34	46
It depends	4	4	3	3
Don't know/No answer	7	7	8	7

Q38. Do you think people who apply to be legal immigrants to the U.S. should be required to speak English when they arrive, or not?

Yes, required	44	61	31	44
No, not required	55	38	69	54
Don't know/No answer	1	1	*	2

Q38a. Do you favor or oppose building a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border to try to stop illegal immigration?

Favor	36	72	9	35
Oppose	61	26	88	62
Don't know/No answer	3	2	3	4

Q38b. If a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border is built who do you think will ultimately pay for it – the United States or Mexico?

The United States	85	74	94	85
Mexico	10	21	4	8
Don't know/No answer	5	5	2	7

Q52. Twenty five years ago, the North American Free Trade Agreement, known as NAFTA, eliminated most trade barriers between Mexico, Canada and the U.S. On balance how would you rate NAFTA - Would you say it has been a success or a failure?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Success	40	24	53	39
Failure	39	58	23	40
Both equal	2	1	3	3
Don't know enough to say	13	12	15	12
Don't know/No answer	6	6	6	6

Q57aa. Which best describes your view of possible Russian interference in the 2016 election – do you feel it is 1. Just a political distraction that should be put aside, 2. Serious - but not as serious as other issues, or is it 3. A critical issue of national security that needs top priority?

Political distraction	36	64	13	37
Serious, but not as serious as other issues	26	24	24	29
Critical Issue of national security	35	10	61	31
Don't know/No answer	2	2	2	3

Q57ab. As you may know, Robert Mueller is the Special Counsel investigating Russia and the Trump campaign. From what you have seen or heard so far, do you believe Robert Mueller will conduct a fair investigation into the matter, or won't he?

Will conduct fair investigation	58	48	65	59
Will not	27	40	18	26
Don't know/No answer	15	12	17	15

	<u>Unweighted</u>	<u>Weighted</u>
Total Respondents	1,111	
Total Republicans	268	266
Total Democrats	362	348
Total Independents	481	498