

Independents Gravitate Towards Republicans on Fiscal, National Security Issues

Resurgent Republic Survey: Independents Cite Need for More Congressional Republicans

Washington, D.C. (May 4, 2010) – Independents believe the country needs more Congressional Republicans, increasingly disapprove of President Barack Obama's job performance and are aligning with Republicans on fiscal and national security issues according to a just released survey from Resurgent Republic. The survey coincides with the one-year anniversary of Resurgent Republic's first national survey.

"Independents are moving closer to Republicans on fiscal and national security issues, and President Obama and Democrats in Congress have seen dramatic deterioration of their public standing," said Ed Gillespie, Resurgent Republic Board Member. "This is clearly being driven by disaffection from Independent voters who have steadily moved toward siding with Republican policymakers on these policies."

The nationwide survey showed, by a two-to-one margin, that Independents believe the country needs more Congressional Republicans "to act as a check and balance on runaway Washington government" over those who think, "more Republicans in Congress will lead to more gridlock and stand in the way of President Obama's agenda to create jobs and make needed reforms to our economy."

As opposed to last year's survey which showed President Obama enjoying a 61-32 percent approval rating (59-32 percent among Independents), this year's survey shows the President's approval rating falling to 48-48 percent (41-52 percent among Independents), a 29-point swing overall and a 38-point swing among Independents.

On most issues across the policy spectrum, Independents approach a two-to-one alignment with the conservative or Republican perspective over the liberal or Democratic perspective. This mirrors the margins for successful Republican statewide candidates in Virginia, New Jersey and Massachusetts in the last seven months.

"Much of the change has been driven by Congressional policy choices on the economy, jobs, government spending and health care, the issues which remain of most concern to voters," said Whit Ayres, Resurgent Republic Board Member. "For example, more than a month since its passage, predictions by Democratic leaders that the health care reform bill would become popular with voters, once passed, have not proved to be accurate, despite the White House's concerted effort to tout the bill."

Overwhelming majorities of likely voters say the health care reform plan will increase their premiums, their health care costs, their taxes and the federal deficit, while simultaneously decreasing their quality of care. Only 22 percent of voters support leaving the bill in place, while 72 percent of voters support amending and modifying it (37 percent) or repealing and replacing it (35 percent).

Other key findings include:

- Republicans are more likely to vote in the 2010 election than either Independents or Democrats. Sixty-four percent of Republicans say they are absolutely certain to vote in the elections for Congress this year, compared to 59 percent of Independents and 58 percent of Democrats.
- Voters are more likely to say the country is on the wrong track now than they were a year ago. Likely voters say the country is on the wrong track by a 59-33 percent margin compared to a 50-40 percent margin a year ago. Independents say the country is on the wrong track by a 65-25 percent margin, compared to a 52-34 percent margin a year ago.
- Likely voters think the federal government's priority should be spending less to reduce the deficit, and think the stimulus package wasted money that had to be borrowed.

- By nearly a two-to-one margin, voters think holding prisoners at Guantanamo Bay helps keep America safe rather than undermines our values. Voters agree that holding prisoners at Guantanamo Bay “helps protect America by keeping terrorists in custody who would kill Americans overseas” rather than “weakens America’s moral authority and isn’t in keeping with our values” by a 60-32 percent margin. This result is essentially unchanged from the 58-33 percent margin seen last April.

Through a steady stream of national polls and focus groups, Resurgent Republic helps policy makers, think tanks, interest groups and others advocate for policies that are consistent with conservative principles. More information, including the key findings and survey memo, can be found at www.resurgentrepublic.com.

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