

Policy Poll of Registered Voters January 3-10, 2015



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Methodology

- Survey conducted January 3-10, 2015.
- •1328 registered voters interviewed by telephone with live interviewers. 55 percent of interviews were completed on cell phones.
- Results are weighted to a nationally representative sample of 1000.
- Margin of error is ±3.1 percent for full sample.
- Quotas set for state, gender, race, and age to reflect past turnout.
- Party identification balance is 28% Republican, 32% Democrat, 36% independent.
- High priority policies are those with a mean of 8.0 or higher on a scale from 1 to 10; medium priority polices are those with a mean of 6.0 to 7.9; low priority policies are those with a mean below 6.0.
- High polarization policies are defined as those with a difference between the Republican and Democrat mean above 2.5.





Three-fifths of voters say the country is off on the wrong track.

Do you think the country is headed in the right direction, or have things gotten off on the wrong track?

Right Direction



All Voters

Republicans





Independents

Democrats

Priorities and Polarization

Voters were asked to rate a series of policy options, broken down into fourteen policy areas, using the following question wording:

Now I would like to read you a series of policy priorities for the new Congress that begins in January. On a scale of one to ten, please rate each one in terms of how high a priority you think Congress should place on that policy. A policy with the lowest priority would be a one and a policy with the highest priority would be a ten.

We calculated polarization as the difference between the Republican and Democratic mean. Low polarization policies are good candidates for common ground. High polarization polices offer opportunities to highlight differences.



These five policies are high priorities for Republicans and top or medium priorities for Independents and Democrats.

Require Congress to pass, and the president to sign, a budget every year.

Increasing penalties for people who make fraudulent claims on Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, Social Security, disability, and welfare programs.

Require welfare or food stamp recipients to take a drug test and undergo treatment if they test positive.

Protect the ability of states to require a valid photo ID before voting.

Reform the food stamp, welfare, and Medicaid programs to require the recipients to be working or looking for work.





These policies also get high marks from most voters, especially reforming Medicare and lowering college costs.

Reform Medicare to strengthen the program and protect it from bankruptcy, keeping our word to current seniors and saving the program for future generations.

Find creative ways to drive down the prices charged by colleges, rather than just increasing federal spending on student loans.

Make it easier for local schools to fire ineffective teachers, even over the objections of teachers' unions.

Abolish the estate tax so that all Americans can receive inheritances without paying new taxes to the federal government.





These policies are higher priorities for Republicans and Independents than Democrats.

Pass a law repealing Obamacare altogether, thereby returning to the health care system we had before 2010.

Approve the Keystone XL pipeline from Canada that would allow delivery of over 800,000 barrels of crude oil to the Gulf Coast every day that can be refined into gasoline, diesel, or aviation fuel.

Repeal the Obamacare mandate that individuals must buy health insurance or face a fine.

Repeal Obamacare's tax on medical devices.

Pass a complete replacement for Obamacare, even if President Obama promises to veto it.

Repeal the Obamacare mandate that businesses must provide health insurance, which makes it harder for them to hire and give raises.





These policies are medium priorities for Republicans and medium or low priorities for Independents and Democrats, but they are not particularly polarizing.

Stop paying Social Security disability benefits to drug abusers.

Reform the corporate tax system by lowering tax rates on businesses to make them internationally competitive.

Ratify trade agreements that will open up international markets for American manufacturing and agricultural exports.

Use federal education dollars to give parents more options and choices to better meet the needs of their children.

Increase taxpayer funding for national defense in order to fight ISIS, also called the Islamic State, and other terrorist organizations.





Increased oversight, reduced regulation, and lower tax rates are non-polarizing medium priorities.

Increase congressional oversight of all federal agencies.

Reduce burdensome regulations by requiring old regulations to be removed as new ones are added.

Roll back excessive Dodd-Frank financial regulations that restrict small business lending.

Stop the FCC from regulating internet service, since government regulation could hurt investments in new technologies.

Lower personal income tax rates on the highest earning Americans, many of whom are employers, in order to encourage economic growth and job creation.





Immigration Policies

Many immigration reform proposals are either medium or high priorities for all three groups.

Strengthen border security with fences, electronic surveillance, and more border guards to make it more difficult to cross the border illegally.

Require all employers to verify the citizenship of new hires, and increase fines and other penalties on employers who hire illegal immigrants.

Develop a tracking system so people who come here legally on temporary visas do not stay longer than their visas allow.

Create a path to earned legal status for illegal immigrants without a criminal record who have been here at least five years if they pass a background check, pay a fine, pay back taxes, learn English, and have a job.

Create a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants without a criminal record who have been here at least five years if they pass a background check, pay a fine, pay back taxes, learn English, and have a job.



