

September 26, 2008

Americans Favor Congressional Action on Crisis

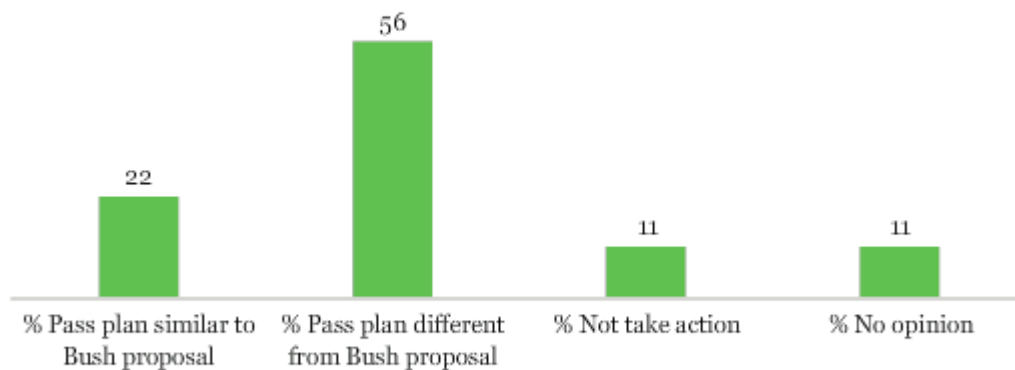
Four out of 10 say this is biggest financial crisis of their lifetimes

by Frank Newport

PRINCETON, NJ -- Americans overwhelmingly favor Congress' passing a plan that would help fix the current Wall Street economic crisis, but a Wednesday night *USA Today*/Gallup poll (conducted before Thursday's high-level negotiations between President Bush and congressional leaders on a new plan) shows that by more than a 2-to-1 ratio, Americans would like to see Congress pass a different plan rather than the \$700 billion plan proposed by the Bush administration.

As you may know, the Bush administration has proposed a plan that would allow the Treasury Department to buy and re-sell up to \$700 billion of distressed assets from financial companies. What would you like to see Congress do?

Based on national adults



USA Today/Gallup poll, Sept. 24, 2008

GALLUP POLL

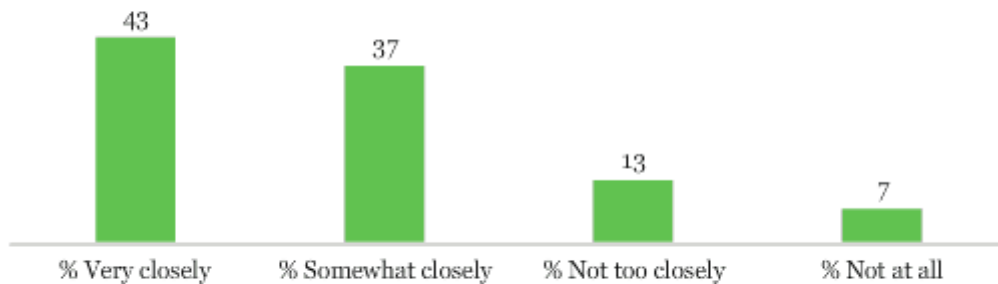
This key question was asked of more than 1,000 Americans on Wednesday night (Sept. 24), and described the Bush administration's plan as allowing "the Treasury Department to buy and re-sell up to \$700 billion of distressed assets from financial companies." With this description, and given three choices of their preferred action (pass a plan similar to the Bush plan, pass a plan different from the Bush proposal, or not take any action at all), the majority of Americans opted for the middle alternative, with smaller percentages opting for either passing the Bush plan or not taking any action.

These data suggest that Americans should in broad terms favor the type of plan Congress was working on Thursday, but may have some disagreements as the precise details become known, particularly if it is viewed as being similar to the original Bush administration proposal.

Eight out of 10 Americans say they are following news of the financial problems on Wall Street and the Bush administration's proposals very or somewhat closely, with 43% "very" closely. This ranks in the upper tier of what Gallup has measured historically for news topics.

How closely are you following the news about the financial problems on Wall Street and the Bush administration's proposals to address the problems?

Based on national adults



USA Today/Gallup poll, Sept. 24, 2008

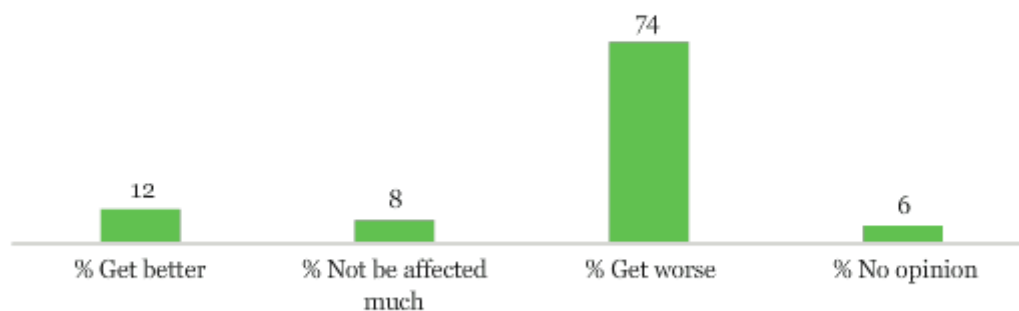
GALLUP POLL

All discussions of the current financial crisis and proposals to resolve it are highly complex, even for professionals in the financial field. One can assume that Americans who are following the news very closely are more knowledgeable than others, but the views of the closely attentive group toward the plan are little different from those of the total sample: 24% of the attentive group favors the Bush proposal, 58% a plan different from the Bush proposal, and 12% no action at all.

One reason a high percentage of Americans feel some type of plan should be passed is evident from the fact that 74% of Americans believe the U.S. economy would get worse if Congress does not act at this time.

Suppose Congress takes no action on this issue. Over the next few years, do you think the U.S. economy would -- [ROTATED: get better, not be affected much, or get worse]?

Based on national adults



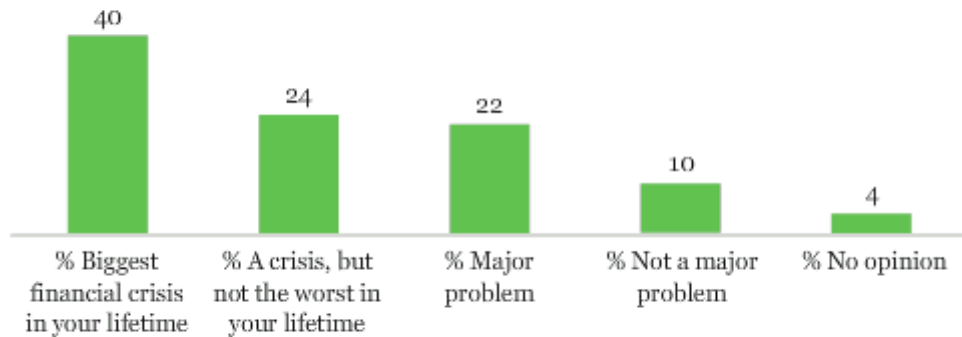
USA Today/Gallup poll, Sept. 24, 2008

GALLUP POLL

Moreover, 4 out of 10 Americans describe the current situation as the "biggest financial crisis" in their lifetimes.

Which of the following would you say best describes the current situation?

Based on national adults



USA Today/Gallup poll, Sept. 24, 2008

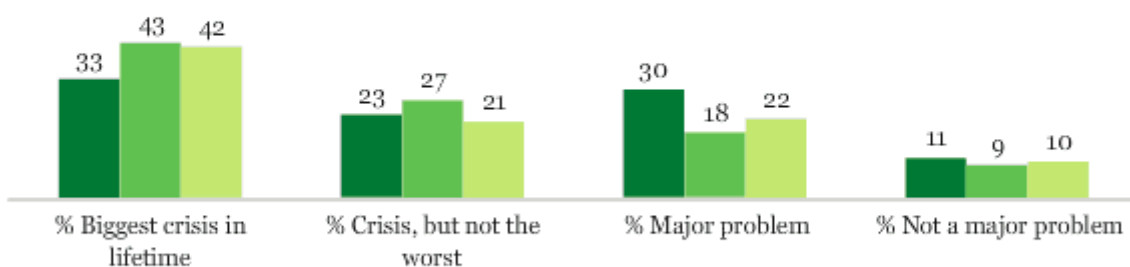
GALLUP POLL

The biggest variation in responses to this question by age is among those who are 18 to 34. This group -- despite having had fewer years to be exposed to other financial crises in their lifetimes -- is actually less likely than those who are older to say this is the biggest financial crisis of their lifetimes. Americans 55 and older, some of whom may have been exposed to the Great Depression of the 1930s, are little different from the overall sample average in their views that this is the biggest financial crisis of their lifetimes.

Which of the following would you say best describes the current situation?

Based on national adults, by age

■ 18 to 34 yrs. ■ 35 to 54 yrs. ■ 55 yrs. and older



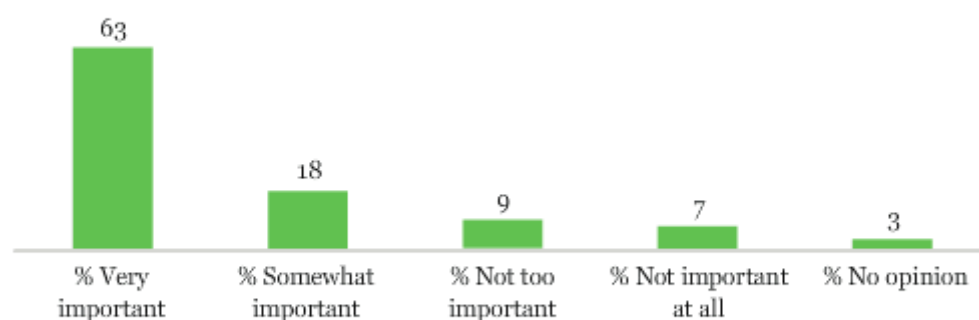
USA Today/Gallup poll, Sept. 24, 2008

GALLUP POLL

The bailout plan is still being worked out, but almost two-thirds of Americans say it would be very important to include in any government plan limits on compensation for executives at corporations that participate in the plan. About half say it is very important to include provisions to help homeowners who cannot pay their mortgages.

How important is it to you that any government plan to deal with the financial problems ...

A. Set limits on compensation for executives at corporations that participate in the plan

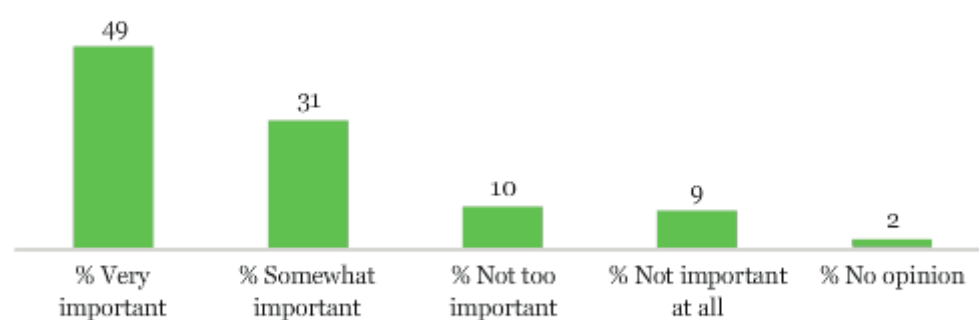


USA Today/Gallup poll, Sept. 24, 2008

GALLUP POLL

How important is it to you that any government plan to deal with the financial problems ...

B. Include provisions to help homeowners who cannot pay their mortgages



USA Today/Gallup poll, Sept. 24, 2008

GALLUP POLL

Survey Methods

Results are based on telephone interviews with 1,019 national adults, aged 18 and older, conducted Sept. 24, 2008. For results based on the total sample of national adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 3 percentage points.

Interviews are conducted with respondents on land-line telephones (for respondents with a land-line telephone) and cellular phones (for respondents who are cell-phone only).

In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls. Polls conducted entirely in one day, such as this one, are subject to additional error or bias not found in polls conducted over several days.

