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Hillary Clinton Seen as Leader of Democratic Party
BUSH A DRAG ON REPUBLICAN MIDTERM PROSPECTS

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Hillary Clinton Seen as Leader of Democratic Party
BUSH A DRAG ON REPUBLICAN MIDTERM PROSPECTS

Nine months before the midterm elections, the Democrats hold a sizable lead in the congressional horse race and an advantage on most major issues. Democrats lead by 50%-41% among registered voters in the test ballot, which is little changed from last September (52%-40%). While retaining a huge advantage on traditional party strengths like the environment and health care, Democrats also are seen as better able to deal with the economy (by 46%-36%) and reform the federal government (42%-29%). Terrorism, and to a lesser extent crime, remain the GOP's only strong issues among 12 tested in the survey.

President Bush's unpopularity has become a drag on his party's prospects in the fall. Roughly three-in-ten registered voters (31%) say they consider their vote for Congress as a vote against Bush, compared with 18% who say they see it as a vote for the president; 47% say Bush is not much of a factor in their decision. This represents a marked change from a comparable point in the previous midterm campaign – in February 2002 – when by nearly four-to-one (34% to 9%) more voters considered their vote as one in favor of, rather than against, the president.

Yet the Democratic Party also shows signs of weakness in the key area of leadership. Slightly more Americans say the GOP has better political leaders, by 41%-37%. Overall, the Democratic Party has a more favorable image than the GOP, though its advantage here is fairly modest. About half of the public (48%) say they have favorable overall opinion of the Democratic Party, while 44% have a negative impression. For the GOP, negative opinions outnumber positive ones (by 50% to 44%). Notably, both parties are viewed less favorably than they were last summer.

The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted Feb. 1-5 among 1,502 adults, finds that by 31% to 14%, more people say the Republican Party has greater involvement than the Democratic Party in congressional corruption. But fully a third (34%) volunteer that both parties are equally involved in corruption. And most Americans say there is nothing new about bribery and corruption in Congress. Six-in-ten say these problems are no different than in the past, compared with 36% who believe that corruption is more common today.

Democrats Hold Midterm Lead				
	Jul	Feb	Feb	Feb
<i>Midterm Congress test ballot</i>	<u>94</u>	<u>98</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>06</u>
	%	%	%	%
Vote Democratic	47	50	45	50
Vote Republican	45	41	46	41
Other/DK	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>
	100	100	100	100
	Oct	Mar	Feb	Feb
<i>Think of vote as...</i>	<u>94</u>	<u>98</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>06</u>
Vote for Bush/Clinton	17	21	34	18
Vote against Bush/Clinton	23	15	9	31
President not a factor	54	59	50	47
Don't know	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100	100

All figures based on registered voters.

Independents Boost Democrats in '06

By a 50% to 41% margin, more registered voters say they will vote Democratic in this year's Congressional election. The Democratic advantage stems from the party's significant lead among independent voters, 51% of whom favor the Democrats, while just 32% favor the Republicans. Among partisans on both sides, more than nine-in-ten say they plan to vote for their own party's candidate.

Four years ago, in the early stages of the 2002 midterm, independents were divided evenly over whether to vote Republican (42%) or Democratic (39%). The 19-point advantage Democrats hold among independents represents a sizable shift in voting intentions. By comparison, both Democrats and Republicans are just as loyal to their own congressional candidates today as they were in February 2002.

The Democratic Party's current lead is identical to its advantage at a comparable point in the 1998 midterm, an election in which the party nearly gained control of the House. The two parties were in a virtual dead heat in the test ballot at this stage in 2002, an election in which the GOP picked up six House seats, and in 1994, when the Republicans swept into control of Congress. In that historic election, the Republicans did not open up a sizable lead in the congressional ballot until the fall.

	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Ind</u>
	%	%	%
Feb 2006			
Vote Democratic	6	93	51
Vote Republican	91	5	32
Other/DK	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>17</u>
	100	100	100
Feb 2002			
Vote Democratic	7	92	39
Vote Republican	93	4	42
Other/DK	<u>*</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>19</u>
	100	100	100

Based on registered voters.

Bush Hurting GOP

As was the case in 2002, roughly half of voters say that the president will be a factor in their vote. However, Bush’s net impact on the 2006 race so far is the opposite of what it was four years ago. In the late stages of the 2002 congressional campaign, 30% of voters said they thought of their congressional vote as a vote *for* George W. Bush, while 20% said they were voting *against* the president. Today, these figures are reversed – 31% say their midterm vote is a vote against Bush, while 18% are motivated by their support for the president.

Currently, 43% of Republican voters view their choice as a vote in favor of Bush; that compares with 59% of Republican voters expressing this opinion in October 2002. A majority of Democratic voters (55%) now say their ballot will be a vote against Bush; in October 2002, 42% said they were voting against Bush. And about twice as many independents say they see their vote as a vote against Bush than did so in October 2002 (31% now vs. 14% then).

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Ind</u>
<i>Feb 2006</i>	%	%	%	%
For Bush	18	43	4	8
Against Bush	31	7	55	31
Bush not a factor	47	48	38	57
Don’t know	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Oct 2002</i>				
For Bush	30	59	9	23
Against Bush	20	3	42	14
Bush not a factor	44	34	43	58
Don’t know	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>
	100	100	100	100

Based on registered voters.

How Bad for Incumbents?

The survey suggests potential problems for congressional incumbents this year. Most voters (59%) say they would like to see their own representative in Congress reelected this fall, compared with 28% who would not like their own representative to win another term. This reflects a somewhat more anti-incumbent mood than was present in 2002, 1998 or 1990. Only in October 1994 did as many (29%) want to see their congressional representative voted out. But district-level dissatisfaction this year is not nearly as high as in 1994 overall – just 49% said they supported their incumbent’s reelection in 1994, ten points lower than is the case today.

	<u>Oct 1990</u>	<u>Oct 1994</u>	<u>Oct 1998</u>	<u>Oct 2002</u>	<u>Feb 2006</u>
<i>Like to see your member reelected</i>	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	62	49	58	58	59
No	22	29	20	19	28
Don’t know	<u>16</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>13</u>
	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Like to see most members reelected</i>					
Yes	--	28	39	39	36
No	--	56	39	38	49
Don’t know	--	<u>16</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>15</u>
		100	100	100	100

Based on registered voters. 1990 data from Gallup.

Thinking beyond the candidates in their own district, the number of registered voters who say they want to see *most* members of Congress defeated this year is up, but also not at record highs. Just under half (49%) say most members should *not* be returned to office, up from 38% in October 2002 and 39% in October 1998. Only in October 1994 was this figure higher, when 56% said most members should be voted out. Again, anti-incumbent attitudes today are not nearly as strong as in the final month of the 1994 race. Currently, 36% say most members should be reelected, compared with just 28% in October 1994.

	<u>Total</u> %	<u>Rep</u> %	<u>Dem</u> %	<u>Ind</u> %
Yes	36	51	29	30
No	49	35	57	57
Don't know	<u>15</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>13</u>
	100	100	100	100

Based on registered voters.

Not surprisingly, Democrats and independents are the most dissatisfied with the current group of incumbents. By almost two-to-one, both Democrats and independents believe most members should not be returned to office; 51% of Republicans want to see most members return. But even among Republicans, more than a third (35%) say most should not be reelected.

Democrats Optimistic

Democrats are highly optimistic about their party's prospects in next year's congressional midterm elections. Nearly two-thirds of Democrats (64%) say they think their party will do better in 2006 than it has in recent elections – just 2% see the Democratic Party doing worse than usual next year. By comparison, just 23% of Republicans predict that the GOP's position will improve in the coming election; 17% think their party will do worse than it has recently, and 56% believe things will stay about the same.

<i>Democrat/ Lean Democratic</i>		%
Better		64
Worse		2
About the same		28
Don't know		<u>6</u>
		100
<i>Republican/ Lean Republican</i>		
Better		23
Worse		17
About the same		56
Don't know		<u>4</u>
		100

People who identify with or lean toward one of the parties asked to evaluate their party's chances in 2006 compared to recent elections.

Democratic Issue Advantage

The public believes the Democratic Party could do a better job than the GOP on a host of policy issues. The Democrats hold a huge advantage on the environment and health care, and smaller but still significant leads on several other issues, including deficit reduction (12 points), taxes (11 points) and education (11 points).

Neither party has a significant edge on immigration and Iraq. The GOP maintains a sizable advantage as the party better able to deal with the terrorist threat at home (by 46%-30%), and a smaller lead in reducing crime (seven points).

In most cases, these opinions have changed little in recent years. However, the Democratic Party has recaptured its advantage as the party better able to improve the educational system, which it lost early in Bush’s presidency. Throughout the first two years of his administration, the public was divided over which party had the best ideas for education. But today 44% say the Democratic Party can do a better job of improving education, compared with 33% who choose the GOP. In early 2002, independents were evenly divided on this issue (35% Democratic Party, 34% Republican Party); today they decisively favor the Democratic Party (45%-24%).

Favorable Views of Both Parties Below 50%

The Democratic lead across issues does not translate into a significant advantage in terms of overall party image. Just under half of the public (48%) has a positive view of the Democrats, compared to 44% for Republicans. The narrow Democratic advantage on this measure is largely driven by independents, who have a mixed view of the Democratic Party (44% favorable,

Democrats Better Regarded on Most Issues			
<i>Which party can do a better job on...</i>	Rep Party	Dem Party	Dem Adv
	%	%	
Environment	24	56	+32
Health care	27	49	+22
Energy problems	32	45	+13
Reforming government	29	42	+13
Deficit reduction	33	45	+12
Taxes	35	46	+11
Education	33	44	+11
Economy	36	46	+10
Immigration	34	38	+4
Iraq	38	41	+3
Crime	37	30	-7
Terrorism	46	30	-16

GOP Poorly Rated Democrats Not Much Better			
	Fav	Unfav	Can't rate
	%	%	%
Democratic Party	48	44	8=100
Late October 2005	49	41	10=100
July 2005	50	41	9=100
December 2004	53	41	6=100
Early February 2004	58	37	5=100
December 2002	54	37	9=100
January 2001	60	30	10=100
March 1998	58	36	6=100
July 1994	62	34	4=100
July 1992	61	33	6=100
Republican Party	44	50	6=100
Late October 2005	42	49	9=100
July 2005	48	43	9=100
December 2004	52	42	6=100
Early February 2004	52	42	6=100
December 2002	59	33	8=100
January 2001	56	35	9=100
March 1998	50	43	7=100
July 1994	63	33	4=100
July 1992	46	48	6=100

44% unfavorable), but an overwhelmingly negative opinion of the GOP (32% favorable, 57% unfavorable).

But the public remains largely unimpressed with both political parties. The unfavorable ratings for both parties are at their highest levels in measures dating to 1992; in addition, the current survey and the previous one (in October 2005) mark the only times in which both parties have been rated favorably by less than half of the public.

Rating the Parties' Leaders

By a slight 41%-37% margin, more Americans say the Republican Party, rather than the Democratic Party, has better political leaders. Independents, who tend to agree with Democrats on most issues, are divided over which party has the better leadership. Meanwhile, partisans generally back their own party leaders, although Republicans are more enthusiastic about the GOP leadership than Democrats are about Democratic leaders.

	<u>Total</u> %	<u>Rep</u> %	<u>Dem</u> %	<u>Ind</u> %
Republican Party	41	83	14	32
Democratic Party	37	8	70	34
Both equally (Vol.)	5	3	3	6
Neither (Vol.)	8	3	6	15
Don't know	<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>13</u>
	100	100	100	100

Men in particular say the Republican Party has better leaders (by 46%-33%) while women narrowly prefer Democratic leaders (40%-37%).

Who Leads the Democratic Party?

More people name Hillary Clinton as the current leader of the Democratic Party than any other major Democratic figure. Presented with a list of ten names, one-in-four (26%) name Sen. Clinton as the person they think of as the party's leader these days. Bill Clinton (14%) and John Kerry (12%) are also frequently chosen.

The party's institutional leaders, Howard Dean (4%), Nancy Pelosi (3%) and Harry Reid (1%) are chosen as the party leader by fewer than one-in-twenty. About as many see John Edwards (4%), Al Gore (4%) or Barack Obama (3%) as the Democrats' leader.

	<u>Total</u> %	<u>Dem</u> lean D. %	<u>Rep</u> lean R. %
Hillary Clinton	26	28	23
Bill Clinton	14	17	11
John Kerry	12	16	9
Howard Dean	4	3	6
John Edwards	4	4	4
Al Gore	4	4	4
Barack Obama	3	4	4
Nancy Pelosi	3	2	4
Joseph Biden	2	2	2
Harry Reid	1	1	2
Other (Vol.)	5	4	5
Nobody is (Vol.)	8	5	10
Don't know	<u>14</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>16</u>
	100	100	100

* Respondents choose from a list of ten names.

While there is no overwhelming consensus as to

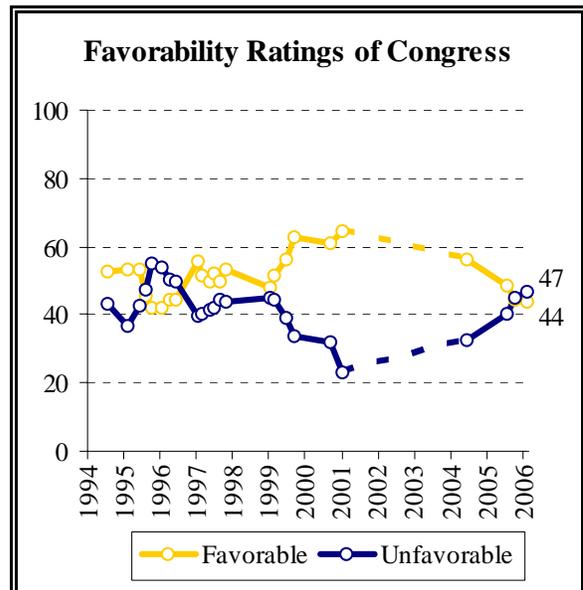
the leader of the party, just 8% volunteer that “nobody” leads the Democratic Party. Republicans were somewhat more likely than Democrats to offer this assessment.

In other respects, there are only minor differences in how Republicans and Democrats view the party’s current leadership. Democrats are somewhat more likely to name Bill Clinton or John Kerry as the party’s current leader, while Republicans are more apt to choose Dean, Pelosi or Reid.

Congress’ Favorability Falls

Public views of Congress as an institution are at their lowest point in over a decade. Currently, 47% express an unfavorable opinion of Congress, while 44% feel favorably. This marks the lowest favorability marks for Congress since the unpopular government shutdown in late 1995. Even during the impeachment of former President Clinton, a slightly higher percentage gave Congress a favorable rating (48% in January 1999). And in the summer of 1994, a few months before the GOP gained control of the House and Senate, 53% expressed a favorable view of Congress.

The growing unhappiness with Congress represents a sharp turnaround from recent years. In January 2001, 64% expressed a favorable view of Congress, 20 points higher than today. While there are no data on views of Congress from July 2001 to June 2004, ratings of virtually all domestic institutions grew more favorable following the Sept. 11 terror attacks. If anything, it is likely that Congress’s image improved even more in late 2001, making today’s negative ratings even more notable.



‘Bribery’ Common, Payoffs Less So

As was the case in January, an overwhelming number of Americans (81%) say that the recent reports of lobbyists bribing members of Congress are common behavior, while just 13% believe they are isolated incidents of corruption. This view is qualified, however, when respondents who say that corruption is commonplace are asked if this means that lawmakers trade votes for money, or that they just pay more attention to campaign donors.

A plurality – 38% of the general public – believes that lawmakers pay more attention to campaign donors, while 29% feel that members of Congress actually trade specific votes on legislation for money and personal favors. However, 11% volunteer that members of Congress engage in both practices – trading votes for money and paying attention to donors.

In a similar vein, far fewer people say their own member of Congress has taken bribes from lobbyists than believe such behavior is commonplace. Roughly four-in-ten (41%) say their member has taken bribes from lobbyists, while 35% say they have not; a sizable number (24%) do not express an opinion. More independents than Republicans or Democrats say their member has received bribes from lobbyists.

Money Buys Access – But Not Votes	
<i>Reports of lobbyists bribing members of Congress...</i>	%
Common behavior	81
Listen more to donors	38
Trade votes for money	29
Both (Vol.)	11
Don't know	3
Isolated incidents	13
Don't know	6
	100
<i>Has <u>your</u> member taken bribes?</i>	
Yes	41
No	35
Don't know	<u>24</u>
	100

Many See Corruption as Bipartisan

More than twice as many people think the Republican Party, rather than the Democratic Party, has greater involvement in congressional corruption (31% vs.14%). But a plurality of Americans (34%) volunteer that both parties are equally implicated in bribery and corruption in Congress.

A solid majority of Democrats (55%) say the GOP is more involved in corruption on Capitol Hill. Independents view the problem of corruption as bipartisan – 43% volunteer that both parties are equally involved in corruption, while 29% point to the Republican Party.

Partisan Views of Congressional Ethics				
<i>Republicans or Democrats more involved in corruption?</i>	<u>All</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Ind</u>
	%	%	%	%
Republicans	31	10	55	29
Democrats	14	29	6	8
Both equally (Vol.)	34	34	23	43
Neither (Vol.)	4	5	2	6
Don't know	<u>17</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Corruption more common than in the past?</i>				
No different than in past	60	63	54	64
More common now	36	32	42	34
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100	100

Roughly a third of Republicans (34%) say that both parties are embroiled in corruption, compared with 29% who say the Democratic Party has more deeply involved in corruption.

College graduates are somewhat more likely than those with less education to say that both parties are equally involved in corruption in Congress. Young people, in particular, believe that the Republican Party is more involved in corruption – 42% of those ages 18-29 express this view, compared with no more than three-in-ten in other age categories.

Corruption Nothing New?

Six-in-ten Americans, including majorities in all major political and demographic categories, believe that bribery and corruption in Congress are no more common now than in the past; just 36% say these practices are more common today.

Republicans and independents, by roughly two-to-one each, say that bribery and corruption on Capitol Hill are no more common now than in the past. A higher percentage of Democrats believe that corruption is more frequent now, but a majority (54%) feels the level of corruption is no different than in the past.

Congressional Corruption – More Common Today?			
	<u>More</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK</u>
	<u>common</u>	<u>different</u>	<u>%</u>
	%	%	%
Total	36	60	4=100
18-29	40	54	6=100
30-49	30	67	3=100
50-64	34	64	2=100
65+	46	48	6=100
College grad	31	64	5=100
Some college	33	64	3=100
HS or less	39	57	4=100

People ages 65 and older are evenly divided in their view of whether bribery and corruption in Congress are more common today – 46% say they are, while 48% disagree. Majorities in other age categories say corruption is no different now than in the past.

More Say Health System Needs Repair

An increasing number of Americans say that the nation’s health care system needs to be completely rebuilt. Roughly a third (32%) believe the system should be completely rebuilt and another 46% say it needs major changes. Only one-in-five say the health care system works pretty well and needs only minor changes. The percent saying the system needs to be completely rebuilt is up 11 points from last January when just 21% expressed this view.

Beyond health care, the public believes that several other government services and systems are also in need of massive repairs. Seven-in-ten say the Medicare system should be completely rebuilt (28%) or needs major changes (42%). About as many make the same assessment of immigration policy.

Roughly a quarter (26%) think the Social Security system should be completely rebuilt; just 15% said that last year, amid the debate over Bush’s failed proposal for private investment accounts. The growing support for restructuring Social Security comes evenly across party lines.

A year ago, half of Americans felt the tax system worked pretty well or at most needed minor changes. But that figure has dropped to 35%, as the number saying the tax system is in need of complete rebuilding or major changes has increased to 61% (up from 46%). Independents are by far the least satisfied with the current tax system and the most in favor of major reforms.

The view that the health care system needs to be completely rebuilt has increased especially among moderate and liberal Republicans, and liberal Democrats. The percentage of moderate and liberal Republicans who say health care needs to be complete restructured has more than doubled since January 2005 – from 13% to 33%. A majority of liberal Democrats (52%) now believe the health care

Health Care Tops List of Systems in Need of an Overhaul				
	<i>System needs...</i>			
	<u>Complete rebuilding</u>	<u>Major changes</u>	<u>Minor changes</u>	<u>DK</u>
	%	%	%	%
Health care system	32	46	20	2=100
Medicare system	28	42	26	4=100
Immigration policy	27	41	23	9=100
Social Security	26	36	35	3=100
Tax system	22	39	35	4=100
Criminal justice	20	41	36	3=100
Homeland security	19	36	39	6=100
Legal system	19	34	43	4=100
Education system	16	45	35	4=100

Health Care Needs to be ‘Completely Rebuilt’			
	Jan		<u>Change</u>
	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	
	%	%	%
Total	21	32	+11
Conserv Rep	13	19	+6
Mod/Lib Rep	13	33	+20
Independent	21	34	+13
Cons/Mod Dem	22	33	+11
Liberal Dem	35	52	+17

system should be completely rebuilt, up from 35% last year.

The largest partisan differences come in views of the nation's homeland security system. A solid majority of Republicans (57%) feel the system works pretty well or needs only minor changes. That view is shared by only a quarter of Democrats and 37% of independents; majorities in both groups say the system should be completely rebuilt or needs major changes (69% of Democrats, 55% of independents). By comparison, there are little or no partisan differences over the need to rebuild Social Security or immigration policy.

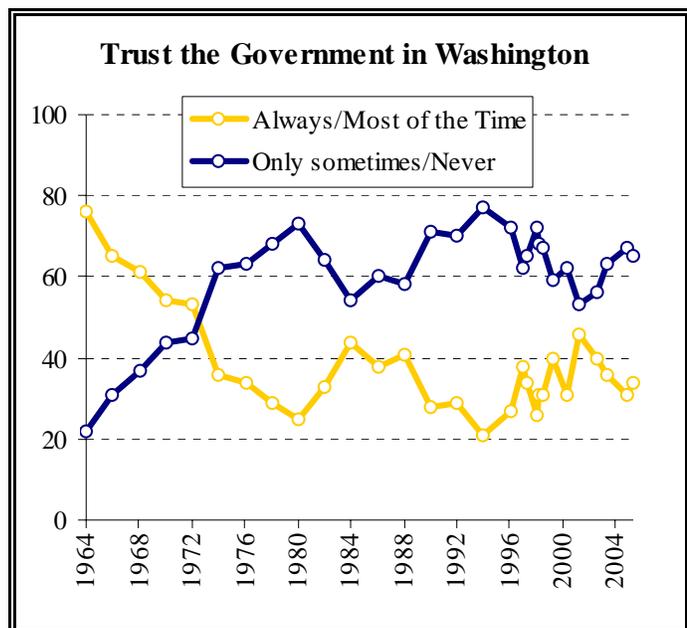
Distrust of the Federal Government Rises

Just as views of Congress have become somewhat more negative, so too have opinions about the federal government. About a third (34%) say they think they can trust the government in Washington to do what's right "just about always" or "most of the time," while 65% say they trust the government "only sometimes" or "never." This is nearly identical to opinion last September, and is much more negative than in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. In the first two months following 9/11, surveys showed very high levels of trust.

Despite the rise in government distrust, Americans are not as negative about the government in Washington as they were during the mid-1990s, nor has disgruntlement reached the levels seen in the late 1970s when economic and foreign policy problems weighed on the public.

The ratings today are similar to those seen during Bill Clinton's second term in office. In February 1998, 34% said they trusted the government always or most of the time. But the partisan patterns are very different today. Now, a majority of 55% of Republicans trust the federal government at least most of the time, compared with just 27% in 1998. For Democrats, the numbers are nearly reversed: 21% trust government today; 44% did so in 1998.

A similar pattern is seen in another measure of trust in government. Half of the current poll's respondents (50%) said they now have an unfavorable opinion of the federal government in



Washington, while 43% are favorable. In November 2001, 82% had a favorable opinion.

Today's favorable ratings for the government are slightly higher than in 1997 when 38% were positive and 59% were negative. As with trust in government, the big difference between 1997 and today is that Republicans are much happier with the government and Democrats much less happy. In 1997, two-thirds (66%) of Republicans said they had an unfavorable opinion of the government (with 32% favorable), while Democrats were divided evenly (50% favorable, 47% unfavorable). Today, the vast majority of Republicans have a favorable opinion of the government (72%), compared with just 29% of Democrats.

	Oct <u>1997</u>	Nov <u>2001</u>	Feb <u>2006</u>	<i>Change 97-06</i>
All	38	82	43	+5
Republican	32	92	72	+40
Democrat	50	79	29	-21
Independent	32	79	30	-2

The Supreme Court

The U.S. Supreme Court continues to be held in generally high regard by the public, with 60% saying they have a favorable opinion of the high court. But this is somewhat lower than the level of esteem for the court through much of the 1980s and 1990s, when an average of about 73% had favorable views.

As with other aspects of the government, there is now a distinct partisan division in evaluations of the court, with three-quarters of Republicans (76%) holding favorable views of the courts and Democrats split in their opinions (45% favorable, 40% unfavorable). Liberal Democrats are even more negative (51% unfavorable). This pattern is very different from earlier years such as 1997, when 77% of Republicans and 81% of Democrats regarded the Supreme Court favorably.

Most Favor Media's Right to Report

With security concerns paramount in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terror attacks, many Americans saw justification for government censorship of news stories that might threaten security efforts. But in the years since, Americans on both sides of the political spectrum have moved away from this position, and are more likely to back the media's right to report on stories they see as in the national interest.

Currently, 56% say it is more important for the news media to report stories they feel are in the national interest, while just 34% believe it is more important for the government to censor news stories on national security grounds. In February 2003, somewhat fewer (50%) backed the media's right to report; in November 2001, two months after the 9/11 attacks, the balance of opinion was in favor of government censorship.

Democrats back media freedom over the government's ability to censor by roughly three-to-one (68% to 23%); Republicans by a smaller margin (53%-38%) say it is more important for the government to censor stories that it believes threaten

national security. The partisan divide has widened since 2001, even as both Republicans and Democrats (as well as independents) have become more supportive of the media's unfettered right to report. Independents are much closer to Democrats than Republicans on this issue; 62% of independents say it is more important for the media to report stories it sees as being in the national interest.

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Ind</u>
<i>Feb 2006</i>	%	%	%	%
Govt able to censor	34	53	23	28
Media able to report	56	38	68	62
Both/DK	<u>10</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Feb 2003</i>				
Govt able to censor	42	57	25	40
Media able to report	50	36	66	52
Both/DK	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Nov 2001</i>				
Govt able to censor	53	68	40	53
Media able to report	39	28	49	41
Both/DK	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>6</u>
	100	100	100	100

Press Favorability Rises

While views of government, Congress and the political parties have sagged, public satisfaction with the news media has rebounded over the past few years. Since October, the percentage rating the news media favorably has risen seven points (to 59%). A little over a year ago, in December 2004, just 43% rated the news media favorably.

	<u>Dec 2004</u>	<u>Mar 2005</u>	<u>Oct 2005</u>	<u>Feb 2006</u>
<i>Favorable view of news media</i>	%	%	%	%
Total	43	56	52	59
Republican	32	51	44	49
Democrat	56	65	62	71
Independent	39	51	50	57

While Republicans take a far dimmer view of the news media than do Democrats, Americans on both sides of the political divide feel more favorably than they have in recent years. Currently, 49% of Republicans rate the media favorably, and 48% give an unfavorable rating. The favorable-to-unfavorable margin among Republicans last October was 44% to 53%. Fully 71% of Democrats give the press a favorable rating, up from 62% in October. And independents also give better ratings today (57%) than last fall (50%).

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International among a nationwide sample of 1,502 adults, 18 years of age or older, from February 1-5, 2006. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 3 percentage points. For results based on form 1 (N=757) and form 2 (N=745) the sampling error is plus or minus 4 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

ABOUT THE CENTER

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of six projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. All of our current survey results are made available free of charge.

All of the Center's research and reports are collaborative products based on the input and analysis of the entire Center staff consisting of:

Andrew Kohut, Director
Jodie Allen, Senior Editor
Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research
Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock, Associate Directors
Carolyn Funk and Richard Wike, Senior Project Director
Nilanthi Samaranyake, Peyton Craighill, Nicole Speulda and Courtney Kennedy, Project Directors
Kate DeLuca Research Assistant

2006 CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION, GENERIC CANDIDATE PREFERENCE

(Based on Registered Voters)

	<u>Republican /</u> <u>Lean Republican</u>	<u>Democrat /</u> <u>Lean Democrat</u>	<u>Other /</u> <u>Undecided</u>
	%	%	%
Total	41	50	9=100
Sex			
Male	46	45	9
Female	36	54	10
Race			
White	45	45	10
Non-white	18	73	9
Black	13	75	12
Race and Sex			
White Men	51	40	9
White Women	41	50	9
Age			
Under 30	34	55	7
30-49	45	47	8
50-64	38	53	9
65+	41	48	11
Sex and Age			
Men under 50	51	40	9
Women under 50	34	57	9
Men 50+	41	51	8
Women 50+	37	52	11
Education			
College Grad.	42	49	9
Some College	41	53	6
H.S. Grad or less	40	49	11
Family Income			
\$75,000+	50	45	5
\$50,000-\$74,999	50	40	10
\$30,000-\$49,999	38	55	7
\$20,000-\$29,999	41	50	9
<\$20,000	23	64	13

Question: If the 2006 elections for U.S. Congress were being held TODAY, would you vote for the Republican Party's candidate or the Democratic Party's candidate for Congress in your district?

	<u>Republican / Lean Republican</u>	<u>Democrat / Lean Democrat</u>	<u>Other / Undecided</u>
	%	%	%
Total	41	50	9=100
Region			
Northeast	28	58	14
Midwest	39	53	8
South	49	42	9
West	40	52	8
Religious Affiliation			
Total Protestant	47	43	10
- White Evangelical	64	27	9
- White Non-Evangelical	42	48	10
- Black Protestant	13	75	12
Total Catholic	37	58	5
- White Non-Hispanic	41	54	5
Seculars	22	60	18
Party ID			
Republican	91	6	3
Democrat	5	93	2
Independent	32	51	17
Party and Ideology			
Conservative Republican	92	6	2
Moderate/Liberal Rep.	88	7	5
Conservative/Mod. Dem.	7	90	3
Liberal Democrat	1	99	0
Presidential Approval			
Approve	80	13	7
Disapprove	9	81	10
Use of Force in Iraq			
Right Decision	69	24	7
Wrong Decision	11	80	9

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
FEBRUARY 2006 NEWS INTEREST INDEX
FINAL TOPLINE
February 1-5, 2006
N = 1,502

QUESTIONS 1 THROUGH 6 IN PREVIOUS RELEASE

Q.7 Which is more important to you: that the government be able to censor news stories it feels threaten national security OR that the news media be able to report stories they feel are in the national interest?

	Feb <u>2003</u>	Mid-Nov <u>2001</u>	March <u>1991</u>	Aug <u>1989</u>	June <u>1985</u>	Oct <u>1985</u>
34 Government able to censor	42	53	58	40	44	38
56 News media able to report	50	39	32	52	38	50
5 Both equal (VOL)	2	4	5	5	9	6
<u>5</u> Don't know/Refused	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>6</u>
100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Q.8 Now thinking about some groups and organizations ... Is your overall opinion of [INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE; OBSERVE FORM SPLITS] very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable?

	-----Favorable-----			-----Unfavorable-----			(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	Total	Very	Mostly	Total	Very	Mostly	Never Heard of	Can't Rate
a. The Republican Party	44	11	33	50	24	26	*	6=100
Late October, 2005	42	12	30	49	24	25	*	9=100
July, 2005	48	13	35	43	18	25	*	9=100
June, 2005	48	11	37	44	20	24	0	8=100
December, 2004	52	15	37	42	17	25	0	6=100
June, 2004	51	12	39	40	14	26	0	9=100
Early February, 2004	52	14	38	42	16	26	*	6=100
June, 2003	58	14	44	33	10	23	0	9=100
April, 2003	63	14	49	31	10	21	*	6=100
December, 2002	59	18	41	33	11	22	*	8=100
July, 2001	48	11	37	42	15	27	*	10=100
January, 2001	56	13	43	35	13	22	*	9=100
September, 2000 (RVs)	53	11	42	40	12	28	0	7=100
August, 1999	53	8	45	43	12	31	*	4=100
February, 1999	44	7	37	51	15	36	0	5=100
January, 1999	44	10	34	50	23	27	0	6=100
Early December, 1998	46	11	35	47	20	27	*	7=100
Early October, 1998 (RVs)	52	9	43	42	14	28	0	6=100
Early September, 1998	56	9	47	37	11	26	*	7=100
March, 1998	50	10	40	43	12	31	*	7=100
August, 1997	47	9	38	47	11	36	*	6=100
June, 1997	51	8	43	42	11	31	1	6=100
January, 1997	52	8	44	43	10	33	*	5=100
October, 1995	52	10	42	44	16	28	*	4=100
December, 1994	67	21	46	27	8	19	*	6=100
July, 1994	63	12	51	33	8	25	*	4=100
May, 1993	54	12	42	35	10	25	0	11=100
July, 1992	46	9	37	48	17	31	*	6=100
b. The Democratic Party	48	14	34	44	17	27	0	8=100
Late October, 2005	49	14	35	41	15	26	*	10=100

Q.8 CONTINUED...

		-----Favorable-----			-----Unfavorable-----			(VOL.) Never	(VOL.) Can't
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Heard of</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	July, 2005	50	15	35	41	14	27	*	9=100
	June, 2005	52	12	40	39	13	26	*	9=100
	December, 2004	53	13	40	41	14	27	*	6=100
	June, 2004	54	12	42	36	11	25	0	10=100
	Early February, 2004	58	14	44	37	9	28	*	5=100
	June, 2003	54	11	43	38	10	28	0	8=100
	April, 2003	57	13	44	36	11	25	*	7=100
	December, 2002	54	15	39	37	10	27	*	9=100
	July, 2001	58	18	40	34	10	24	*	8=100
	January, 2001	60	18	42	30	9	21	1	9=100
	September, 2000 (RVs)	60	16	44	35	12	23	*	5=100
	August, 1999	59	14	45	37	9	28	*	4=100
	February, 1999	58	11	47	37	11	26	0	5=100
	January, 1999	55	14	41	38	12	26	0	7=100
	Early December, 1998	59	18	41	34	10	24	0	7=100
	Early October, 1998 (RVs)	56	11	45	38	9	29	*	6=100
	Early September, 1998	60	13	47	33	8	25	*	7=100
	March, 1998	58	15	43	36	10	26	*	6=100
	August, 1997	52	11	41	42	10	32	0	6=100
	June, 1997	61	10	51	33	8	25	*	6=100
	January, 1997	60	13	47	35	7	28	*	5=100
	October, 1995	49	9	40	48	11	37	0	3=100
	December, 1994	50	13	37	44	13	31	*	6=100
	July, 1994	62	13	49	34	7	27	*	4=100
	May, 1993	57	14	43	34	9	25	0	9=100
	July, 1992	61	17	44	33	9	24	*	6=100
ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=757]:									
c.F1	The news media	59	12	47	37	10	27	0	4=100
	Late October, 2005	52	11	41	42	13	29	0	6=100
	Mid-March, 2005	56	12	44	40	13	27	0	4=100
	December, 2004	43	8	35	51	18	33	*	6=100
	Late October, 2000 (RVs)	50	7	43	45	14	31	0	5=100
	February, 1999	49	6	43	49	15	34	0	2=100
	March, 1998	48	9	39	50	16	34	*	2=100
	October, 1997	50	7	43	48	14	34	*	2=100
d.F1	The federal government in Washington	43	6	37	50	16	34	*	7=100
	December, 2005	46	7	39	49	18	31	*	5=100
	Late October, 2005	45	6	39	48	16	32	*	7=100
	February, 2004	59	10	49	36	11	25	*	5=100
	April, 2003	73	14	59	22	5	17	0	5=100
	December, 2002	64	11	53	27	7	20	*	9=100
	Mid-November, 2001	82	17	65	15	3	12	0	3=100
	Late October, 2000 (RVs)	54	7	47	40	10	30	*	6=100
	October, 1997	38	4	34	59	18	41	0	3=100
ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=745]:									
e.F2	Congress	44	6	38	47	14	33	0	9=100
	Late October, 2005	45	7	38	45	13	32	*	10=100
	July, 2005	49	6	43	40	11	29	*	11=100
	June, 2005	49	6	43	40	10	30	*	11=100
	June, 2004	56	7	49	33	7	26	*	11=100

Q.8 CONTINUED...

		-----Favorable-----			-----Unfavorable-----			(VOL.) Never	(VOL.) Can't
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Heard of</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	July, 2001	57	7	50	32	8	24	*	11=100
	March, 2001	56	6	50	36	10	26	1	7=100
	January, 2001	64	10	54	23	5	18	1	12=100
	September, 2000 (RVs)	61	8	53	32	5	27	*	7=100
	August, 1999	63	8	55	34	7	27	*	3=100
	June, 1999	56	9	47	39	9	30	*	5=100
	February, 1999	52	4	48	44	8	36	0	4=100
	January, 1999	48	7	41	45	15	30	0	7=100
	Early December, 1998	52	11	41	41	12	29	0	7=100
	Early October, 1998 (RVs)	62	7	55	33	8	25	0	5=100
	Early September, 1998	66	7	59	27	5	22	0	7=100
	October, 1997	53	5	48	44	11	33	0	3=100
	August, 1997	50	6	44	44	11	33	0	6=100
	June, 1997	52	4	48	42	8	34	0	6=100
	May, 1997	49	5	44	42	10	32	*	9=100
	February, 1997	52	6	46	40	9	31	*	8=100
	January, 1997	56	6	50	40	8	32	*	4=100
	June, 1996	45	6	39	50	12	38	*	5=100
	April, 1996	45	6	39	50	13	37	0	5=100
	January, 1996	42	4	38	54	16	38	*	4=100
	October, 1995	42	4	38	55	13	42	0	3=100
	August, 1995	45	5	40	47	13	34	*	7=100
	June, 1995	53	8	45	42	11	31	*	5=100
	February, 1995	54	10	44	37	10	27	0	9=100
	July, 1994	53	7	46	43	9	34	*	4=100
	May, 1993	43	8	35	48	13	35	0	9=100
	November, 1991	51	7	44	43	9	34	0	6=100
	March, 1991	66	16	50	26	7	19	0	8=100
	May, 1990	59	6	53	34	9	25	1	6=100
	May, 1988	64	8	56	28	5	23	0	8=100
	January, 1988	64	6	58	29	4	25	0	7=100
	May, 1987	74	10	64	20	4	16	*	6=100
	January, 1987	59	7	52	31	8	23	0	10=100
	June, 1985	67	9	58	26	5	21	*	7=100
f.F2	The Supreme Court	60	16	44	28	10	18	*	12=100
	Late October, 2005	62	12	50	27	10	17	*	11=100
	July, 2005	61	12	49	28	10	18	*	11=100
	June, 2005	57	8	49	30	8	22	*	13=100
	July, 2001	70	15	55	20	6	14	*	10=100
	March, 2001	72	15	57	20	5	15	*	8=100
	January, 2001	68	18	50	21	8	13	1	10=100
	October, 1997	77	13	64	18	6	12	*	5=100
	May, 1997	72	16	56	22	5	17	0	6=100
	July, 1994	80	18	62	16	3	13	*	4=100
	May, 1993	73	17	56	18	4	14	0	9=100
	November, 1991	72	18	54	21	5	16	0	7=100
	May, 1990	65	10	55	25	7	18	1	9=100
	January, 1988	79	14	65	13	2	11	*	8=100
	May, 1987	76	13	63	17	2	15	*	7=100
Roper:	March 1985	64	17	47	28	7	21		8=100

NO QUESTIONS 9 OR 10

ASK ALL:

Q.11 If the 2006 elections for U.S. Congress were being held TODAY, would you vote for the Republican Party's candidate or the Democratic Party's candidate for Congress in your district?

IF ANSWERED '3' OTHER OR '9' DON'T KNOW IN Q.11, ASK:

Q.11a As of TODAY, do you LEAN more to the Republican or the Democrat?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=1269]:

	Rep/ <u>Lean Rep</u>	Dem/ <u>Lean Dem</u>	Other/ <u>Undecided</u>		Rep/ <u>Lean Rep</u>	Dem/ <u>Lean Dem</u>	Other/ <u>Undecided</u>
February, 2006	41	50	9=100				
Mid-September, 2005	40	52	8=100				
2004 Election				1996 Election			
June, 2004	41	48	11=100	November, 1996 ¹	44	48	8=100
2002 Election				October, 1996	42	49	9=100
Early November, 2002	42	46	12=100	Late September, 1996	43	49	8=100
Early October, 2002	44	46	10=100	Early September, 1996	43	51	6=100
Early September, 2002	44	46	10=100	July, 1996	46	47	7=100
June, 2002	44	46	10=100	June, 1996	44	50	6=100
February, 2002	46	45	9=100	March, 1996	44	49	7=100
Early November, 2001	44	44	12=100	January, 1996	46	47	7=100
2000 Election				October, 1995	48	48	4=100
Early November, 2000	42	48	10=100	August, 1995	50	43	7=100
Early October, 2000	43	47	10=100	1994 Election			
July, 2000	43	47	10=100	November, 1994	45	43	12=100
February, 2000	44	47	9=100	Late October, 1994	47	44	9=100
October, 1999	43	49	8=100	Early October, 1994	52	40	8=100
June, 1999	40	50	10=100	September, 1994	48	46	6=100
1998 Election				July, 1994	45	47	8=100
Late October, 1998	40	47	13=100				
Early October, 1998	43	44	13=100				
Early September, 1998	45	46	9=100				
Late August, 1998	44	45	11=100				
Early August, 1998	42	49	9=100				
June, 1998	44	46	10=100				
March, 1998	40	52	8=100				
February, 1998	41	50	9=100				
January, 1998	41	51	8=100				
August, 1997	45	48	7=100				

¹ November 1996 trend based on likely voters.

ASK ALL:

Thinking ahead...

Q.12 Would you like to see your representative in Congress be re-elected in the next congressional election, or not?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=1269]:

	(VOL.) Congressperson			
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Not running</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
February, 2006	59	28	1	12=100
Mid-September, 2005	57	25	1	17=100
Early October, 2002	58	19	2	21=100
June, 2002	58	23	1	18=100
Early November, 2000	59	16	2	23=100
October, 2000	60	17	1	22=100
July, 1999	66	23	*	11=100
Late October, 1998	64	19	1	16=100
Early October, 1998	58	20	2	20=100
Early September, 1998	63	20	1	16=100
March, 1998	63	21	1	15=100
January, 1998	66	23	0	11=100
August, 1997	66	22	0	12=100
Early November, 1996	60	16	3	21=100
October, 1996	62	19	2	17=100
Late September, 1996	55	17	2	26=100
Early September, 1996	62	19	2	17=100
November, 1994	58	25	1	16=100
October, 1994	55	30	2	13=100
Early October, 1994	49	29	2	20=100
<i>Gallup</i> : October 1990	62	22	2	14=100

Q.13 Regardless of how you feel about your own representative, would you like to see most members of Congress re-elected in the next congressional election, or not?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=1269]:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
February, 2006	36	49	15=100
September, 2005	36	48	16=100
Early October, 2002	39	38	23=100
June, 2002	45	37	18=100
October, 2000	40	34	26=100
July, 1999	41	47	12=100
Late October, 1998	41	37	22=100
Early October, 1998	39	39	22=100
Early September, 1998	46	36	18=100
March, 1998	45	41	14=100
January, 1998	44	43	13=100
August, 1997	45	42	13=100
Early September, 1996	43	43	14=100
November, 1994	31	51	18=100
Late October, 1994	31	56	13=100
Early October, 1994	28	56	16=100

Q.14 Do you think of your vote for Congress this fall as a vote for George W. Bush, as a vote against George W. Bush, or isn't George W. Bush much of a factor in your vote?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=1269]:

	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	Not a <u>Factor</u>	DK/ <u>Ref.</u>
February, 2006	18	31	47	4=100
Early November, 2002	29	16	49	6=100
Early October, 2002	30	20	44	6=100
Early September, 2002	29	15	51	5=100
February, 2002	34	9	50	7=100
Clinton: Late October, 1998	20	17	58	5=100
Clinton: Early October, 1998	19	23	52	6=100
Clinton: Early September, 1998	18	16	63	3=100
Clinton: Late August, 1998	20	17	61	2=100
Clinton: Early August, 1998	21	18	57	4=100
Clinton: June, 1998	20	18	57	5=100
Clinton: March, 1998	21	15	59	5=100
Clinton: Early September, 1996	24	18	51	7=100
Clinton: November, 1994	17	21	55	7=100
Clinton: Late October, 1994	17	21	57	5=100
Clinton: Early October, 1994	17	23	54	6=100
CBS/NYT Bush: 10/28-31, 1990	19	15	61	6=100
CBS/NYT Reagan: 10/24-28, 1986	26	12	55	7=100
CBS/NYT Reagan: 9/28-10/1, 1986	26	16	51	7=100
CBS/NYT Reagan: 10/23-28, 1982	23	21	51	5=100

NO QUESTIONS 15-19

Q.20 Do you think [INSERT ITEM, RANDOMIZE – OBSERVE FORM SPLIT] in this country works pretty well and requires only MINOR CHANGES, do you think it needs MAJOR CHANGES, or do you think it needs to be COMPLETELY REBUILT?

	<u>Works pretty well/ Only minor changes</u>	<u>Major changes</u>	<u>Completely Rebuilt</u>	<u>Don't know/ Refused</u>
a. The health care system	20	46	32	2=100
January, 2005	27	50	21	2=100

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=757]:

b.F1 The tax system	35	39	22	4=100
January, 2005	50	29	17	4=100

d.F1 The Social Security system	35	36	26	3=100
January, 2005	47	34	15	4=100

e.F1 The legal system	43	34	19	4=100
January, 2005	44	37	15	4=100

g.F1 Immigration policy	23	41	27	9=100
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ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=745]:

c.F2 The education system	35	45	16	4=100
January, 2005	36	45	17	2=100

f.F2 The criminal justice system	36	41	20	3=100
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Q.20 CONTINUED...

		<u>Works pretty well/ Only minor changes</u>	<u>Major changes</u>	<u>Completely Rebuilt</u>	<u>Don't know/ Refused</u>
h.F2	The Medicare system	26	42	28	4=100
i.F2	The Homeland Security system	39	36	19	6=100

ASK ALL:

Thinking more generally...

Q.21 How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right? Just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

	<u>Just About Always</u>	<u>Most of the Time</u>	<u>Only Sometimes</u>	(VOL) <u>Never</u>	(VOL) <u>DK/Ref.</u>
February, 2006	4	30	59	6	1=100
Mid-September, 2005	3	28	63	4	2=100
Mid-March, 2004	4	32	59	4	1=100
February, 2000	5	35	56	3	1=100
May, 1999	3	28	62	5	2=100
February, 1999	4	27	64	4	1=100
November, 1998	4	22	61	11	2=100
February, 1998	5	29	61	4	1=100
November, 1997	2	36	60	2	*=100
<i>NES</i> ² 1996	2	25	70	2	1=100
1994	2	19	74	3	2=100
1992	3	26	68	2	1=100
1990	3	25	69	2	1=100
1988	4	37	56	2	1=100
1986	3	35	58	2	2=100
1984	4	40	53	1	2=100
1982	2	31	62	2	3=100
1980	2	23	69	4	2=100
1978	2	27	64	4	3=100
1976	4	30	62	1	3=100
1974	2	34	61	1	2=100
1972	5	48	44	1	2=100
1970	7	47	44	*	2=100
1968	7	54	37	*	2=100
1966	17	48	28	3	4=100
1964	14	62	22	*	2=100
1958	16	57	23	0	4=100

NO QUESTION 22

² Trend numbers for 1958 through 1996 are from the American National Election Studies.

Q.23 Next, please tell me if you think the REPUBLICAN Party or the DEMOCRATIC Party could do a better job in each of the following areas... (First,) which party could do a better job of...**[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE – OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]**³

		Republican	Democratic	(VOL.) Both	(VOL.) Neither	Don't
		<u>Party</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Equally</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>Know</u>
a.	Dealing with the economy	36	46	5	5	8=100
	Mid-September, 2005	38	44	5	7	6=100
	July, 2004	34	46	5	5	10=100
	Late October, 2002 (RVs)	37	40	5	6	12=100
	Early October, 2002 (RVs)	37	41	4	5	13=100
	Early September, 2002	36	36	9	6	13=100
	January, 2002	43	34	--	5	18=100
	May, 2001 ⁴	33	44	8	5	10=100
	June, 1999	37	43	8	3	9=100
	March, 1999	39	44	5	3	9=100
	Early September, 1998	40	38	8	4	10=100
	March, 1998	40	40	12	3	5=100
	October, 1994	45	33	5	7	10=100
	Gallup: October, 1992 (RVs)	36	45	10	--	9=100
	Gallup: October, 1990	37	35	--	--	28=100
b.	Reforming the U.S. health care system	27	49	6	9	9=100
	Mid-September, 2005	28	51	4	10	7=100
	July, 2004	23	50	4	10	13=100
	Early July, 2003	31	38	6	10	15=100
	January, 2002 ⁵	20	45	--	6	29=100
	January, 2001	30	47	--	7	16=100
	January, 1999	25	46	--	7	22=100
	Early September, 1998	31	43	7	7	12=100
	March, 1998	25	53	6	8	8=100
	October, 1994	34	41	5	10	10=100
	July, 1994	34	48	2	8	8=100
	December, 1993	25	47	--	10	18=100
	January, 1992	21	56	--	8	15=100
	May, 1990	20	50	--	16	14=100
c.	Dealing with the nation's energy problems	32	45	6	7	10=100
	Mid-September, 2005	31	44	6	8	11=100
	May, 2001	36	34	10	7	13=100
d.	Reforming government in Washington	29	42	7	12	10=100
	March, 1998 ⁶	37	35	8	10	10=100
	July, 1994	39	40	3	11	7=100

³ In January 1999, January 2001, January 2002, and May 2002, the question was worded: "Please tell me which party you think has the best ideas... the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?"

⁴ In May 2001 and earlier, the item was worded: "... keeping the country prosperous?"

⁵ From 1999 to 2002, the item was listed as "...regulating health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and managed health care plans." In December 1993 question was worded "Reforming health care." In January 1992 and May 1990 the question was worded "improving health care in the U.S."

⁶ In March 1998 and July 1994 the item was worded "reforming government."

Q.23 CONTINUED...

		Republican	Democratic	(VOL.) Both	(VOL.) Neither	Don't
		<u>Party</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Equally</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>Know</u>
ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=757]:						
e.F1	Making wise decisions about what to do in Iraq	38	41	3	8	10=100
	Mid-September, 2005	38	43	5	6	8=100
	July, 2004	38	40	4	6	12=100
	Late October, 2002 (RVs)	42	33	6	6	13=100
	Early October, 2002 (RVs)	46	30	7	4	13=100
f.F1	Protecting the environment	24	56	6	5	9=100
	Mid-September, 2005	28	51	5	7	9=100
	July, 2004	24	51	5	6	14=100
	Early September, 2002	25	46	9	6	14=100
	May, 2001	25	51	7	4	13=100
	June, 1999	27	45	7	5	16=100
	Early September, 1998	25	51	8	4	12=100
	March, 1998	22	56	8	5	9=100
	July, 1994	28	56	4	4	8=100
	December, 1993	22	46	--	12	20=100
	May, 1990	24	40	--	19	17=100
g.F1	Dealing with taxes	35	46	5	6	8=100
	May, 2001	37	40	8	6	9=100
	June, 1999	38	38	5	7	12=100
	September, 1998	41	37	7	5	10=100
	March, 1998	39	40	6	7	8=100
	October, 1994	43	34	5	9	9=100
h.F1	Reducing crime	37	30	8	10	15=100
	September, 2002	35	26	14	10	15=100
	June, 1999	35	35	12	6	12=100
	Early September, 1998	39	32	10	7	12=100
	March, 1998	35	34	11	10	10=100
	October, 1994	38	34	7	10	11=100
	December, 1993	29	35	--	17	19=100
	January, 1992	32	32	--	18	18=100
ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=745]:						
i.F2	Dealing with the terrorist threat at home	46	30	8	7	9=100
	Mid-September, 2005	45	34	7	6	8=100
	July, 2004	45	30	6	6	13=100
	Late October, 2002 (RVs)	44	27	11	6	12=100
	Early October, 2002 (RVs)	44	28	7	5	16=100
	Early September, 2002	44	22	14	6	14=100
	January, 2002	48	18	--	6	28=100
j.F2	Improving the educational system	33	44	8	7	8=100
	Mid-September, 2005	35	44	6	7	8=100
	July, 2004	29	45	7	7	12=100
	January, 2002	37	34	--	6	23=100
	May, 2001	36	38	11	6	9=100
	January, 2001	40	41	--	7	12=100
	June, 1999	29	52	7	5	7=100
	March, 1999	33	46	6	5	10=100

Q.23 CONTINUED...

		Republican	Democratic	(VOL.) Both Equally	(VOL.) Neither	Don't Know
		<u>Party</u>	<u>Party</u>			
	January, 1999	26	46	--	7	21=100
	Early September, 1998	34	42	10	4	10=100
	March, 1998	29	49	10	5	7=100
	July, 1994	37	46	4	5	8=100
	January, 1992	28	48	--	10	14=100
	May, 1990	30	42	--	14	14=100
k.F2	Reducing the federal budget deficit	33	45	6	9	7=100
	Early October, 2005 ⁷	29	47	6	10	8=100
	June, 1999	37	41	5	8	9=100
	July, 1994	42	36	2	13	7=100
	December, 1993	31	36	--	18	15=100
l.F2	Dealing with immigration	34	38	8	9	11=100

ASK ALL:

Q.24 In your view, does the [INSERT ITEM; ROTATE] or the [NEXT ITEM] have better political leaders?

41 Republican Party
 37 Democratic Party
 5 Both equally (VOL.)
 8 Neither (VOL.)
 9 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
 100

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=757]:

Q.25F1 Thinking about the Democratic Party, who do YOU think of as the leader of the Democratic Party these days? days? Is it... [RANDOMIZE; READ ALL BEFORE RECORDING RESPONSE]?

2 Joseph Biden
 14 Bill Clinton
 26 Hillary Clinton
 4 Howard Dean
 4 John Edwards
 4 Al Gore
 12 John Kerry
 3 Barack Obama
 3 Nancy Pelosi [OR]
 1 Harry Reid
 5 (VOL. DO NOT READ) Other
 8 (VOL. DO NOT READ) Nobody is
 14 (VOL. DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused
 100

⁷ In Early October 2005, the item was asked as a stand alone question. In June 1999, the question was worded "keeping the federal budget balanced." In December 1993 the question was worded "reducing the budget deficit."

TREND FOR COMPARISON:

Who do YOU now think of as the leader of the Democratic Party... (**READ AND ROTATE**)?

Jan	
<u>2002</u>	
14	Bill Clinton
15	Al Gore
10	Joseph Lieberman
9	Dick Gephardt [OR]
29	Tom Daschle
1	Other (VOL)
3	Nobody is (VOL)
<u>19</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=745]:

Q.26F2 Thinking about the Democratic Party, who do YOU think of as the leader of the Democratic Party these days? [**SINGLE RESPONSE, DO NOT READ OPTIONS. USE PRECODES AS APPROPRIATE; ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.**]

3	Joseph Biden
11	Bill Clinton
15	Hillary Clinton
3	Howard Dean
2	John Edwards
1	Al Gore
8	John Kerry
4	Barack Obama
1	Nancy Pelosi [OR]
1	Harry Reid
8	Other
13	Nobody is
<u>30</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

ASK ALL:

Q.27 Do you think recent reports of lobbyists bribing members of Congress are isolated incidents of corruption, or do you think this kind of behavior is common in Congress?

		Jan
		<u>2006</u>
13	Isolated incidents	11
81	Common behavior	81
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>8</u>
100		100

IF FORM 2 AND 'COMMON BEHAVIOR' (2 IN Q.27) ASK [N=616]:

Q.28F2 When you say this is common, do you mean that members are trading specific votes on legislation for money and personal favors, or that they just pay more attention to those who give them campaign donations?

36	Trading specific votes for money
47	Just more likely to listen
13	Both (VOL.)
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	

ASK ALL:

Q.29 Do you think that YOUR member of Congress has taken bribes from lobbyists, or not?

BASED ON FORM 1 ONLY [N=757]:

41 Yes
35 No
24 Don't know/Refused
100

Q.30 Do you think bribery and corruption in Congress is more common now than it used to be, or no different from the past?

36 More common now
60 No different from the past
4 Don't know/Refused
100

Q.31 Is the [INSERT ITEM; ROTATE] or the [NEXT ITEM], more involved in corruption and bribery in Congress?

31 Republican Party
14 Democratic Party
34 Both equally (VOL.)
4 Neither (VOL.)
17 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100

QUESTIONS 32 THROUGH 38 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

QUESTIONS 39 THROUGH 46 IN PREVIOUS RELEASE

QUESTION 47 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

QUESTIONS 48 THROUGH 67 IN PREVIOUS RELEASE

ASK ALL:

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	(VOL) <u>No Preference</u>	(VOL) <u>Other Party</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
February, 2006	30	33	31	3	*	3=100
January, 2006	28	32	32	5	*	3=100
December, 2005	29	34	31	4	*	2=100
Late November, 2005	27	34	29	5	1	4=100
Early November, 2005	28	34	31	5	*	2=100
Late October, 2005	29	33	31	5	*	2=100
Early October, 2005	26	34	34	4	*	2=100
September 8-11, 2005	31	32	33	3	*	1=100
September 6-7, 2005	27	33	33	4	*	3=100
July, 2005	31	34	29	4	*	2=100
June, 2005	30	32	32	4	*	2=100
Mid-May, 2005	30	34	29	4	*	3=100
Late March, 2005	29	32	36	2	*	1=100
Mid-March, 2005	30	34	29	4	*	3=100
February, 2005	31	32	30	4	1	2=100
January, 2005	32	33	30	4	*	1=100
December, 2004	31	34	30	3	*	2=100

Yearly Totals

2005	30	33	31	4	*	2=100
2004	30	33	30	4	*	3=100
2003	30	31	31	5	*	3=100
2002	30	31	30	5	1	3=100
2001	29	34	29	5	*	3=100
2001 Post-Sept 11	31	32	28	5	1	3=100
2001 Pre-Sept 11	28	35	30	5	*	2=100
2000	28	33	29	6	*	4=100
1999	27	33	34	4	*	2=100
1998	28	33	32	5	*	2=100
1997	28	33	32	4	1	2=100

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	No Preference/ <u>Other/DK</u>
1996	29	33	33	5=100
1995	32	30	34	4=100
1994	30	32	34	4=100
1993	27	34	34	5=100
1992	28	33	35	4=100
1991	31	32	33	4=100
1990	31	33	30	6=100

	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Independent/ No Pref/Oth/DK</u>
1989	33	33	34=100
1987	26	35	39=100

IF ANSWERED 3, 4, 5 OR 9 IN PARTY [N=538] ASK:

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Refused to lean</u>
February, 2006	11	16	10=37%
January, 2006	10	16	14=40%
December, 2005	10	16	11=37%
Late November, 2005	9	13	17=39%
Early November, 2005	11	14	13=38%
Late October, 2005	11	15	12=38%
Early October, 2005	11	18	11=40%
September 8-11, 2005	10	18	9=37%
September 6-7, 2005	10	15	15=40%
July, 2005	9	15	11=35%
June, 2005	10	16	12=38%
Mid-May, 2005	9	13	14=36%
Late March, 2005	13	17	9=39%
December, 2004	14	12	9=35%
August, 2003	12	16	14=42%
August, 2002	12	13	13=38%
September, 2000	11	13	15=39%
Late September, 1999	14	15	16=45%
August, 1999	15	15	12=42%

ASK IF REPUBLICAN OR LEAN REPUBLICAN (1 IN PARTY OR 1 IN PARTYLN) [N=641]:

Q.68 Thinking about next year's congressional elections, do you think the Republican Party will do better, worse, or about the same as it has in recent elections?

		<u>Dec 2005</u>
23	Better	17
17	Worse	20
56	About the same	55
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused	8
100		100

ASK IF DEMOCRAT OR LEAN DEMOCRAT (2 IN PARTY OR 2 IN PARTYLN) [N=726]:

Q.69 Thinking about next year's congressional elections, do you think the Democratic Party will do better, worse, or about the same as it has in recent elections?

		<u>Dec 2005</u>
64	Better	62
2	Worse	1
28	About the same	31
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>6</u>
100		100