Daily Presidential Tracking Poll

The Rasmussen Reports daily Presidential Tracking Poll for Friday shows that 46% of Likely U.S. Voters approve of President Obama's job performance. Fifty-three percent (53%) disapprove (see trends
).

The latest figures include 23% who Strongly Approve of the way Obama is performing as president and 38% who Strongly Disapprove. This gives him a Presidential Approval Index rating of -15.

Regular updates are posted Monday through Friday at 9:30 a.m. Eastern
(sign up for free daily e-mail update
).

Congress is now embroiled in a debate over legislation that would give the president more power to negotiate free trade deals with other countries. Republicans are in the very rare position of arguing for more power for Obama, while Democrats are in the equally rare position of opposing it. We?ll tell you how Americans feel about free trade and how it affects them personally at 10:30 a.m. Eastern today.

Americans overwhelmingly describe themselves as middle class, but most voters continue to believe the economy isn?t working for the middle class
.

Forty-one percent (41%) think being middle class is determined by how much money you make. However, slightly more (43%) say being middle class means you are self-supporting, self-reliant and free of dependence on the government
.

Nearly two-out-of-three Americans now believe the government has too much power in this country and that too many of their fellow countrymen are dependent on the government for financial support
.

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie recently proposed lowering or eliminating benefits for wealthy retirees to help keep Social Security financially afloat. Voters suspect that any savings earned from proposed changes in Social Security won't be used to benefit the federal retirement system, though, but will just go to new spending on something else
.

Seventy-six percent (76%) are also concerned that the plan to lower or eliminate Social Security payments to wealthier Americans may later be extended to include those who earn less
.

(More below)

Remember the problems exposed a year ago at the Department of Veterans Affairs, the unusually long waits for medical care that many veterans suffered? The majority of voters think most of the problems at the VA remain unsolved.

Americans rely on the Internet for more and more things in their daily lives, but most want to keep voting offline
.

For White House hopefuls, what?s in a name?

(More below)

Some readers wonder how we come up with our job approval ratings for the president since they often don?t show as dramatic a change as some other pollsters do. It depends on how you ask the question and whom you ask.

To get a sense of longer-term job approval trends for the president, Rasmussen Reports compiles our tracking data on a full month-by-month basis.

Rasmussen Reports has been a pioneer in the use of automated telephone polling techniques, but many other firms still utilize their own operator-assisted technology (see methodology
).

Daily tracking results are collected via telephone surveys of 500 likely voters per night and reported on a three-day rolling average basis. To reach those who have abandoned traditional landline telephones, Rasmussen Reports uses an online survey tool to interview randomly selected participants from a demographically diverse panel. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 1,500 Likely Voters is +/- 2.5 percentage points with a 95% level of confidence. Results are also compiled on a full-week basis and crosstabs for full-week results
 are available for Platinum Members
.