

Latest Politico-GW battleground poll reveals 'fiscal cliff' anxieties

December 12 2012



The poll measures attitudes and concerns one month after Barack Obama's re-election.

Voters are anxious about the economy and the direction of the country, according to a new POLITICO-George Washington University Battleground Poll.

While politicians argue about the best way to avoid the so-called "fiscal cliff," at least 60 percent of American voters favor three proposals for reducing the [federal budget deficit](#): raising taxes on households earning more than \$250,000 (60 percent), raising taxes on corporations (64 percent) and cutting government spending across the board (75 percent). Additionally, a narrow majority (51 percent) favor reducing Medicare benefits for seniors who have higher incomes.

Proposals with the most opposition include raising the [retirement age](#) for [Social Security benefits](#) (64 percent), making significant cuts to the

Department of Defense budget (59 percent) and raising taxes on small businesses that earn more than \$250,000 (69 percent).

"As President Obama and congressional leaders attempt to negotiate a solution to reducing deficit spending, they will be facing a formidable challenge due to conflicting voter attitudes," said Ed Goeas, president/CEO of the Tarrance Group. "Americans support raising taxes on households earning more than \$250,000, but a majority oppose raising taxes on small businesses earning more than \$250,000, who comprise a significant portion of those same households. In addition, while 75 percent support cutting government spending across the board, a strong majority oppose significant cuts to the Department of Defense budget."

Fifty-nine percent of Americans disapprove of the job President [Barack Obama](#) is doing to reduce the federal budget deficit; however, his overall job performance rating is 50 percent approval and 47 percent disapproval.

"President Obama campaigned on a plan that defined progress as all Americans moving forward," said Celinda Lake, president of Lake Research Partners. "Over six in 10 voters, including solid majorities of Democrats and independents, and even over a third of Republicans support these tax increases. Furthermore, voters soundly reject trickle-down economics. Obama has the stature in job performance and favorability to successfully take this debate directly to the people as he has done. At the same time, Democrats must remember that many more voters are concerned about jobs and the economy than [government spending](#) and the deficit. We can't take our eye off the ball, which is getting this economy moving forward."

In addition to economic issues, the latest Battleground Poll measured voter concerns on a range of issues including gay marriage, immigration

reform, the 2014 congressional race and other topics.

On the issue of gay marriage, 40 percent of Americans believe same-sex couples should be allowed to legally marry while 30 percent approve of civil unions and 24 percent disapprove of any type of legal union. Forty-eight percent approve of President Obama's handling of gay marriage, and one in five voters said they changed their mind on the issue during the last few years.

"President Obama enters his second term confronted by some serious concerns. More voters disapprove than approve of his job performance on reducing the federal deficit, immigration and the economy generally," said Christopher Arterton, professor of political management.

"Meanwhile, these voters narrowly approve of the job he is doing on same sex marriage, working with Congress, taxes and Medicare."

"As a nation, we've come out of the 2012 election as badly divided as we were during the campaign," he said. "The very serious issues that we face will take adroit management to solve. The election didn't serve to resolve them; no consensus has emerged on how the nation should move forward. Nor is the public particularly happy about the future. When asked if the country is headed in the right direction or is off on the wrong track, fully 59 percent replied 'wrong track' in this post-election survey, a percent comparable to our surveys during most of 2012."

The POLITICO-George Washington University Battleground Poll is a nationally recognized series of surveys conducted by Mr. Goeas of the Tarrance Group and Ms. Lake of Lake Research Partners. The George Washington University Global Media Institute, affiliated with the Graduate School of Political Management and the School of Media and Public Affairs, serves as the university's home for the partnership. George Washington's Gelman Library houses the data archive of the survey results dating back more than two decades.

The poll, which is distinguished from other surveys by its presentation of separate analyses from these top pollsters representing both sides of the aisle, surveyed 1,000 registered likely voters nationwide Dec. 2 through Dec. 6, including a protocol for reaching mobile phone users, and yields a margin of error of + 3.1 percent.

More information: www.gwu.edu/battleground-poll

Provided by George Washington University

Citation: Latest Politico-GW battleground poll reveals 'fiscal cliff' anxieties (2012, December 12) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-12-latest-politico-gw-battleground-poll-reveals.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--