

Survey Results: Where Are We Today?

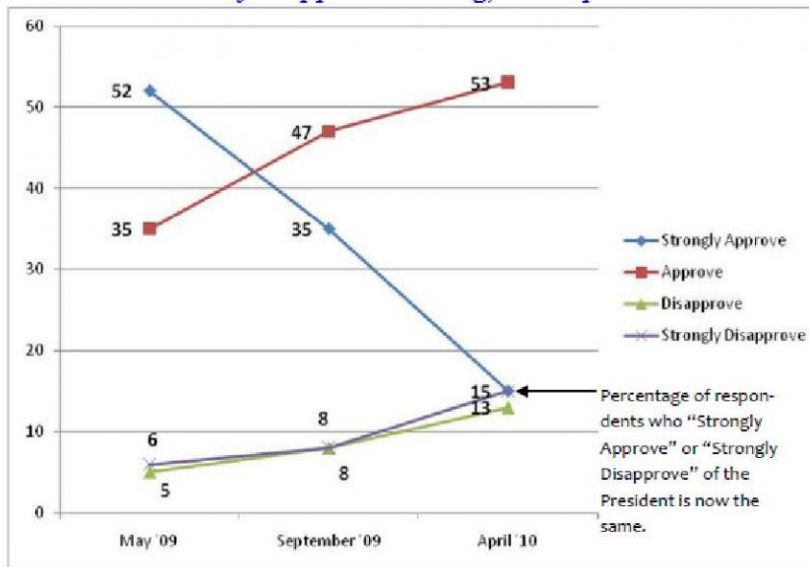
Third CWCS survey shows erosion in support for President Obama, disdain for Congress, working class rejection of "tea party"

Americans are less enamored with President Obama than they were one year ago, scornful of Congress, and pessimistic about the economy according to the latest on-line survey conducted by the Center for Working-Class Studies at Youngstown State University, Dr. John Russo, Co-Director of the Center said as he released the results of the poll. Nearly 400 people from across the country participated in the survey. "This survey provides us with an opportunity to discern just how much damage President Obama and Congressional Democrats have sustained during the long health care debate," Dr. Russo said. "And it also provides us with interesting insights regarding whether the Tea Party Movement, which was energized during that public policy battle, has been able to attract substantial support among the working class."

Preliminary Analysis of Results

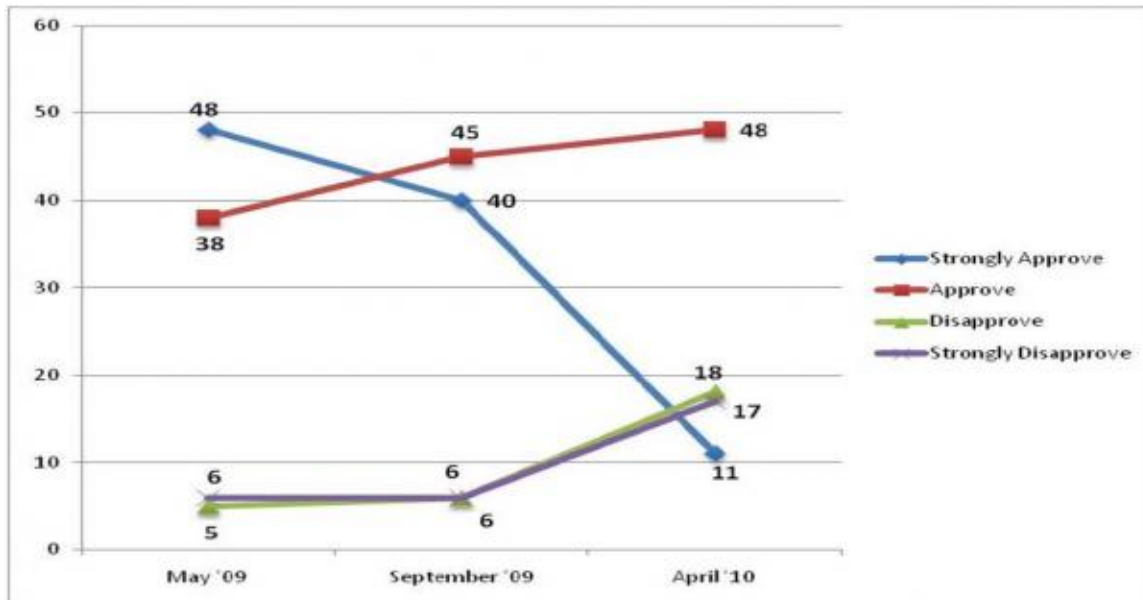
While President Obama's nearly 69% overall approval rating is extremely high, that number is nearly 19 points below the marks he received in the CWCS survey conducted at the end of his first 100 days in office and 14 points below his rating in September 2009. As the chart below illustrates, most of the erosion in President Obama's overall approval rating occurred among those who "strongly approved" of his job performance. That number dropped 37 points from a high of 52% shortly after he took office to 15% today and is now equal to the percentage of respondents who "strongly disapprove" of President Obama's performance.

President Obama's Job Approval Rating, all respondents



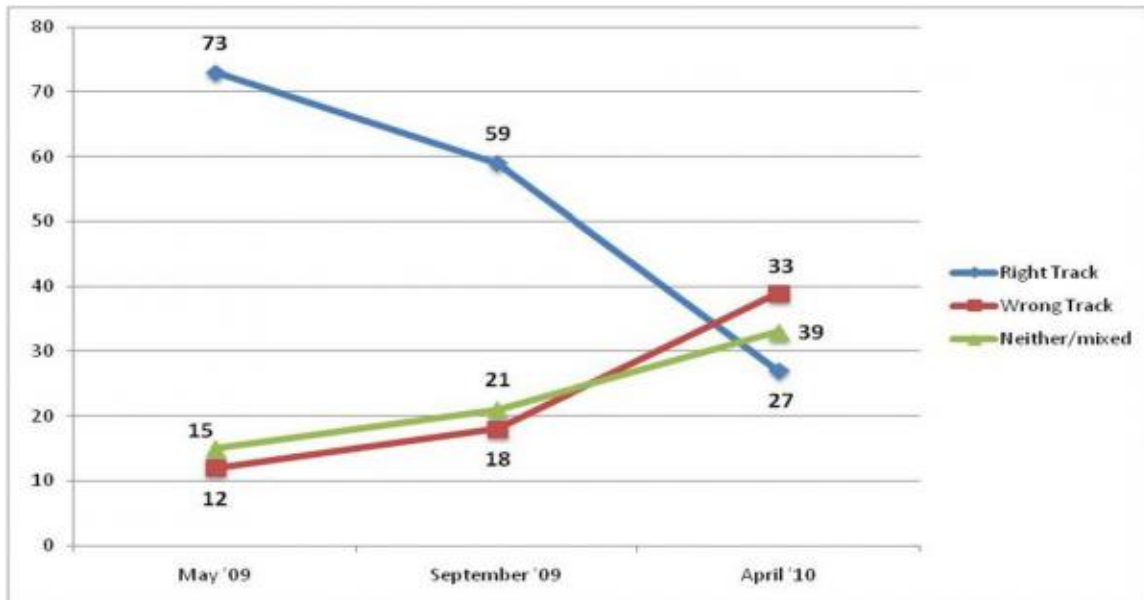
Support for President Obama has also slipped among respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the "working class." Today the President's overall approval rating stands below 60%, down 27% in less than a year while his overall disapproval rating has shot up to 33%, a 24% increase over the past 12 months. Most notably, those in the working class who say they "strongly approve" of Mr. Obama has fallen by 37 points from a high of 48% in May of 2009 to 11% today.

President Obama's Job Approval Rating, working-class respondents



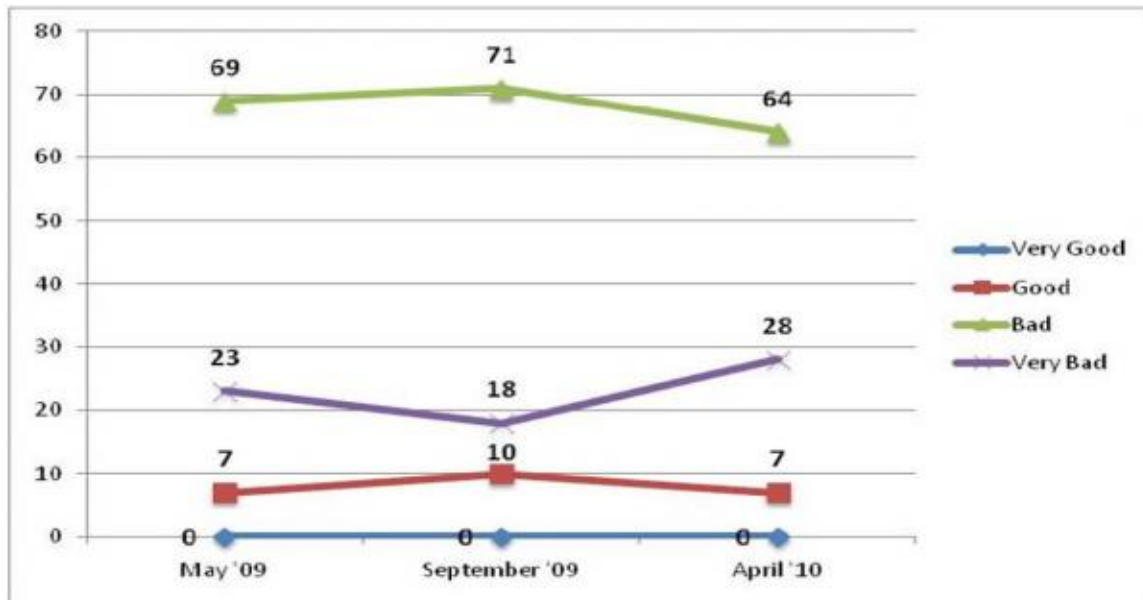
President Obama's falling popularity may be attributable to the fact that the optimism about the future generated by his election has collided with the pessimism spawned by what respondents believe is a persistent recession. In earlier surveys, both President Obama's approval ratings and the percentage of respondents who believed the U.S. was on the "right track" were extremely high despite the fact that a vast majority believed the economy was in "bad" or "very bad" condition. Today, only 27% of respondents believe the nation is on the "right track," a precipitous 46 point decline from the 73% who expressed confidence in the direction the country was moving at the end of President Obama's first 100 days. Not surprisingly, the percentage of those believing the U.S. is on the "wrong track" has nearly tripled from 12% in May of 2009 to 33% today. The percentage who believe things are "mixed" has also jumped considerably indicating that a growing number of people are uncertain about the future.

Percentage Who Believe U.S. is on Right or Wrong Track



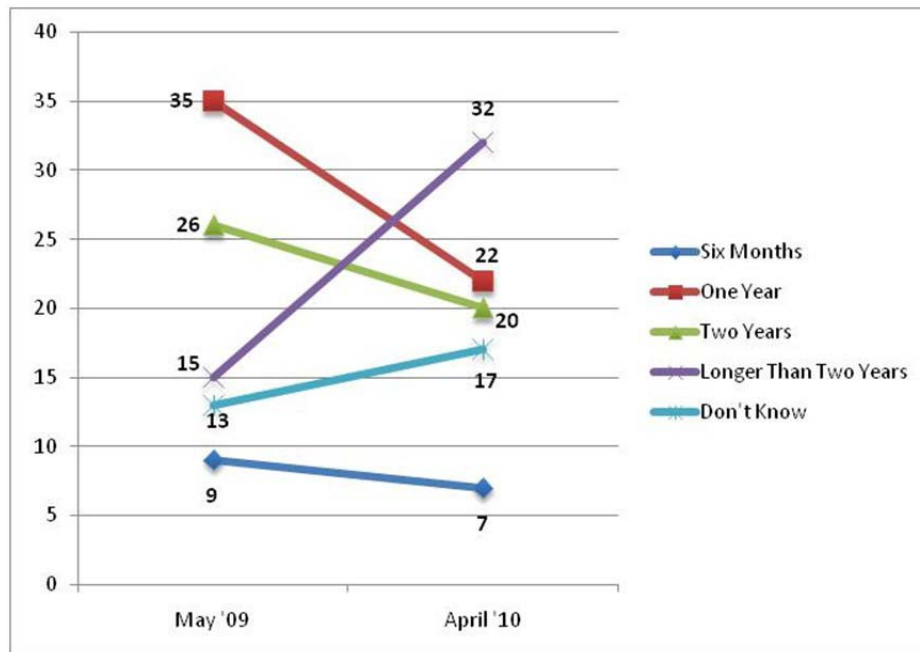
Responses to the "right track," "wrong track" questions should be neither surprising or shocking given the fact that respondents are overwhelmingly despondent when it comes to their view of the economy. By wide margins they believe that the economy is "bad" or "very bad" and for the third consecutive time not one person rated it "very good." In previous polls respondents appeared willing to give President Obama a pass on the issue, placing most of the blame for the recession on former President Bush and corporate greed.

Rating the Condition of the Economy



In the latest survey, however, 17% of respondents said President Obama is responsible for the economic woes, a jump of 12 points from last year. They are also dissatisfied with the administration's stimulus efforts. A majority of those participating, 57%, said the stimulus package had been only "somewhat effective," and the number of those believing the programs designed to boost the economy was only slightly larger than the number who believed the administration's efforts were not effective at all: 19% to 17%.

How Long will the Recession Last?



In addition, respondents, by a more than three-to-one margin, 70% to 18%, believe the bank bailouts supported by President Obama and his economic team benefited large banks and investors rather than everyday Americans. And almost as many, 64%, believe that Wall Street has too much influence over the Obama administration.

Finally, and this should be disconcerting for a president who faces reelection in two years, more people believe the recession will last for two years or more, 52%, than feel America's economic woes will be resolved in six months to one year: 29%. It is especially important to note that the number of respondents who said the recession will last for more than two years more than doubled since May of 2009, from 15% to 32%.

Respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the working class are just as despondent about the state of and prospects for the economy:

Which track is the nation on:

Right track: 24%

Wrong track: 48%

Mixed: 28%

How long will the current recession last:

More than two years: 44%

Two years: 17%

One year: 12%

Six months: 4%

Don't know: 23%

The condition of the economy is:

Very good: 0

Good: 10%

Bad: 60%

Very bad: 28%

Mixed: 2%

The economy is:

Getting better: 17%

Getting worse: 32%

Staying about same: 51%

Combined with the respondent's deep concern over the economy and jobs---64% named the economy as one of the five most important issues facing the nation, 59% selected jobs---the administration must take significant steps to improve the economy if President Obama wants to avoid a pitched battle for the White House in 2012.

Unfortunately for members of Congress, their moment of reckoning could come in six months, not two and one-half years. More than 85% of respondents disapprove or strongly disapprove of the job Congress is doing, and while 79% believe the Democrats should maintain control of the House and Senate, only 49% say they are going to vote for their incumbent Congressperson this year.

Along with panning their job performance, participants revealed a deep cynicism about Congress that crossed party lines. More than 93% said they believed Wall Street and big business exert too much influence over Congressional Republicans and 87% said the same about the Democrats. Less than 10% said they trusted either party to fix the economy.

This general and deep-seated dissatisfaction and distrust of Congress has not, however, translated into support for the Tea Party movement. While 92% of respondents claim to be aware of the movement and similar percentage say they are very or somewhat familiar with what the Tea Party stands for, less than one in ten characterizes themselves as a member of the movement and only 5% trust the Tea Partiers to fix the nation's economy.

This trend holds true among the working class. More than 81% say they disagree or strongly disagree with the Tea Party movement on important social and political issues, less than one in ten describes themselves as a supporter of the movement, and similar number say they trust the Tea Partiers to fix the economy. So while conservative pundits make much of the fact that the movement is comprised of everyday, working Americans who are sick of Washington deal-making and influence peddling, the working-class men and women who responded to the survey are not among them. This should provide some level of hope to Democrats who must do everything possible to recapture the enthusiasm generated by President

Obama's election---much of which was dissipated during the drawn-out debate over insurance reform.

For more information please contact Dr. John Russo at 330-941-2976.