



## **The National Landscape**

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March 2012

# The Current Environment



Democrats outnumber Republicans nationwide

- But self-identification with Democrats has declined slightly in recent months while the proportion identifying as Independent is on the rise

Voters remain pessimistic

- But they are not as morose as they were just a few months ago

Recent job reports indicate the economy is rebounding some

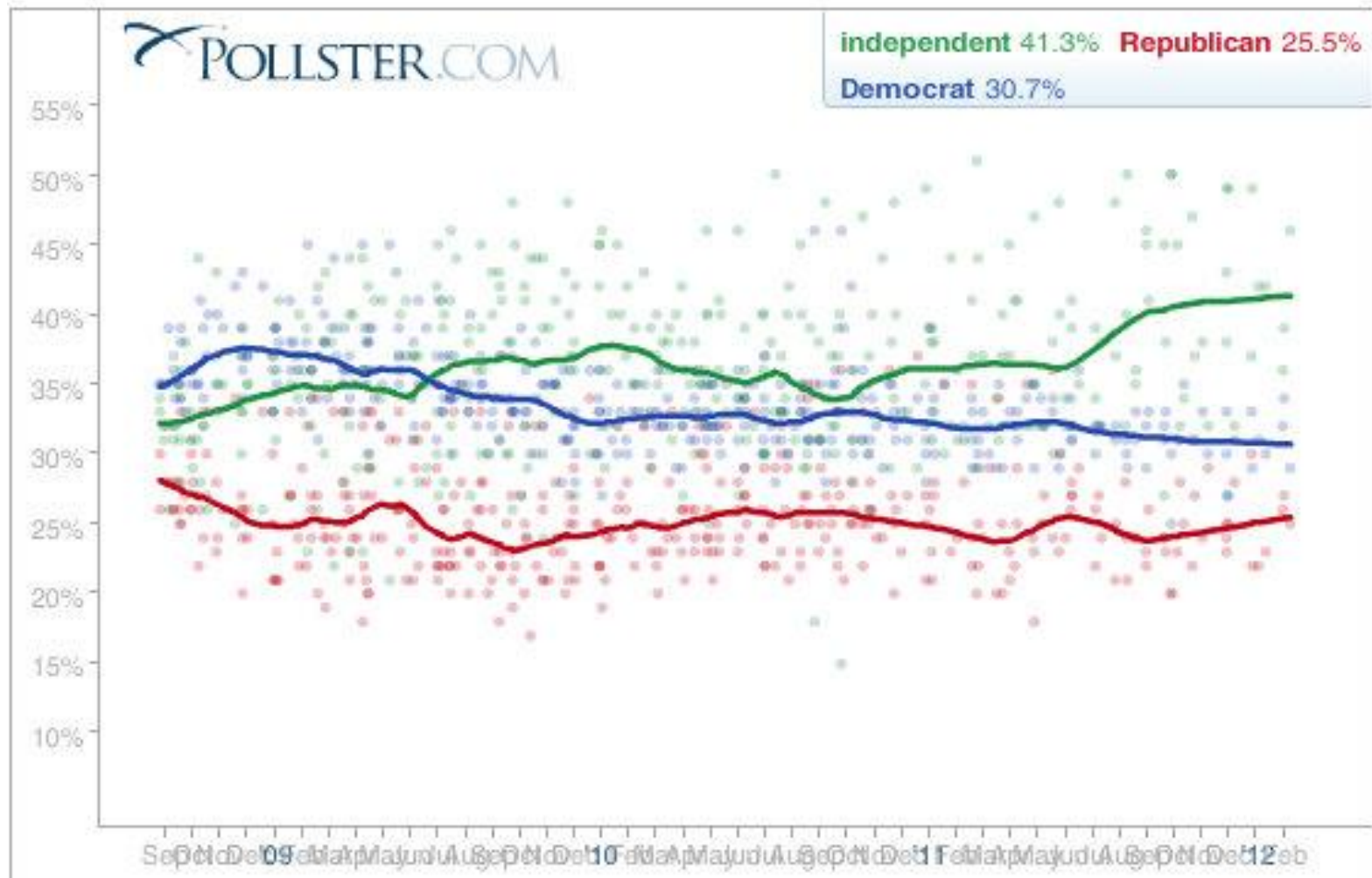
And as a result, more approve of the job President Obama is doing

- He has also improve significantly among independents
- And while his ratings on the economy are improving, nearly a majority still disapprove of how he is handling the economy

# Party Identification: Currently Democrats Outnumber Republicans Nationwide



## National Party ID (ALL ADULTS)

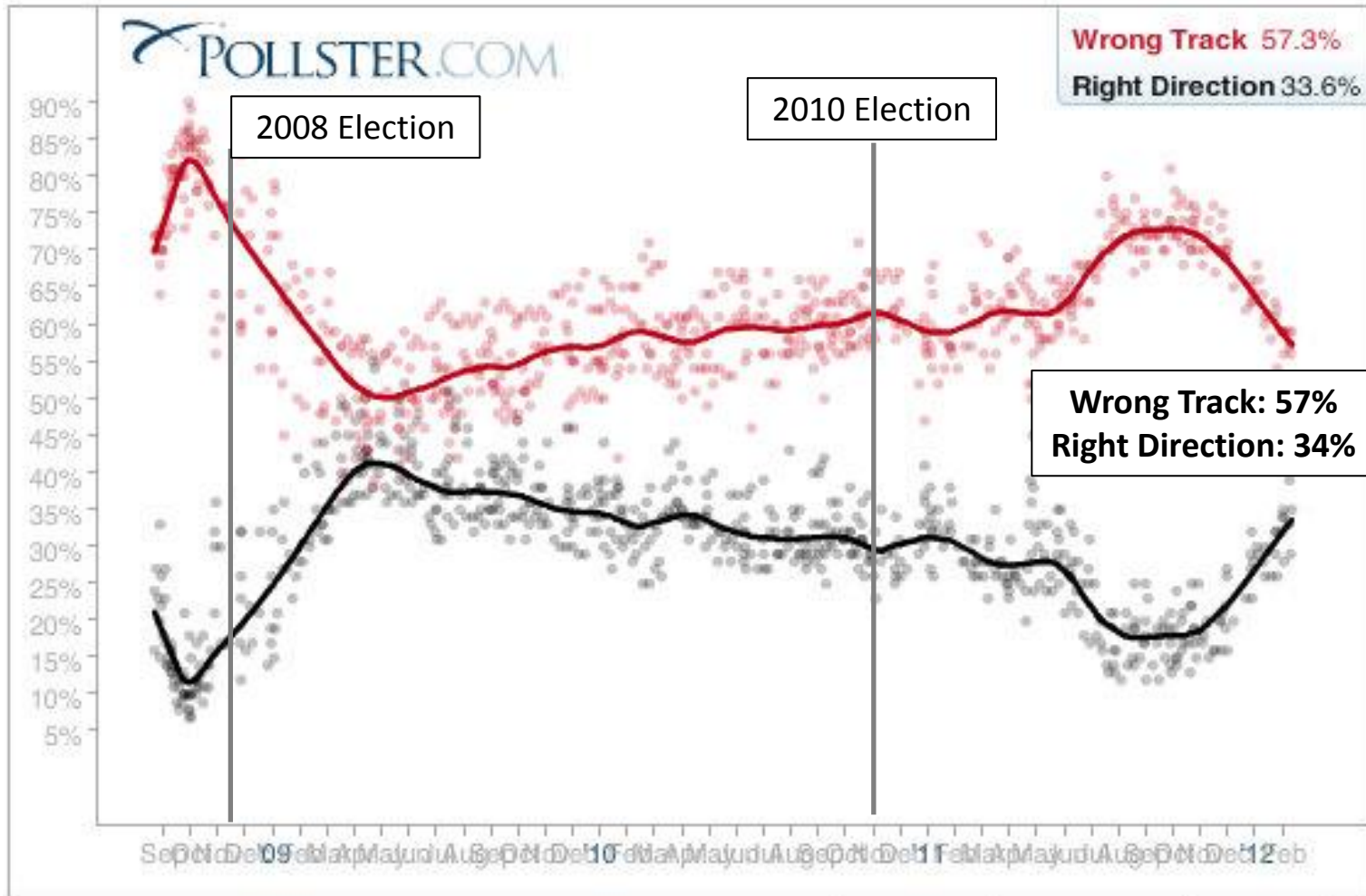


## Voters Remain Pessimistic

But The Electorate's Mood Has Rebounded Some Since The Fall



### State of the Country: Right Direction / Wrong Track

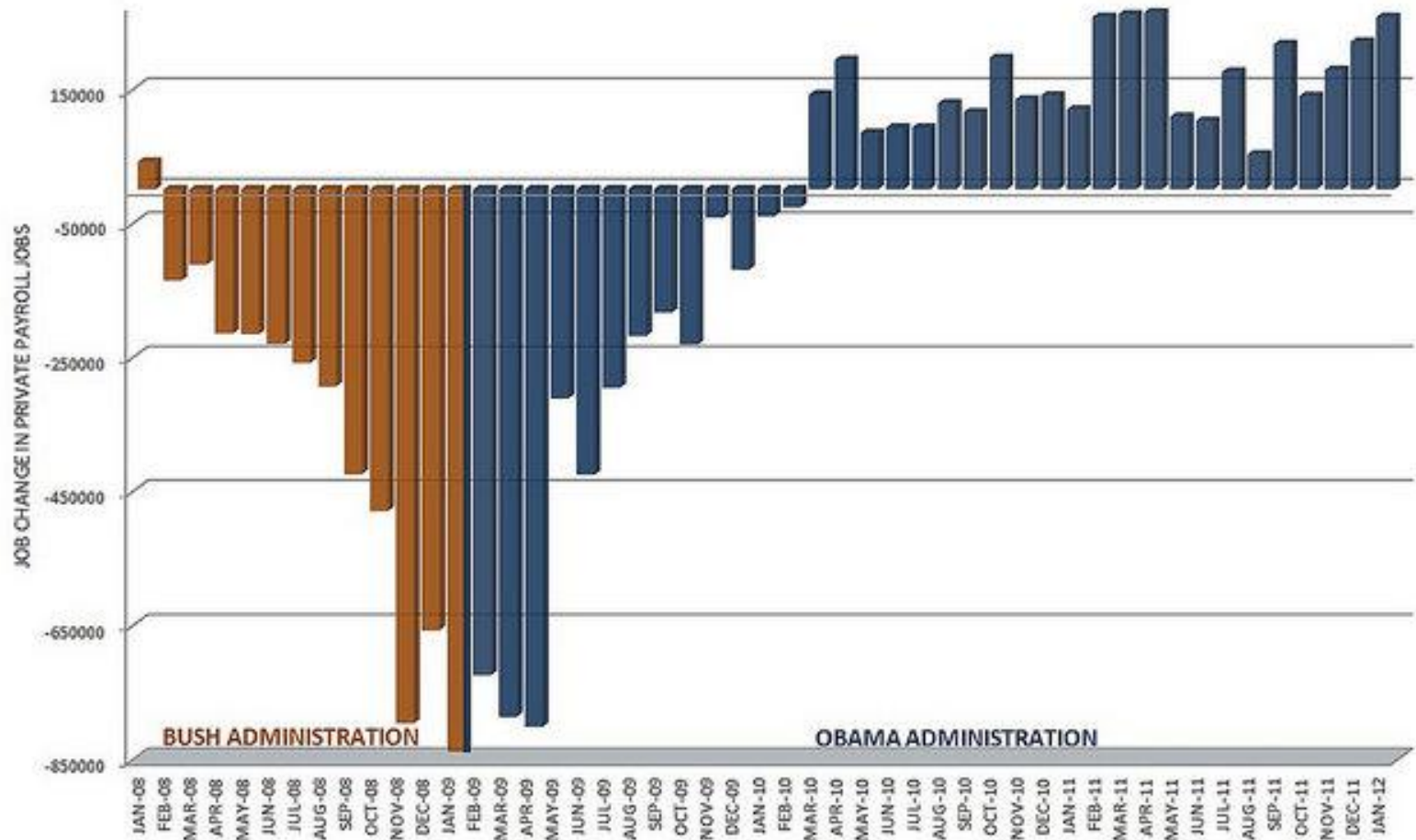


# The Economy Continues To Add Jobs

243,000 Private Sector Jobs Added in January 2012



## Private Sector Job Growth January 2008 - January 2012



OFFICE OF THE HOUSE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

SOURCE: BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, 2/3/2012

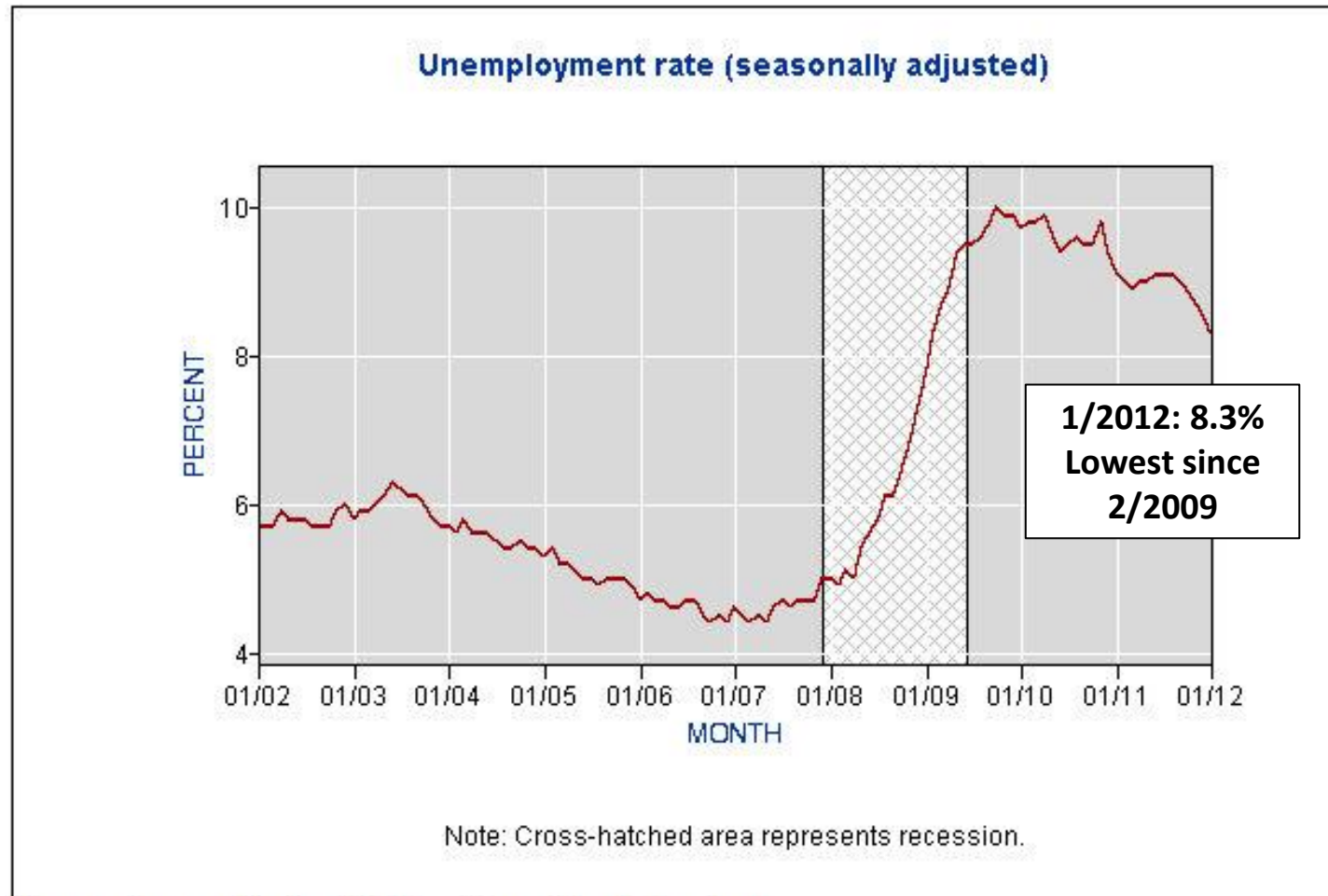
Data from Bureau of Labor Statistics, compiled by Democraticleader.gov

# The Unemployment Rate Continues To Drop

8.3% in January, The Second Lowest Month of The Obama Presidency



Unemployment January 2002 - January 2012



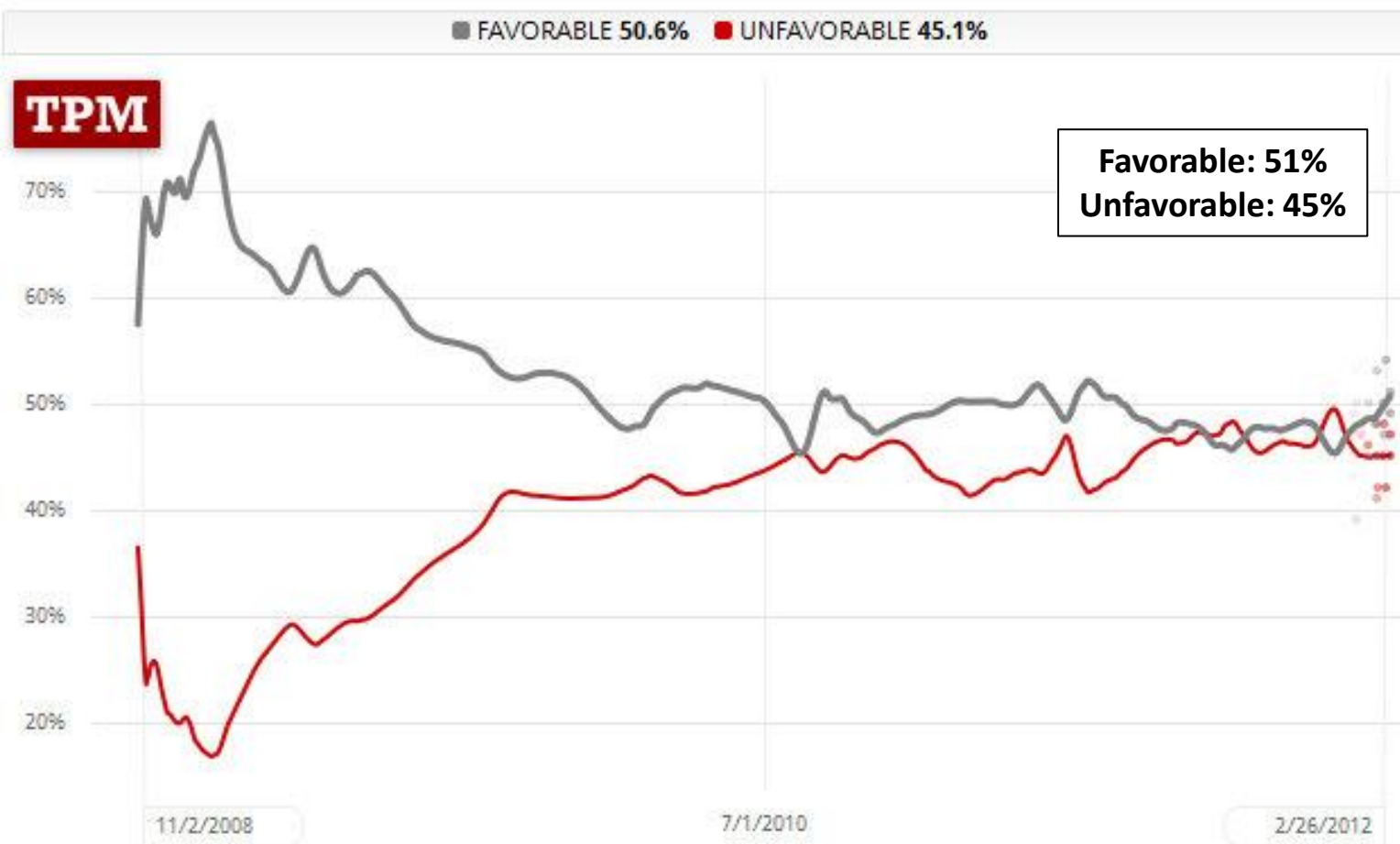
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

## More Voters Hold A Favorable View Of Obama Than Unfavorable



TPM PollTracker

### US Obama Favorability (US)

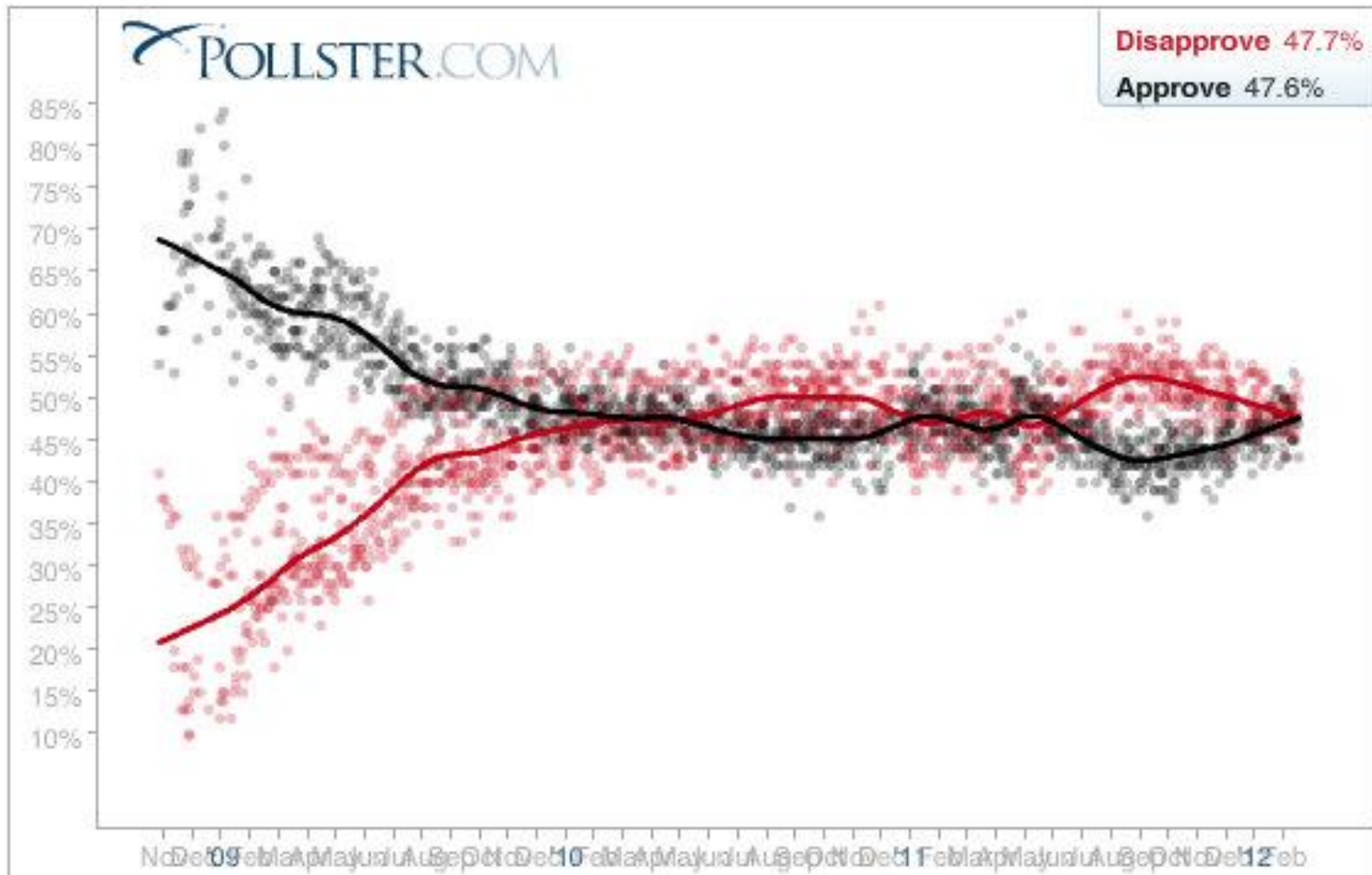




## And Obama's Approval Rating Has Rebounded Since Reaching All-Time Lows Last Fall



### National Job Approval: Barack Obama

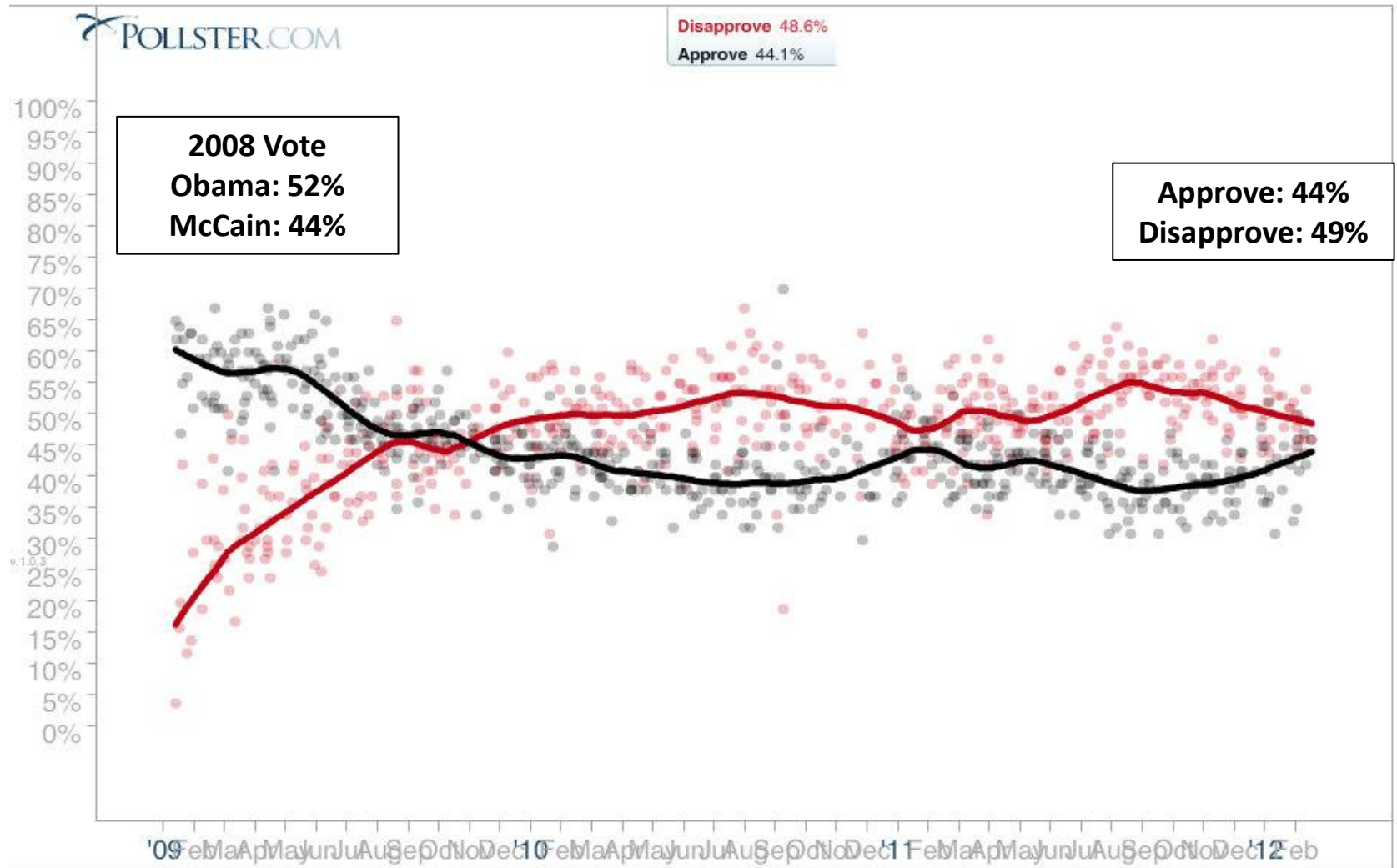




# Obama Has Also Improved Significantly Among Independents



National Job Approval: Barack Obama (INDS ONLY)

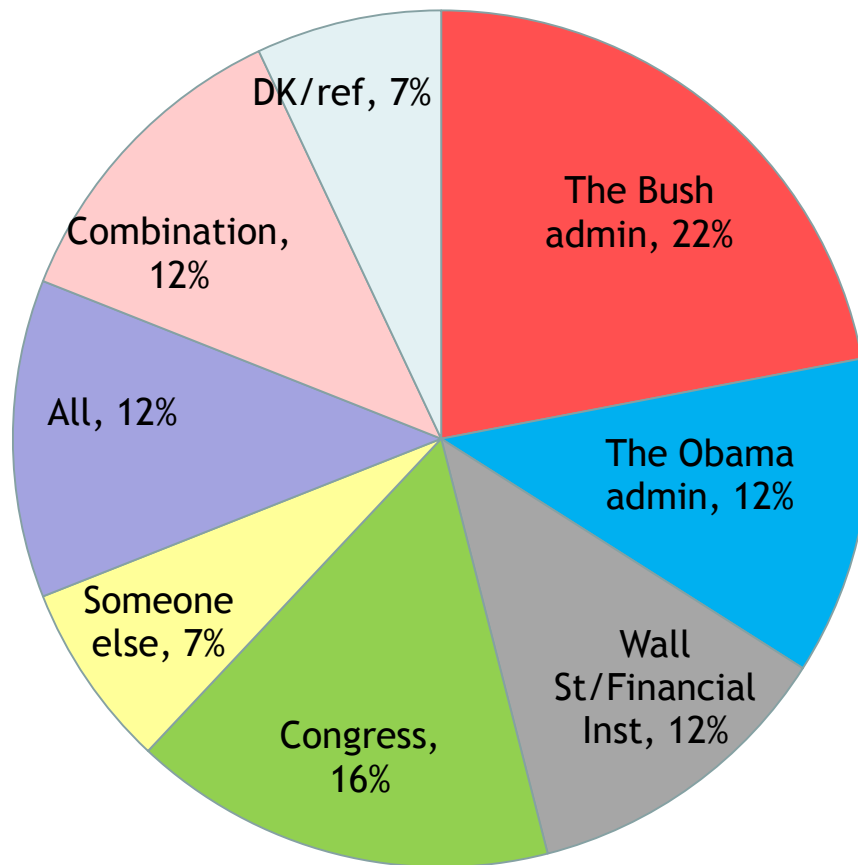


# A Plurality Continues To Blame Bush Most For The Economy

## But There Is Enough Blame To Go Around



*Who do you think is mostly to blame for the current state of the nation's economy?*



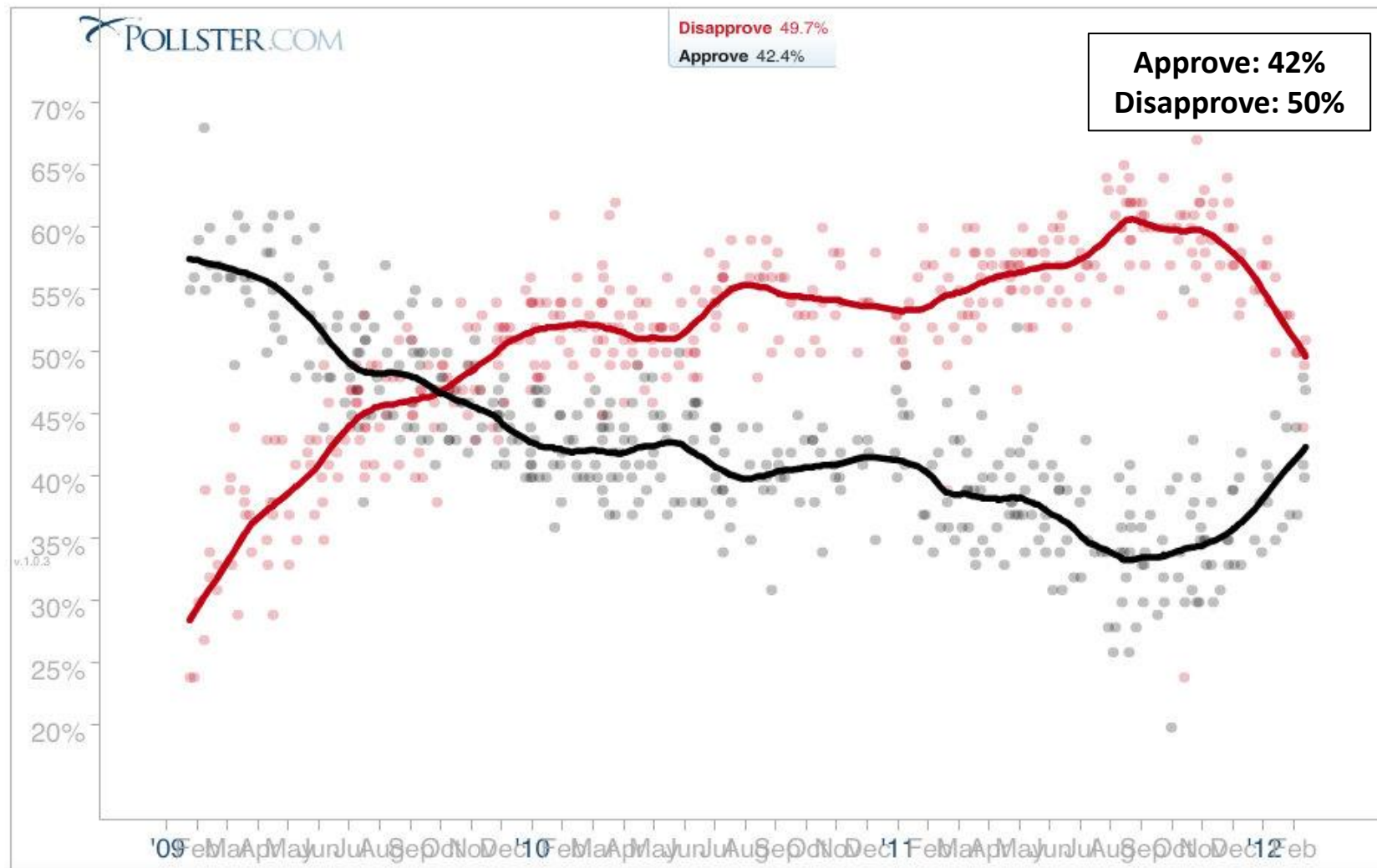
Blame	Dem	Ind	Rep
Bush	39	21	6
Obama	2	11	26
Wall St	14	12	9
Congress	14	16	19

*Results from CBS News poll conducted December 5-7, 2011 among adults nationwide*

# On Handling The Economy Obama's Numbers Are Also Improving



## National Job Approval: Barack Obama - Economy



# The Republican Primary & The General



Romney leads in the Republican primary contest

- But this is by no means locked up
- His opponents keep scoring victories emboldening them to take this all the way to Tampa
- Conservatives are picking the winner in most states, and despite attempts to court the Conservative Right, Romney often trails with that bloc

The General Election

- There is evidence the protracted primary battle is damaging the Republican candidates
  - None of them are popular nationally
- And there are many paths to 270 for Obama

# Romney Is Winning The Delegate Race

## But Has A Long Way To Go To The 1,144 It Takes To Win The Nomination

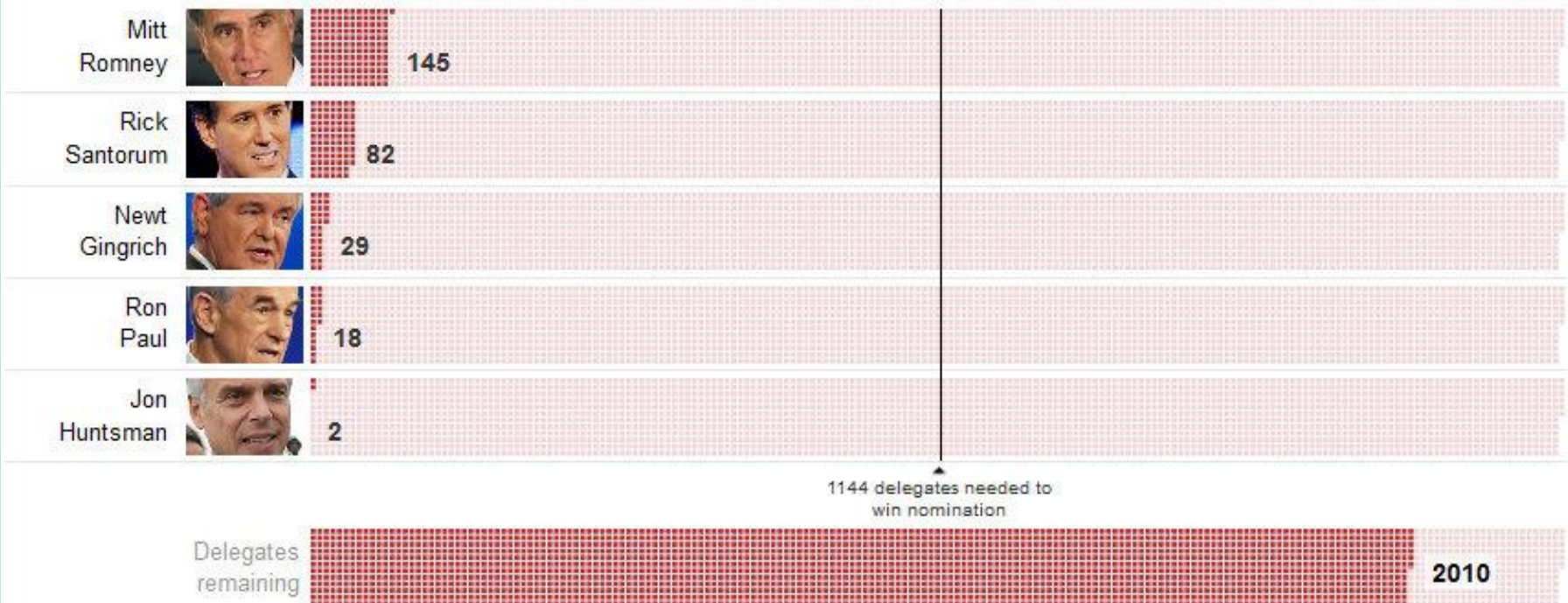


### Republican Delegate Count

FACEBOOK TWITTER

State totals are from The Associated Press. Totals do not include the preferences of national party leaders, who are free to support any candidate, regardless of what happens in the primaries.

LAST UPDATED: 9:40 AM ET



Graphic obtained from The New York Times at [nytimes.com](http://nytimes.com)

## Romney Wins Among Voters Concerned With Electability; He Loses Among Those Who Want a “True Conservative”



Exit Poll Results	IA	NH	SC	FL	NV	AZ	MI
<b>Can beat Obama</b>							
Romney	48	63	37	58	70	56	61
Gingrich	20	12	51	33	20	19	8
Santorum	13	6	7	6	4	22	24
Paul	9	11	4	2	5	3	4
<b>Is a true conservative</b>							
Romney	1	13	2	11	4	13	18
Gingrich	4	16	38	44	31	24	6
Santorum	36	22	33	30	26	43	58
Paul	37	41	27	13	39	20	15
<b>Men</b>							
Romney	23	39	26	41	48	49	39
Gingrich	14	10	42	36	20	18	7
Santorum	23	8	14	13	9	23	38
Paul	24	25	14	9	23	10	14
<b>Women</b>							
Romney	25	40	29	52	52	46	43
Gingrich	12	9	38	28	22	16	6
Santorum	27	11	20	13	12	29	38
Paul	19	20	12	5	14	7	9

*Note: Exit polling not available for CO, MN, MO or ME*

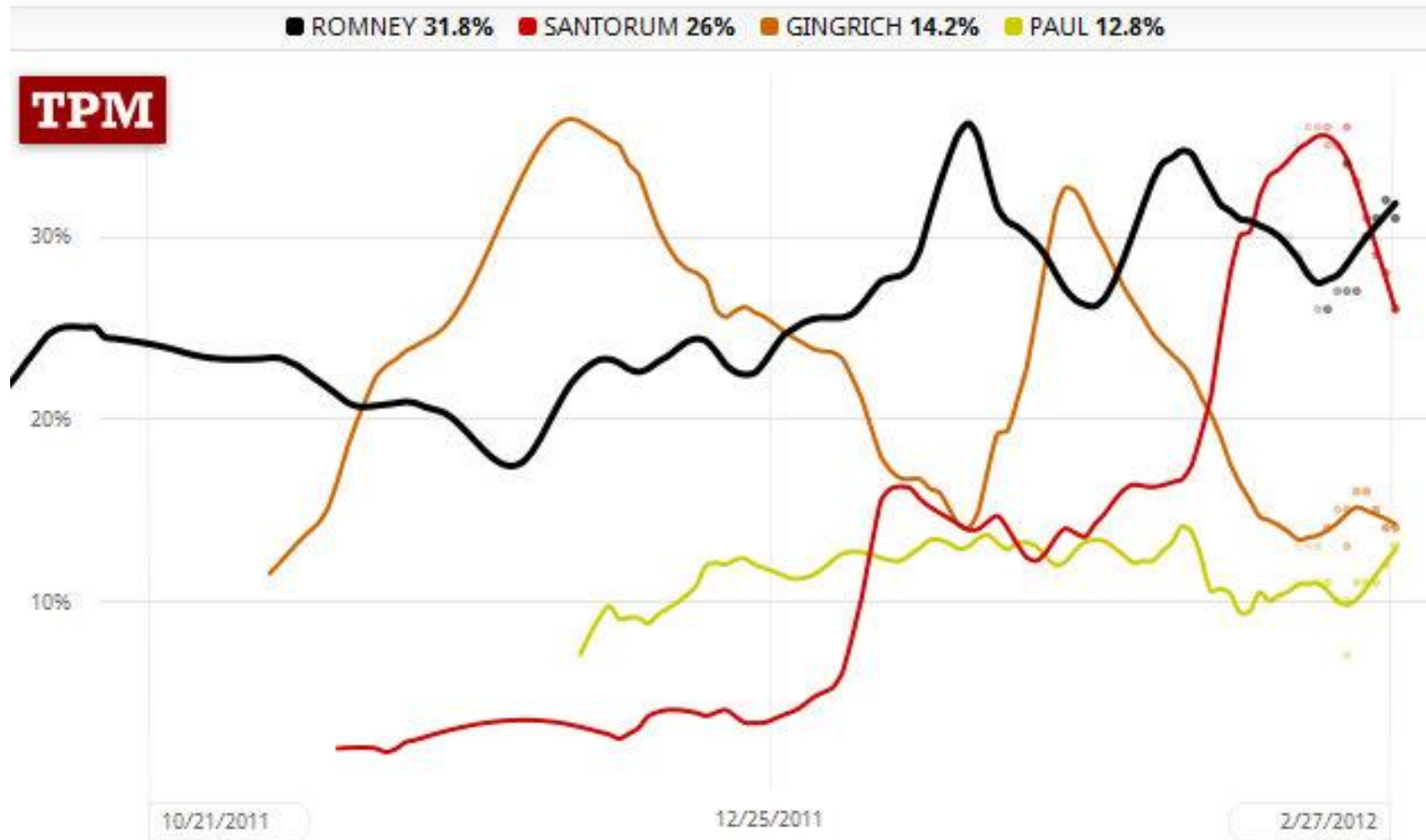


# Recent Polling Shows Santorum Running Near Even With Romney Among Republican Voters Nationally



TPM PollTracker

## US US-Pres '12 (R)

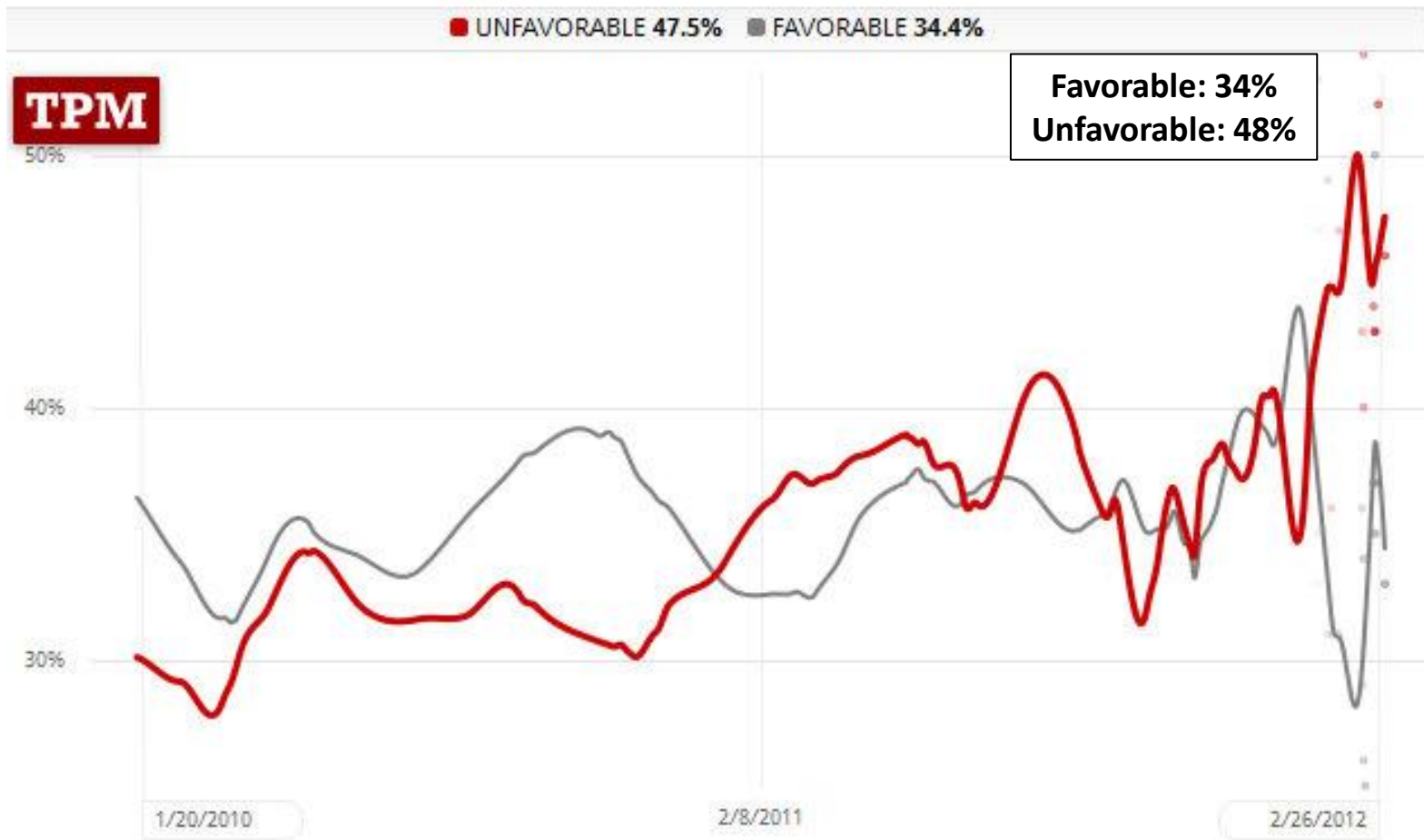


# Romney Has Seen His Negatives Jump Recently, & Is Not Popular



TPM PollTracker

## Mitt Romney • US Favorability (US)

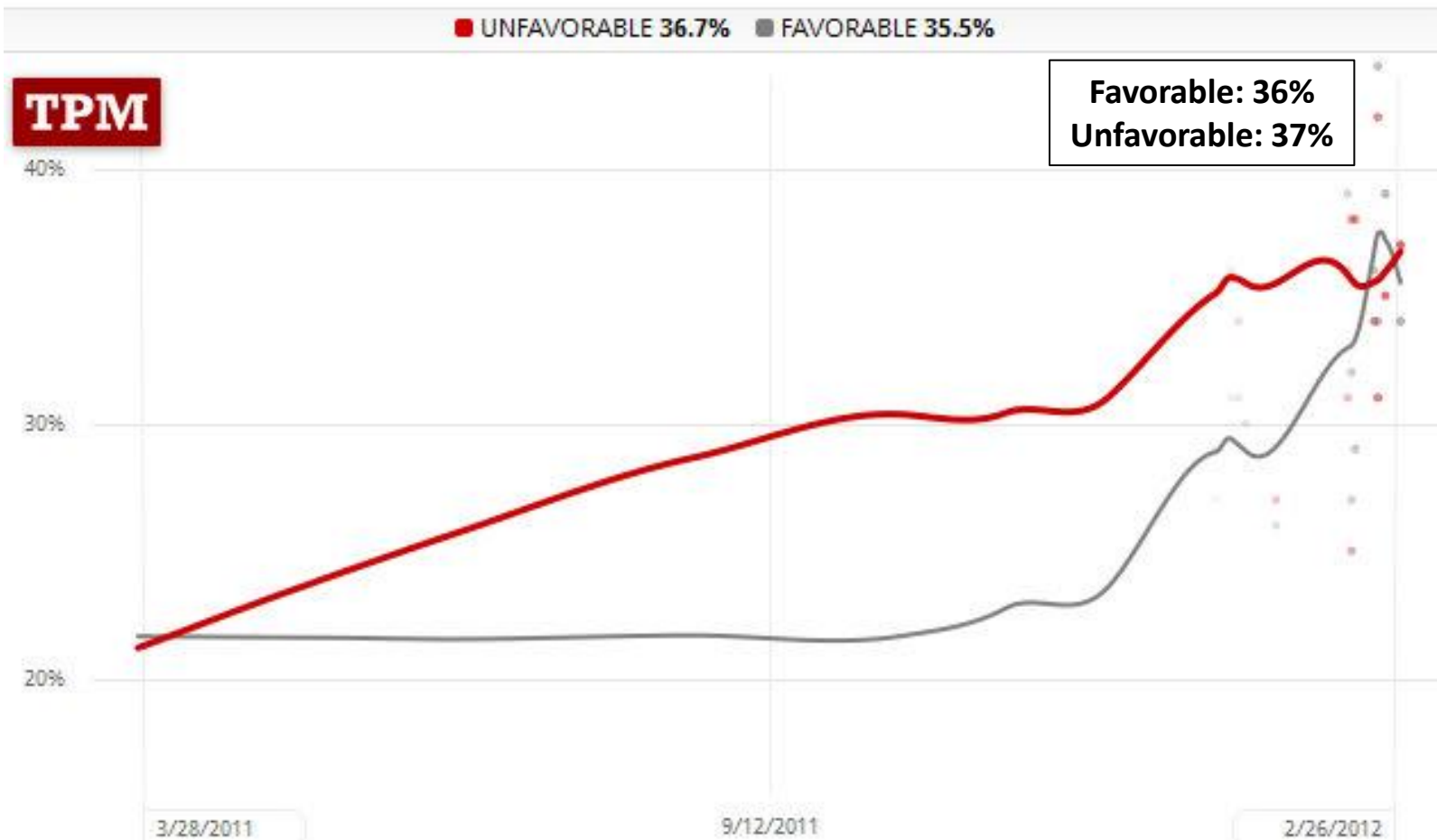


# Santorum Is More Popular Than Romney, But Less Well-Known



TPM PollTracker

## Rick Santorum • US Favorability (US)

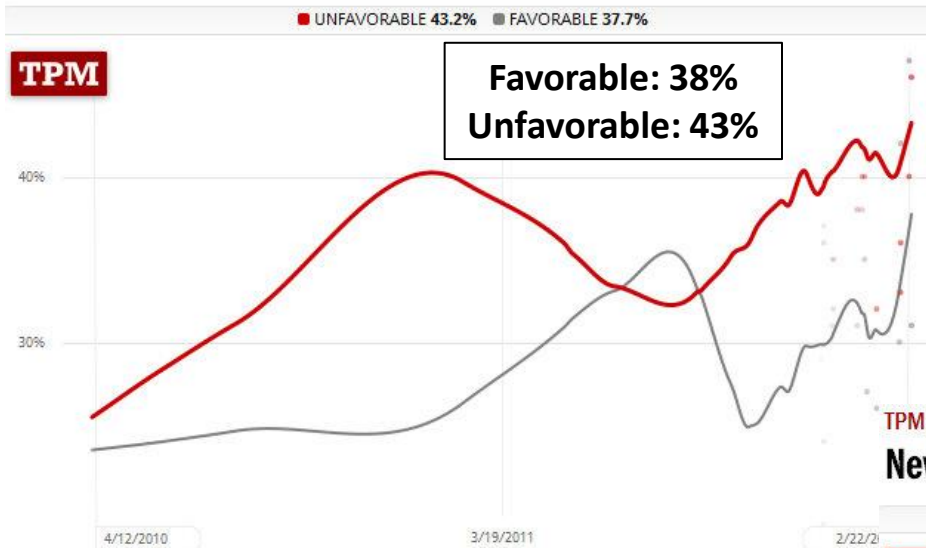


# Neither Newt Or Paul Are Popular



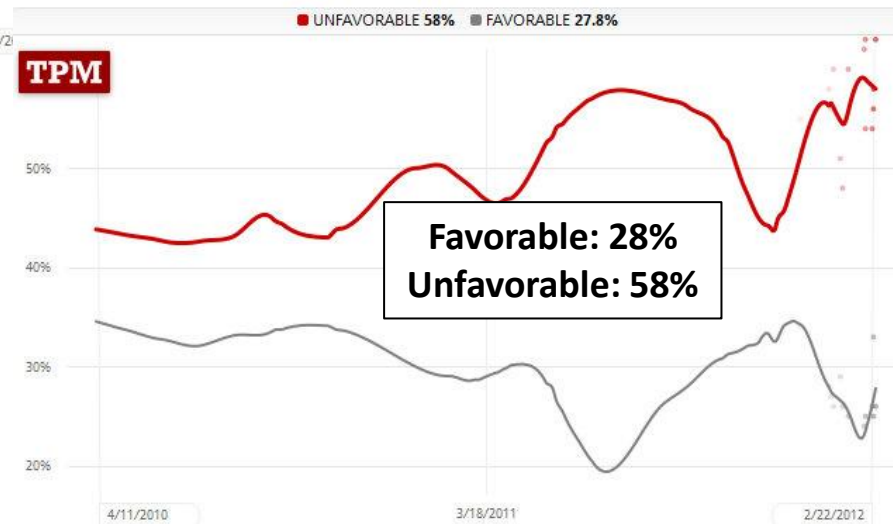
TPM PollTracker

## Rep. Ron Paul • US Favorability (US)



TPM PollTracker

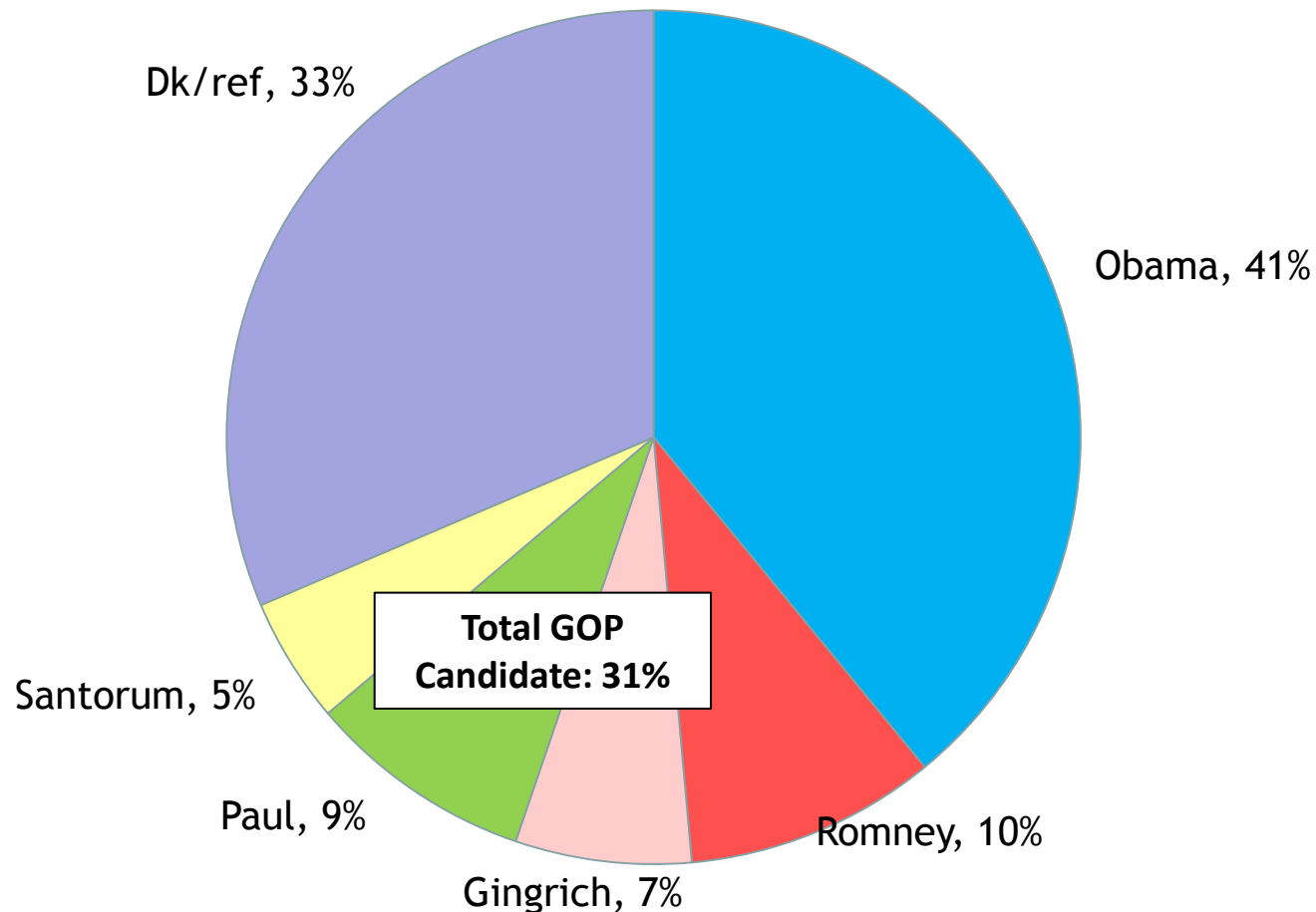
## Newt Gingrich • Favorability (US)



# A Plurality Of Voters Say Obama Is The Candidate They Would Most Like To Share An Office With



*Who would you most like to share an office with?*



*Results from CNN/ORC poll conducted with Adecco Staffing Solutions. Data released February 8, 2012*

# Currently, Obama Is Tied With Romney



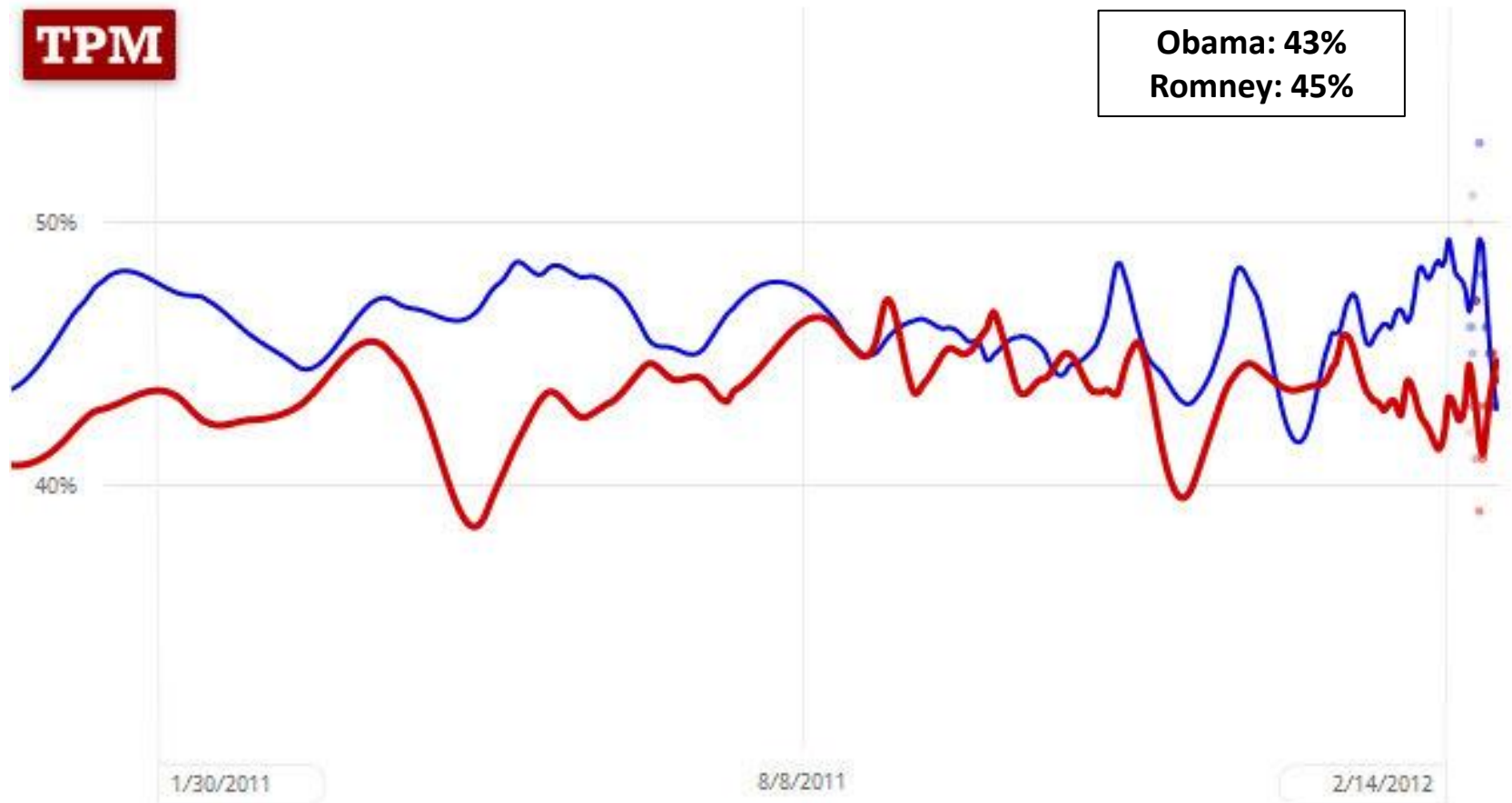
TPM PollTracker

## US US-Pres '12

ROMNEY 44.7% OBAMA 42.9%

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Obama: 43%  
Romney: 45%





# A Third-Party Candidacy By Ron Paul Helps Obama



## Paul Third-Party Candidacy Attracts Independents, Conservative Republicans

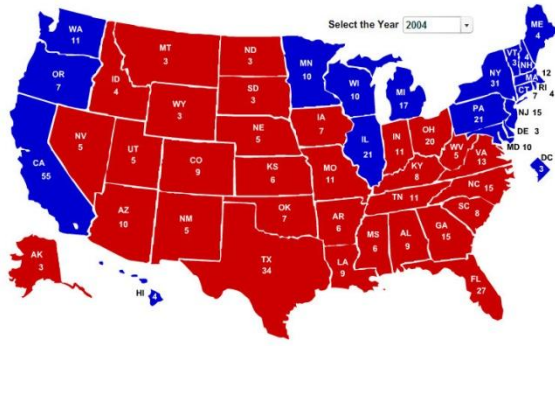
	If choice is between ...		If choice is between ...			Change in support for	
	Obama Romney		Obama Romney		Paul	Oba- ma	Rom- ney
	%	%	%	%	%		
<b>All voters</b>	50	45	44	32	18	-6	-13
Republican	9	90	9	73	16	0	-17
Independent	40	50	31	33	26	-9	-17
Democrat	91	7	86	5	9	-5	-2
<b>Republican</b>							
Conservative	3	96	2	77	19	-1	-19
Moderate/Lib*	--	--	--	--	--		
<b>Independent</b>							
Lean Republican	9	86	7	59	28	-2	-27
No leaning	39	31	30	14	36	-9	-17
Lean Democratic	80	14	64	10	17	-16	-4
<b>Democrat</b>							
Liberal	98	*	94	*	5	-4	0
Cons/Mod	87	11	80	8	11	-7	-3

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Jan. 11-16, 2012. Q30 & Q31. Based on registered voters.  
\*Insufficient cases for analysis.

# There Are Several Paths For Obama To Get To 270



**Baseline: 2004 Results (246 votes)**



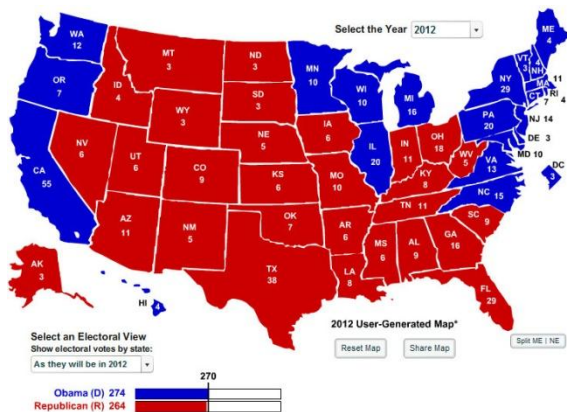
**Florida (275)**



**Midwest: +OH & IA (270)**



**South: + VA & NC (274)**



**West: + CO, NV, NM (IA) (272)**



**Expansion: Win AZ, Lose PA (272)**



# The Race for The House Of Representatives



Congress is more unpopular than ever

- But specific members get slightly better marks than the institution overall
- Neither party is popular

Republicans hold a 25-seat majority in the House, in 2012 Democrats will try to recapture the majority

- **Democratic Congressional Advantages:**

- *Generic Ballot*: Democrats have rebounded in the generic vote, and are now tied with Republicans
- *Fundraising*: The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee outraised their Republican counterparts by 7 million in 2011
- *Obama & Jobs*: Unemployment has dropped to its lowest level since 02/09, improving Obama's standing. If this continues, Obama could be a boon to Democrats down-ballot

- **Republican Congressional Advantages:**

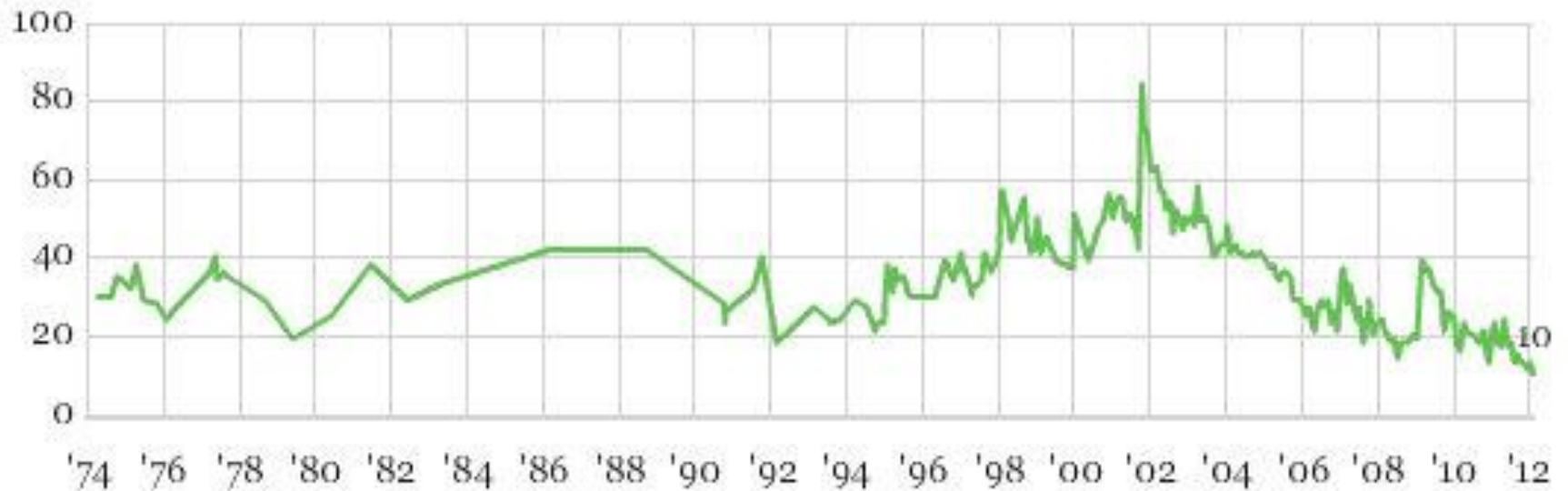
- *Super-PACs*: Despite the Democratic fundraising advantage, Republicans will likely get a bigger boost than Democrats from Super-PACs, as they did in 2010
- *Retirements*: More Democrats have announced they are retiring (10) than Republicans (6). And Republicans are well positioned to pick-up 4 of those Democratic seats, Democrats on the other hand have a chance at just 1 of those Republican seats
- *Redistricting*: Republicans held complete control over drawing the boundaries for 198 congressional districts, compared to 115 for the Democrats

# Congress Is The Least Popular Ever



*Congressional Job Approval Ratings Trend (1974-Present)*

■ % Approve



GALLUP

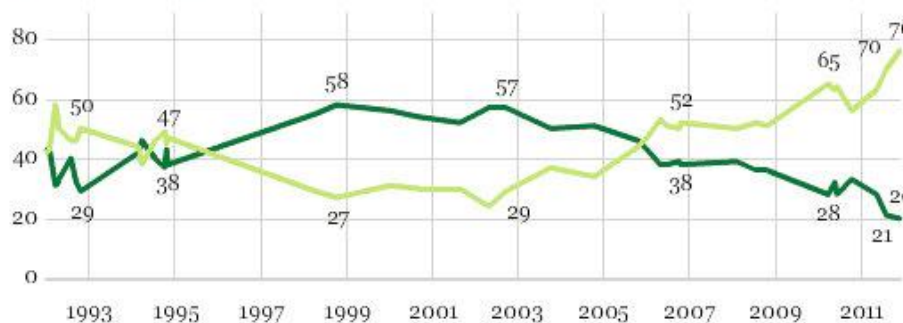
# And Though Incumbents Have Seen Their Popularity Diminish, Voters Still View Their Member More Favorably Than The Institution



Please tell me whether you think each of the following political officeholders deserves to be re-elected, or not. How about -- most members of Congress?

Based on registered voters

■ % Yes, do    ■ % No, do not



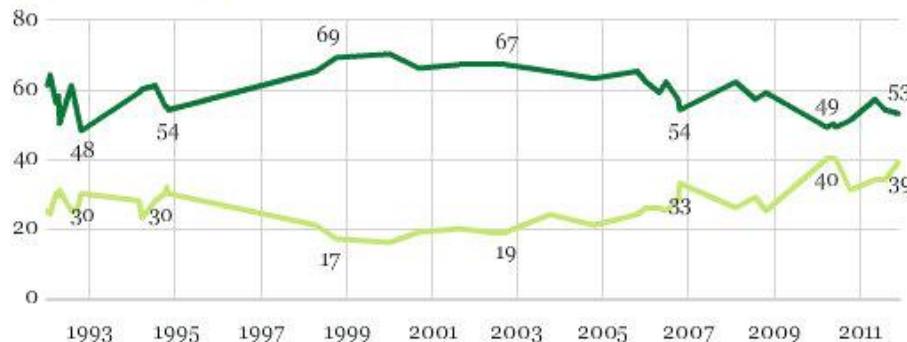
**20% say most members of Congress deserve re-election**

GALLUP

Please tell me whether you think each of the following political officeholders deserves to be re-elected, or not. How about -- the U.S. representative in your congressional district?

Based on registered voters

■ % Yes, does    ■ % No, does not



**53% say their representative deserves re-election**

GALLUP

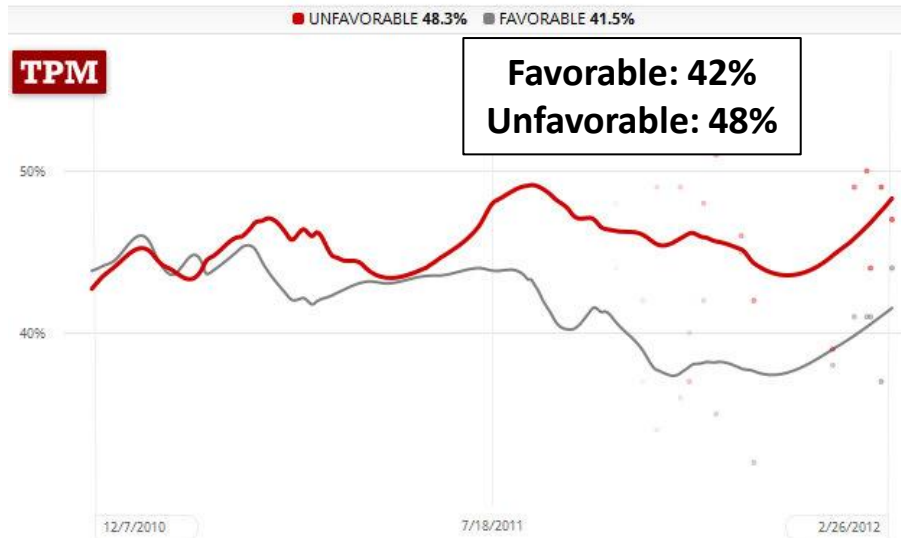


# Neither Political Party is Popular



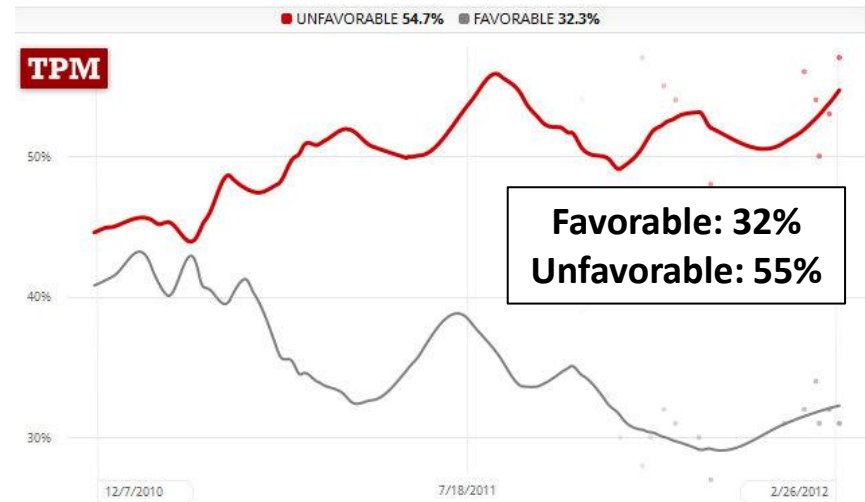
TPM PollTracker

## US Democratic Party Favorability (US)



TPM PollTracker

## US Republican Party Favorability (US)

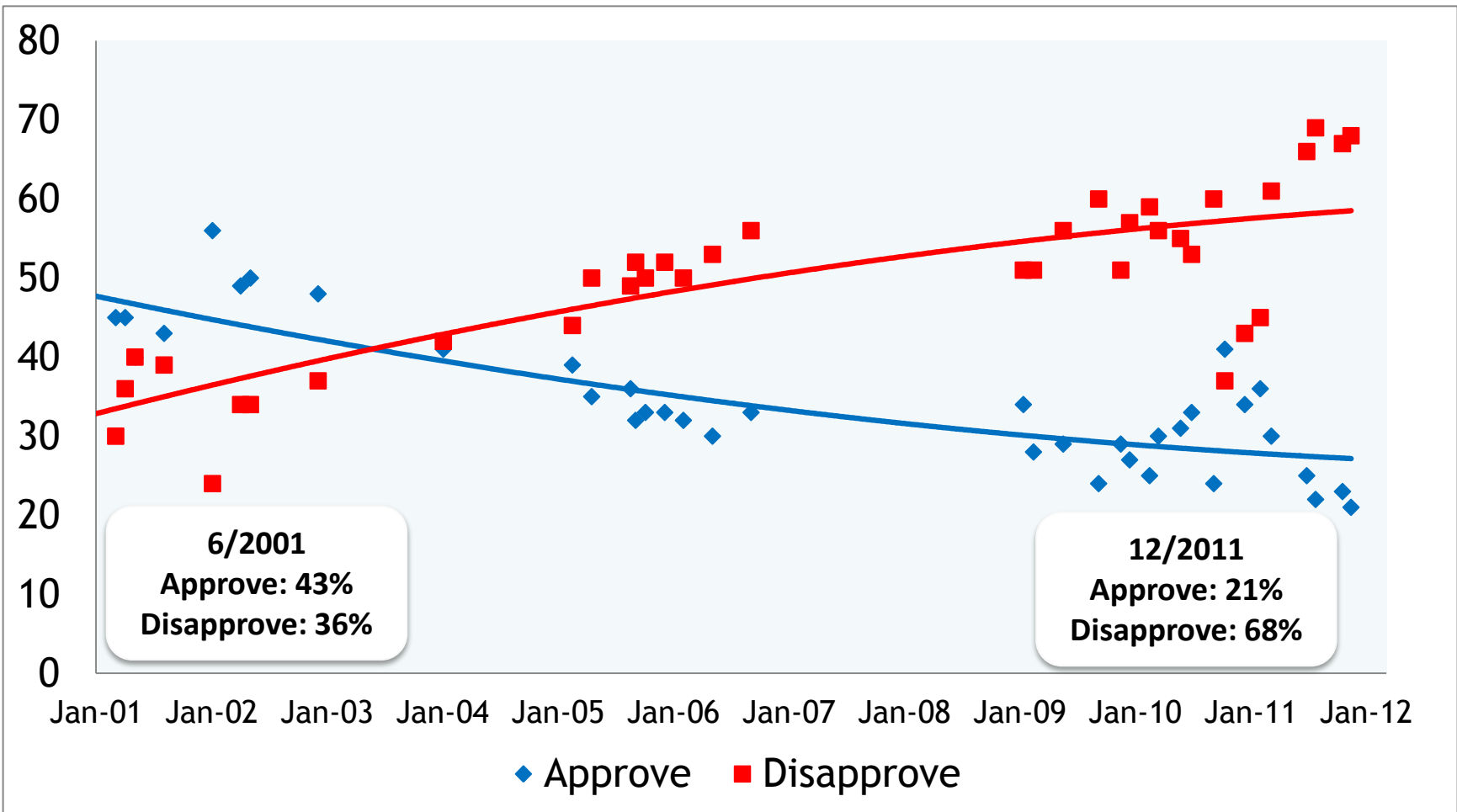




# Approval Ratings For Republican Leaders In Congress Have Reached An All Time Low



*Do you approve or disapprove of the job **Republican Leaders in Congress** are doing?*

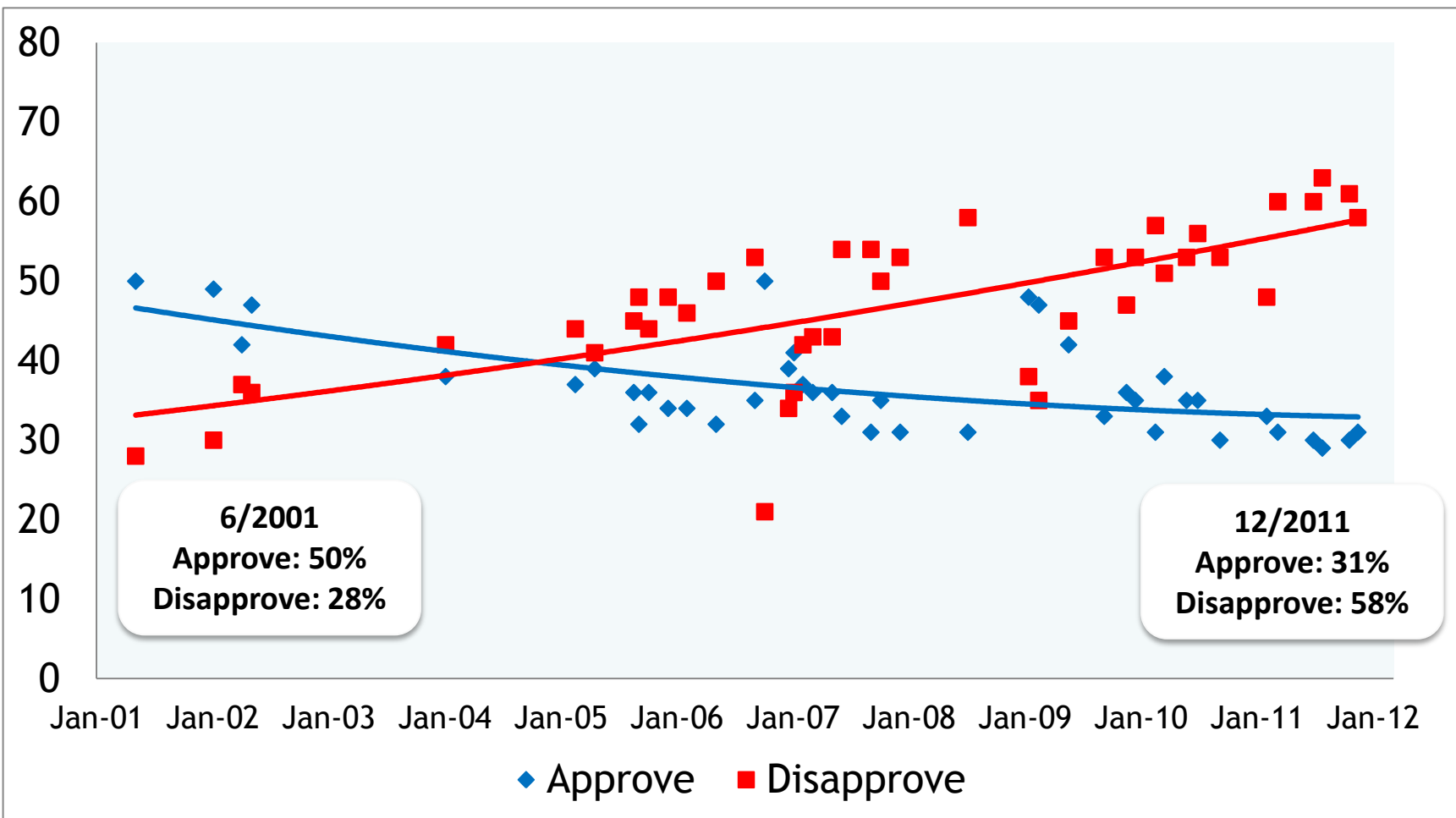


(Data from Pew Research Polling January 2001 - December 2011)

# Similarly, Ratings For Democratic Leaders In Congress Have Also Continually Dropped



*Do you approve or disapprove of the job Democratic Leaders in Congress are doing?*



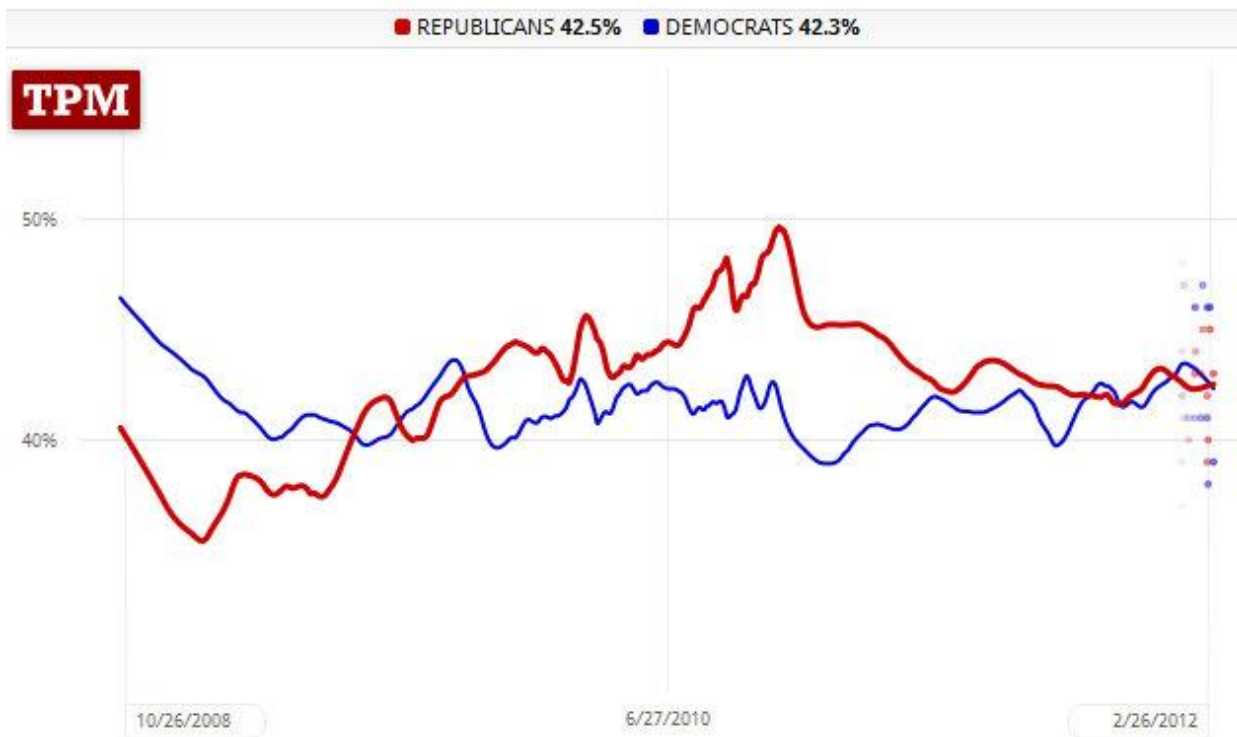
(Data from Pew Research Polling January 2001 - December 2011)

# Democratic Advantages: Falling Unemployment, Tied In The Generic Vote, & Small Fundraising Adv



TPM PollTracker

## US US-Congressional Generic Ballot



Unemployment: 8.3% (lowest since 2/09)  
Obama: 47% App/49% Disapp

Total Raised  
In 2011

\$61.4 M

\$54.6 M

DCCC

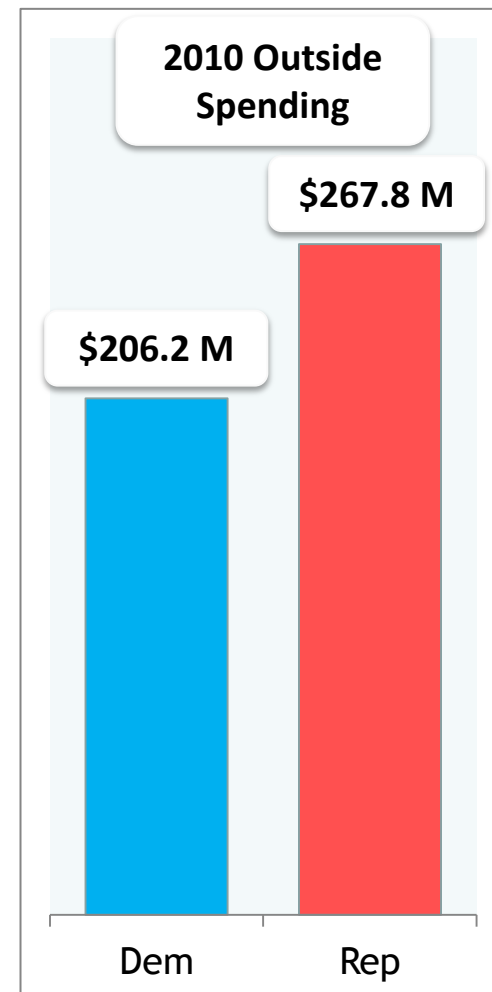
NRCC

# Republican Advantages: Retirements, Redistricting, and Outside Spending



Retirements	Cook PVI Rating
<b>10 Dem Retirements (6 comp)</b>	
AR-04 (Mike Ross)	R +8
NC-11 (Heath Shuler)	R +13
NC-13 (Brad Miller)	R +10
OK-02 (Dan Boren)	R +14
<b>6 Rep Retirements (1 comp)</b>	
CA-26 (Elton Gallegly)	D +3

Redistricting	Sole Rep Control	Sole Dem Control	Shared Control
Congressional Districts	195	115	122



# The Race for The Senate



Democrats have a slim majority (51 seats) in the Senate, Republicans hold 47 seats.

- Senator Lieberman (I-CT) and Senator Sanders (I-VT) both caucus with the Democrats giving them 53 votes total

Republicans are well positioned to retake the majority, for several reasons

- *Democrats are defending more seats:* Democrats have to defend 21 seats in 2012, Republicans only have to defend 10
- *Tough road for Dems:* Of the 21 seats Democrats are defending:
  - 1 (NE) is likely to go Republican
  - 7 are toss-ups and could go either way
  - 3 (FL, OH, MI) *lean* Democratic, but could go to the Republicans
- *Republican seats are far safer:* Of the 10 seats Republicans are defending:
  - 2 (NV, MA) are toss-ups
  - 2 (AZ, IN) are likely Republican

But recent developments have increased Democrats chances of holding the majority

- Maine: Olympia Snowe's retirement moves that seat from a Safe-Republican to a toss-up
- Nebraska: According to recent rumors former Senator Bob Kerrey may enter the race. Kerrey would greatly improve Democrats chances of holding that seat

## Democrats Are Defending Most Of The Competitive Senate Seats In 2012



	Incumbent	Cook Rating	Dem Cand	Rep Cand	Most recent Poll
Nebraska	Nelson (D, retiring)	Likely Rep	Several	Several	NA
New Mexico	Bingaman (D, retiring)	Toss up	Several	Wilson	Heinrich/Balderas 44% - Wilson 43%
Hawaii	Akaka (D, retiring)	Toss up	Several	Several	NA
Montana	Jon Tester (D)	Toss up	Tester	Rehberg	Tester 42% - Rehberg 53%
North Dakota	Conrad (D, retiring)	Toss up	Heitkamp	Berg	Heitkamp 47% - Berg 42%
Wisconsin	Kohl (D, retiring)	Toss up	Several	Several	NA
Missouri	McCaskill (D)	Toss up	McCaskill	Several	McCaskill 43% - Steelman/Brunner 43%
Virginia	Webb (D, retiring)	Toss up	Kaine	Allen	Kaine 45% - Allen 44%
Nevada	Ensign (R)	Toss up	Berkley	Heller	Berkley 44% - Heller 43%
Massachusetts	Brown (R)	Toss up	Warren	Brown	Warren 49% - Brown 42%
Maine	Snowe (R)	Toss Up	NA	NA	NA



# The Issues



The economy remains the top issue for voters

- But in recent polling the deficit is second

Obama has some weaknesses on the issues that are most important

Voters prefer Obama over Romney on:

- Taxes
- Protecting the middle class
- International affairs
- Terrorism

Voters see income inequality as a serious problem (that is even true among Republicans)

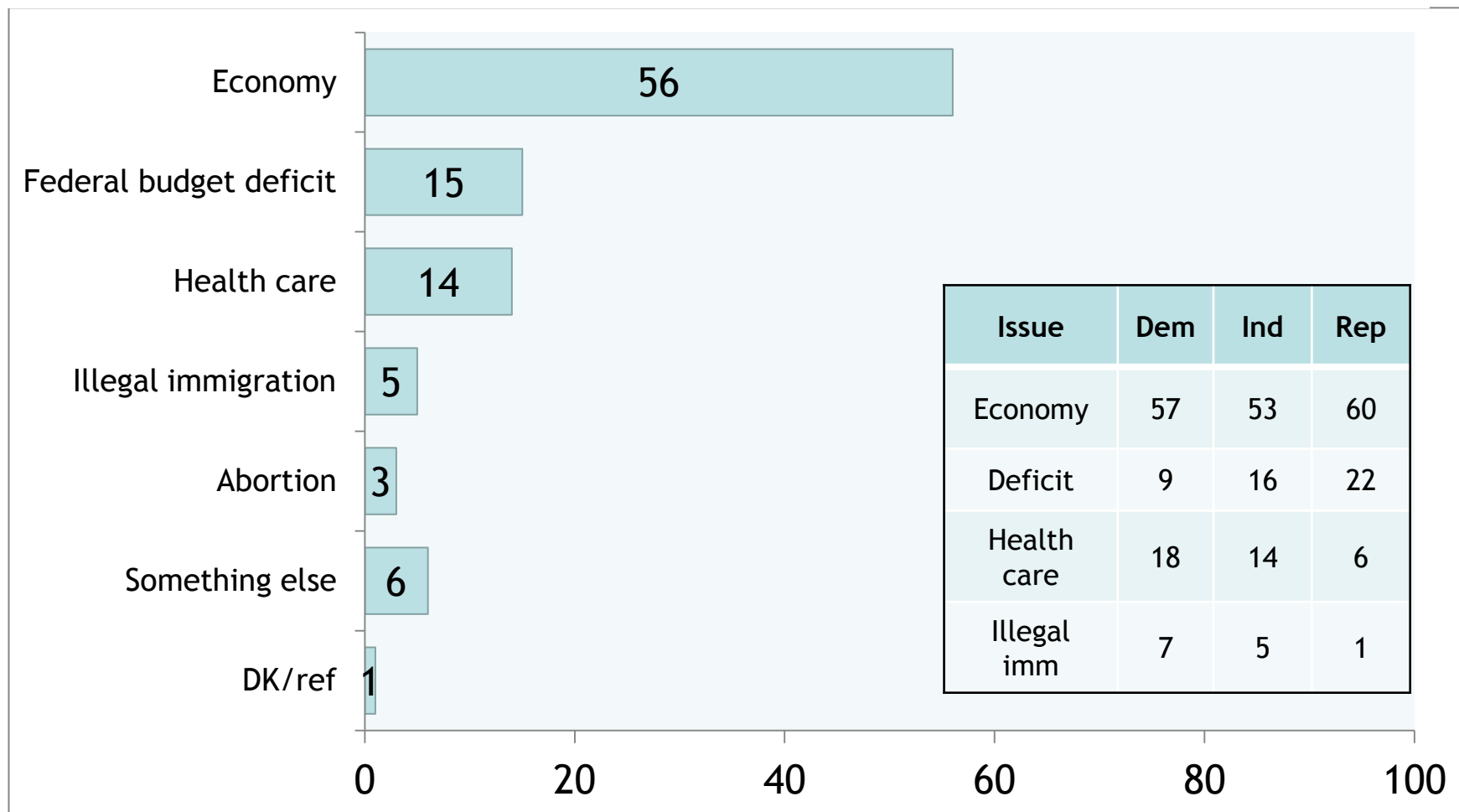
- And most say the current tax system as unfair

# The Economy Is Still The Top Issue

## But For A Significant Proportion, The Deficit Is Most Important



*In deciding who you would like to see elected President this year, which one of the following issues will be most important to you?*



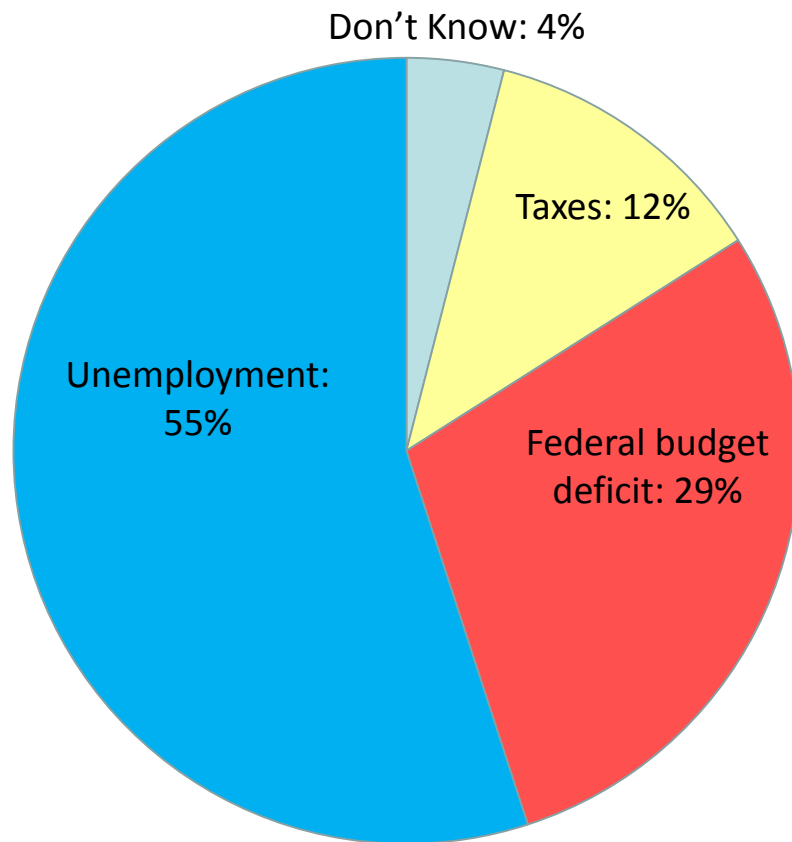
Data from January 17, 2012 New York Times/CBS News poll.

# Voters Are Somewhat Divided On Whether The Govt Should Spend To Create Jobs Or Save To Pay Down The Deficit

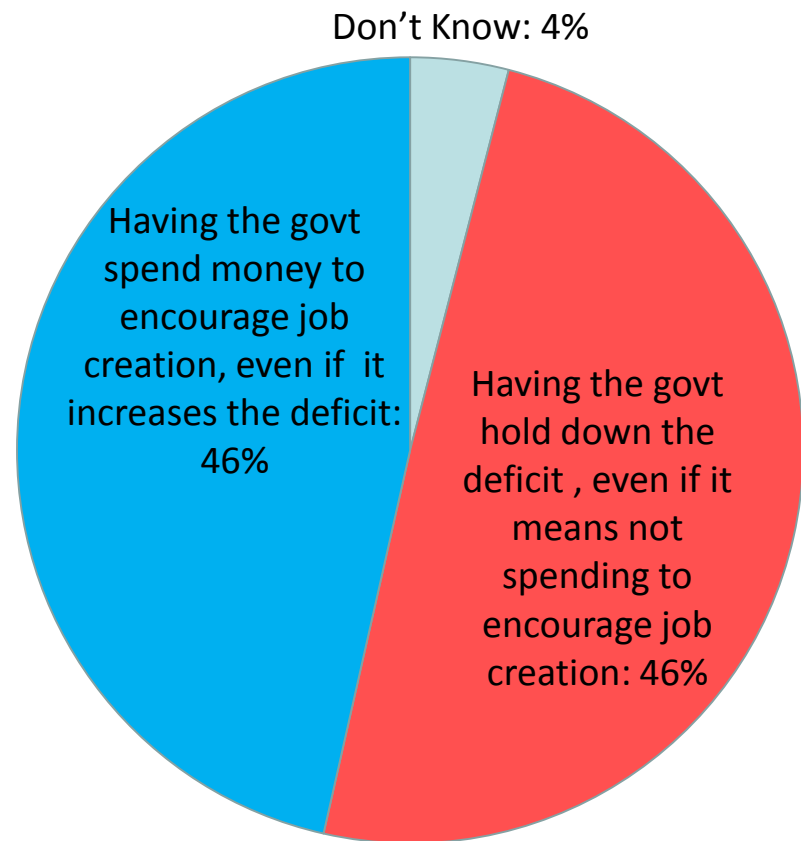


*Which one of these economic issues should be the higher priority for the nation right now?*

*What do you think is more important right now...*



*Data from December 18, 2011 CBS News poll.*



*Data from November 3, 2011 Washington Post/ABC News poll.*

# In Recent Gallup Polling, Obama Receives Strongest Marks on National Defense & The Environment

His Lowest Marks Come On The Economy & Deficit



## *Obama Job Approval Ratings on 11 Issues*

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling \_\_\_?

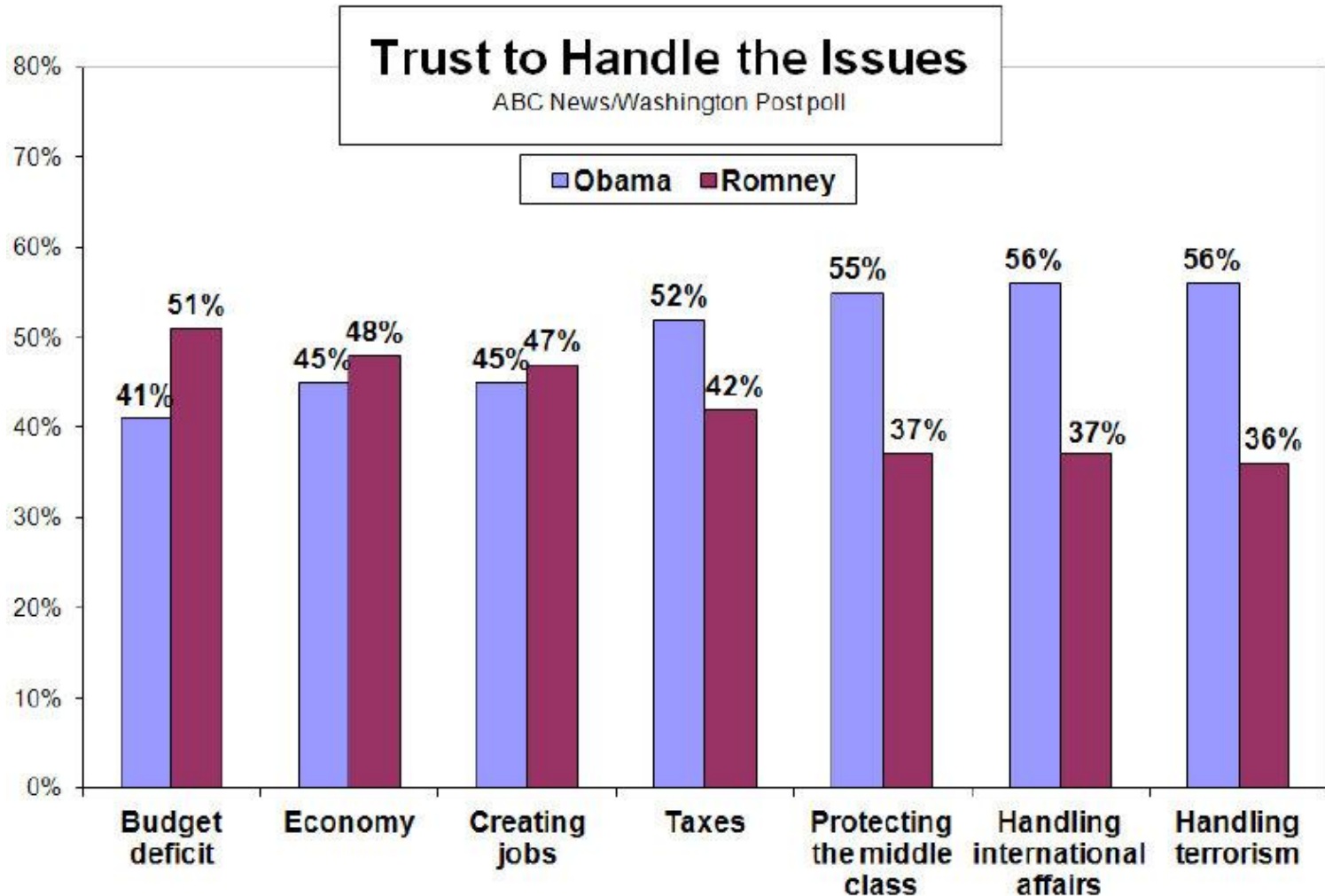
	Approve	Disapprove
	%	%
The environment	53	39
National defense	53	42
The situation in Afghanistan	49	45
Foreign affairs	48	46
Taxes	45	51
Healthcare policy	41	56
Creating jobs	40	58
Relations with China	39	46
Foreign trade	38	48
The economy	38	59
The federal budget deficit	32	63

Feb. 2-5, 2012

GALLUP®

# Voters Are Divided On Whether They Trust Obama Or Romney On The Economy & Creating Jobs

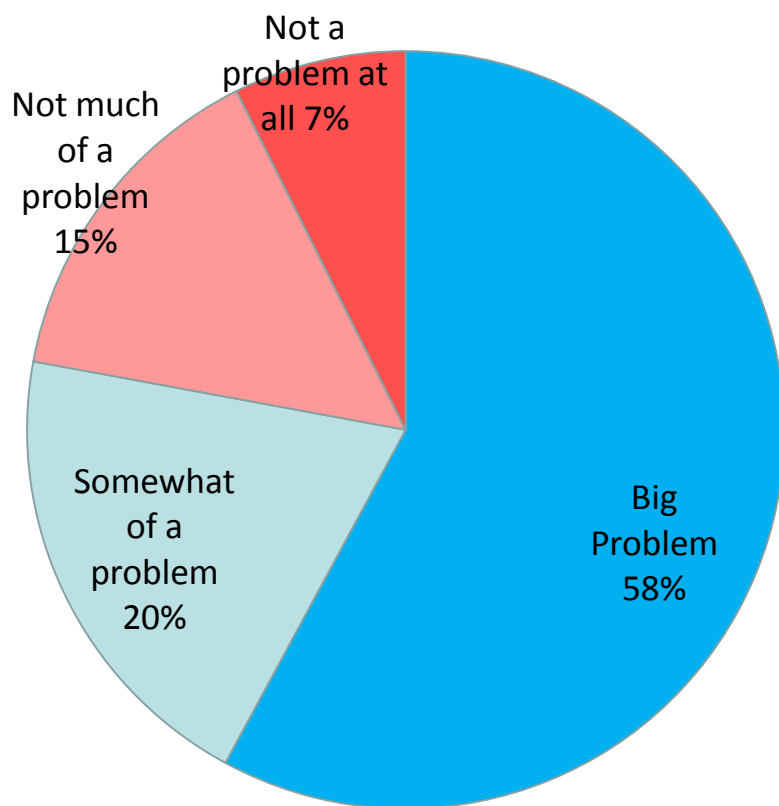
Romney Preferred On The Deficit; Obama On Taxes, Terrorism, Middle Class



Data from February 5, 2012 Washington Post/ABC News poll.

# Income Inequality Seen As A Serious Problem

## And Most (Even Among Republicans) Say The Tax System Is Not Fair



Income Inequality	Tot	Dem	Oth	Rep
Big prob	55	68	47	48
Smwht of a prob	19	19	24	16
Not much of a prob	14	6	19	19
Not at all a prob	7	1	7	13

Tax System	Tot	Dem	Oth	Rep
Very Fair	6	7	8	5
Smwht Fair	24	21	14	37
Not very fair	39	38	47	32
Not at all fair	29	32	30	26
TOTAL FAIR	30	28	22	42
TOTAL NOT FAIR	68	70	77	58

Results from The Hill Poll conducted October 27, 2011 among 1,000 likely voters nationwide



# The Tea Party



Studies from 2010 showed those initial Tea Partiers were...

- Overwhelmingly white
- Older
- Better educated & upscale

The Tea Party is getting less popular

- And more voters now have a negative not positive view of the Tea Party

And many say the Tea Party is having a negative impact on Washington

- Voters were made to feel less favorable toward the Tea Party due to their role in the debt ceiling debate last summer



# Old, White, Well Educated, Upscale Men Make Up The Tea Party



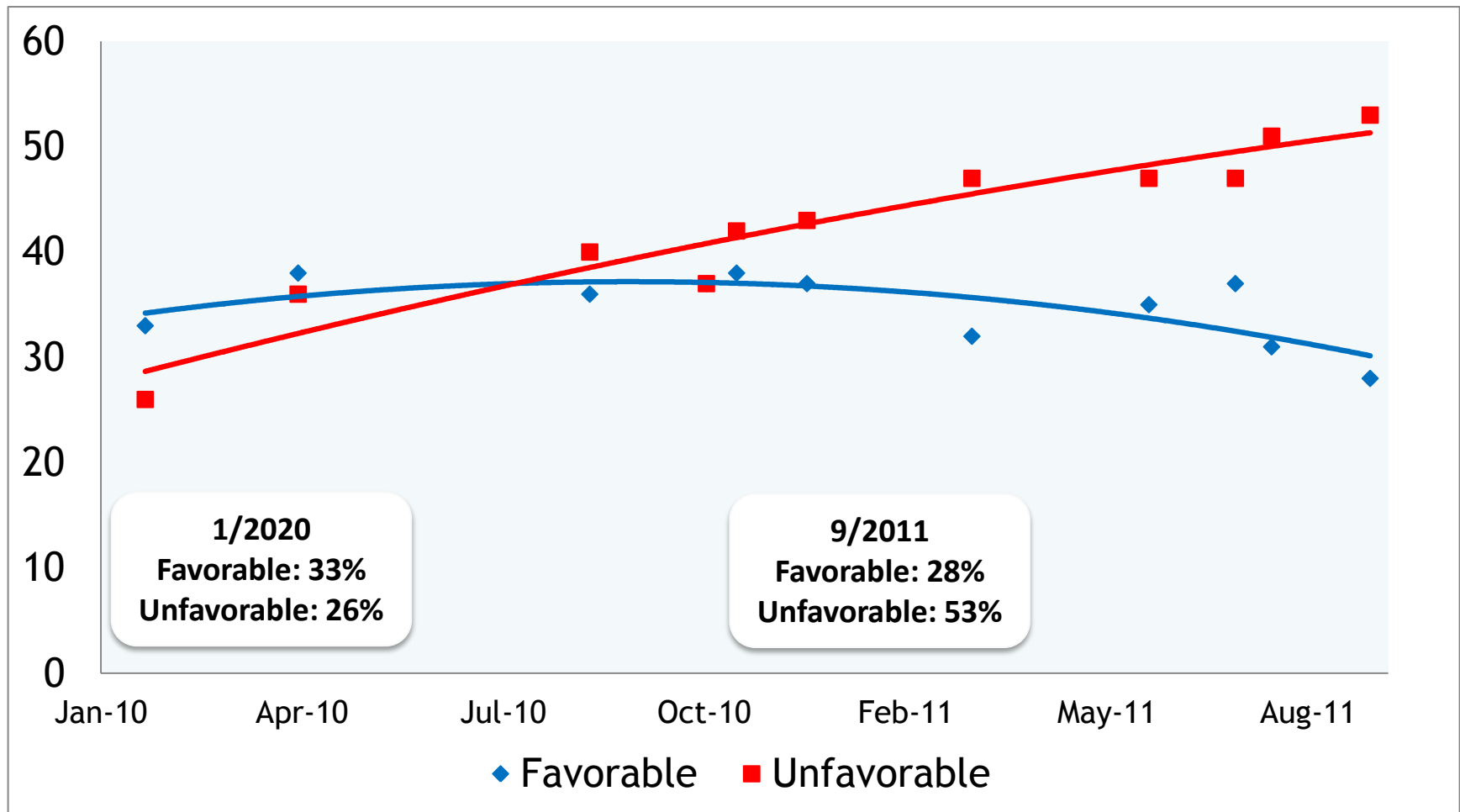
Demographic	All	Tea Party
White	77	89
Non White	24	11
18-29	23	7
30-44	27	16
45-64	34	46
65+	16	29
HS or less	47	29
Some College	28	33
College Grad	15	23
Post Graduate	14	14
< \$30k	32	18
\$31k-\$50k	16	17
\$51k-\$75k	18	25
\$76k - \$100k	12	11
Over \$100k	14	20

Source: New York Times poll conducted 4/5-4/12, 2010

# The Tea Party Has Gotten Less Popular Since Its Inception



*Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of The Tea Party Movement?*



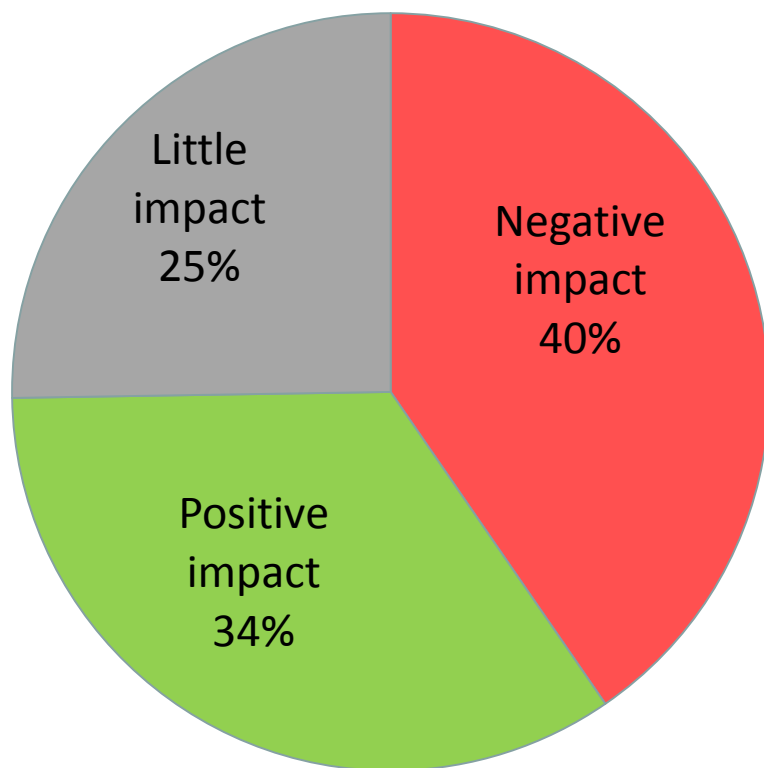
(Data from CNN/ORC polling January 2010 - September 2011)

# A Plurality Say The Tea Party Has A Negative Impact On Politics

## And More View The Tea Party Less Favorably After The Debt Ceiling Debate



*Has the Tea Party Movement Had a positive impact on American politics, a negative impact, or has it had little impact?*



The Tea Party played a significant role in this debate about the debt ceiling. How did your view of the Tea Party change as a result of this debate: would you say your view of the Tea Party is more favorable, less favorable, or not changed as a result of this debate?

Less Favorable	33
More favorable	19
Not changed	44

*Data from George Washington University/Politico Battleground survey conducted Aug 28 – Sept 1, 2011 among 1,000 likely voters nationwide*

*(Data from Time/SRBI poll conducted October 9-10, 2011 among 1,001 adults nationwide)*

# Conclusions



Voters remain pessimistic

- But encouraging jobs reports have helped their mood

There have been similar improvements in Obama's image and vote

- But this is all highly volatile

Romney leads in the Republican primary battle

- But he has yet to seal the deal with Conservatives
- The protracted primary fight has tarnished the images of all of the remaining Republican candidates

Congress is the least popular in history

- And neither party is very popular (although Dems have an advantage here)

The race for majority control of the House will be a battle, with both Democrats and Republicans holding some advantages

The battle for the Senate will be tough for Democrats, but recently their odds have improved

The Tea Party has gotten less popular over time

- And a plurality believes it has a negative impact on American politics