Reason-Rupe March/April 2011 National Poll
NSON Opinion Research
Questionnaire

N = 1,200 (859 from Landline / 341 from Cell)
Interviewing dates: March 24-April 9, 2011
English only

Hello. This is _____ calling from NSON Opinion Strategy. We are conducting a nationwide survey covering matters of importance to people around the United States. Your participation is appreciated...

28. Gender {BY OBSERVATION}

  1. Male
  2. Female

29. To make sure that we have a representative sample of people in the United States, which of the following categories best describes your age?

  1. 18 to 29
  2. 30 to 44
  3. 45 to 54
  4. 55 to 64
  5. 65 or Older

47. Which of the following racial or ethnic groups best describes you?

  1. White
  2. Black
  3. Hispanic or Latino
  4. Asian
  5. Native American
  6. Something Else

1. How would you rate the job performance of President Obama? Would you say you strongly approve, approve, neither approve nor disapprove, disapprove, or strongly disapprove of his job performance?

  1. Strongly Approve
  2. Approve
  3. Neither Approve nor Disapprove
  4. Disapprove
  5. Strongly Disapprove
  6. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

2. How would you rate the job performance of Congress? Would you say you strongly approve, approve, neither approve nor disapprove, disapprove, or strongly disapprove of Congress's job performance?

  1. Strongly Approve
  2. Approve
  3. Neither Approve nor Disapprove
  4. Disapprove
  5. Strongly Disapprove
  6. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

3. Is the country headed in the right direction or the wrong direction?

    1. Right Direction
    2. Wrong Direction
    3. Both/ Depends   (DO NOT READ)
    4. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

4. In just a few words, what makes you think that? (OPEN)

5. Again, in just a few words, what would you say is the biggest problem facing Americans today? (OPEN)

6. The national debt of the United States is over $1trillion dollars, which averages about $45,000 owed per resident. How important do you believe it is to reduce the national debt? Would you say it is...

    1. Very Important
    2. Important
    3. Moderately Important
    4. Not Very Important, OR
    5. Not at All Important
    6. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

7. Which of the following options comes closest to your view about the best way to reduce the national debt?

    1. Increase federal taxes as much as necessary while maintaining current spending levels
    2. Primarily by increasing federal taxes with some reduction in spending levels
    3. Equal emphasis on raising federal taxes and reducing spending
    4. Primarily by reducing spending with some increase in federal taxes
    5. Reduce spending as much as necessary while maintaining the current level of federal taxes
    6. Do nothing about the debt
    7. Don't Know/ No Response

8. Please tell me whether you agree strongly, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or disagree strongly with the following statement:

"The federal government should have a spending cap that prevents it from spending more than it takes in during a given year."

    1. Strongly Agree
    2. Agree
    3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
    4. Disagree
    5. Strongly Disagree
    6. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

9. If Congress doesn't finalize a spending bill, the federal government may shut down. How would a government shutdown impact you? (OPEN)

10. For the following proposals, please tell me whether you would strongly support, somewhat support, neither support nor oppose, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose each one.

           1. Strongly Support
           2. Somewhat Support
           3. Neither Support nor Oppose
           4. Somewhat Oppose
           5. Strongly Oppose
           6. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

10a. Changing the federal tax system to a flat tax, where everyone pays the same percentage of their income?

10b. Eliminating federal income taxes and replacing them with a national sales tax?

10c. Eliminating all tax deductions and tax credits, like the mortgage interest deduction, if it results in lower overall tax rates?

10d. Reducing Social Security taxes and allowing individuals to invest in their own retirement instead?

11. Thinking about the total amount you pay in federal, state, and local taxes, such as income taxes, property taxes, and sales taxes, would you say it is too much, too little, or about the right amount?

    1. Too Much
    2. Too Little
    3. About the Right Amount
    4. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

12. In just a few words, what, if any, programs should the government spend less on? (OPEN)

13. In just a few words, what, if any, programs should the government spend more on? (OPEN)

14. How much do you feel you know about public sector employee pay and benefits? Would you say you...

    1. Know a Lot
    2. Know a Moderate Amount
    3. Know Just a Little
    4. Know Nothing at All
    5. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

15. On average, do you think public sector employees have better benefits, the same benefits, or poorer benefits than those with similar jobs in the private sector?

    1. Better Benefits
    2. Same Benefits
    3. Poorer Benefits
    4. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

16. Would you strongly support, somewhat support, neither support nor oppose, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose cutting public employee benefit plans to help balance state budgets?

    1. Strongly Support
    2. Support
    3. Neither Support nor Oppose
    4. Oppose
    5. Strongly Oppose
    5. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

17. As you may know, many states are seeking to reduce their budget deficits by passing laws that would take away some of the collective bargaining rights of most public sector unions. Would you strongly favor, somewhat favor, neither favor nor oppose, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose such a bill in your state?

    1. Strongly Favor
    2. Somewhat Favor
    3. Neither Favor nor Oppose
    4. Somewhat Oppose
    5. Strongly Oppose
    6. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

18. As you may know, there has been a lot of talk these days about the collective bargaining rights of public sector unions. How familiar would you say you are with the process of collective bargaining? Would you say...

    1. Very Familiar
    2. Somewhat Familiar
    3. Not Very Familiar
    4. Not at All Familiar
    5. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

19. How would you feel about making it legal for states to allow workers to form competing unions from which to choose, or do you think it would be best for workers to have one union? Which would you prefer?

    1. Multiple Competing Unions - Strongly
    2. Multiple Competing Unions - Not So Strongly
    3. Single Union - Not So Strongly
    4. Single Union - Strongly
    5. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

20. Do you think public sector unions that represent employees of local, state, and the federal government are more helpful or more harmful to society?

    1. Helpful
    2. Neither
    3. Harmful
    4. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

[CONTINUES]

21. I would like you to rate whether you think the government is not involved enough or too involved in the following areas on a scale of one to five, where one stands for "not involved enough," three stands for "about the right amount," and five stands for "involved far too much." You may use any number between and 5.

1. Not Involved Enough
2.
3. About the Right Amount
4.
5. Involved Far Too Much
6. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

21a. Health care?
21b. Financial services, such as banking and mortgages?
21c. Communications, such as the Internet, cable TV, and cell phones?
21d. Energy, such as gasoline, natural gas, electricity, and oil?
21e. Food and beverage choices?
21f. Education?
21g. Marriage?
21h. Recreational drug use?
21i. Culture and the arts?
21j. Environment and natural resources?

22. If Congress were only in session every other year, do you think the country would be better off, worse off, no difference?

1. Better Off
2. Worse Off
3. No Difference
4. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

23. Which political party do you trust more to govern responsibly? (ROTATE & READ)

1. The Democratic Party
2. The Republican Party
3. Some Other Party (SPECIFY)
4. Neither
5. Both/ All about the Same   (DO NOT READ)
6. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

24. Would you consider voting for an independent or third-party candidate for president in 2012?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Maybe/ Possibly
4. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

25. How would you describe your views about the Tea Party?

1. Very Unfavorable
2. Somewhat Unfavorable
3. Somewhat Favorable
4. Very Favorable
5. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

26. Some states have passed laws allowing for the use of medical marijuana for the treatment of certain medical conditions where research has demonstrated it is an effective treatment. These conditions include glaucoma and pain management for cancer. Federal law prohibits the use of marijuana for any purpose.

Which of the following two statements is closer to your own view?

1. The federal government should allow each state to decide how it wants to regulate the use of marijuana.

2. States should not be allowed to have different rules than the federal government regarding the use of marijuana.

3. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

27. How do you feel about the legalization of small amounts of marijuana for personal use? Do you strongly support, support, neither support nor oppose, oppose, or strongly oppose the legalization of small quantities of marijuana for personal use?

1. Strongly Support
2. Support
3. Neither Support nor Oppose
4. Oppose
5. Strongly Oppose
6. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

{READ EARLIER IN SURVEY}

Now, I am going to ask you some questions for demographic purposes only. These questions are completely anonymous and help us determine what people in different education levels, income levels, etc. think about important matters. First...

28. Gender {BY OBSERVATION}

3. Male
4. Female

29. To make sure that we have a representative sample of people in the United States, which of the following categories best describes your age?

6. 18 to 29
7. 30 to 44
8. 45 to 54
9. 55 to 64
10. 65 or Older

30. What is your marital status?

1. Married
2. Single - Never Married
3. Divorced or Separated
4. Widowed

31. What is your household income category? Please stop me when I reach your category.

    1. Less than $25,000 per year
    2. $25,000 but less than $50,000
    3. $50,000 but less than $75,000
    4. $75,000 but less than $100,000
    5. $100,000 but less than $200,000
    6. $200,000 or More
    7. Don't Know/ Refused   (DO NOT READ)

32. Do you have money invested in the stock market?

    1. Yes
    2. No
    3. Don't Know/No Response   (DO NOT READ)

33. Did you pay federal income taxes last year?

    1. Yes
    2. No
    3. Don't Know/No Response   (DO NOT READ)

34. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

    1. Employed Full-Time
    2. Employed Part-Time
    3. Small Business Owner (Self-Employed)
    4. Taking Care of Home/ Family (Homemaker)
    5. Retired
    6. Student
    7. Unemployed
    8. Don't Know/No Response   (DO NOT READ)

35. {If answered (1) for 34} Are you employed by local, state, or the federal government?

    1. Yes - Employed by Government/ Public Employee
    2. No
    3. Don't Know/No Response   (DO NOT READ)

36. Are you, or is anyone in your family, a member of a union?

    1. Yes
    2. No
    3. Don't Know/No Response   (DO NOT READ)

37. Is your family covered by health insurance?

    1. Yes
    2. No
    3. Don't Know/No Response   (DO NOT READ)

38. Is that insurance provided through an employer?

    1. Yes
    2. No
    3. Don't Know/No Response   (DO NOT READ)

39. Are you registered to vote?

  1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Don't Know/No Response   (DO NOT READ)

40. What is your religious preference? Is it Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, some other religion, or no religion?

  1. Protestant
  2. Catholic
  3. Jewish
  4. Muslim
  5. Other (SPECIFY)
  6. No Religion
  7. Don't Know/No Response   (DO NOT READ)

41. How often do you attend religious services? Would you say...

  1. More than Once a Week
  2. Once a Week
  3. A Few Times a Month
  4. A Few Times a Year
  5. Never
  6. Don't Know/No Response   (DO NOT READ)

42. With which political party do you most closely identify?

  1. Democratic
  2. Republican
  3. Some Other Party (SPECIFY)
  4. Independent/No Party
  5. Don't Know/No Response   (DO NOT READ)

42a. {If answered (4) for 42} Do you think of yourself as CLOSER to the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?

  1. Closer to Republican Party
  2. Neither (Totally Independent)
  3. Closer to Democratic Party
  4. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

43. Thinking about your overall political philosophy, would you describe yourself as... (ROTATE & READ)

  1. Conservative
  2. Moderate
  3. Liberal
  4. Libertarian
  5. Progressive
  6. Something Else
  7. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

44. When it comes to government spending, do you think of yourself as very conservative, somewhat conservative, moderate, somewhat liberal or very liberal?

   1. Very Conservative
   2. Somewhat Conservative
   3. Moderate
   4. Somewhat Liberal
   5. Very Liberal
   6. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

45. When it comes to social policy, do you think of yourself as very conservative, somewhat conservative, moderate, somewhat liberal, or very liberal?

   1. Very Conservative
   2. Somewhat Conservative
   3. Moderate
   4. Somewhat Liberal
   5. Very Liberal
   6. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

46. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

   1. Less than High School Graduate
   2. High School Graduate (GED)
   3. Some College (Associates, No 4-Year Degree)
   4. Trade or Technical School
   5. College Graduate (Bachelor's)
   6. Post Graduate Study/ Degree
   7. Don't Know/ No Response   (DO NOT READ)

47. Which of the following racial or ethnic groups best describes you?

   1. White
   2. Black
   3. Hispanic or Latino
   4. Asian
   5. Native American
   6. Something Else

Please respond to the following questions with just a few words...

48. What do you think Democrats stand for? (OPEN)

49. What do you think Republicans stand for? (OPEN)

50. What do you think Libertarians stand for? (OPEN)

51. What do you think Independents stand for? (OPEN)

52. What do you think the Tea Party stands for? (OPEN)

Thank you. This is the end of our interview. We really appreciate your views. Have a nice day/ evening!