



# REASON-RUPE

## Public Opinion Survey

### FALL 2011 TOPLINE RESULTS

UPDATED: AUGUST 30th

1. How would you rate the job performance of President Obama? Would you say you approve or disapprove of his performance?

Strongly Approve	24.3
Somewhat Approve	22.5
Somewhat Disapprove	14.4
Strongly Disapprove	33.6
Don't Know	5.2
Total	100.0
<i>Net Approve</i>	<i>46.8</i>
<i>Net Disapprove</i>	<i>48.0</i>

2. How would you rate the job performance of Congress? Would you say you approve or disapprove of Congress's job performance?

Strongly Approve	3.3
Somewhat Approve	10.7
Somewhat Disapprove	20.3
Strongly Disapprove	60.5
Don't Know	5.2
Total	100.0
<i>Net Approve</i>	<i>14.0</i>
<i>Net Disapprove</i>	<i>80.8</i>

5. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree 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."

Strongly Agree	62.1
Somewhat Agree	15.2
Somewhat Disagree	7.6
Strongly Disagree	12.3
Don't Know	2.9
Total	100.0
<i>Net Agree</i>	<i>77.3</i>
<i>Net Disagree</i>	<i>19.9</i>

*Nationwide telephone poll conducted August 9th-18th of both mobile and landline phones, 1200 adults, margin of error +/- 3%. Columns may not add up to 100% due to rounding error.*

For more information on this survey, please visit <http://reason.com/poll> or email [polling@reason.org](mailto:polling@reason.org)

5.1 Would you favor or oppose a constitutional amendment to require a balanced federal budget?

Favor Strongly	49.6
Favor Somewhat	18.9
Oppose Somewhat	8.7
Oppose Strongly	17.2
Don't Know	5.5
Total	100.0
<i>Net Favor</i>	68.5
<i>Net Oppose</i>	25.9

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

Increase Taxes/ No Spending Cuts	6.7
Mainly Increase Taxes/ Some Spending Cuts	8.2
Equal Emphasis on Both	23.4
Mainly Decrease Spending/ Some Tax Increase	20.4
Decrease Spending/ No Tax Increase	36.7
Don't Know	4.5
Total	100.0
<i>Only Spending Cuts</i>	36.7
<i>Primarily Spending Cuts (some tax increases)</i>	57.1
<i>Tax Increases with Spending Cuts</i>	52.0
<i>% Want Taxes Included</i>	58.7
<i>% Want Spending Cuts Included</i>	88.7

7. Do you believe reducing government spending will mostly help, mostly harm, or have no impact on the economy?

Mostly Help	57.4
Mostly Harm	21.3
No Impact	15.1
Don't Know	6.3
Total	100.0

8. To reduce federal spending, would you favor or oppose closing the U.S. Postal Service and allowing people to use private firms such as FedEx or UPS to deliver all mail and packages?

Favor Strongly	11.1
Favor Somewhat	11.1
Oppose Somewhat	15.1
Oppose Strongly	58.0
Don't Know	4.7
Total	100.0
<i>Net Favor</i>	22.2
<i>Net Oppose</i>	73.1

9. If the federal government raised taxes, do you believe they would use that money to reduce the deficit or do you believe they would spend that money on new programs instead?

Reduce Deficit	26.5
Spend on New Programs	61.6
Don't Know	11.9
Total	100.0

10. Do you think the federal government should increase taxes on the wealthy?

Yes	69.1
No	28.0
Don't Know	2.9
Total	100.0

{IF 10 YES} 10a. OPEN- What household income would you use to define someone who is wealthy and thus should pay higher taxes? (For the typical household)

1% Percentile	\$50,000
25% Percentile	\$200,000
50% Percentile ( <i>Median</i> )	\$250,000
75% Percentile	\$500,000
99 % Percentile	\$10 Billion

11. Do you expect your taxes to increase, decrease, or stay the same over the next five years?

Increase a Lot	32.2
Increase a Little	36.4
Stay the Same	21.7
Decrease a Little	3.6
Decrease a Lot	2.1
Don't Know	4.0
Total	100.0
<i>Net Increase</i>	<i>58.1</i>
<i>Net Decrease</i>	<i>5.7</i>

12. “People like me should be primarily responsible for saving enough money to meet basic expenses in retirement”; OR, “People like me should primarily expect help from the government to meet basic expenses in retirement”

Primarily Responsible for Saving Enough for Retirement	59.5
Primarily Expect Help from Government for Retirement	33.3
Don't Know	7.1
Total	100.0

13. “People like me should be primarily responsible for saving enough money to purchase health insurance in retirement”; OR, “People like me should primarily expect help from the government to pay for health insurance in retirement”.

Primarily Responsible for Health Insurance in Retirement	43.1
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Primarily Expect Help from Gov't for Health Insurance	50.3
Don't Know	6.6
Total	100.0

14. Who do you believe should receive Social Security benefits? “All who have paid into the system”; OR, “Only those in financial need”?

All Who Have Paid into the System	79.8
Only Those in Financial Need	16.4
Don't Know	3.8
Total	100.0

15. Who do you believe should receive Medicare benefits? “All who have paid into the system”; OR, “Only those in financial need”?

All Who Have Paid into the System	71.4
Only Those in Financial Need	23.1
Don't Know	5.5
Total	100.0

16. A plan has been proposed that would allow workers to opt out of Social Security, meaning they could choose to not pay Social Security taxes and not receive Social Security benefits. Would you favor or oppose allowing workers to opt out of Social Security and rely on their own private retirement savings?

Favor Strongly	34.9
Favor Somewhat	18.9
Oppose Somewhat	10.0
Oppose Strongly	30.5
Don't Know	5.8
Total	100.0
<i>Net Favor</i>	53.8
<i>Net Oppose</i>	40.5

17. Would you favor or oppose a similar plan that would allow workers to opt out of Medicare?

Favor Strongly	35.5
Favor Somewhat	20.7
Oppose Somewhat	10.4
Oppose Strongly	27.0
Don't Know	6.4
Total	100.0
<i>Net Favor</i>	56.2
<i>Net Oppose</i>	37.4

18. Would you be willing to have your current or future Social Security benefits reduced as part of a plan to balance the federal budget or ensure the Social Security program remains in place for future retirees?

Yes	37.2
No	56.6
Don't Know	6.3
Total	100.0

{If 18: NO} 18a. Would you be more willing to accept reductions in your current or future Social Security benefits if you were still guaranteed to receive at least the amount of money that you have contributed into the system?

Yes	42.6
No	53.1
Don't Know	4.3
Total	100.0

DERIVED: Would you be willing to accept reduction in your current or future Social Security benefits as part of a plan to balance the federal budget or if you were still guaranteed to receive at least the amount of money that you have contributed into the system?

0. No	30.0
1. Yes	61.3
5. Don't Know	8.7
Total	100.0

19. Would you be willing to have your current or future Medicare benefits reduced as part of a plan to balance the federal budget or ensure Medicare remains in place for future retirees?

Yes	42.7
No	50.9
Don't Know	6.4
Total	100.0

{If 19: NO} 19a. Would you be more willing to accept a reduction in your current or future Medicare benefits if you were still guaranteed to receive at least the amount you have contributed into the system?

Yes	32.0
No	65.6
Don't Know	2.4
Total	100.0

DERIVED: Would you be willing to accept reduction in your current or future Medicare benefits as part of a plan to balance the federal budget or if you were still guaranteed to receive at least the amount of money that you have contributed into the system?

0. No	33.4
1. Yes	59.1
5. Don't Know	7.6
Total	100.0

20. Americans can currently retire with full Social Security benefits at the age of 65. Do you think the retirement age should be raised?

Yes	29.5
No	67.2
Don't Know	3.3
Total	100.0

21. OPEN – What do you think the Social Security retirement age should be?

Mean ( <i>Average</i> )	65
1% Percentile	54
25% Percentile	65
50% Percentile ( <i>Median</i> )	65
75% Percentile	67
99 % Percentile	75

22. Do you currently receive Social Security benefits?

Yes	21.3
No	78.4
Refused	0.3
Total	100.0

DERIVED: RETIREES: Expect to get regular or reduced Social Security benefits?

1. Get Back Less	23.3
2. Get Back Regular	63.8
5. Don't Know	12.9
Total	100.0

DERIVED: NON-RETIREES: Expect to get regular or reduced Social Security benefits?

1. Get Back Less	45.1
2. Get Back Regular	48.9
5. Don't Know	6.1
Total	100.0

DERIVED: COMBINED RETIREES & NON-RETIREES: Expect to get regular or reduced Social Security benefits?

1. Get Back Less	40.4
2. Get Back Regular	52.1
5. Don't Know	7.5
Total	100.0

23. Do you currently receive Medicare benefits?

Yes	19.6
No	79.5
Refused	0.9
Total	100.0

DERIVED: RETIREES: Expect to get regular or reduced Medicare benefits?

1. Get Back Less	18.8
2. Get Back Regular	66.2
5. Don't Know	15.0
Total	100.0

DERIVED: NON-RETIREES: Expect to get regular or reduced Medicare benefits?

1. Get Back Less	45.7
2. Get Back Regular	47.1
5. Don't Know	7.2
Total	100.0

DERIVED: COMBINED RETIREES & NON-RETIREES: Expect to get regular or reduced Medicare benefits?

1. Get Back Less	40.4
2. Get Back Regular	50.9
5. Don't Know	8.7
Total	100.0

24. The Congressional Tea Party Caucus has opposed any bill that would increase federal tax revenues; do you favor or oppose their approach?

Favor Strongly	24.0
Favor Somewhat	12.8
Oppose Somewhat	15.1
Oppose Strongly	37.6
Don't Know	10.4
Total	100.0
<i>Net Favor</i>	36.8
<i>Net Oppose</i>	52.7

26. Do you think the Tea Party has had a positive or negative impact on the way Washington, DC works?

Positive Impact	34.4
Negative Impact	44.6
No Impact	6.6
Don't Know	14.4
Total	100.0

27. If the Tea Party ran its own candidate against President Obama and the Republican nominee in the 2012 presidential election, would you consider voting for him or her?

Yes	36.7
No	49.0
Don't Know	14.3
Total	100.0

28. Some people believe the Tea Party movement is primarily about cutting spending and limiting government; others believe that social issues, such as abortion, gay marriage, and immigration are equally important to the Tea Party. Which do you think is more accurate?

Cutting Spending	54.7
Social Issues	26.8
Don't Know	18.5
Total	100.0

40. I would like to read you two statements about the current housing market and ask which one you agree with more:

“Statement A: The troubled housing market is the result of a lack of government oversight. Without proper government regulation, banks and lenders misled homebuyers into home mortgages they did not understand and could not afford.”

OR

“Statement B: The troubled housing market is the result of misguided government regulations, incentives, and subsidies. These regulations inflated housing prices and shielded lenders and borrowers from the consequences of their risky choices.”

Statement A	55.7
Statement B	35.2
Don't Know	9.1
Total	100.0

41. As you may know, President Obama has announced that he is running for re-election in 2012. Would you say you will definitely vote for him, you will consider voting for him, or you definitely will not vote for him?

Definitely Vote for Him	25.4
Consider Voting for Him	28.8
Definitely Not Vote for Him	42.0
Don't Know	3.7
Total	100.0



42. OPEN: If you could choose any American, who would you like to see run for president in 2012? (*top vote getters*)

President Obama	16.9
Hillary Clinton	6.2
Rick Perry	4.5
Mitt Romney	3.7
Sarah Palin	3.1
Ron Paul	2.3
Colin Powell	1.9
Mike Huckabee	1.4
Chris Christie	1.3
Donald Trump	1.3
Warren Buffet	1.3
Bill Clinton	1.1
Newt Gingrich	1.1
Michele Bachmann	1.0

43. Are you registered to vote?

Yes	91.3
No	8.5
Refused	0.3
Total	100.0

44. In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, Independent, or what?

Republican	24.8
Democrat	31.1
Independent	38.0
Other	1.5
Don't Know/ Refused	4.6
Total	100.0

{If INDEPENDENT} 44a. Do you think of yourself as CLOSER to the Republican Party, Democratic Party, or some other party? {If SOME OTHER PARTY} Which party?

Closer to Republican Party	26.6
Closer to Democratic Party	32.4
Other	1.0
Neither	35.6
Don't Know/ Refused	4.4
Total	100.0

### DERIVED: Party Identification with Leaners

1. Democrat	31.1
2. Leans Democrat	12.5
3. Pure Independent	13.5
4. Leans Republican	11.8
5. Republican	24.8
8. Don't Know	6.3
Total	100.0

45. {If 44: Republican OR 44: Independent AND 44a: Closer to Republican Party}  
If you were voting today in the 2012 Republican primary for president, which one of the following candidates would you favor?

Mitt Romney	19.6
Rick Perry	18.2
Sarah Palin	11.8
Rudy Giuliani	8.3
Michele Bachmann	7.6
Ron Paul	7.3
Herman Cain	3.7
Newt Gingrich	3.3
Tim Pawlenty	1.7
Jon Huntsman	1.2
Rick Santorum	0.9
Gary Johnson	0.3
Undecided/ Don't Know/ Refused	16.1
Total	100.0

### DERIVED: Party ID 5 with Tea Party

0. Tea Party	28.0
1. Democrat	29.0
2. Leans Democrat	11.4
3. Pure Independent	10.0
4. Leans Republican	5.4
5. Republican	10.9
8. Don't Know	5.4
Total	100.0

### DERIVED: Party ID 3 with Tea Party

0. Tea Party	28.0
1. Democrat	40.4
2. Pure Independent	10.0
3. Republican	16.2
8. Don't Know	5.4
Total	100.0

## DERIVED: Republican Coalition: Tea Party and non-Tea Party

1. Non-Tea Party GOP	36.6
2. Tea Party	63.4
Total	100.0

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

Yes	52.9
No	25.0
Maybe	18.7
Don't Know/ Refused	3.5
Total	100.0
<i>Yes/Maybe</i>	<i>71.6</i>

47. Generally speaking, would you support or oppose an independent or third party candidate who described him or herself as “conservative on economic issues” *and* “liberal on social issues”?

Support Strongly	17.6
Support Somewhat	29.9
Oppose Somewhat	12.1
Oppose Strongly	24.5
Don't Know	15.9
Total	100.0
<i>Net Support</i>	<i>47.5</i>
<i>Net Oppose</i>	<i>36.6</i>

I am going to read you two statements. After I read both statements, please tell me which comes closer to your own opinion. You might agree to some extent with both, but we want to know which one is closer to your own views:

48. Some people say that “people get ahead by their own hard work”; others say “that lucky breaks or help from other people are more important”. Which do you think is more important?

Hard Work	80.5
Luck/ Help from Other People	14.6
Don't Know	4.9
Total	100.0

49. Some people say that “people generally get rich at the expense of others”; others say “that wealth can grow so there’s enough for everyone”. Which better describes your own views?

Get Rich at Expense of Others	46.1
Wealth Can Grow/ Enough for Everyone	48.2
Don't Know	5.8
Total	100.0

50. If you had to choose only one of these two values to teach your kids, which would it be? “To work hard and be self-reliant”; OR, “to learn how to share with others”

Work Hard and Be Self-Reliant	63.4
Learn How to Share with Others	29.0
Don't Know/ Refused	7.7
Total	100.0

I am going to read you two statements. After I read both statements, please tell me which comes closer to your own opinion. You might agree to some extent with both, but we want to know which one is closer to your own views:

51. “The less government the better”; OR, “there are more things that government should be doing”.

Less Government the Better	47.6
More Things Government Should Be Doing	45.3
Don't Know	7.2
Total	100.0

52. “The government should be doing more to regulate businesses”; OR, “Too often, government regulation of businesses does more harm than good”.

Government to Do More to Regulate Businesses	38.0
Regulation of Businesses Does More Harm than Good	54.3
Don't Know	7.6
Total	100.0

53. “We need a strong government to handle today’s complex economic problems”; OR, “People would be better able to handle today’s problems within a free market with less government involvement”.

Strong Government to Handle Complex Economic Problems	48.0
Free Market with Less Government Involvement	45.9
Don't Know	6.1
Total	100.0

54. Some people think the government should promote traditional values in our society. Others think the government should not favor any particular set of values. Which comes closer to your own view?

Should Promote Traditional Values	46.1
Should Not Promote Any Particular Set of Values	48.9
Don't Know	5.1
Total	100.0

**DERIVED: POLITICAL LANDSCAPE (4 Role of Government Questions)**

1. Liberal	24.8
2. Libertarian	26.1
3. Conservative	31.7
4. Communitarian	17.4
Total	100.0

DERIVED: POLITICAL LANDSCAPE (2 Role of Government Questions)

1. Liberal	29.2
2. Libertarian	23.4
3. Conservative	27.6
4. Communitarian	19.8
Total	100.0

55. Thinking about your overall political philosophy, would you describe yourself as...conservative, moderate, liberal, libertarian, progressive, or something else?

Conservative	30.8
Moderate	30.0
Liberal	14.6
Libertarian	3.8
Progressive	8.9
Other	1.3
Don't Know/ Refused	10.7
Total	100.0

DERIVED: Ideology based on 4 role of government questions

1. Liberal	24.8
2. Libertarian	26.1
3. Conservative	31.7
4. Communitarian	17.4
Total	100.0

DERIVED: Ideology based on 3 role of government questions

1. Liberal	29.2
2. Libertarian	23.4
3. Conservative	27.6
4. Communitarian	19.8
Total	100.0

DERIVED: Ideology based on 2 role of government questions

1. Liberal	27.1
2. Libertarian	24.1
3. Conservative	27.6
4. Communitarian	21.1
Total	100.0

DERIVED: Ideology based on 2a role of government questions

1. Liberal	29.2
2. Libertarian	22.6
3. Conservative	26.6
4. Communitarian	21.6
Total	100.0

DERIVED: Ideological Landscape Average  
(from Role of Government Questions 51-54)

1. Liberal	27.6
2. Libertarian	24.1
3. Conservative	28.4
4. Communitarian	20.0

DERIVED: IDEOLOGICAL CONSISTENCY:  
Consistent Ideology on 51-54 Role of Government Questions

0. Not Ideologically Consistent	43.6
1. Ideologically Consistent	56.4
Total	100.0

56. Do you consider yourself to be a supporter of the Tea Party movement or not?

Yes	28.0
No	62.7
Don't Know	9.3
Total	100.0

{If 56: NO} Did you ever consider yourself in the past to be a supporter of the Tea Party movement?

Yes	5.6
No	93.5
Don't Know	0.9
Total	100.0

DERIVED: Tea Party Supporter

1. Tea Party Supporter	28.0
2. Past Tea Party Supporter	3.5
3. Not Tea Party Supporter	58.6
5. Don't Know	9.9
Total	100.0

57 GENDER

Male	48.0
Female	52.0
Total	100.0

58 AGE GROUP

18 to 29	16.7
30 to 44	29.2
45 to 54	20.8
55 to 64	20.8
65 or Older	12.5
Total	100.0

## 59 RACE/ETHNICITY

White	65.0
Black	13.0
Hispanic/ Latino	16.0
Asian	4.5
Native American	0.7
Other	0.8
Total	100.0

## 60 ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Less than \$25,000	14.7
\$25,000 to \$49,999	18.6
\$50,000 to \$74,999	20.1
\$75,000 to \$99,999	15.7
\$100,000 to \$199,999	15.0
\$200,000 or More	4.5
Don't Know/ Refused	11.4
Total	100.0

## 61 LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Less than High School Graduate	2.9
High School Graduate	20.9
Some College	30.4
College Graduate	25.4
Post Graduate	15.5
Refused	4.9
Total	100.0

## 62 EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Employed Full-Time	40.0
Employed Part-Time	8.1
Self-Employed	8.7
Homemaker	7.4
Retired	16.9
Student	4.6
Unemployed	9.7
Refused	4.6
Total	100.0

## DERIVED: Employment Status

1. Employed Full-Time PRIVATE	28.4
2. Employed Full-Time PUBLIC	11.4
3. Employed Part-Time PRIVATE	5.9
4. Employed Part-Time PUBLIC	2.2
5. Self-Employed	8.7
6. Homemaker	7.4
7. Retired PREVIOUS PRIVATE	7.8
8. Retired PREVIOUS PUBLIC	8.1
9. Student	4.6
10. Unemployed	9.7
11. Refused	5.8
Total	100

## CENSUS REGION

Northeast	18.4
Midwest	22.1
South	36.4
West	23.1
Total	100.0

## 63 MARITAL STATUS

Married	56.2
Live with a Partner	2.0
Single	22.5
Divorced/ Separated	9.4
Widowed	4.8
Refused	5.1
Total	100.0

## 64 ARE YOU, OR IS ANYONE IN YOUR FAMILY, A MEMBER OF A UNION?

Yes	21.4
No	74.1
Refused	4.6
Total	100.0

## 65 RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE

Protestant	41.6
Catholic	25.1
Jewish	1.6
Muslim	0.9
Other	5.4
No Religion	15.1
Refused	10.3
Total	100.0



## 66 HOW OFTEN DO YOU ATTEND RELIGIOUS SERVICES?

Once a Week or More	34.8
A Few Times a Month	15.9
A Few Times a Year	20.8
Never	18.3
Refused	10.2
Total	100.0

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Q3 FALL 2011 POLL**

The Reason-Rupe Q3 2011 poll collected a nationally representative sample of 1200 respondents, aged 18 and older from all 50 states and the District of Columbia using live telephone interviews from August 9<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> 2011. The margin of sampling error for this poll is  $\pm 3$  percent. The margin of error for the GOP presidential race numbers is  $\pm 4.79\%$ . Interviews were conducted with respondents using both landline (790) and mobile phones (410). Landline respondents were randomly selected within households based on the adult who had the most recent birthday. Sample was weighted by gender, age, ethnicity, and Census region, based on the most recent US Census data. The sampling frame included landline and mobile phone numbers generated using Random Digit Dialing (RDD) methods and randomly selected numbers from a directory-listed sample. Click [here](#) for full methodological details. NSON Opinion Strategy conducted the poll's fieldwork

View [full methodology](#)