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NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist Poll*

Impeach President Trump? Not So Fast, Voters Say

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This NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist Poll Reports:

A congressional candidate's position on whether or not to impeach President Donald Trump could be a motivating factor in this year's midterm elections. A plurality of registered voters (47%) say they would definitely vote *against* a candidate for Congress who wants to impeach the president. 42% would definitely vote *for* a candidate who has that intent, and 10% are unsure.

Notably, three in ten Democrats say they would either definitely vote *against* a candidate who favors impeachment (18%) or are unsure (12%). 70% of Democrats would definitely vote *for* such a candidate. Among Republicans, 84% would not back a candidate seeking to impeach President Trump. A plurality of independents (47%) say the same.

"If the question of impeachment dominates the news this fall, like so many other voter concerns, it breaks along partisan lines," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. "But, because nearly one-third of Democrats are not eager to open up this debate, it is one potential campaign issue that advantages the GOP."

Looking at the generic congressional ballot, the Democrats (44%) have a five-point advantage over the Republicans (39%) among registered voters nationally, unchanged from last month. Eight percent of voters support neither major party candidate, and 9% are undecided.

Partisan allegiances are strong. 91% of Democrats support their party's candidate while 94% of Republicans support the GOP candidate. Among independents, 38% back the Democrat in their district, 32% support the Republican, 15% say neither, and 16% are undecided.

What are Americans' expectations for the current Congress? On the issues, Americans want

Congress to address health care reform immediately (72%). Majorities of residents nationally also think granting legal status to “dreamers” (54%) and stricter gun legislation (52%) should be taken up as soon as possible. However, only 24% of Americans think building a wall between the U.S. and Mexico should top Congress’ list. In fact, 55% say the wall is not a priority at all.

Health care reform is the only issue on which there is rare bipartisan agreement. 73% of Democrats, 73% of independents, and 66% of Republicans say health care should be taken up immediately.

Other issues draw partisan strife. More than seven in ten Democrats and about half of independents think stricter gun legislation and granting legal status to “dreamers” should be addressed with haste. However, only 26% of Republicans say gun legislation should be an immediate priority for the current Congress, and a plurality (47%) do not think reforming gun laws should be a priority at all. Regarding granting legal status to “dreamers,” two-thirds of Republicans (67%) think it’s a priority but this includes 35% that say it can wait. 32% of GOP’ers say giving legal status to “dreamers” is an immediate priority. 29% of Republicans think it is not a priority at all. In contrast, a majority of Republicans (52%) say the border wall is an immediate priority. 80% of Democrats and 55% of independents say the wall is not a priority at all.

President Donald Trump’s job approval rating is at 38% among Americans, comparable to the 40% score he received in late March. The proportion of Americans who strongly disapprove of how President Trump is doing his job (40%) is nearly double the proportion who say they strongly approve (22%).

“What is remarkable about Donald Trump’s tenure as president is that in the eighteen polls we have conducted since he assumed office, his approval rating has ranged from a low of 35% to a high of 42%,” says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. “Trump has neither chased away his base nor has he reached out to new supporters.”

The president’s favorable rating remains upside down. 36% have a positive opinion of Trump, and 57% have an unfavorable one, little changed from late March. Seven percent are unsure.

American institutions, including Congress and the presidency, are not trusted by the vast proportion of the public. 78% of U.S. residents, up from 71% in February, have little or no confidence in Congress, and 59% of adults nationally, an uptick from 54%, have little or no confidence in the presidency. Many Americans are also critical of the media. 70%, comparable to 68% previously, lack faith in the media.

Americans remain pessimistic about the direction of the country. 56% say it is moving in the wrong one, and 36% report it is moving in the right direction. This is relatively unchanged from March.