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POLL MUST BE SOURCED:

Majority Views Tax Bill as Adding Financial Injury...

POTUS Favors Wealthy, Say Americans

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This Marist Poll Reports:

The tax reform bill is highly unpopular among the American people. In fact, a majority of U.S. residents (52%), including more than one in five Republicans (22%) and one in five Trump supporters (20%), think the legislation will mostly hurt their personal family finances. In contrast, 30% say it will mostly help them financially, and 8% do not think the bill will make a difference in their lives. One in ten Americans (10%) are unsure.

Most Democrats (78%) and a majority of independents (52%) consider the tax reform bill to be a detriment to their family's finances. 57% of Republicans perceive the legislation to benefit them.

Americans who earn less than \$50,000 annually (60%) say the legislation will mostly harm them. Fewer residents who earn more annually (46%) think the bill will hurt their family financially.

Six in ten Americans (60%) also think the tax bill will mostly help the wealthy. More than one in five (21%) say it will aid the middle class, and 4% believe it will mostly assist the poor. 15% are unsure.

Again, a partisan divide is present. Most Democrats (85%) and more than six in ten independents (63%) perceive the tax reform bill to mostly help upper income Americans. However, Republicans do not consider tax reform in its current version to be universally beneficial. Among Republicans, a plurality (46%) says the legislation will mostly assist the middle class, but a notable 28% think it benefits those in the highest income brackets. Five percent of the GOP believe it buoys the poor. More than one in five Republicans (21%) are unsure.

“If the objective of the GOP is to win a legislative battle, then the tax reform bill may still reach its goal,” says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. “But, if the goal is to pass legislation that is supported by most Americans, the tax reform bill comes up very short.”

When it comes to how the Republicans in Congress are handling the issue of tax reform, Americans are increasingly dissatisfied. 63% of U.S. residents, up from 57% in November, say they disapprove of the congressional GOP’s approach. 25%, down from 31% previously, approve, and 12% are unsure. Republicans are less enamored with the GOP’s handling of tax reform than in the past. While a majority of Republicans (56%) report they approve of how the GOP is dealing with the issue, the proportion with this view is down from 62%. But, Republicans have not grown in their opposition. The proportion of those who disapprove remains steady at 29%. Instead, more members of the GOP are unsure, 15% up from 9% last month. Democrats (87% up from 81%) and independents (67% up from 60%) are increasingly upset about how congressional Republicans are managing tax reform.

The rating the congressional GOP receives on tax reform reflects the party’s dismal overall job approval rating. 68% of Americans disapprove of how the Republicans in Congress are doing their job. 25% approve, and 7% are unsure. These proportions are little changed from when last reported in the middle of November. Of note, Republicans are slightly more pleased with their party’s performance than in the past (55% up from 50% last month). Residents who supported Trump in the 2016 election are also more upbeat about the GOP. 49%, up from 40%, say they now approve of the Republicans’ performance in Congress.

Congressional Democrats also score poorly but do slightly better than the GOP. 59% of residents disapprove of how they are performing in office compared with 32% who approve. Nine percent are unsure. There has been little change on this question since November. Among Democrats, 58% down from 64%, approve of how their party is doing their job in Congress.

When it comes to the 2018 midterm elections, the Democrats have the upper hand. 50% of registered voters report they are more likely to vote for the Democratic candidate in their district. 37% say they will support the Republican candidate, and 7% do not back either party’s candidate. Seven percent are undecided.

Last month while President Donald Trump was in Asia, 43% of voters supported the Democrat, and 40% backed the Republican. Six percent did not support either, and 10% were undecided. Independent voters account for the change. While there was little consensus among independents previously (35% for the Democrat and 35% for the Republican), a plurality of independents (43%) now say they are in the corner of the Democrat in their district. 32% favor the Republican running for Congress.

Turning to President Trump, his job approval rating remains upside down among Americans (37% to 56%) and is little changed from the rating he received last month (39% to 55%). The

president's base is relatively unchanged from previous findings. Most Republicans (84%) and those who supported Trump in 2016 (87%) are still behind him.

Americans are more than twice as likely to strongly disapprove (45%) of how President Trump is doing his job than strongly approve (20%). The proportion of residents who strongly disapprove is up from 38% previously and represents the largest proportion of Americans with this view since this question was first reported in June.

President Trump's favorable rating remains in negative territory (35% who perceive him favorably to 60% who view him unfavorably). This is comparable to the 37% positive to 57% negative score he previously received.

Americans' views toward the tax reform bill are not an anomaly. In general, residents perceive the president's policies to be directed more toward helping the wealthy. 61% of residents have this view while 27% say Trump's agenda benefits the middle class. Only 2% report his policies are for the poor, and 10% are unsure. These findings are similar to those reported in November.

While more than six in ten Republicans (63%) perceive President Trump's policies to target the middle class, there has been a decline in that proportion since last month (69%). Most Democrats (91%) and many independents (62%) perceive the president's policies to boost those who are already better off. This is little changed from previous Marist Poll survey findings.

President Trump campaigned on eliminating illegal immigration, but most Americans oppose deporting so-called "dreamers." Included here are 58% who think "dreamers" should be permitted to stay and gain legal U.S. citizenship and 23% who think "dreamers" should be allowed to stay but not gain citizenship status. Only 15% report "dreamers" should be deported. These proportions are nearly identical to those reported in September.

"Like tax reform, the administration's approach to DACA is out of step with public opinion," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion.

Although Republicans (29%) are nearly six times as likely as Democrats (5%) and more than twice as likely as independents (14%) to believe "dreamers" should be deported, 67% think they should be allowed to stay in some capacity.

Are Americans optimistic about the future of the country? Nearly two in three Americans (64% up from 59% in November) say the nation is moving in the wrong direction. Three in ten (30% similar to 33% at the end of last month) think it is moving in the right one. Six percent are currently unsure.