



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on February 11, 2010

## Obama's Approval Ratings Continue to Drop

The Rasmussen Reports President Tracking Poll for Thursday February 11 shows that a mere 25 percent of American voters strongly approve of President Obama's performance. Thirty-nine percent strongly disapprove, leaving 36 percent of voters somewhere in the middle.



Scott Rasmussen has published columns in the *Wall Street Journal* that address several facets of Obama's presidency, including his declining approval among independent voters. President Obama enjoyed a relatively high approval rating within the first month of his presidency, on average 64 percent. However, by February 21, 2009, the Gallup Poll showed the approval rating dropped to 59 percent. The Gallup Poll attributed this decline to the independent voters, who within one week, went from a 62 percent approval to a 54 percent rating. Since then, the numbers have fluctuated, though for the most part have indicated decline.

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Of course, the accuracy of most polls is often contested, particularly when the reports reflect very different numbers. Marist University's poll released on Monday, February 8, shows a 44 percent approval rating for Obama. Per the Marist poll, 57 percent of independent voters disapprove of Obama's performance. Similar to Marist's report, the Gallup poll reflects an overall 44 percent approval rating, as does the CBS News poll. The Rasmussen Reports show 35 percent of voters believe that a new political party is needed and just 30 percent believe the country is headed in the right direction.

The different approval ratings can be explained by analyzing the voters that are polled. The Marist poll questioned 910 voters, while the Gallup Poll surveys something in the realm of 1,500 voters. Twelve hundred adults nationwide are interviewed by telephone for the CBS News poll. The Rasmussen Reports are based on a sample of likely voters, while other firms survey all adults. As a result, President Obama's numbers are usually several points higher in a poll of adults rather than likely voters. The Rasmussen Reports explain that this is a result of Obama's more enthusiastic young adult supporters being less likely to turn out to vote. Above all, the wording of the questions is a prime determinant of the numbers.

The economy continues to remain the determining factor for those who are polled. Another consistent item found in the polls is that approximately a quarter of the Democratic voters are unhappy with their leader. Additionally, Obama's approval rating continues to remain high amongst African-American voters. Likewise, Obama's increasingly unpopular and highly imposed agenda has proven to hinder his



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popularity.

The Gallup poll shows that six out of 10 Americans believe Obama has not focused enough on the economic strife that has plagued Americans. CBS News' poll indicates that it is Obama's domestic issues that are driving the numbers downward. However, since the attempted attack on Christmas Day, the percentage of voters citing terrorism as an imminent issue has risen to seven percent from 0 in early December. Likewise, Obama's handling of healthcare, according to the CBS poll, has just a 36-percent approval rating. On the war in Afghanistan and terrorism, CBS reports a generous 46 percent approval rating.

CBS also reports that over half of Americans think the United States should keep the Guantanamo Bay prison open.

President Obama appears undaunted by his steady decline in approval since taking office just one year ago. As he indicated to Diane Sawyer in his interview on January 25, Obama does not intend to "nurture his own popularity." He remarked, "When the poll numbers drop, you're an idiot" but "when your poll numbers are high, you're a genius." Judging by his approval ratings, perhaps he should not hold his breath for the "genius" remarks.



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