

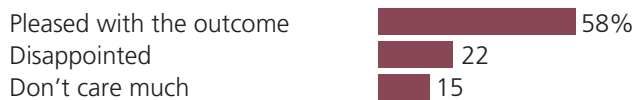
# AEI Political Report

## Election Post-mortem

The 2006 midterm elections were a resounding success for Democrats. They took back both the House and Senate and a majority of the nation's governorships and state legislative chambers. This issue of *Political Report* looks at the election results and what voters expect from the new Congress.

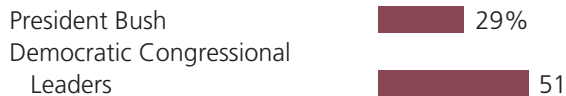
### Most People Are Pleased

Q: In general, are you . . . ?



Source: CBS News, Nov. 12-13, 2006.

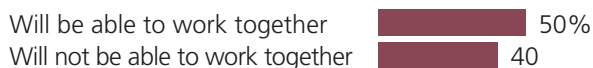
Q: Who in Washington do you think should take the lead in solving the nation's problems . . . ?



Source: PSRA/Pew Research Center, Nov. 9-12, 2006.

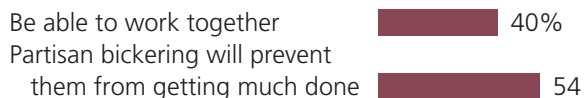
### Will Partisanship Be Put Aside?

Q: Do you think President George W. Bush and the Democrats in Congress . . . ?



Source: CBS News, Nov. 12-13, 2006.

Q: Do you think the two sides will . . . ?



Source: PSRA/Newsweek, Nov. 9-10, 2006.

Q: If the Democrats win, do you think there will be . . . ?



Source: Fox News/Opinion Dynamics, Nov. 4-5, 2006.

### A Clear Plan?

Q: Do you think the Democrats . . . ?



Source: CBS News, Nov. 12-13, 2006.

### Up or Down

Q: With the Democrats in control of Congress now, do you think . . . ?

	Will go up	Will go down
Minimum wage	66%	1%
Taxes	32	9
Cost of health care	26	14
Cost of prescription drugs for seniors	11	33

	Get better	Get worse
Nation's economy	33	16

	Increase	Decrease
Threat of terrorism	19	16

Source: CBS News, Nov. 12-13, 2006.

### Two Cheers for Divided Government

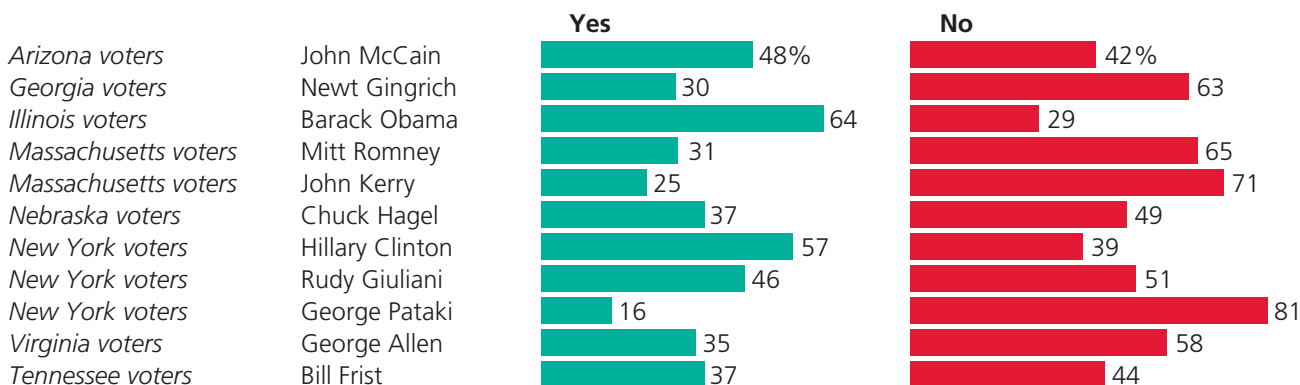
Q: Do you think it is better for the country to have . . . ?

A president who comes from the same political party that controls Congress	33%
Better when different	42

Source: CBS News, Nov. 12-13, 2006.

## Favorite Sons and Daughters, 2008

Q: *Would make a good president . . . ?*



Source: National Election Pool exit poll, Nov. 7, 2006.

## Actual Results

**House:** 231 Democrats, 202 Republicans, 2 runoffs  
**Senate:** 49 Democrats, 49 Republicans, 2 independents  
**Governors:** 28 Democrats, 22 Republicans  
**State legislatures:** 23 Democrats (both houses),  
 16 Republicans (both houses), 10 split control,  
 1 non-partisan

## Congressional Ratings



## Bush Ratings



## Gubernatorial Elections, 2007

There will be three gubernatorial contests in 2007.

- ❖ **Kentucky** – Ernie Fletcher (R) won in 2003 with 55 percent of the vote, but his administration has been caught in scandal recently. Potential opponents include Rep. Ben Chandler (D), whom Fletcher defeated in 2003, and Attorney General Greg Stumbo (D).
- ❖ **Louisiana** – Kathleen Blanco (D) received 52 percent of the vote in a runoff in 2003 over now-Rep. Bobby Jindal. She has been criticized widely for mismanagement following Hurricane Katrina and could face another strong challenge from Rep. Jindal.
- ❖ **Mississippi** – Haley Barbour (R) is the most popular of the three governors up for reelection. He received 53 percent of the vote in 2003. Potential Democratic challengers in 2007 include former Governor Ray Mabus (D) and former Attorney General Michael Moore (D).

### AEI POLITICAL REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

Karlyn Bowman, Resident Fellow; John Fortier, Research Fellow; Norman Ornstein, Resident Scholar; and Ben Wattenberg, Senior Fellow.

Research Assistants: Adam Foster, Editor; Matt Weil; Tim Ryan; and Joe Manzari.

## What the Voters Said on Election Day, from A to Z

The dust has settled, and now it is time to take a closer look at what voters said on Election Day. Here, in alphabetical order, is a snapshot of what voters told the National Election Pool consortium of the five networks and the Associated Press. The pollsters interviewed 13,251 voters at hundreds of locations around the country. In addition, the NEP interviewed national samples before the election to see who had voted absentee or early and how those people cast their votes.

**Age:** Eighteen- to twenty-nine-year-olds voted overwhelmingly for Democratic House candidates, 60 to 38 percent. Voters age sixty-five and older were the Republicans' best group, giving Republican House candidates 49 percent of their votes.

**Blacks** are one of the few monolithic voting blocs in American politics. This year, they voted 89 percent for Democratic House candidates and 10 percent for Republican ones. In Maryland, 27 percent of blacks voted for black senatorial candidate Michael Steele.

**Conservatives**, about a third of the electorate this year, were not unusually upset with Republican candidates. Twenty percent of them voted for Democratic House candidates. A similar percentage of them voted for Democrats in 2004, 2000, 1998, 1996, and 1994 House races.

**Democrats** were 38 percent of the electorate compared to 36 percent for the Republicans. Democrats voted 93 to 6 percent for Democratic House candidates. Republicans were equally loyal to their party, voting 91 to 8 percent for their party's House candidates.

**Education:** Voters at the top and bottom of the education ladder voted for Democrats, with voters who were not high-school graduates (3 percent of the electorate) voting in overwhelming numbers for Democratic candidates (64 to 35 percent). The vote among post-grads (18 percent of voters) was 59 to 40 percent for Democrats.

Thirty percent of voters said their **family's financial situation** was better than two years ago. They voted for Republican candidates, 71 to 28 percent. Those who said it was worse (25 percent) voted for Democrats by a similar margin, 77 to 20 percent. Voters who said their situation was the same (44 percent) voted for Democrats, too, by 56 to 42 percent.

**Gays, lesbians, and bisexuals** (3 percent of the electorate) voted for Democrats, 75 to 24 percent, much as they have in recent elections.

**House races:** The national vote for the House this year was 53 percent for the Democrats and 46 percent for the Republicans.

**Independents** were the story in this election. At 26 percent of the electorate, their vote for Democrats (57 to 39 percent) proved key to Democratic victories.

**Jews** cast 12 percent of their votes for Republicans, 87 percent for Democrats. This is the highest percentage of their votes for Democrats since 1982, when they voted 82 percent for Democratic candidates.

**Amy Klobuchar**, Minnesota's new senator, brings the ranks of women in the Senate to sixteen. Both men and women in Minnesota voted for her, but women did so in massive numbers (64 percent), while 35 percent voted for her opponent, Mark Kennedy. Women win at every level of politics just as often as men do.

**Latinos** do not appear to have increased their share of the electorate. They represented 8 percent of voters this year. Democrats improved their margin among this group in 2006 (69 to 29 percent), setting back Republican hopes for gains among this key constituency. In 2004, they voted 55 percent for Democrats. In New Mexico, Latinos were 31 percent of the electorate. They voted 81 percent for Democratic House candidates.

**Married voters** broke much more narrowly for the Republicans (50 to 48 percent) than they had in past elections. They have been key to Republican victories in years past. Since 1994, more than 50 percent of this group has voted for Republican candidates. The gap between married and single voters (32 points) was much larger than the gender gap this year (10 points).

Sixty percent of voters said **national issues** mattered more in their vote; 34 percent said local issues did.

**Opposition to Bush:** Thirty-six percent of voters said they voted to oppose President Bush, 22 percent to support him, and nearly four in ten said he was not a factor in their vote.

*(continued on the next page)*

*(WHAT THE VOTERS SAID, continued from previous page)*

**Parents with children under eighteen** voted narrowly for the Democrats, 51 to 47 percent. They were 34 percent of the electorate.

**Questions** asking voters to rank issues in terms of their importance were not included in the exit poll this year. Instead, the exit pollsters asked separately about seven issues.

**Religiosity**, or how actively people practice their faith, is one of the big dividers in our politics these days. Those who attend church weekly (45 percent of the electorate) voted for Republican candidates, by 55 to 43 percent. Those who never attend church (15 percent) voted overwhelmingly for Democrats (67 to 30 percent).

**Seniors** broke evenly this year, 49 percent for Republicans, 49 percent for Democrats. Many had expected there to be substantial dissatisfaction with the Medicare Part D drug benefit. Pre-election polls showed that most seniors were satisfied with it.

**Troops in Iraq:** Voters disapproved of the war in Iraq by 56 to 42 percent. Sixteen percent wanted to send more troops there, and 29 percent wanted to withdraw them all now. Twenty-one percent wanted to keep the same number there, and 26 percent withdraw some.

**Union members** (14 percent of voters) voted for Democrats, 68 to 30 percent. Twenty-three percent of voters resided in a union household. They voted 64 to 34 percent for the Democrats.

**Voters with incomes of \$100,000 or more** (22 percent of the electorate) voted for the Republican House candidates, by 51 to 47 percent. Those making over \$200,000 (5 percent of voters) were slightly more Republican, 53 to 46 percent.

**Women:** The gender gap, at 10 points, was smaller in this election than it has been in recent years. That's because both men and women voted for Democratic House candidates. Fifty-six percent of women voted for Democratic candidates, compared to 51 percent of men.

**X:** Forty-one percent said corruption was **extremely** important to their vote, and 39 percent described terrorism and the economy that way. Thirty-six percent said Iraq was extremely important, 36 percent values issues, 30 percent illegal immigration, and 18 percent said the Saddam Hussein verdict.

Forty-one percent of voters checked **"Yes"** when asked if the country was going in the right direction.

**Zzs:** No time to rest. Campaign 2008 started long ago. The first question about Hillary Clinton and the presidency was asked in 1993.

## 2008: Some Precedents

- ❖ Only one Democrat has been elected president who did not come from the Northeast or the South. President Truman was from Missouri.
- ❖ At no time have two sitting senators faced off in a presidential election.
- ❖ The 2008 presidential election will be the first time in fifty-six years that neither a president nor a vice president will be running.
- ❖ The last member of the House of Representatives elected directly to the presidency was James Garfield in 1880.
- ❖ No senator since John F. Kennedy has been able to make the transition from senator to president. Before Kennedy, the only other senator in the 20th century to become president was Warren G. Harding.

