



# **REASON-RUPE**

## **Public Opinion Survey**

### **SEPTEMBER 2012 TOPLINE RESULTS**

**The Reason-Rupe September 2012 Poll interviewed 1006 adults on both mobile (404) and landline (602) phones, including 208 respondents without landlines. The margin of sampling error is +/- 3.8%. The sample also includes 787 likely voters, based on those who say they “definitely” will vote in the next election. The margin of error for likely voters is +/- 4.3%. The survey was conducted by Princeton Survey Research International. Statistical results are weighted to correct known demographic discrepancies.**

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**FOR RELEASE: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21**

1	Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president?	Likely Voters
	Approve	51%
	Disapprove	46%
	Don't Know/Refused	4%
	Total	100%
2	Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling the economy?	
	Approve	47%
	Disapprove	50%
	Don't Know/Refused	3%
	Total	100%
3	Do you approve or disapprove of the job the U.S. Congress is doing?	
	Approve	16%
	Disapprove	77%
	Don't Know/Refused	8%
	Total	100%
4	Overall, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Mitt Romney?	
	Favorable	41%
	Unfavorable	49%
	Never heard of (VOL.)	1%
	Can't rate (VOL.)	8%
	Refused (VOL.)	1%
	Total	100%
5	Overall, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Barack Obama?	
	Favorable	52%
	Unfavorable	45%
	Never heard of (VOL.)	1%
	Can't rate (VOL.)	2%
	Refused (VOL.)	1%
	Total	100%

6	Overall, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Gary Johnson?	
	Favorable	7%
	Unfavorable	14%
	Never heard of (VOL.)	65%
	Can't rate (VOL.)	11%
	Refused (VOL.)	2%
	Total	100%
7	If the 2012 presidential election were held TODAY and the candidates were (Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats,) and (Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan, the Republicans,) for whom would you vote?	
	Barack Obama/Joe Biden	48%
	Mitt Romney/Paul Ryan	43%
	Vote for someone else (VOL.)	2%
	Would not vote (VOL.)	1%
	Don't Know/Refused	6%
	Total	100%
8	IF DID NOT CHOOSE ANY TICKET: As of TODAY, do you LEAN more toward Obama and Biden, the Democrats, or Romney and Ryan, the Republicans?	
	Obama/Biden	36%
	Romney/Ryan	22%
	Neither/Other (VOL.)	28%
	Don't Know/Refused	14%
	Total	100%
9	COMBINED 2-WAY RACE: If the 2012 presidential election were held TODAY and the candidates were Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, and Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan, the Republicans, for whom would you vote?	
	Obama-Biden/Lean Obama-Biden	52%
	Romney-Ryan/Lean Romney-Ryan	45%
	Neither/Other/Wouldn't vote	3%
	Undesignated	1%
	Total	100%

10	And if the 2012 presidential election were held TODAY and the candidates were Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, and Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan the Republicans, and Gary Johnson and Jim Gray the Libertarians, for whom would you vote?	
	Barack Obama/Joe Biden	49%
	Mitt Romney/Paul Ryan	40%
	Gary Johnson/Jim Gray	6%
	Vote for someone else (VOL.)	1%
	Would not vote (VOL.)	<1%
	Don't Know/Refused	4%
	Total	100%
11	IF DID NOT CHOOSE ANY TICKET: As of TODAY, do you LEAN more toward (Obama and Biden, the Democrats,) or (Romney and Ryan, the Republicans,) or Johnson and Gray, the Libertarians?	
	Obama/Biden	12%
	Romney/Ryan	22%
	Johnson/Gray	2%
	Neither/Other (VOL.)	17%
	Don't Know/Refused	48%
	Total	100%
12	COMBINED 3-WAY RACE: And if the 2012 presidential election were held TODAY and the candidates were Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, and Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan the Republicans, and Gary Johnson and Jim Gray the Libertarians, for whom would you vote? (Combined with leaners)	
	Obama-Biden/Lean Obama-Biden	49%
	Romney-Ryan/Lean Romney-Ryan	42%
	Johnson-Gray/Lean Johnson-Gray	6%
	Neither/Other/Wouldn't vote	1%
	Undesignated	2%
	Total	100%
13	In general, would you say you are better off or worse off than you were four years ago?	
	Better off	44%
	Worse off	41%
	About the same (VOL.)	14%
	Don't Know/Refused	1%
	Total	100%

14	Do you favor or oppose raising taxes on households making over \$250,000 a year?	
	Favor	57%
	Oppose	39%
	Don't Know/Refused	5%
	Total	100%
15	Do you think raising taxes on households making more than \$250,000 a year will ...	
	Primarily help the economy	45%
	Primarily hurt the economy	25%
	or have no impact?	27%
	Don't Know/Refused	4%
	Total	100%
16	Do you think raising taxes on households making more than \$250,000 a year would make the tax system...	
	More fair	43%
	Less fair	21%
	or not make much of a difference?	32%
	Don't Know/Refused	4%
	Total	100%
17	Do you think raising taxes on households making more than \$250,000 a year will close the federal budget deficit...	
	Completely	3%
	A lot, but not completely	20%
	Only a little	38%
	Not at all	34%
	Don't Know/Refused	5%
	Total	100%
18	Last year, the government collected about \$1.8 trillion dollars in income tax revenue. If you were to estimate, about what PERCENTAGE of this total tax revenue do you think the top 5 percent of households probably contributed? Would you say...	
		66%
	<1%	3%
	1% to less than 20%	29%
	20% to less than 40%	19%
	40% to less than 60%	15%
	60% to less than 80%	11%
	80% or more	8%
	Don't Know/Refused	16%
	Total	100%

19	What PERCENTAGE of total federal income tax revenue do you think the top 5 percent of households should contribute? Would you say...	
	<1%	2%
	1% to less than 20%	23%
	20% to less than 40%	32%
	40% to less than 60%	16%
	60% to less than 80%	7%
	80% or more	4%
	Don't Know/Refused	15%
	Total	100%

20	What about the lowest 50 percent of households by income. What PERCENTAGE of total federal income tax revenue do you think they probably contributed?	
	<1%	10%
	1% to less than 20%	38%
	20% to less than 40%	22%
	40% to less than 60%	10%
	60% to less than 80%	6%
	80% or more	4%
	Don't Know/Refused	11%
	Total	100%

21	What PERCENTAGE of total federal income tax revenue do you think they should contribute?	
	<1%	5%
	1% to less than 20%	43%
	20% to less than 40%	26%
	40% to less than 60%	11%
	60% to less than 80%	2%
	80% or more	2%
	Don't Know/Refused	11%
	Total	100%

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about Medicare, the government health insurance program for seniors and the disabled.

22	Do you, yourself, currently receive Medicare?	
	Yes	27%
	No	73%
	Don't Know/Refused	<1%
	Total	100%

23	If you were to estimate, do you think most people receiving Medicare get benefits worth...	
	More money than they paid into the system	35%
	Less than they paid into the system	34%
	Receive about the same amount as they put in	23%
	Don't Know/Refused	8%
	Total	100%
24	Which comes closest to your view?	57%
	The government should pay for retirement health insurance benefits for all seniors	55%
	The government should pay for retirement health insurance benefits only for low-income seniors?	35%
	Don't Know/Refused	10%
	Total	100%
25	To control the costs of Medicare, do you think the government needs to make (major) changes to Medicare, make (minor) changes to Medicare, or that government doesn't need to control the costs of Medicare?	
	Major changes	42%
	Minor changes	36%
	No need for changes	17%
	Don't Know/Refused	5%
	Total	100%
26	The most recent Medicare Trustees report found that the taxes paid into the Medicare system will not cover all of the program's costs by 2024. If this occurs and there are no other options, would you favor...	
	Raising taxes to keep the Medicare program as it is [OR]	55%
	Reducing Medicare benefits to lower the costs?	31%
	Don't Know/Refused	14%
	Total	100%
27	Would you be willing to accept reductions to your current or future Medicare benefits if you were guaranteed to receive benefits at least equal to the amount of money that you and your employer contribute into the system?	
	Yes	68%
	No	25%
	Don't Know/Refused	7%
	Total	100%

Several proposals have been made to lower the costs of the Medicare program. I'd like to ask you about two of them.

- 28 (One proposal/another proposal) would create a board to identify what it views as non cost-effective medical treatments and would reduce or eliminate payments to doctors and health insurance companies for these services. Supporters say this would lower Medicare's costs and ensure that seniors don't have to pay more money out of pocket. Opponents say it would result in shortages and fewer medical innovations.

Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

Favor	44%
Oppose	45%
Don't Know/Refused	11%
Total	100%

Do you think this plan is likely or unlikely to cause shortages and less medical innovation?

Likely	51%
Unlikely	38%
Don't Know/Refused	11%
Total	100%

- 29 (One proposal/another proposal) would introduce competition among health insurance companies by giving seniors a credit to purchase the health insurance plan of their choice from private companies or the government. Supporters say this would lower Medicare's costs and ensure that seniors have more health care choices. Opponents say it would result in seniors paying more money out-of-pocket for their own health care.

Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

Favor	48%
Oppose	47%
Don't Know/Refused	5%
Total	100%

30

Do you think this plan is likely or unlikely to cause seniors to pay more for their health care?

Likely	61%
Unlikely	33%
Don't Know/Refused	6%
Total	100%

31	If you had to choose between the two Medicare proposals I just mentioned, would you favor...	
	The plan with the payment board [or]	37%
	The plan with the credit program?	48%
	Don't Know/Refused	16%
	Total	100%
32	Please tell me which statement you agree with more:	
	People like me should be primarily responsible for saving enough money to pay for our own health care needs in retirement	45%
	People like me should primarily expect help from the government to pay for health care in retirement.	48%
	Don't Know/Refused	7%
	Total	100%
33	Do you think Americans generally...	
	Have an equal opportunity to succeed [OR]	59%
	Do not have an equal opportunity to succeed?	39%
	Don't Know/Refused	1%
	Total	100%
34	Do you think that the fact that some people in the United States are rich and others are poor...	
	Represents a problem that needs to be fixed [or]	35%
	Is an acceptable part of our economic system?	61%
	Don't Know/Refused	4%
	Total	100%
35	Do you think it is or is not the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences in income between people with high incomes and those with low incomes?	
	It is the government's responsibility	29%
	It is not the government's responsibility	67%
	Don't Know/Refused	4%
	Total	100%
36	In your opinion, do most poor people in this country have...	
	A very good chance of escaping from poverty [or]	42%
	Very little chance of escaping poverty?	51%
	Don't Know/Refused	7%
	Total	100%

37	In the future, when children reach your age, do you think they'll have...	
	More opportunities to get ahead	27%
	The same opportunities to get ahead [or]	29%
	Fewer opportunities to get ahead?	37%
	Don't Know/Refused	7%
	Total	100%
38	Do you think the federal government has too much influence on your life, not enough influence, or about the right amount of influence on your life?	
	Too much	55%
	Not enough	7%
	About the right amount	36%
	Don't Know/Refused	2%
	Total	100%
39	Would you like to see Congress pass more laws, fewer laws, or about what it's doing now?	
	More laws	27%
	Fewer laws	45%
	About what it's doing now	21%
	Don't Know/Refused	7%
	Total	100%
40	Would you favor or oppose a law that would allow Congress to conduct an annual internal review of the Federal Reserve?	
	Favor	70%
	Oppose	21%
	Don't Know/Refused	10%
	Total	100%
	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.	
41	Please tell me which comes closer to your own opinion...	
	The less government the better [or]	49%
	There are more things government should be doing	48%
	Don't Know/Refused	3%
	Total	100%

42	Please tell me which comes closer to your own opinion...	
	We need a strong government to handle today's complex economic problems [or]	49%
	People would be better able to handle today's problems within a free market with less government involvement.	49%
	Don't Know/Refused	2%
	Total	100%
43	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?	
	Government should promote traditional values	42%
	Government should not favor any particular set of values	55%
	Don't Know/Refused	3%
	Total	100%
44	Thinking about your overall political philosophy, would you describe yourself as...	
	Conservative,	31%
	Moderate	21%
	Liberal	15%
	Libertarian	4%
	Progressive	8%
	Something else	16%
	Don't Know/Refused	4%
	Total	100%
45	{DERIVED} Ideological Groups	
	Libertarian	24%
	Conservative	26%
	Liberal	26%
	Communitarian	24%
	Total	100%
46	In politics today, do you consider yourself a [RANDOMIZE: Republican, Democrat], an Independent, or what?	
	Republican	28%
	Democrat	36%
	Independent	29%
	Or what? (INTERVIEWER: INCLUDE 'OTHER' AND 'NONE' HERE)	3%
	[DO NOT READ] Don't know/Refused	3%
	Total	100%

47	AMONG NON-PARTISANS: Do you LEAN more towards the [RANDOMIZE: Republican Party or the Democratic Party?	
	Republican	40%
	Democratic	37%
	Independent/don't lean to either party (VOL.)	18%
	Other party (VOL.)	<1%
	[DO NOT READ] Don't know/Refused	4%
	Total	100%
48	PARTY IDENTIFICATION: INDEPENDENTS SORTED	
	Republican/Lean Republican	42%
	Democratic/Lean Democratic	50%
	Independent/Other	7%
	Undesignated	2%
	Total	100%
49	Do you consider yourself to be a supporter of the Tea Party movement or not?	
	Supporter	31%
	Not a supporter	60%
	Don't Know/Refused	9%
	Total	100%
50	GENDER	
	Male	46%
	Female	54%
	Total	100%
51	AGE	
	18-24	8%
	25-34	16%
	35-44	16%
	45-54	20%
	55-64	19%
	65+	20%
	Total	100%

52	What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?	
	< High School	8%
	High School	27%
	Some College	30%
	College	23%
	Post-Grad	12%
	Don't Know	1%
	Total	100%
53	Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban or some other Spanish background? ; What is your race? Are you white, black, Asian, or some other race?	
	Caucasian	72%
	African-American	11%
	Latino	12%
	Other	5%
	Total	100%
54	What is your household income category? Please stop me when I reach your category.	
	<\$30,000	20%
	\$30,000-\$45,000	17%
	\$45,000-\$60,000	14%
	\$60,000-\$75,000	10%
	\$75,000-\$110,000	15%
	\$110,000+	14%
	DK/Ref	9%
	Total	100%
55	Thinking about 10 years from now, what do you expect your annual household income to approximately be?	
	< \$30,000 per year	13%
	\$30,000-\$45,000	12%
	\$45,000-\$60,000	9%
	\$60,000-\$75,000	8%
	\$75,000-\$90,000	5%
	\$90,000-\$110,000	8%
	\$110,000-\$150,000	3%
	\$150,000-\$250,000	6%
	\$250,000+	10%
	DK/Refused	25%
	Total	100%

56	RECODED: Thinking about 10 years from now, what do you expect your annual household income to approximately be?	
	Expect Lower Income	22%
	Expect Same Income	24%
	Expect Higher Income	54%
57	Which of the following best describes your current employment status?	
	Employed Full Time	42%
	Employed Part Time	11%
	Small Business Owner	6%
	Taking Care of Home and Family	7%
	Retired	22%
	Student	2%
	Unemployed	6%
	Disabled (VOL)	2%
	DK/Ref	1%
	Total	100%
58	AMONG EMPLOYED: Are you employed by local, state, or the federal government?	
	Yes	18%
	No	80%
	Don't Know/Refused	2%
	Total	100%
59	What is your religious preference? Is it Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, some other religion, or no religion?	
	Protestant	51%
	Catholic	26%
	Jewish	2%
	Muslim	1%
	Other (SPECIFY)	2%
	No Religion (includes Atheists and Agnostics)	14%
	Don't Know/Refused	3%
	Total	100%
60	Would you describe yourself as a 'born-again' or evangelical Christian?	
	Yes, Evangelical	33%
	No, Not Evangelical	67%
	Total	100%

61 Aside from weddings and funerals, How often do you attend religious services? Would you say

Once a Week or More	40%
A few times a month	15%
A few times a year	25%
Never	18%
Don't Know/Refused	2%
Total	100%