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Over Two-thirds of Republicans Think President Biden Should be Impeached if the GOP Retakes the House, According to New National UMass Amherst Poll

Economic concerns dominate voters' views toward the midterm elections, while Biden and Trump may to be headed toward a presidential rematch in 2024

Topline results and crosstabs for the poll can be found at www.umass.edu/poll

AMHERST, Mass. – The results of a [new national University of Massachusetts Amherst Poll](http://www.umass.edu/poll) released today show that more than two-thirds of Republicans believe that the House of Representatives should impeach President Joe Biden, if the GOP retake the House in this fall's midterm elections.

While just over one-third of the poll's 1,000 respondents (34%) say that a GOP-controlled House should impeach Biden, 68% of Republicans and Trump voters and 66% of conservatives all would like to see the President charged by Congress for treason, bribery or other high crimes and misdemeanors, the formal criteria for impeachment laid out in the Constitution. Asked if they think that a Republican-controlled House actually will impeach Biden, 44% of the poll's respondents said they think it will, while over half of Republicans (53%) said they think it will.

“The decision to impeach a president was once viewed as a last resort to reign in a president who pushed or broke through the boundaries of our laws, values and ethics,” says [Tatishe Nteta](http://www.umass.edu/poll), associate professor of political science at UMass Amherst and director of the poll. “Today, impeachment is no longer a final option, but one of many weapons to be used in an era of rampant partisan polarization to gain an upper hand on one's partisan opponents. With a number of Republican members of Congress calling to impeach President Biden, the chorus will likely grow louder if and when the Republican Party takes control of the U.S. House in 2022.”

Looking Ahead to the Midterm Elections

“Super-majorities of Democrats and Republicans both say they are energized going into the 2022 midterm election season,” [Jesse Rhodes](http://www.umass.edu/poll), professor of political science at UMass Amherst and associate director of the poll, says. “With partisans of all stripes excited about the election, we could be in for very closely fought campaigns this fall. A lot will

hinge on whether and to what extent Democratic and Republican candidates are successful in turning out their voters during the campaign.”

Asked to gauge their own level of excitement for the midterm elections on a scale of 0-100, Republicans rated themselves an average of 79, while Democrats scored themselves an average of 73. Independents, however, rate themselves at an average of just 47. Democrats believe Republicans are more excited about the elections (69) than Republicans think Democrats are (44).

“In the 2018 midterm, turnout was at its highest level since 1914 with close to 120 million Americans going to the polls,” Nteta says. “Our results suggest that the days of low voter turnout in midterm elections may be over with Americans on both sides of the partisan divide expressing excitement to vote in 2022 and expressing their belief that the results of the 2022 midterm will be important for the nation’s future.”

Far and away, the poll finds that the economy is the top issue on voters’ minds. Nearly one-third of all respondents (32%), nearly half of Republicans (45%) and more than a third of independents (37%) tabbed the economy as their most important issue when making their candidate choice in the midterms. Meanwhile nearly identical proportions of Democrats cited the economy (22%), climate change (20%) and abortion (18%) as their top issue heading into this November’s election. The poll was taken just days after the draft majority opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*, the Supreme Court case challenging *Roe v. Wade*, was leaked to the media.

Two years after the COVID pandemic shattered the U.S. economy and killed a million Americans, and with hospitalizations once again increasing nationally, COVID-19 ranks near the very bottom among the poll respondents’ concerns. Just 3% overall say that managing the pandemic is the most important issue in determining who they will vote for in the 2022 midterm, tied with education and race relations, and slightly behind Supreme Court appointments, crime and taxes. Amidst escalating tensions between the West and Russia over the war in Ukraine, just 1% of respondents said foreign policy was the most important issue for them when considering candidates.

“The economy tops Americans’ list of the issues that will be most important in making their decisions at the ballot box in the midterm elections, and with inflation at its highest level since the early 1980s this is very bad news for Democrats,” says Rhodes. “Democrats already face likely losses in Congress during the midterms, and if inflation doesn’t cool off soon those losses could be very serious.”

“Given skyrocketing inflation, the downward turn in the stock market, and continued problems with the supply chain, it is no surprise that concerns about the economy top our list of the most important issues in the 2022 midterm election,” Nteta says. “With six months until Election Day, President Biden and the Democratic Party will need to address and hopefully solve these issues or they could lose control of both the House and the Senate to a resurgent Republican Party.”

The poll does give Democrats some hope, however. In a generic matchup, respondents indicate they would be more likely to vote for a Democratic candidate over a Republican candidate, 44-38, to represent their congressional district, while generic Democratic candidates carry a 13-point lead (46-33) among respondents in states facing a Senate battle this fall. Support for Democratic Senate candidates has actually increased since UMass Polls conducted in [April 2021](#) (+2) and [December 2021](#) (+4), while support for Republican Senate candidates in the new poll is five points lower than both of last year's UMass Polls. About one in five respondents indicated that they don't know which party's candidate they would vote for in either their House (19%) or Senate (21%) races.

“If the past is any indication, then President Biden and the Democratic Party will likely lose seats in the U.S. Congress if not total control of both the House and the Senate,” says Nteta. “However, our results suggest that all is not lost, with Democratic candidates in both the House and Senate holding on to slim leads over their Republican opponents. With six months until Election Day, it looks like the fight for control of Congress may not comport with our historical expectations.”

Among non-partisan demographic groups, Republicans lead Democrats only among whites (+10 House, +2 Senate), respondents age 55 and older (+11 House, +6 Senate) and independents (+10 House, +20 Senate) although more than half of the poll's independent respondents are undecided in each race. Republican House candidates also hold a five-point lead among respondents with a high school education or less, although they trail Democrats by one point on the Senate side among the same demographic group.

“Partisan polarization on the basis of education continues,” Rhodes notes. “While those with a high school degree or less prefer Republicans by a slim margin, those with college degrees and above strongly favor Democrats. This polarization poses a challenge for Democrats: while well-educated Americans donate more funds and often serve in leadership roles, they are a significantly smaller group than those with less education. Democrats often struggle to maintain an identity and messaging that simultaneously appeals to many less-well-educated Americans as well as the intellectual elite.”

“A common refrain in American politics over the course of the last 22 years is that ‘elections matter,’” Nteta adds. “Whether it is the decision to go to war, the revamping of health care, or who sits on the Supreme Court, the party that controls the presidency and Congress wield enormous power over the everyday lives of Americans. In an era of rife partisan strife that does not show any signs of decline, overwhelming majorities of Americans now view the next federal election as important not only for the future of the nation (75%), but their political party (80%) and the Supreme Court (63%).”

Looking Ahead to the 2024 Presidential Contest

“The focus on the economic woes of the nation do not bode well for the Democratic Party or President Biden,” Nteta says. “If voters continue to view the economy as the central issue in the 2022 midterm election, then it is likely that they will vote the Democratic ‘bums’ out at the midterms and potentially President Biden in 2024.”

Biden leads the pack among Democratic voters with 33% naming him as their preferred party torchbearer in the 2024 presidential election, well ahead of Sen. Bernie Sanders (17%) and Vice President Kamala Harris (12%). Biden's support is down from the December 2021 UMass Poll, which had Biden as the top choice of 40% of Democrats, but the new poll included the option of respondents to choose "Someone Else" other than the list of seven potential options. Ten percent of respondents chose this option and the December poll did not offer such a choice.

On the Republican side, the clear frontrunner for the nomination in 2024 remains former President Donald Trump, who holds a 29-point advantage over Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis among GOP voters. Trump holds the identical 55% support he had in the December UMass Poll, but DeSantis has improved his standing by six points over the past five months, from 20% to currently having the backing of 26% of his party's voters.

"Even after all of the revelations of his complicity in the January 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol, many Republicans still exhibit strong loyalty toward Donald Trump," Rhodes says. "But Ron DeSantis remains a credible contender for the 2024 Republican nomination, and he is clearly positioning himself for a run. If he declares formally – and is willing to weather the full force of Trump's disapproval – he could give Trump a real run for the nomination."

"Back to the Future?," Nteta asks. "The more things change, the more they stay the same, and it looks as if 2024 could see a rematch of 2020, where Biden finds himself seeking a second term by facing his old foe, Donald Trump."

Methodology

This [University of Massachusetts Amherst Poll](#) of 1,000 respondents nationwide was conducted by YouGov May 5-9. YouGov interviewed 1,056 total respondents who were then matched down to a sample of 1,000 to produce the final dataset. The respondents were matched to a sampling frame on gender, age, race and education. The frame was constructed by stratified sampling from the full 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) one-year sample with selection within strata by weighted sampling with replacement, using the person weights on the public use file.

The matched cases were weighted to the sampling frame using propensity scores. The matched cases and the frame were combined and a logistic regression was estimated for inclusion in the frame. The propensity score function included age, gender, race/ethnicity and years of education. The propensity scores were grouped into deciles of the estimated propensity score in the frame and post-stratified according to these deciles.

The weights were then post-stratified on 2016 and 2020 Presidential vote choice, and a four-way stratification of gender, age (4-categories), race (4-categories) and education (4-categories) to produce the final weight.

The margin of error within this poll is 3.5%.

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