

Cooperative Congressional Election Study

# COMMON CONTENT

August 15, 2006

## Pre-Election

[Fielded in three stages – late September, mid October, late October]

***Dialogue Box.*** What would you like to tell us about the way things are today?

1. What is the Most Important Problem facing the country today?

War in Iraq  
Terrorism  
Education  
Health Care and Health costs  
Corruption in Government  
Energy Supply/Gas and Oil Prices  
Economy and Jobs  
Rising Prices  
Poverty  
Housing  
Immigration  
Crime  
Drug Abuse  
Taxes/Deficit  
Social Security and pensions  
Abortion  
Gay Marriage  
Pollution and the Environment  
Other, Please State:[     ]

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

Approve  
Disapprove  
Not Sure

If Approve/Disapprove, Do you:  
Approve/Disapprove strongly  
Approve/Disapprove somewhat

3. In general, do you think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican or Independent?

3a. If Democrat or Republican, how strongly do you feel about your party?

Strong D/R, Weak D/R.

3b. If Independent, do you lean toward one of the parties?

If so which one? D or R.

4. Would you say that OVER THE PAST YEAR the nation's economy has gotten worse, stayed about the same, or gotten better?

Much better  
Better  
About Same  
Worse  
Much Worse  
Not Sure

5. Now thinking about your state's economy, would you say that over the past year, your state's economy has gotten worse, stayed about the same, or gotten better?

Much better  
Better  
About Same  
Worse  
Much Worse  
Not Sure

5-prime. Do you think it was a mistake to invade Iraq?

6. Do you approve or disapprove of the way [name] is handling his/her job as Governor of [state]?

Approve  
Disapprove  
Not Sure

If Approve/Disapprove, Do you:

Approve/Disapprove strongly  
Approve/Disapprove somewhat

7. Do you happen to remember the party affiliation of the Governor of your state?

Democrat  
Republican  
Independent  
Don't Know

Your state has two United States Senators -- [Name1] and [name2].

8. Do you approve or disapprove of the way [name1] is handling his/her job as U. S. Senator for [state]?

Approve  
Disapprove  
Not Sure

If Approve/Disapprove, askDo you:

Approve/Disapprove strongly  
Approve/Disapprove somewhat

9. Do you happen to remember the party affiliation of Senator [name1]?

Democrat  
Republican  
Independent  
Don't Know

10. Do you approve or disapprove of the way [name2] is handling his/her job as U. S. Senator for [state]?

- Approve
- Disapprove
- Not Sure

If Approve/Disapprove, ask Do you:

- Approve/Disapprove strongly
- Approve/Disapprove somewhat

11. Do you happen to remember the party affiliation of Senator [name2]?

- Democrat
- Republican
- Independent
- Don't Know

Your area is also represented in the U. S. House of Representatives by [name].

12. Do you approve or disapprove of the way [name] handles his/her job as a member of Congress?

- Approve
- Disapprove
- Not Sure

(If Approve/Disapprove, Do you:

- Approve/Disapprove strongly
- Approve/Disapprove somewhat

13. Do you happen to remember the party affiliation of your Representative in the House of Representatives?

- Democrat
- Republican
- Independent
- Don't Know

Now we'd like to ask you about several issues.

14. There has been some discussion about abortion during recent years. Which one of the opinions on this page best agrees with your view on this issue?

BY LAW, ABORTION SHOULD NEVER BE PERMITTED.

THE LAW SHOULD PERMIT ABORTION ONLY IN CASE OF RAPE, INCEST, OR WHEN THE WOMAN'S LIFE IS IN DANGER.

THE LAW SHOULD PERMIT ABORTION FOR REASONS OTHER THAN RAPE, INCEST, OR DANGER TO THE WOMAN'S LIFE, BUT ONLY AFTER THE NEED FOR THE ABORTION HAS BEEN CLEARLY ESTABLISHED.

BY LAW, A WOMAN SHOULD ALWAYS BE ABLE TO OBTAIN AN ABORTION AS A MATTER OF PERSONAL CHOICE.

OTHER (SPECIFY) [VOL]

14a. How important is this issue to you? Very Important, Important, Somewhat Important, Not Important.

15. Some people think it is important to protect the environment even if it costs some jobs or otherwise reduces our standard of living. Other people think that protecting the environment is not as important as maintaining jobs and our standard of living.

Which is closer to the way you feel, or haven't you thought much about this?

Much more Important to Protect Environment Even if Lose Jobs and Lower Standard of Living

Environment Somewhat more Important

About the Same

Economy Somewhat More Important

Much More Important to Protect Jobs Even if Environment Worse

15a. How important is this issue to you?

16. Now, we'd like to ask you about Social Security. A proposal has been made that would allow people to put a portion of their Social Security payroll taxes into personal retirement accounts that would be invested in private stocks and bonds.

Do you FAVOR this idea, OPPOSE it, or NEITHER FAVOR NOR OPPOSE it?

IF R FAVORS INVESTING SOCIAL SECURITY FUNDS/  
IF R OPPOSES INVESTING SOCIAL SECURITY FUNDS:  
Do you [favor/oppose] it STRONGLY or NOT STRONGLY?

IF NEITHER, Do you lean toward FAVORING it, lean toward OPPOSING it, or don't you lean either way?

16a. How important is this issue to you?

17. Some people think that if a company has a history of discriminating against blacks when making hiring decisions, then they should be required to have an affirmative action program that gives blacks preference in hiring. What do you think?

Should companies that have discriminated against blacks have to have an affirmative action program?

Strongly support  
Affirmative Action

Strongly Oppose  
Affirmative Action

17a. How important is this issue to you?

18. For each of the following reasons, would you approve of the use of U.S. military troops? Please check all that apply:

- To ensure the supply of oil
- To destroy a terrorist camp
- To intervene in a region where there is genocide or a civil war
- To assist the spread of democracy
- To protect American allies under attack by foreign nations
- To help the United Nations uphold international law
- None of the above

Now we'd like to ask you about the coming elections.

One way that people talk about politics in the United States is in terms of liberal, conservative, and moderate. We would like to know how you view the parties and candidates using these terms. The scale below represents the ideological spectrum from very liberal to very conservative.

{Widget} [Query: Should the widget have a don't know box on the bottom?]

19. Where would you place yourself on this line?

20. Where would you place the Democratic party and the Republican party?

[randomize order of the following]

{New Widget}

21. Where would you place [House Candidate 1] and [House Candidate 2]?

{New Widget}

22. Where would you place [Senate Candidate 1] and [Senate Candidate 2]?

22a. Where would you place [Senator 2, who is not running for election this year,] [and Senator 1 – if retiring]?”

{New Widget}

23. Where would you place [Governor Candidate 1] and [Governor Candidate 2]?

[If no governor election, “Where would you place [Governor]?”]

24. Do you intend to vote in the November election?

No

Not Sure

Yes

I already voted, absentee or early

25. For which candidate do you intend to vote in the race for US House? [If already voted, for whom did you vote?]

26. For which candidate do you intend to vote in the race for U. S. Senate? [If already voted, for whom did you vote?]

27. For which candidate do you intend to vote in the race for Governor? [If already voted, for whom did you vote?]

As you know, Senators and Representatives in Washington regularly have to decide how to vote on issues affecting the country. We'd like to ask you about how you would vote on some of these same issues as well as how you think your representative voted.

28. First, we'd like to ask about a proposal in Congress to ban a type of late-term abortion sometimes called "partial-birth abortion." Some argue that late-term abortion is a barbaric procedure and should be banned. Others argue that late-term abortions are extremely uncommon and used only in exceptional circumstances best determined by a doctor, not the Congress. The proposed legislation could also be the opening to a broader ban on abortion.

28a. How about you? If you were faced with this decision, would you vote for or against banning late-term abortion?

For (that is, to ban late-term abortion)

Against (that is, not to ban late-term abortion)

Don't Know

28b. How about Senator [name1]? Do you think he/she voted for, or against banning late-term abortion?

For (that is, to ban late-term abortion)

Against (that is, not to ban late-term abortion)  
Don't Know

28c. How about Senator [name2]? Do you think he/she voted for, or against banning late-term abortion?

For (that is, to ban late-term abortion)  
Against (that is, not to ban late-term abortion)  
Don't Know

29. Now we'd like to ask about whether the government should fund stem cell research.

Some politicians argue that this research may lead to cures for diseases and disabilities affecting large numbers of Americans, and should be funded. Others argue that a potential human life has to be destroyed in order to use these cells, and funding it would be unethical.

29. a. What do you think? If you were faced with this decision, would you vote for or against funding the research?

29. b. How about your Senator [name 1]? Do you think he/she voted for or against funding the research?

29. c. How about your Senator [name 2]? Do you think he/she voted for or against funding the research?

**NOTE: H.R.810; Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005** This bill would permit federal funds to be used to support medical research into therapies derived from embryonic stem cells. Funds would be restricted to research on human embryos slated to be destroyed by fertility clinics.

Senate: 63-37; R 19-36; D 43-1; I 1-0. July 18 2006

House: 238-194; R: 50-180; D 187-14; I 1-0 May 24 2006

30. Now we'd like to ask you about a proposal that the president begin phased redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq starting this year and submit to Congress by the end of 2006 a plan with estimated dates for continued phased withdrawal.

Some politicians argue that setting out a plan to withdraw would make Iraqis take responsibility for their country and become more independent of the U.S. Others argue that it is too early to start withdrawing, and that doing so would make terrorists grow bolder.

30a. What do you think? If you were faced with this decision, would you vote for or against a plan to start withdrawing troops this year?

30b. How about [Senator 1]? Do you think he/she voted for or against this plan?

30c. How about [Senator 1]? Do you think he/she voted for or against this plan?

**Levin amendment no. 4320** that would express the sense of Congress urging the president to begin phased redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq starting in 2006 and to submit to Congress by the end of 2006 a plan with estimated dates for continued phased withdrawal. Rejected 39-60: R 1-54; D 37-6 (ND 36-3, SD 1-3); I 1-0. June 22, 2006. [Note: There is also the Kerry amendment, which was more extreme, and there was not a comparable measure in the House.]

31. Another issue is illegal immigration. One plan considered by the Senate would offer illegal immigrants who already live in the U.S. more opportunities to become legal citizens.

Some politicians argue that people who have worked hard in jobs that the economy depends should be offered the chance to live here legally. Other politicians argue that the plan is an amnesty that rewards people who have broken the law.

31. a. What do you think? If you were faced with this decision, would you vote for or against this proposal?

31. b. How about your Senator [name 1]? Do you think he/she voted for or against this proposal?

31. c. How about your Senator [name 2]? Do you think he/she voted for or against this proposal?

**Immigration Overhaul -- Passage. (in Sen.) S2611** Passage of the bill that would overhaul U.S. immigration policies and offer a path to citizenship for most illegal immigrants in the country. It would subdivide illegal immigrants into three groups based on how long they had been in the United States. Illegal immigrants in the country more than five years would be able to stay and earn citizenship; those here between two and five years would have three years to file paperwork for a temporary work visa, after which they would be eligible for permanent legal residency; and those here less than two years would have to return to their native country and go through normal channels if they want to return. It would create a guest worker program that could accommodate an additional 200,000 immigrants a year. It also would authorize increased border security and enforcement provisions, including a requirement for businesses to verify documents

of all prospective employees through an electronic system managed by the Department of Homeland Security. Passed 62-36: R 23-32; D 38-4 (ND 34-4, SD 4-0); I 1-0. May 25, 2006.

NOTE: The House considered a very different bill.

32. Now we'd like to ask about a proposal to increase the federal minimum wage from \$ 5.15 to \$6.25 within the next year and a half.

Some politicians argue that the wage should be increased because it hasn't changed since 1997 and many workers still live in poverty. Other politicians argue that raising the wage might force small businesses to cut jobs and would hurt the economy.

32. a. What do you think? If you were faced with this decision, would you vote for or against increasing the minimum wage?

32. b. How about your Senator [name 1]? Do you think he/she voted for or against increasing the minimum wage?

32. c. How about your Senator [name 2]? Do you think he/she voted for or against increasing the minimum wage?

**Fiscal 2006 Transportation-Treasury-Housing Appropriations -- Minimum Wage Increase. (in Sen.) HR3058** Kennedy, D-Mass., motion to waive the Budget Act with respect to the Bond, R-Mo., point of order against the Kennedy amendment no. 2063. The Kennedy amendment would increase the minimum wage to \$5.70 six months after the bill's enactment and to \$6.25 one year Motion rejected 47-51: R 4-51; D 42-0 (ND 38-0, SD 4-0); I 1-0 . A three-fifths majority vote (60) of the total Senate is required to waive the Budget Act. (Subsequently, the chair upheld the point of order, and the amendment fell.) Oct. 19, 2005.

33. Last, we'd like to ask about cutting taxes on the money people make from selling investments, also referred to as capital gains. This past year the Senate considered a bill to extend capital gains tax cuts passed in 2001.

Some politicians argue that these tax reductions make the economy strong and encourage people to invest more. Others argue that the plan would mostly benefit people who are already rich and that any tax cuts should be shared more fairly among all taxpayers.

33. a. What do you think? If you were faced with this decision, would you vote for or against these tax cuts?

33. b. How about your Senator [name 1]? Do you think he/she voted for or against increasing these tax cuts??

33. c. How about your Senator [name 2]? Do you think he/she voted for or against increasing these tax cuts??

**Tax Reconciliation -- Conference Report. (in Sen.and HR) HR4297** Adoption of the conference report on the bill that would extend about \$70 billion in tax cuts over a five-year period. Reduced tax rates on capital gains and dividends would be extended through 2010. It would extend through 2009 a tax provision that allows small businesses to write off up to \$100,000 in capital investments in the year they are made. It would extend for one year and set higher alternative minimum tax exemption amounts for 2006 of \$62,550 for a joint return, \$42,500 for individuals, and \$31,275 for married individuals who file separate returns.

Adopted in House (thus sent to the Senate) 244-185: R 229-2; D 15-182 (ND 5-141, SD 10-41); I 0-1. May 10, 2006.

Adopted in Senate (thus cleared for the president) 54-44: R 51-3; D 3-40 (ND 1-38, SD 2-2); I 0-1. May 11, 2006.

**If time:**

34. Now we'd like to ask about a new free trade agreement that reduces barriers to trade between the U.S. and countries in Central America.

Some politicians argue that the agreement allows America to better compete in the global economy and would create more stable democracies in Central America. Other politicians argue that it helps businesses to move jobs abroad where labor is cheaper and does not protect American producers.

34. a. What do you think? If you were faced with this decision, would you vote for or against funding the research?

34. b. How about your Senator [name 1]? Do you think he/she voted for or against funding the research?

34. c. How about your Senator [name 2]? Do you think he/she voted for or against funding the research?

**Central American Free Trade Agreement -- Passage. (in H.R.) HR3045**

Passage of the bill that would implement a free trade agreement between the United States and Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua and a separate pact with the Dominican Republic. It also would eliminate customs duties on all Passed

217-215: R 202-27; D 15-187 (ND 7-144, SD 8-43); I 0-1. July 28, 2005 (in the session that began and the Congressional Record dated July 27, 2005.). July 27, 2005.

Central American Free Trade Agreement -- Passage (in Sen.) S1307

Passage of the bill that would implement a free trade agreement between the United States and Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic. It also would eliminate customs duties on all originating goods traded among  
Passed 54-45: R 43-12; D 10-33 (ND 7-32, SD 3-1); I 1-0. June 30, 2005.

Doug – can we get these on at the end?

Which of these statements best describes you?

I am an immigrant to the USA and a naturalized citizen

I am an immigrant to the USA but not a citizen

I was born in the USA but at least one of my parents is an immigrant

My parents and I were born in the USA but at least one of my grandparents was an immigrant

My parents, grandparents and I were all born in the USA

We'd like to know whether you or someone in your immediate family is currently serving or has ever served in the U.S. military. Immediate family is defined as your parents, siblings, spouse, and children. Please check all boxes that apply.

I am currently serving in the U.S. military

I have immediate family members currently serving in the U.S. military

I previously served in the U.S. military but I am no longer active

Members of my immediate family have served in the U.S. military but are no longer active

Neither myself nor any members of my immediate family have ever served in the U.S. military

# Post-Election

[Fielded the week following the election]

1. How long have you lived at your current address?

- Less than one month.
- One month to six months
- Seven months to a year
- 1 - 2 years
- 3 - 4 years
- 5 years or longer
- Don't Know

Alternative1.

2. In any election, some people are not able to vote because they are sick, or busy, or have some other reason, and others do not want to vote. Did you vote in the election on Tuesday November 7, 2006?

- No
- Yes
- Don't Know

3. How did you vote? Did you vote in person on election day at a precinct, in person before election day, or by mail?

- In person on election day (at polling booth or precinct)
- In person before election day
- Voted by mail
- Don't Know
- I did not vote

4. Were you asked to show picture identification, such as a driver's license, at the polling place this November?

- Yes
- No
- If Yes, were you then allowed to vote? Yes/No.

5. Was there a problem with your voter registration when you tried to vote?

- No
- Yes

If yes, were you allowed to vote?

I voted,  
I was allowed to voting using a provisional ballot,  
No, I was not allowed to vote

At the midterm elections candidates for many offices were chosen. We'd like to ask you about a few of the choices you faced.

[Randomize Order]

6. For whom did you vote for U.S. House of Representatives?

List names; plus I did not vote in this race and I did not vote and Not Sure

7. For whom did you vote for Governor?

8. For whom did you vote for U.S. Senator?

9. In the race for representative in the [state name] state [lower house chamber name] (that is the lower house of the state of [state name]) did you vote for the Democrat or the Republican?

10. In politics, do you think of your self as a Democrat, a Republican or Independent?

10a. If Democrat or Republican, how strongly do you feel about your party?

Strong D/R, Weak D/R.

10b. If Independent, do you lean toward one of the parties?

If so which one? D or R.

One way that people talk about politics in the United States is in terms of left, right, and center, or liberal, conservative, and moderate. We would like to know how you view the parties and candidates using these terms. The scale below represents the ideological

spectrum from very liberal to very conservative. The most centrist American is exactly at the middle.

{Widget} [Query: Should the widget have a don't know box on the bottom?]

11. Where would you place yourself on this line?

12. Where would you place the Democratic party and the Republican party?

{New Widget}

13. Where would you place [House Candidate 1] and [House Candidate 2]?

{New Widget}

14. Where would you place [Senate Candidate 1] and [Senate Candidate 2]?

14a. Where would you place [Senator 2, who is not running for election this year,] [and Senator 1 – if retiring]?”

{New Widget}

15. Where would you place [Governor Candidate 1] and [Governor Candidate 2]?

[If no governor election, “Where would you place [Governor]?”]

16. If your state were to have a budget deficit this year it would have to raise taxes on income or sales or cut spending, such as on education, health care, welfare, and road construction. What would you prefer more raising taxes or cutting spending? Choose a point along the scale from 100% from Taxes Increases (and no spending cuts) to 100% from Spending Cuts (and no Tax Increases). The point in the middle means that any the budget should be balanced with equal amounts of spending cuts and tax increases.

Widget: scale from all from tax increases to all from spending cuts

17. If the state had to raise taxes, which taxes should it increase? Suppose that your state government has to raise some combination of sales taxes and individual income taxes in the coming year. What share of the tax increase should come from increased income taxes and what share from increased sales taxes? Choose a point along the scale from 100% from sales (and none from income) to 100% from income (and none from sales). The point in the middle means that any increase in taxes should come equally from sales and income taxes.

Widget: scale from all from 100% Sales to 100% Income

18. The federal budget is currently running a \$300 billion deficit. If the Congress were to balance the budget it would have to consider cutting defense spending, cutting domestic spending, and raising taxes.

18a. What would you most prefer that Congress do to balance the budget – cut domestic spending, cut military spending, or raise taxes?

Cut Defense

Cut Domestic

Raise Taxes

18b. What do you least want Congress to do?

Cut Defense

Cut Domestic

Raise Taxes

[Alternative is a click and drag list.]

19. Have you ever been called for jury duty?

19a. If yes, did you serve on a jury or were you excused?

20. During the past year did you donate money to any candidates for office or to political party committees?

20a. If yes, approximately how much did you contribute over the last year [      ]

21. During the past three months, did you try to persuade anyone else to vote or how to vote?

22. During the November election campaign, did a candidate, party organization, or other organization contact you to get you to vote?

23. Based on the overall results of the election, which party will have the most seats after the newly elected U.S. House of Representatives is sworn in?

the Democrats, or

the Republicans

Not Sure

24. Based on the overall results of the election, which party will have the most seats after the newly elected U.S. Senate is sworn in?

the Democrats

the Republicans

There will be 50 Democrats and 50 Republicans

Not Sure