



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on December 13, 2011

Amid Surging Fear of Big Government, Americans Say Third Party Needed

According to a *USA Today*/Gallup [survey](#) released on December 13, around 54 percent of Americans nationwide would like to see the rise of an alternative to the two major parties. The number was 52 percent in the top 12 “battleground” states, according to a report about the poll.

The reason: The GOP and Democratic parties “do such a poor job that a third major party is needed,” survey participants said. Support for a third party is even higher among moderate and liberal Republicans, as well as moderate and conservative Democrats, *USA Today* reported. Barely a third of conservative Democrats and liberal Republicans were “enthusiastic” about voting for President in 2012, the poll found.



Meanwhile, a separate [poll](#) released by Gallup this week revealed that fear of “big government” is far more widespread than worries about “big business” or “big labor.” When asked which of the three represented the biggest threat to America, 64 percent said an overbearing government — close to the record of 65 percent reached in 1999 and 2000.

Despite Occupy Wall Street’s claims of representing the “99 percent,” only about 26 percent of respondents identified big business as the most serious threat. Big labor, meanwhile, was considered the top danger by just 8 percent.

The surge in fears over big government was led by Democrats weary of the Obama administration, the survey revealed, showing a steady increase since he took office. Almost half of Democrats now say big government is the primary threat, up from 32 percent just two years ago, but down from 55 percent in 2006 under then-President George W. Bush.

In 2011, 64 percent of independents and 82 percent of Republicans identified big government as the primary danger. Both camps’ fears of out-of-control government power are up slightly from 2009.

Since the question has been asked beginning in 1965, big government has always occupied the top position as the most frightful danger. Fears about big business reached their highest level — 38 percent — in 2002 following the Enron and WorldCom scandals, Gallup reported.

Analysts [said](#) the increasing threat of big government has helped fuel the Tea Party, which generally calls for limiting governmental power. And while Occupy Wall Street has garnered a lot of press lately, the poll results suggest the largely anti-business movement may have missed its best opportunity to garner broad public support.

Of course, many Americans realize that big business and big labor are only dangerous if and when they



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are able to seize the power of big government to obtain special benefits at public expense. Even as Americans' fear of big government grows, however, so does the size and scope of government — by leaps and bounds.

But with an electorate increasingly fed up with failed big-government policies like the “stimulus” plan and the seemingly never-ending wars, that could change.

“If polls teach us anything, it’s that public opinion is perennially changing, but I still think this demonstrates in some small way the American people’s astute understanding — at a time of 8.6 percent unemployment — that jobs depend on expanding businesses, whereas increased government very often creates perverse incentives that undermine economic growth,” [noted](#) conservative blogger Tina Korbe. “And that should have electoral implications.”

The three largest third parties in America today are the Libertarian Party, the Green Party, and the Constitution Party. There are, however, countless smaller parties, subscribing to philosophies ranging from Objectivist to Socialist. Still, only two Senators not affiliated with a major party are currently serving in Congress, illustrating the difficulty of running for office without the backing of either the GOP or Democrat establishments.

Analysts said a strong third-party candidate might do well in the 2012 presidential elections — especially if an “establishment” Republican contender wins the nomination. And at least one liberty-minded GOP candidate, former New Mexico Governor Gary Johnson, has indicated that he may run as a Libertarian. Still, others worried that such a scenario could easily help deliver the White House to Obama for another four years.

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