



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on September 29, 2010

Poll Shows Tea Party Strength Grows

According to a recent Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll, the Tea Party movement in America continues to gain strength, much to the chagrin of the Left.

The survey shows that 71 percent of Republicans are self-described Tea Party supporters, with one-third of Independents reported as having an affinity for the movement. Most importantly, Tea Party voters comprise approximately one-third of voters likely to cast ballots in November.

The poll was conducted by Republican pollster Bill McInturff and Democratic pollster Peter Hart. Noting the results of the poll, Hart asserts that the movement isn't a small little segment, but it is a huge part of what's driving 2010.



The Tea Party began as small groups of activists but was almost immediately propelled into a prominent organized movement by the debate and passage of President Obama's healthcare reform law. Today, repealing ObamaCare remains one of the top five priorities of the Tea Party groups.

McInturff describes members of the Tea Party as conservative Republicans who are very ticked-off people. Members of the movement are reportedly frustrated with the business as usual techniques in Washington, and are interested in downsizing the federal government, reducing spending, as well as the national debt, and retaining their personal liberties.

If the midterm elections result in a Republican majority, McInturff notes that the polls results indicate enormous amounts about how limited the interest is going to be in those new majorities to try to seek negotiation with the president or the Democratic leadership.

The momentum of the Tea Party movement was most evidential throughout the recent GOP primaries, where establishment Republicans were ousted by candidates endorsed by the Tea Party, as well as endorsed by Tea Party favorite Sarah Palin. Prime examples of Republicans overthrown by the Tea Party machine are Alaska's Lisa Murkowski and Delaware's Mike Castle, both of whom lost to Tea Party candidates, Joe Miller and Christine O'Donnell respectively.

Of those polled, Republican Tim Bahmer remarked, The Tea Party has to a certain extent scared the Republican Party. From what I've seen of what the Tea Party is saying, I think that could be the change [Republicans] could benefit from.

McInturff noted that the Tea Party movement has effectively reduced the number of people labeling themselves as Republicans. Instead, a substantial chunk of the Republican Party is rebranding themselves.

The poll revealed several disconcerting figures as well. First, the Republicans have lost grip of the nine-



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point lead they held a month ago. When voters were asked which party they would prefer in power, the GOP maintains a three-point edge, 46 percent to 43 percent. Additionally 59 percent of Independents surveyed contend that they are not supporters of the Tea Party movement. Likewise, while 60 percent of the country believes the United States is moving in the wrong direction, President Obama still manages to maintain a 46 percent approval rating.

Fortunately for the GOP, the *Wall Street Journal* reports, Republicans retain major advantages, including a fired-up base. Two thirds of GOP voters say they are intensely interested in the election, compared with about half of Democrats, suggesting that Republican voters are more likely to turn out at the polls. To boot, The tea party is a major driver of the so-called enthusiasm gap, with three-quarters of supporters saying they are intensely interested in the election.

Furthermore, *WSJ* explains that the failing economy continues to work in favor of the Tea Party movement. Seven in 10 adults felt the country remains in recession. And among people who said the recession had a major impact on them and their family, more said they preferred a GOP-controlled Congress to a Democratic-run Congress. One in four adults thought the economy would get worse over the next 12 months. Of that group, two-thirds were people with an affinity for the tea-party movement.

Within the same survey, two-thirds of the self-described Tea Partiers held former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin in high esteem, thrusting Palin into the position of the most popular potential presidential candidate of the Tea Partiers involved in the study. Of 43 candidates backed by Sarah Palin this year, 25 have won.

The poll reveals that other potential Tea Party presidential candidates include former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, and former House Speaker Newt Gingrich.

Note: As originally published, this article incorrectly stated that Palin-endorsed candidates were 25 for 25; the mistake has been corrected.



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