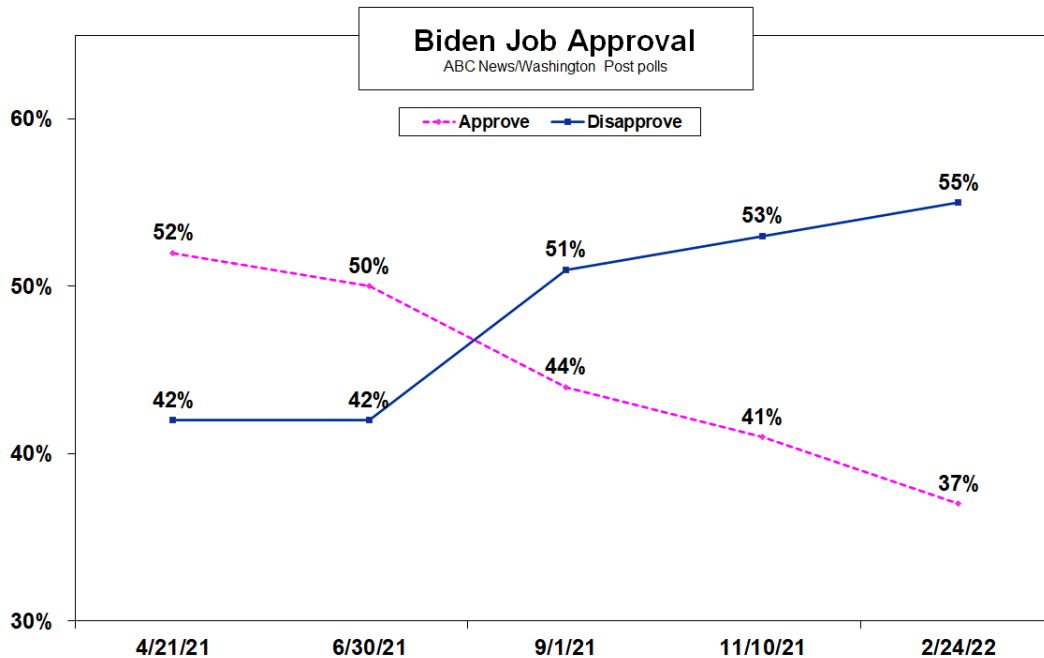


Economic Discontent Slams Biden, Keeps Congressional Democrats in Peril

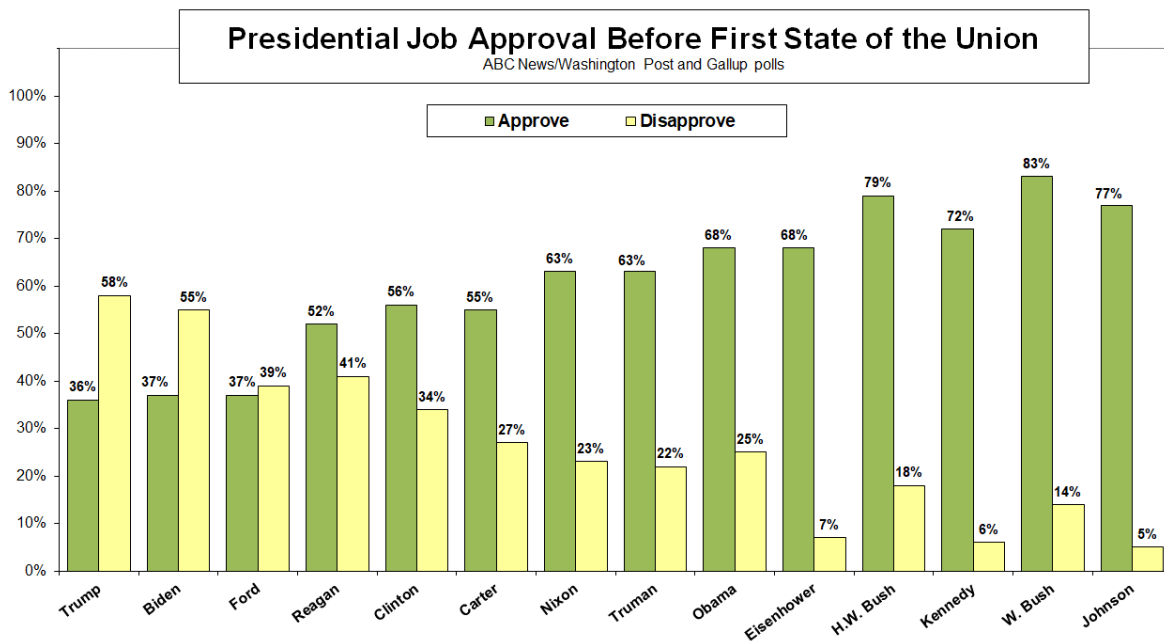
Economic discontent is slamming Joe Biden and his party’s midterm election prospects, with six in 10 Americans experiencing inflation hardships, three-quarters saying the economy’s in bad shape and a nearly 20-point lead for the Republican Party in trust to handle it.

Biden has other problems, with underwater ratings for his handling of the invasion of Ukraine, a split on the pandemic and weak scores on personal attributes including leadership, handling a crisis and mental sharpness. But 40-year-high inflation leads his headaches: By 35-17 percent, Americans are twice as apt to say they’ve gotten worse off than better off under his presidency.

Result: A career-low 37 percent of Americans approve of Biden’s job performance overall, with 55 percent disapproving. That includes just 30 percent approval among political independents and 10 percent from Republicans. Even in his own party, nearly a quarter of Democrats either disapprove of Biden (19 percent) or are withholding judgment (4 percent).

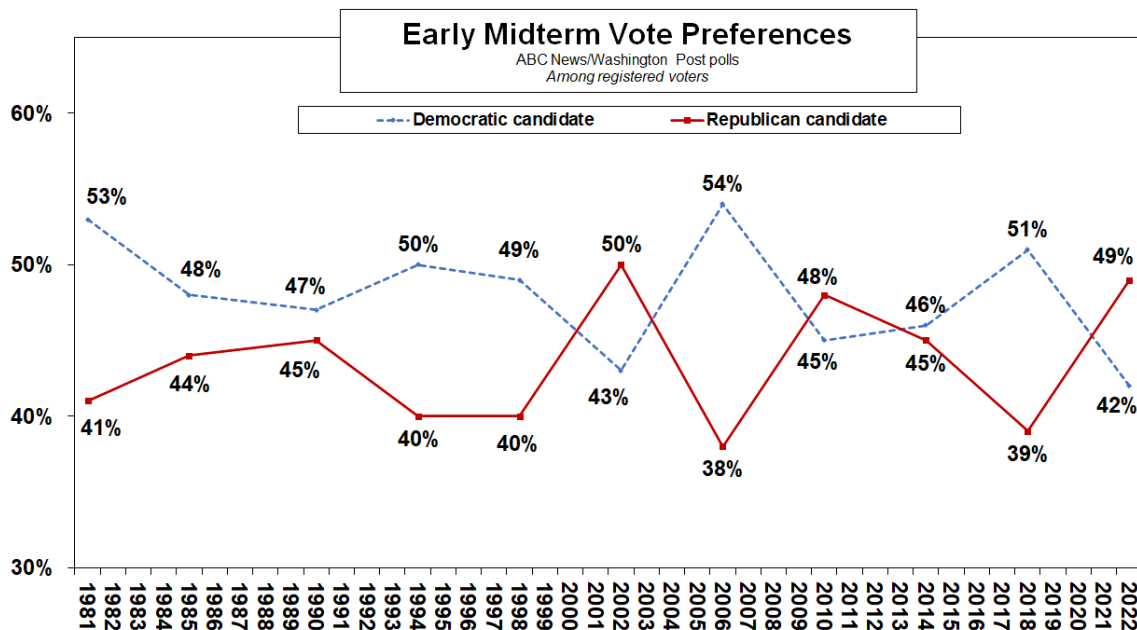


In data since Harry S. Truman, only two presidents have had approval ratings this low heading into their first State of the Union address, which Biden delivers Tuesday – Donald Trump, at 36 percent, and Gerald Ford, 37 percent. Disapproval has been higher, by a nonsignificant 3 percentage points, only for Trump. (More were undecided about Ford, then just five months in office.)



Biden’s fortunes in turn spell trouble for his party in this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#). Republican congressional candidates have a 49-42 percent advantage over Democrats among registered voters, widening to 54-41 percent among those who say they both are registered and certain to vote in November.

The result among registered voters is highly similar to what it was in November, 51-41 percent – as reported at the time, the largest Republican lead in midterm election vote preferences in ABC/Post polls dating back 40 years. In the new data, among independents who are registered to vote – often swing voters – GOP candidates lead by 14 points.



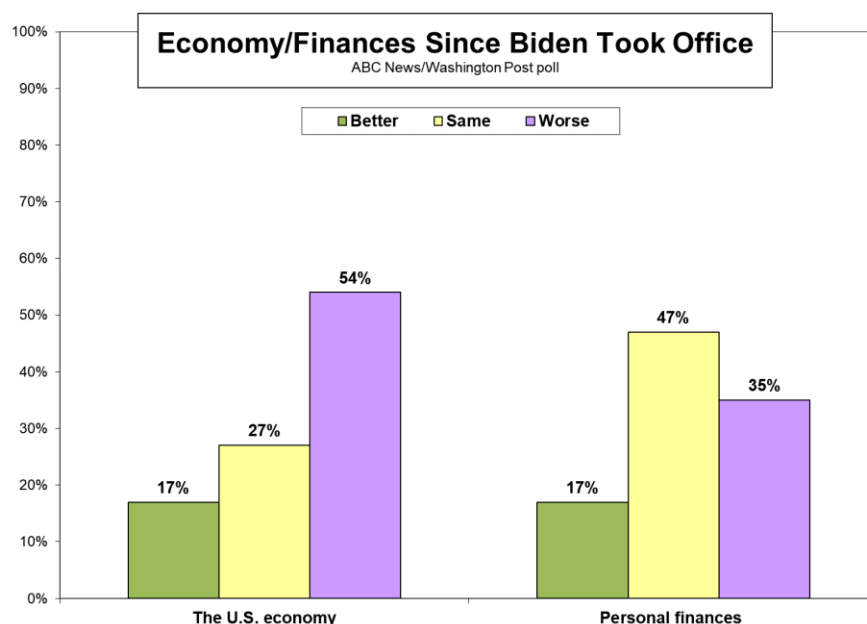
These results are buttressed by a shift in partisan self-identification. In four ABC/Post polls from January through September last year, Democrats outnumbered Republicans by an average of 7 points. In November and again in this poll, by contrast, it's a nonsignificant 1 point.

In accord with vote preferences, Americans by 50-40 percent say they'd rather see the next Congress controlled by the Republicans, to act as a check on Biden, than by the Democrats, to support Biden's agenda. The Democrats led by 16 points on this measure going into Trump's midterm in 2018, when they won 40 seats. It looks more now like it did under Barack Obama in 2014 and 2010, when the Republicans won 13 and 63 seats, respectively.

ECONOMY – Seventy-five percent of Americans rate the economy's condition as not so good or poor, the most in ABC/Post polls since 2013. The public by a 3-1 margin says it's gotten worse rather than better since Biden took office, 54-17 percent (with the rest saying it's stayed the same). That "gotten worse" number is more than double what it was when measured during Trump's presidency in 2019 (22 percent) and 11 points higher than under Obama in 2012.

Personal impacts are apparent as well. As noted, just 17 percent are better off financially now than when Biden took office; twice as many, 35 percent, are worse off. A negative score on this measure has reliably indicated political trouble since Ronald Reagan popularized the concept in his successful 1980 presidential campaign. Among other notable instances, it was negative for George H.W. Bush on his way to losing re-election in 1992, and damaging to Obama early in his presidency as the country struggled out of the Great Recession.

To be sure, there's a political aspect to economic attitudes, particularly when the president is mentioned by name. Fifty-four percent of Republicans say they've gotten worse off under Biden; only 9 percent of Democrats go there. But it's 42 percent among independents, and among Democrats, just 33 percent say they're better off.

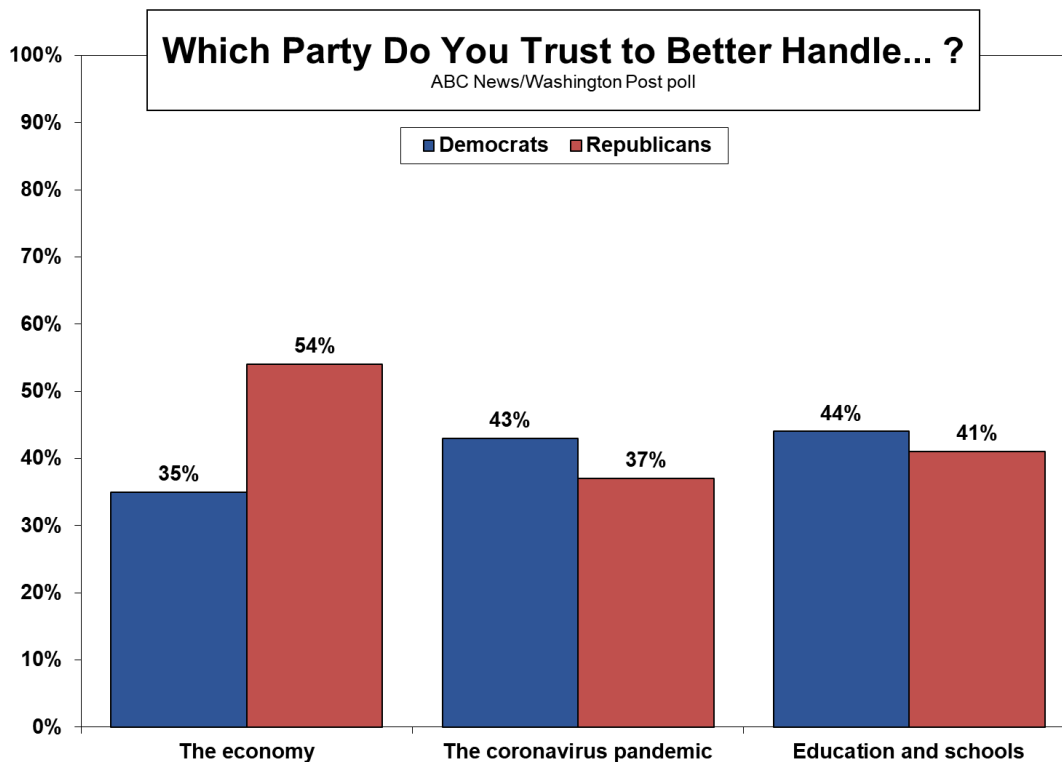


Even with the comparatively robust job market, inflation is a singular irritant. Fifty-nine percent say it's caused hardship for their household; 30 percent call that serious hardship, rising to 43 percent of those with annual household incomes less than \$50,000, a group that encompasses four in 10 adults. Tellingly, Biden's approval rating is down 24 points among these lower-income earners since last June, compared with an 8-point drop among those with higher incomes. (In other groups, Biden's lost 21 points among young adults and 18 points among moderates.)

He has a 37 percent approval rating among all adults for handling the economy, matching his overall job approval; 58 percent disapprove, a steep 21-point hole. More troubling for his party, Americans trust the Republican Party over the Democrats to handle the economy by 54-35 percent.

Notably, Biden doesn't take all the heat for inflation. Fifty percent assign him a great deal or good amount of direct blame for it; more blame corporations trying to increase their profits – 68 percent – and disruptions from the pandemic, 73 percent. Nonetheless, with 7.5 percent annual inflation on his watch, even if indirectly, Biden gets blowback.

OTHER ISSUES and ATTRIBUTES – The economy is the big issue, but not the only one, and on others the Democrats fare less poorly. Americans divide 43-37 percent between the parties in trust to handle the pandemic, a slight 6-point Democratic lead, and 44-41 percent in trust to handle education and schools, not a significant difference.



There's also the matter of Biden's personal attributes, which track generally with his approval overall. Forty-three percent say he can be trusted in a crisis; 52 percent think not. Just 36 percent call him a strong leader, down 7 points since last measured during the 2020 campaign; 59 percent don't see him this way. And 40 percent think he has the mental sharpness it takes to serve effectively, down 11 points from spring 2020; 54 percent think not.

Finally, given his problematic ratings, just 14 percent of Americans say they'd be more likely to vote for a congressional candidate Biden has endorsed, vs. 32 percent less likely. That 18-point net negative score almost exactly matches the net negative impact (19 points, 18 vs. 37 percent) of an endorsement from another political figure – Biden's predecessor, Donald Trump.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone Feb. 20-24, 2022, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,011 adults, including 904 registered voters. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 4.0 percentage points, including the design effect. Partisan divisions are 27-26-40 percent for the full sample, Democrats-Republicans-independents, and 27-27-39 percent for registered voters.

The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling and data collection by Abt Associates of Rockville, Md. See details on the survey's methodology [here](#).

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com. Join our [mailing list](#) to get updates on all new poll releases.

Media contacts: [Van Scott](#) (212-456-7243) or [Caragh Fisher](#) (212-456-3437).

Full results follow.

2c, 8, 9c, 10-12, 21-24 previously released. 18-20 held for release. *= less than 0.5 percent

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Joe Biden is handling his job as president? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
2/24/22	37	20	18	55	11	44	7
11/10/21	41	19	22	53	10	44	6
9/1/21	44	25	19	51	9	42	5
6/30/21	50	30	19	42	7	35	8
4/21/21	52	34	18	42	7	35	6

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Biden is handling [ITEM]?

2/24/22 - Summary table

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
a. the economy	37	58	5
b. the coronavirus pandemic	44	50	5

Trend:

a. the economy

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
2/24/22	37	58	5
11/10/21	39	55	6
9/1/21	45	49	5
4/21/21	52	41	7

b. the coronavirus pandemic

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
2/24/22	44	50	5
11/10/21	47	49	4
9/1/21	52	41	6
6/30/21	62	31	7
4/21/21	64	31	11

3. How likely are you to vote in the congressional election in November - are you absolutely certain to vote, will you probably vote, are the chances 50-50, or less than that?

		Certain to vote	Probably vote	Chances 50/50	Less than 50/50	Don't think will vote (vol.)	Already voted (vol.)	No op.
2/24/22		67	13	10	5	4	NA	1
2/24/22	RV	75	12	9	2	1	NA	*
11/1/18	RV	65	9	8	2	1	14	1
10/11/18	RV	76	12	7	3	*	*	*
8/29/18	RV	75	13	10	2	*	NA	*
4/11/18	RV	67	13	13	5	1		1
1/18/18	RV	62	17	14	5	1		*
11/1/17	RV	62	19	14	3	1		*
7/13/17	RV	66	17	11	4	1	"	1
10/26/14	RV	59	15	11	7	1	6	*
10/12/14	RV	63	15	15	5	2	1	0
9/7/14	RV	71	16	9	2	1	NA	*
6/1/14	RV	74	12	9	4	1		*
4/27/14	RV	68	15	12	4	1	"	*
10/28/10	RV	64	13	11	5	1	7	0
10/3/10	RV	70	15	9	5	2	NA	*
9/2/10	RV	70	14	14	1	1		0
7/11/10	RV	73	13	11	2	*		*
6/6/10	RV	72	14	11	3	*	"	0
11/4/06	RV	70	11	7	4	2	5	*
10/22/06	RV	75	14	7	3	*	1	2

Slight wording differences over time.

4. If the election for the U.S. House of Representatives were being held today, would you vote for (the Democratic candidate) or (the Republican candidate) in your congressional district? Would you lean toward the (Democratic candidate) or toward the (Republican candidate)?

NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE - REG VOTERS

	Dem cand.	Rep cand.	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
2/24/22	42	49	1	3	1	4
11/10/21	41	51	1	4	*	4
11/1/18	50	43	1	3	1	3

10/11/18	53	42	*	2	*	3
8/29/18	52	38	1	3	0	6
4/11/18	47	43	1	3	*	5
1/18/18	51	39	1	2	1	6
11/1/17	51	40	1	3	1	4
10/24/16 LV	47	46	1	1	1	4
10/13/16	48	42	1	3	1	5
5/19/16	45	45	*	3	1	6
10/26/14	47	44	1	2	1	5
10/12/14	46	44	1	3	1	5
9/7/14	46	44	1	4	1	4
6/1/14	47	45	1	3	1	4
4/27/14	45	44	1	2	1	7
3/2/14	46	45	1	3	*	5
1/23/14	45	46	1	3	1	5
12/15/13	47	45	1	4	1	3
10/20/13	48	40	1	5	1	4
5/19/13	48	40	2	4	1	6
10/28/10	49	44	1	2	*	3
10/3/10	47	43	1	3	1	5
9/2/10	45	47	1	2	1	5
7/11/10	46	47	*	2	*	5
6/6/10	47	44	2	2	1	4
4/25/10	48	43	1	2	1	6
3/26/10	48	44	1	2	*	4
2/8/10	45	48	*	3	*	4
10/22/06	54	41	*	1	*	3
10/8/06	54	41	*	1	1	3
9/7/06	50	42	*	3	2	4
8/6/06	52	39	*	2	1	5
6/25/06	52	39	1	3	1	4
5/15/06	52	40	1	3	1	4
4/9/06	55	40	*	2	*	3
1/26/06	54	38	1	3	1	5
12/18/05	51	41	1	3	1	4
11/2/05	52	37	1	4	2	6
7/15/02	47	46	1	1	1	4
1/27/02	43	50	NA	2	1	5
9/6/00	49	42		2	1	6
7/23/00	46	45		3	1	5
2/27/00	45	46	"	2	1	5

Call for full trend.

5. Would you rather see the next Congress controlled by the (Republicans, to act as a check on Biden), or controlled by the (Democrats, to support Biden's agenda)?

	Controlled by Democrats	Controlled by Republicans	No opinion
2/24/22	40	50	11

Compare to:

Would you rather see the next Congress controlled by the (Democrats, to act as a check on Trump), or controlled by the (Republicans, to support Trump's agenda)?

	Controlled by Democrats	Controlled by Republicans	No opinion
10/11/18	55	39	7
8/29/18	60	31	8
7/13/17	53	35	12

Regardless of how you might vote in your own congressional district, do you think it's more important (to have the Democrats in charge of Congress, to help support Obama's

policies), or (to have the Republicans in charge of Congress, to act as a check on Obama's policies)?

	Dems in charge	Reps in charge	No opinion
4/27/14 RV	39	53	8
9/2/10 RV	39	55	6
7/11/10 RV	43	51	6

Which statement comes closer to the way you think: Since the president is a Republican, we need (Republicans in charge of Congress to help support the president's agenda), or since the president is a Republican, we need (Democrats in charge of Congress to act as a check on the president and his agenda).

	Dems in charge	Reps in charge	No difference (vol.)	No opinion
9/26/02 RV	55	36	6	3

6. Which political party, the (Democrats) or the (Republicans) do you trust to do a better job handling [ITEM]?

2/24/22 - Summary table

	Democrats	Republicans	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
a. the economy	35	54	1	7	3
b. the coronavirus pandemic	43	37	2	14	4
c. education and schools	44	41	2	10	3

Trend:

a. the economy

	Democrats	Republicans	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
2/24/22	35	54	1	7	3
11/1/18 RV	39	48	3	7	4
10/11/18 RV	40	47	3	6	3
10/11/18	41	45	3	7	4
10/12/14	37	42	3	13	5
9/7/14	40	45	1	10	4
4/27/14	41	38	2	14	5
3/2/14	41	41	2	12	3
1/23/14	37	44	2	15	3
10/3/10	44	37	4	14	2
9/2/10	42	40	2	15	2
7/11/10	42	34	3	17	5
3/26/10	44	36	3	16	1
2/1/08	52	33	2	10	3
12/9/07	51	33	2	9	5
11/1/07	50	35	3	9	4
9/30/07	51	33	2	11	3
10/22/06 RV	50	41	2	5	2
10/8/06	54	37	3	6	1
9/7/06	50	39	1	7	4
6/25/06	52	39	1	5	3
5/15/06	52	34	3	9	2
4/9/06	49	43	1	4	3
3/5/06	49	40	2	8	2
1/26/06	55	37	2	5	2
11/2/05	56	34	1	8	1
12/15/02	44	45	4	6	1
10/27/02* LV	43	48	3	3	2

9/26/02*	47	39	3	6	5
7/15/02**	38	48	3	6	5
1/27/02**	39	48	5	6	3
4/22/01	47	43	4	4	3

Call for full trend.

**"The economy and jobs"

***"Improving the economy"

b. No trend

c. education and schools

	Democrats	Republicans	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
2/24/22	44	41	2	10	3
11/10/21	44	41	1	9	5
5/15/06*	56	33	3	6	3
11/2/05	55	32	4	7	2
12/15/02	49	40	4	5	2
10/27/02 LV	44	45	4	3	3
9/26/02	46	39	4	5	6
9/1/02**	40	39	6	6	9
7/15/02***	41	41	4	7	7
1/27/02	40	45	8	4	3
4/22/01	48	40	5	5	3
9/28/98	56	35	NA	NA	9
7/12/98	52	31	5	5	7
1/19/98	54	34	4	5	3
7/8/97	51	30	5	9	4
10/23/94	45	30	6	13	6
9/11/94	48	33	6	8	5
2/27/94	53	28	5	11	3
2/2/92	55	29	6	5	5
12/15/91	47	31	6	10	6
3/4/91	39	41	8	9	4
1/16/90	45	36	7	9	3

*5/15/06 and previous: "handling education"

**Post-KFF-Harvard

***7/15/02 and previous: "improving education and the schools"

7. Would you be (more likely) or (less likely) to vote for a candidate for Congress who has been endorsed by [ITEM], or would that make no difference in your vote?

2/24/22 - Summary table

	More likely	Less likely	No difference	No opinion
a. Joe Biden	14	32	52	1
b. Donald Trump	18	37	43	2

9. Do you think Biden [ITEM], or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
a. is a strong leader	36	59	5
b. has the mental sharpness it takes to serve effectively as president	40	54	7

Trend:

a. is a strong leader

	Yes	No	No opinion
2/24/22	36	59	5
5/28/20	43	49	8

b. has the mental sharpness it takes to serve effectively as president

	Yes	No	No opinion
2/24/22	40	54	7
5/28/20	51	43	6

13. Would you describe the state of the nation's economy these days as excellent, good, not so good or poor?

	----- Positive -----			----- Negative -----			No opinion
	NET	Excellent	Good	NET	Not so good	Poor	
2/24/22	24	3	21	75	36	39	1
11/10/21	29	2	26	70	33	38	1
4/21/21	42	4	38	58	37	20	1
9/24/20	40	9	31	59	37	22	1
8/15/20	31	7	24	68	34	33	1
5/28/20	34	8	26	65	40	24	1
9/5/19	56	16	40	43	30	13	1
11/1/18	65	15	49	34	25	9	1
8/29/18	58	12	46	40	31	9	2
1/18/18	58	14	44	40	28	12	2
1/15/17	51	6	45	48	35	14	1
3/29/15	40	2	38	59	40	19	1
1/15/15	41	3	39	58	40	18	1
10/26/14	27	1	26	72	44	28	1
9/7/14	30	1	29	69	42	27	1
4/27/14	29	1	27	71	40	31	1
3/2/14	27	2	26	72	44	28	*
10/20/13	24	2	23	75	45	30	1
9/29/12 RV	18	2	16	81	42	39	*
8/25/12	15	1	14	84	39	45	1
8/5/12*	13	1	12	87	42	44	*
5/20/12	17	1	16	83	47	36	*
2/4/12	11	*	11	89	46	42	*
11/3/11	10	1	9	89	43	47	*
7/17/11	10	1	9	90	40	50	*
6/5/11	11	1	10	89	46	44	*
1/16/11	13	1	12	87	45	41	*
10/28/10	9	*	9	90	41	49	1
10/3/10	9	1	8	90	40	50	*
9/2/10	8	*	7	92	40	53	0
7/11/10	10	1	9	90	44	46	0
6/6/10	12	*	11	88	43	45	0
1/16/09	5	1	5	94	32	62	*
9/22/08	9	*	9	91	34	57	*
4/13/08	10	1	9	90	39	51	*
2/1/08	19	1	18	81	43	38	0
12/9/07	28	3	25	72	40	32	*
11/1/07	35	3	32	64	39	26	*
4/15/07	42	5	37	57	37	20	*
12/11/06	50	7	42	50	36	14	*
10/22/06	55	10	45	45	28	17	*
10/8/06	47	7	40	53	37	16	*
3/5/06	43	5	38	57	37	19	*
1/26/06	40	5	35	60	37	23	*
12/18/05	45	5	39	55	38	17	*
11/2/05	35	3	32	65	36	29	*
9/11/05	40	3	37	59	37	22	1

6/5/05	44	3	40	56	38	19	*
4/24/05	37	2	35	63	44	20	*
9/26/04 RV	46	3	43	53	38	15	1
8/29/04 RV	45	3	41	55	37	18	*
7/25/04	46	4	42	53	39	14	*
6/20/04	45	4	41	55	38	17	*
4/18/04	43	4	39	57	39	18	*
3/7/04	39	2	37	60	38	22	1
1/18/04	42	3	39	58	42	16	0
12/21/03	42	4	39	57	41	16	1
10/29/03	33	1	32	67	45	23	*
9/13/03	30	2	27	70	45	25	*
8/11/03	32	2	30	68	43	25	*
4/30/03	35	1	34	64	46	19	*
2/9/03	28	1	27	72	49	23	*
1/20/03	25	1	25	74	48	26	1
12/15/02	35	1	33	65	44	21	1
11/4/02 LV	28	1	27	72	55	17	1
11/3/02 LV	27	1	26	72	56	17	1
11/2/02 LV	29	1	28	71	54	17	*
9/26/02	31	2	28	69	50	19	*
7/15/02	39	3	36	61	44	17	1
2/21/02	30	1	29	69	51	18	*
1/27/02	31	1	29	69	50	19	*
9/20/01	38	3	35	60	47	14	2
9/9/01	33	1	32	66	47	19	*
7/30/01	50	3	46	50	39	12	*
4/22/01	50	3	47	50	40	9	*
1/15/01	70	10	59	29	24	6	1
10/27/00 LV	86	24	61	14	11	3	*
10/26/00 LV	86	24	61	14	11	3	*
6/11/00	74	17	57	26	19	6	*
2/27/00	80	25	55	20	14	5	*
10/31/99	74	18	56	26	18	7	1
9/2/99	76	19	57	23	16	6	1
3/14/99	80	22	58	19	15	4	1
11/1/98	73	12	61	26	21	5	1
11/1/98 LV	78	13	65	22	19	3	*
10/13/97	61	12	49	39	27	11	*

*Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation

14. Would you say the country's economy has gotten better since Biden became president, gotten worse, or remained about the same? Has it gotten much better/worse or somewhat better/worse?

	----- Better -----			----- Worse -----			Remained	No
	NET	Much	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Much	the same	opinion
2/24/22	17	5	12	54	17	38	27	1

Compare to:

Would you say the country's economy has gotten better since Trump became president, gotten worse, or remained about the same?

	Better	Worse	Same	No opinion
10/30/19	44	22	31	3

Now thinking about the country's economy as a whole, would you say the economy has gotten better since Obama became president, gotten worse, or remained about the same?

	Better	Worse	Same	No opinion
9/9/12 RV	32	43	24	1

15. Would you say you, yourself, are better off financially than you were when Biden became president, not as well off, or in about the same shape financially?

	Better off	Not as well off	About the same	No opinion
2/24/22	17	35	47	1
Trump:				
11/1/18	25	13	60	2
Obama:				
9/22/16	29	25	45	2
1/15/15	25	25	49	2
10/12/14	22	30	46	2
10/28/12 LV	22	33	45	1
9/9/12 RV	20	32	47	*
5/20/12 RV	17	31	51	1
1/15/12 RV	15	31	53	1
11/3/11 RV	13	35	51	1
9/1/11 RV	14	36	50	1
7/18/09	8	27	64	*
G.W. Bush:				
10/5/04 LV	30	30	40	1
10/29/03	22	27	50	1
9/13/03	21	30	49	*
8/11/03	17	25	58	1
Clinton:				
6/11/00	34	14	50	2
7/19/98	30	15	52	3
3/1/98	32	9	57	1
6/23/96	29	22	49	0
2/27/94	12	17	71	*
G.H.W. Bush:				
1/17/93	27	28	44	1
8/9/92	22	32	45	1
6/7/92	19	32	49	*
3/11/92	20	33	46	1
2/2/92	19	31	49	*
12/15/91	17	33	49	*
10/21/91	20	27	53	1
3/4/91	19	18	63	1
Reagan:				
1/16/89	42	18	39	1
1/18/87	37	23	40	1
9/8/86	41	20	39	1

16. How much, if at all, do you blame [ITEM] for the current rate of inflation, meaning rising prices - a great deal, a good amount, not much or not at all?

2/24/22 - Summary table

	--- More blame -----			--- Less blame ----			No opinion
	NET	Great deal	Good amount	NET	Not much	Not at all	
a. Biden	50	33	18	48	24	24	1
b. corporations trying to increase profits	68	40	28	30	21	9	2
c. disruptions from the coronavirus pandemic	73	43	30	26	17	9	1

Trend:

a. Biden

	--- More blame -----			--- Less blame ----			
	NET	Great deal	Good amount	NET	Not much	Not at all	No opinion
2/24/22	50	33	18	48	24	24	1
11/10/21	48	34	14	50	29	21	2

b-c. No trend.

17. Have recent price increases caused any financial hardship for you or others in your household, or not? Has that been a serious hardship, or not serious?

	----- Yes -----				
	NET	Serious	Not serious	No	No opinion
2/24/22	59	30	29	40	1

*** END ***