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State Governments Viewed Favorably as Federal Rating Hits New Low

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State Governments Viewed Favorably as Federal Rating Hits New Low

Even as public views of the federal government in Washington have fallen to another new low, the public continues to see their state and local governments in a favorable light. Overall, 63% say they have a favorable opinion of their local government, virtually unchanged over recent years. And 57% express a favorable view of their state government – a five-point uptick from last year. By contrast, just 28% rate the federal government in Washington favorably. That is down five points from a year ago and the lowest percentage ever in a Pew Research Center survey.

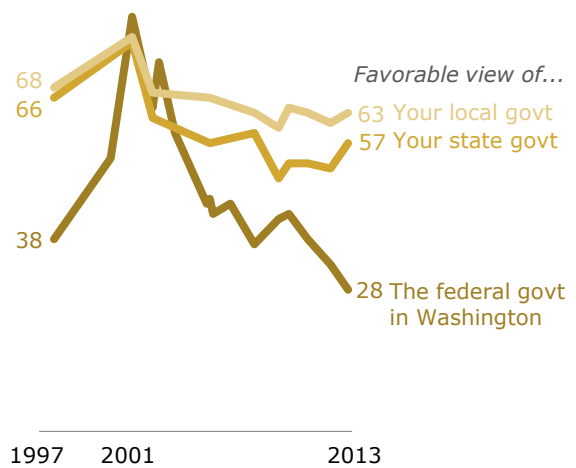
The percentage of Democrats expressing a favorable opinion of the federal government has declined 10 points in the past year, from 51% to 41%. For the first time since Barack Obama became president, more Democrats say they have an unfavorable view of the federal government in Washington than a favorable view (51% unfavorable vs. 41% favorable).

Favorable opinions of the federal government among Republicans, already quite low in 2012 (20% favorable), have fallen even further, to 13% currently.

The national survey by the Pew Research Center, conducted March 13-17 among 1,501 adults, finds positive ratings across party lines for state and local governments overall. But the partisan makeup of the state government matters: Republicans give more positive ratings to GOP-led state governments, while Democrats rate Democratic-led state governments more highly.

Notably, politically divided state governments get positive ratings from members of both parties. In the 13 states with divided governments – those in which the governor and a majority of state legislators are from different parties – majorities of both Republicans and Democrats express favorable opinions of their state governments.

Widening Gap in Views of Federal, State and Local Governments



PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 13-17, 2013.

A sizable majority of Americans (69%) say that their state is currently facing budget problems. However, assessments of state budgets were even more negative two years ago; in February 2011, 81% said their state was encountering budget problems. And while just 30% say that economic conditions in their state are excellent or good, that is nearly double the percentage expressing a positive view of the national economy (16% excellent or good).

Partisan Views of Government

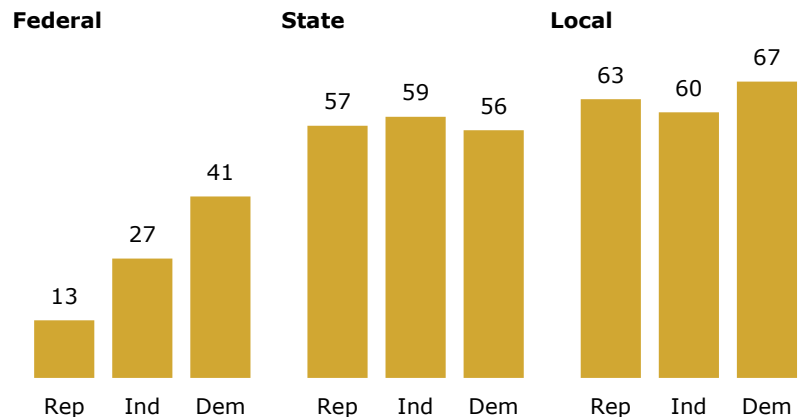
Currently, 41% of Democrats say they have a favorable opinion of the federal government, compared with 27% of independents and just 13% of Republicans. By contrast, state and local governments are viewed favorably across-the-board.

Nearly identical percentages of Democrats (56%), Republicans (57%) and independents (59%) have a favorable opinion of their state's government. Similarly, local governments receive positive ratings from 67% of Democrats, 63% of Republicans and 60% of independents.

While there is partisan agreement in overall ratings of state governments, these opinions differ markedly depending on which party controls the government.

Less Partisan Views of State, Local Governments

% with favorable view of ...



PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 13-17, 2013.

Fully 71% of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents who live in Republican-led states (those with a GOP governor and state legislature) have a favorable opinion of their state government. But just 30% of Republicans living in Democratic-led states view their state governments favorably.

Democrats and Democratic leaners in Democratic-led states express positive views of their state governments (64% favorable). But unlike Republicans, Democrats do not have unfavorable opinions of state governments led by the opposing party. Among Democrats living in Republican-led states, as many have a favorable (50%) as unfavorable (46%) opinion of their state government.

Politically divided state governments receive about the same ratings from Democrats and Democratic leaners (64% favorable) as from Republicans and Republican leaners (58% favorable).

Favorability of State Governments by Party Control

<i>Live in state where governor and majority in both legislative chambers are...</i>	<i>State government favorability among...</i>		
	Total	Rep/ lean R	Dem/ lean D
All Republican (24 states)	%	%	%
Favorable	59	71	50
Unfavorable	36	27	46
Don't know/Other	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100
All Democratic (13 states)			
Favorable	50	30	64
Unfavorable	45	68	30
Don't know/Other	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>
	100	100	100
Divided (13 states)			
Favorable	61	58	64
Unfavorable	33	39	33
Don't know/Other	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 13-17, 2013.
 Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.
 See appendix for full list of state party leadership.

Views of State Governors

Overall, state governors received a positive rating from the public: 55% rate their state's governor favorably, compared with 30% who hold an unfavorable view. Views of state governors in states with a Republican officeholder (55% favorable) are nearly identical to views in states with Democratic governors (56%).

Unlike views of state governments, neither Republicans nor Democrats offer highly negative ratings of their governor, even in cases where the opposing party holds office.

Overall, 43% of Republicans and Republican leaners in states with a Democratic governor rate their state governor favorably, while 48% have an unfavorable view. Opinions among Democrats and leaners in states with an opposing party governor also are mixed: 43% of Democrats in states with a Republican governor express a favorable view of their state governor, 44% an unfavorable one.

Both Republicans and Democrats offer a highly favorable view of their governor in states where their own party is in control (73% of Republicans and Republican leaners, 68% of Democrats and Democratic leaners).

Positive Ratings in Republican-, Democratic-Led States

<i>Live in state where governor is...</i>	<i>Governor favorability among...</i>		
	Total	Rep/ lean R	Dem/ lean D
Republican (30 states)	%	%	%
Favorable	55	73	43
Unfavorable	30	17	44
Don't know/Other	<u>15</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>13</u>
	100	100	100
Democrat (19 states)			
Favorable	56	43	68
Unfavorable	32	48	21
Don't know/Other	<u>12</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>11</u>
	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 28-31, 2013.
 Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.
 See appendix for full list of state party leadership.

Modest Improvement in Views of State Budgets

Nearly seven-in-ten Americans (69%) say their state is experiencing budget problems, down from 81% two years ago. The percentage saying their state does not face budget problems has nearly doubled, from 12% to 21%, during this period.

The percentage saying their state's budget problems are very serious also has dipped, from 36% in February 2011 to 31% currently.

State economic ratings also have shown modest improvement. Three-in-ten (30%) say economic conditions in their state are excellent (3%) or good (27%), up from 23% two years ago.

Ratings of state economic conditions are more positive than national economic ratings. Just 16% describe national economic conditions as excellent or good; this compares with 30% who describe the economy of the state they live in as excellent or good in the current survey.

Respondents in states with a Republican governor offer slightly better economic ratings than those living in states with a Democratic governor. About a third (34%) of those in states with a GOP governor describe economic conditions as excellent or good, compared with 24% of those in states with Democratic governors. Similarly, fewer in Republican-governed states say their state is currently experiencing budget problems (66%) than those in Democratic-governed states (73%).

Less Negative Views of State Budget Problems

	Feb 2011	Mar 2013	Change
<i>Is your state facing budget problems?</i>	%	%	
Yes	81	69	-12
Very serious	36	31	-5
Fairly serious	36	29	-7
Not too serious	8	8	0
Don't know	1	1	0
No	12	21	+9
Don't know	<u>6</u>	<u>10</u>	
	100	100	
<i>State economy is in...</i>			
Excellent/Good shape	23	30	+7
Only fair/Poor shape	77	69	-8
Don't know	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	
	100	100	

PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 28-31, 2013.
Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

More Have Positive Views of Economy in States than in Nation

	National economy	State economy	Nat-State diff
	%	%	
Excellent/Good	16	30	-14
Only fair	43	43	0
Poor	40	26	+14
Don't know	1	<u>1</u>	
	100	100	

PEW RESEARCH CENTER National economy data from March 13-17, 2013; State economy data from March 28-31, 2013.
Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Federal Government's Declining Favorability

Favorable ratings for the federal government rose dramatically after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, but have declined substantially since then. In November 2001, 82% had a favorable opinion of the government and in December 2002, 73% viewed the federal government favorably.

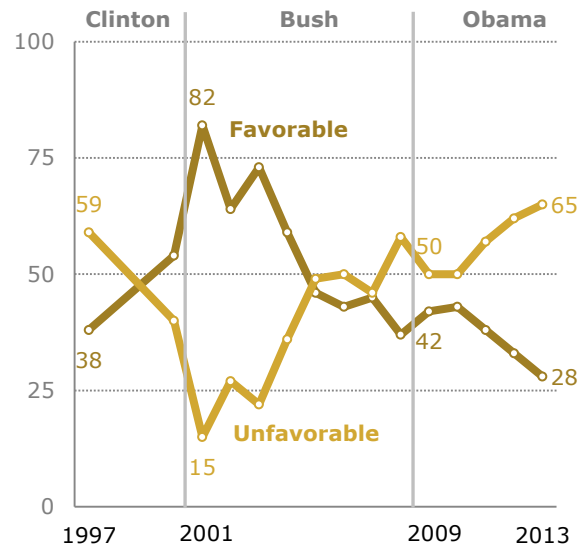
Positive opinions of the government declined through the remainder of George W. Bush's presidency and have continued to fall during the Obama administration. Currently, 28% have a favorable impression of the federal government while 65% have an unfavorable view.

Partisan views of the federal government have shifted depending on which party controls the White House. Currently, Democrats have a more favorable impression of the federal government than do Republicans; during the Bush administration, Republicans expressed more favorable opinions.

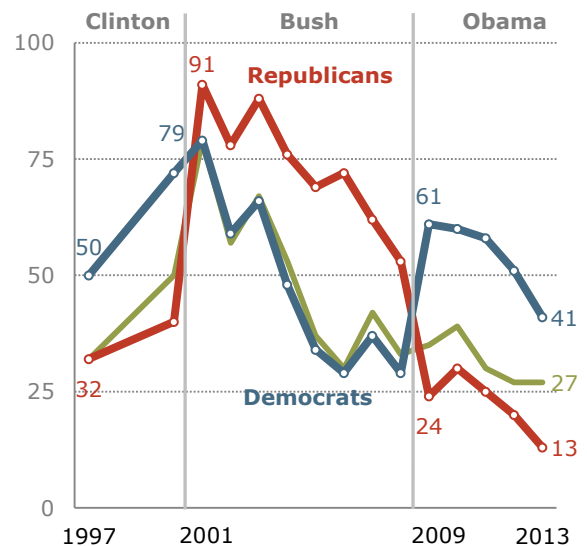
However, there has been a steep decline in the share of Democrats expressing a favorable opinion of the federal government since Obama took office, from 61% in July 2009 to 41% currently. Favorable opinions also have fallen among Republicans over this period, from 24% to 13% — the lowest ever favorable rating among members of either party.

Views of the Federal Government Vary By Administration

View of the federal government in Washington



Percent favorable by party



PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 13-17, 2013.

Appendix: Party of Governors and State Legislatures

States with Republican governors:

AL, AK, AZ, FL, GA, ID, IN, IA, KS, LA, ME, MI, MS, NE, NV, NJ, NM, NC, ND, OH, OK, PA, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, WI, WY

States with Democratic governors:

AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, HI, IL, KY, MD, MA, MN, MO, MT, NH, NY, OR, VT, WA, WV

Republican governors and Republican majorities in both state House and Senate:

AL, AK, AZ, FL, GA, ID, IN, KS, LA, MI, MS, NC, ND, OH, OK, PA, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, WI, WY

Democratic governors and Democratic majorities in both state House and Senate:

CA, CO, CT, DE, HI, IL, MD, MA, MN, OR, VT, WA, WV

Mixed party control of governorship, state House and state Senate:

AR, IA, KY, ME, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NM, NY, RI

Sources: National Conference of State Legislatures, National Governors Association.

About the Surveys

Most of the analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted March 13-17, 2013, among a national sample of 1,501 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (750 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 751 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 385 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by Abt SRBI. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity and region to parameters from the 2011 Census Bureau's American Community Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones (for those with both), based on extrapolations from the 2012 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus...
Total sample	1,501	2.9 percentage points
Republicans	420	5.6 percentage points
Democrats	487	5.2 percentage points
Independents	498	5.1 percentage points
Republican-led states	821	4.0 percentage points
Democratic-led states	413	5.6 percentage points
Divided states	261	7.1 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

Some of the analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted March 28-31, 2013 among a national sample of 1,001 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (500 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 501 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 235 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source and Universal Survey under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see: <http://people-press.org/methodology/>.

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Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,001	3.7 percentage points
Republicans	256	7.4 percentage points
Democrats	339	6.4 percentage points
Independents	319	6.6 percentage points
Republican governor	594	4.8 percentage points
Democratic governor	402	5.9 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
MARCH 2013 POLITICAL SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
March 13-17, 2013
N=1,501

ASK ALL:

Q.5 Would you say your overall opinion of [INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE ORDER OF ITEMS a-c; RANDOMIZE ORDER OF a-c BLOCK WITH ITEM d] is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? [INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE."] How about [NEXT ITEM]? [IF NECESSARY: Just in general, is your overall opinion of [ITEM] very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable?] [INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE."]

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	Total	Very	Mostly	Total	Very	Mostly	Never heard of	Can't rate/Ref
a. The federal government in Washington								
Mar 13-17, 2013	28	4	24	65	30	35	2	5
Apr 4-15, 2012	33	7	26	62	25	37	*	5
Feb 2-7, 2011	38	6	32	57	19	37	*	5
Feb 3-9, 2010	43	6	38	50	16	34	*	7
Jul 22-26, 2009	42	4	38	50	18	31	*	8
April, 2008	37	6	31	58	21	37	1	4
January, 2007	45	7	38	46	15	31	1	8
February, 2006	43	6	37	50	16	34	*	7
December, 2005	46	7	39	49	18	31	*	5
Late October, 2005	45	6	39	48	16	32	*	7
February, 2004	59	10	49	36	11	25	*	5
April, 2003	73	14	59	22	5	17	0	5
December, 2002	64	11	53	27	7	20	*	9
Mid-November, 2001	82	17	65	15	3	12	0	3
Late October, 2000 (RVs)	54	7	47	40	10	30	*	6
October, 1997	38	4	34	59	18	41	0	3
b. Your STATE government								
Mar 13-17, 2013	57	10	47	38	16	22	*	5
Apr 4-15, 2012	52	11	42	42	15	27	*	6
Feb 2-7, 2011	53	10	42	42	14	28	*	5
Feb 3-9, 2010	53	9	44	41	14	27	0	6
Jul 22-26, 2009	50	6	44	44	16	28	*	6
April, 2008	59	9	50	37	16	21	0	4
December, 2005	57	8	49	37	11	26	*	6
December, 2002	62	15	47	31	10	21	1	7
Mid-November, 2001	77	15	62	18	4	14	*	5
October, 1997	66	10	56	29	7	22	*	5
c. Your LOCAL government								
Mar 13-17, 2013	63	12	51	32	12	20	*	5
Apr 4-15, 2012	61	13	48	31	9	22	*	7
Feb 2-7, 2011	63	15	48	32	10	22	1	5
Feb 3-9, 2010	64	11	53	30	10	20	*	6
Jul 22-26, 2009	60	8	52	32	9	23	0	8
April, 2008	63	11	52	33	12	21	1	3
December, 2005	66	12	54	28	10	18	*	6
December, 2002	67	16	51	25	9	16	*	7
Mid-November, 2001	78	15	63	17	4	13	*	5
October, 1997	68	12	56	25	7	18	*	7

QUESTIONS 1, 5d, 6-7, 15a-c, 18, 20-24, 26-29, 35-38, 45-48, 56-57, 61-63, 65, 70-71, 73, 77, 85-92, 98-102 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

NO QUESTIONS 2-4, 8-14, 15d, 16-17, 19, 25, 30-34, 39-44, 49-55, 58-60, 64, 66-69, 72, 74-76, 78-84, 93-97

QUESTION 15e HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	Republican	Democrat	Independent	No preference	Other party	DK/Ref	Rep	Dem
Mar 13-17, 2013	26	33	34	3	1	3	14	15
Feb. 13-18, 2013	22	32	41	2	*	2	15	19
Jan 9-13, 2013	25	32	38	2	*	2	15	16
Dec 17-19, 2012	21	32	38	4	*	4	15	14
Dec 5-9, 2012	23	33	38	3	1	2	14	19
Oct 31-Nov 3, 2012	26	34	34	3	1	3	13	16
Oct 24-28, 2012	28	33	33	4	*	2	12	16
Oct 4-7, 2012	27	31	36	3	1	3	15	15
Sep 12-16, 2012	24	35	36	2	*	2	14	16
Jul 16-26, 2012	22	33	38	4	*	3	14	15
Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012	24	33	37	3	*	3	15	17
Jun 7-17, 2012	24	33	39	2	*	2	17	17
May 9-Jun 3, 2012	24	32	36	4	*	4	13	14
Apr 4-15, 2012	24	31	39	3	*	2	15	15
Mar 7-11, 2012	24	34	36	3	1	2	16	17
Feb 8-12, 2012	26	32	36	4	1	2	13	17
Yearly Totals								
2012	24.7	32.6	36.4	3.1	.5	2.7	14.4	16.1
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

ASK REPUBLICANS AND REPUBLICAN LEANERS ONLY (PARTY=1 OR PARTYLN=1) [N=623]:

TEAPARTY3 From what you know, do you agree or disagree with the Tea Party movement, or don't you have an opinion either way?

Mar 13-17		Feb 13-18	Jan 9-13
<u>2013</u>		<u>2013</u>	<u>2013</u>
43	Agree	36	35
7	Disagree	9	10
47	No opinion either way	52	51
1	Haven't heard of (VOL.)	1	2
1	Refused (VOL.)	3	2

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
March 28-31, 2013, OMNIBUS
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,001

PEW.1, PEW.3a PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**NO QUESTION PEW.2**

PEW.3 Is your overall opinion of **[INSERT NAME; RANDOMIZE]** very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? How about **[NEXT NAME]? [IF NECESSARY: Just in general, is your overall opinion of **[NAME]** very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable?]** **[INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE."]**

	-----Favorable-----			-----Unfavorable-----			(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	Total	Very	Mostly	Total	Very	Mostly	Never heard of	Can't rate/Ref
b. Michael Bloomberg								
March 28-31, 2013	27	5	22	35	17	18	19	19
January 9-13, 2013	30	7	22	27	12	15	22	21
January, 2008	17	4	13	38	13	25	17	28
Gallup: July, 2007	36	--	--	27	--	--	11	28
c. Your state's governor								
March 28-31, 2013	55	15	40	30	15	15	5	9
TREND FOR COMPARISON:								
August 27-September 8, 1998: (INSERT STATE GOVERNOR) ¹	65	22	43	23	9	14	6	6

ASK ALL:

Thinking now about the state you live in...

PEW.4 Would you describe the economy in your state as excellent, good, only fair or poor?

Mar 28-31 2013		Feb 2-7 2011	ABC/Wash. Post Jan 2003 ²
3	Excellent	2	1
27	Good	21	32
43	Only fair	47	45
26	Poor	30	21
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	*	1

¹ Each respondent was read the name of the current governor of their state.

² In 2003 instead of "only fair," the answer category was "not so good."

ASK ALL:

PEW.5 As you may know, some state governments are facing budget problems that have forced them to raise taxes or reduce spending. What about in your state: Is your state government currently facing budget problems, or not? **[IF "DEPENDS," PROBE ONCE WITH: "Just your impression... Is your state government currently facing budget problems, or not?]**

ASK IF STATE FACING BUDGET PROBLEMS (PEW.5=1):

PEW.6 Are these budget problems very serious, fairly serious, or not too serious?

Mar 28-31 <u>2013</u>		Feb 2-7 <u>2011</u>	<i>ABC/Washington Post</i> <u>Jan 2003</u> ³
69	Yes, state facing budget problems	81	82
31	Very serious	36	34
29	Fairly serious	36	37
8	Not too serious	8	10
*	Not a problem (VOL.)	0	*
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	1	1
21	No	12	12
10	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	6	5

³ In 2003 the question read, "As you may know, some state governments are facing budget problems that have forced them to raise taxes and reduce state spending on state programs and services. What about in your state? Is your state government currently facing budget problems, or not?"