

# THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

SEPTEMBER 2013



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>ABOUT THE REPORT</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>REPUBLICAN LEADERS OUT OF SYNC WITH RANK-AND-FILE; TWO-THIRDS OF REPUBLICAN VOTERS WANT THEIR CONGRESSMEN TO “STICK TO PRINCIPLES;” MAJORITY PREFER CANDIDATES WITH “STRONG PRINCIPLES” IN 2014 PRIMARIES</b>                              | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>OBAMACARE REMAINS TOP ISSUE; ONLY 17 PERCENT BELIEVE OBAMACARE WILL HAVE POSITIVE PERSONAL IMPACT; 62 PERCENT PREFER ‘PATIENT-CENTERED’ SYSTEM THAT ALLOWS FOR COMPETITION, CHOICE</b>   | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>NSA AND IRS SCANDALS; LIBERTARIAN VIEWS WITHIN REPUBLICAN PARTY AT HIGHEST LEVEL SINCE 2000; 63 PERCENT CONCERNED ABOUT OBAMACARE RECORD-KEEPING; 73 PERCENT OF REPUBLICANS SELF-IDENTIFY AS FISCALLY CONSERVATIVE, SOCIALLY MODERATE</b>  | <b>10</b> |
| <b>A GENERATION IN FLUX: MILLENNIALS’ VIEWS ON THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT; MAJORITY OF YOUNG VOTERS FAVOR SMALLER GOVERNMENT, FEWER SERVICES, LOWER TAXES; TWO-THIRDS BELIEVE THEIR GENERATION WILL BE “WORSE OFF THAN THE GENERATION BEFORE”</b> | <b>13</b> |
| <b>YOUNGER BLACKS MORE OPTIMISTIC ON PROGRESS TOWARDS MARTIN LUTHER KING’S DREAM; ONE-THIRD OF BLACK VOTERS THINK THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY “TAKES THEM FOR GRANTED”</b>   | <b>16</b> |
| <b>AMERICANS’ VIEW OF GOP: REPUBLICANS ARE FOR LOWER TAXES, JUST NOT FOR THE MIDDLE CLASS; CHALLENGES FOR THE REPUBLICAN BRAND ON TAXES AND SPENDING</b>  | <b>19</b> |
| <b>METHODOLOGY AND DEMOGRAPHICS</b>   | <b>21</b> |
| <b>ENDNOTES</b>   | <b>22</b> |

# ABOUT THE REPORT

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FreedomWorks' Role of Government survey is part of an occasional series of polls that aim to capture voters' attitudes on the role of government and key policy issues.

FreedomWorks is a grassroots service center to a community of over 6 million activists dedicated to advancing the ideas of individual liberty and constitutionally-limited government.



# REPUBLICAN LEADERS OUT OF SYNC WITH RANK-AND-FILE

## **TWO-THIRDS OF REPUBLICAN VOTERS WANT THEIR CONGRESSMEN TO “STICK TO PRINCIPLES;” MAJORITY PREFER CANDIDATES WITH “STRONG PRINCIPLES” IN 2014 PRIMARIES**

In one policy battle after another, Sens. Mike Lee (UT), Ted Cruz (TX), Rand Paul (KY), and Reps. Justin Amash (MI-03) and David Schweikert (AZ-06), are meeting resistance from Republican colleagues. Most recently, Sens. Mike Lee and Ted Cruz have spearheaded an effort to defund Obamacare. One Republican Senator called it the “dumbest idea” he’d ever heard of.

American Crossroads recently circulated a poll asking whether it was a good idea or bad idea for “opponents of the health care reform to risk shutting down the government in an effort to get rid of the law.” This one-sided question wording got 64 percent of Americans to say it’s a “bad idea.” Yet many Republicans dodged townhall meetings over the August recess to avoid voter anger on Obamacare.

A new FreedomWorks’ poll shows that Republican leaders’ instincts may be better than Crossroads’ poll. As members return from recess, Republican leaders risk becoming out of sync with rank-and-file Republican voters, and may well face opposition in 2014 primaries if they continue on this path.

### **PREFER PRINCIPLES TO COMPROMISE**

**TEA PARTIERS (72% - 20%)**  
**REPUBLICANS (67% - 27%)**  
**TRUST NEITHER PARTY (55% - 37%)**  
**INDEPENDENTS (50% - 42%)**

Many Republicans ran successfully on promises to stop Obamacare. Poll respondents were asked whether they want their Congressmen to “keep their promises” and “stick to principles” versus “compromise in a bipartisan way to get things done.” Approximately two-thirds—or 67 percent—of Republican and Republican-leaning independent voters want their Congressman to stick to principles.

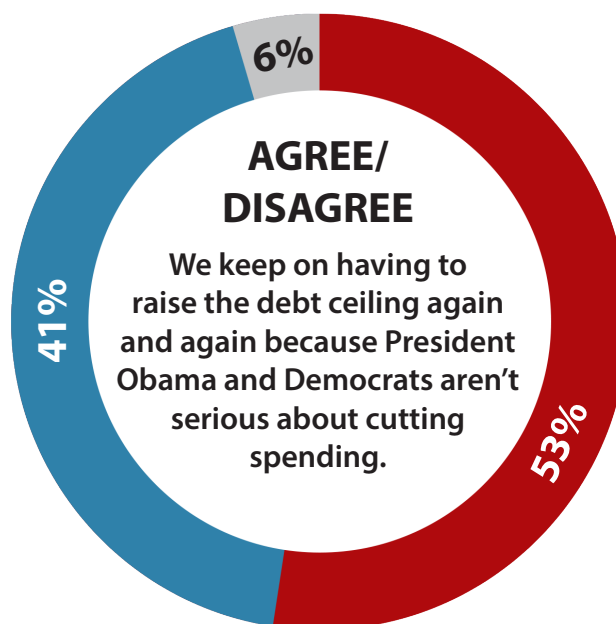
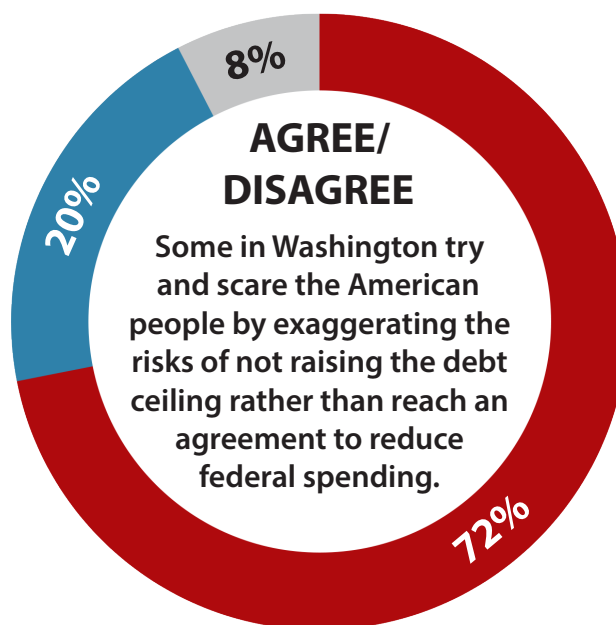
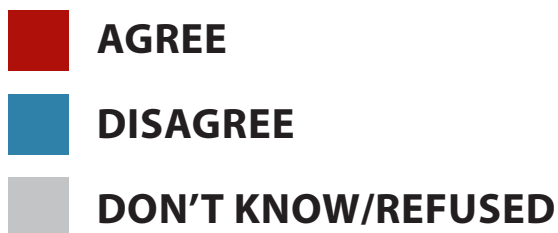
Asked about the pending showdown over the budget and debt ceiling, 81 percent of Republican voters oppose a debt ceiling increase, and 66 percent “strongly” oppose the increase. Indeed, Americans seem to have numbed to the annual apocalyptic predictions over a federal government meltdown.

Nearly three-quarters or 72 percent of all American voters agree that politicians in Washington are “exaggerating the risks” of not increasing the debt ceiling. A majority (53 percent) of voters believe “we keep having this fight again and again” because “Obama and the Democrats aren’t serious about cutting spending.”

Patience and trust is low. Sixty-one percent of American voters think the “economic policies coming out of Washington” are “hurting” rather than “helping.” When asked which party they trust to “reform government in Washington,” 40 percent of American voters say “neither” party can be trusted.

Distrust is a bipartisan issue. Among Republicans, 41 percent say they trust “neither” party. That’s a shocking statement on how few trust the political parties to do what’s right.

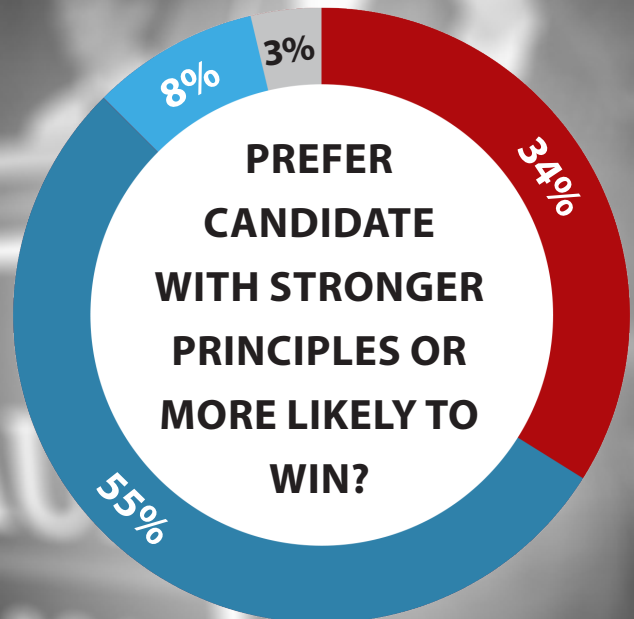
Looking towards 2014 Republican primaries, the FreedomWorks’ poll asked whether Republicans would prefer a hypothetical candidate with “more experience” whom “party leaders say is more likely to win,” or “less



## ASKED AMONG GOP ONLY (N=354):

Consider a hypothetical primary election for Congress between two Republicans. Would you be more likely to vote for (ROTATED) a candidate who has more political experience and party leaders say is more likely to win, OR a candidate with less political experience but is viewed by both local activists and party leaders to have stronger conservative principles?

- ☒ CANDIDATE PARTY LEADERS SAY MORE LIKELY TO WIN
- ☐ CANDIDATE WITH STRONGER PRINCIPLES
- ☐ DO NOT KNOW (VOL.)
- ☐ REFUSED (VOL.)

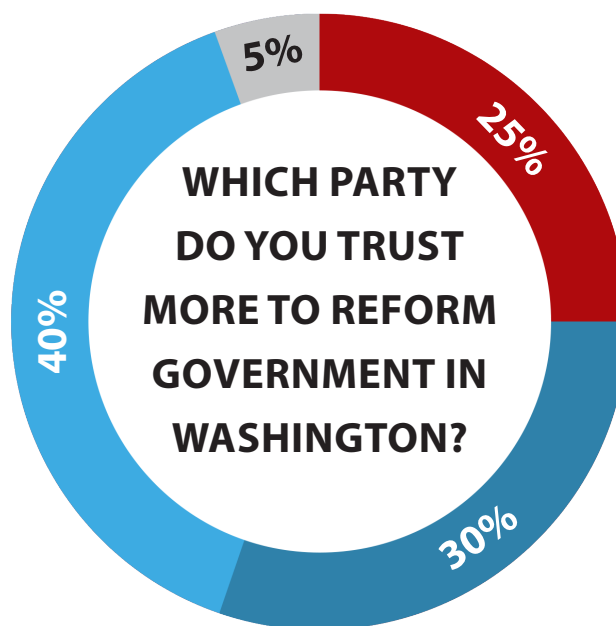


experience” but with “stronger conservative principles.” A majority—55 percent—of Republican voters favored stronger principles versus 34 percent who opted for “more likely to win.” Perhaps they have grown weary of Party leaders, pundits, and strategists who determine “who can win” before a single vote is cast.

After the 2012 election, some Republican strategists aimed to discipline the party against tea party challengers. Yet Republican’s efforts to recruit “safe” candidates against limited government, lower spending challengers may well face strong opposition from voters’ own preferences. Indeed, a June 15 *Wall Street Journal*/NBC News poll found 51 percent of Republicans said they had a positive view of the tea party, up from 42 percent in January.<sup>1</sup>

It’s not just Republicans who prefer principled candidates. In a hypothetical primary, Democrats prefer candidates with “strong liberal principles” over candidates “more likely to win” by 44 to 40 percent.

Former *New York Times* statistician Nate Silver recently predicted that “Senate control increasingly looks like a tossup,” predicting that the GOP will hold 50 or 51 seats.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, FreedomWorks’ poll shows early evidence of dynamics that look more like the 2010 elections within the Republican Party and among voters more generally.



# OBAMACARE REMAINS TOP ISSUE

## ONLY 17 PERCENT BELIEVE OBAMACARE WILL HAVE POSITIVE PERSONAL IMPACT; 62 PERCENT PREFER 'PATIENT-CENTERED' SYSTEM THAT ALLOWS FOR COMPETITION, CHOICE

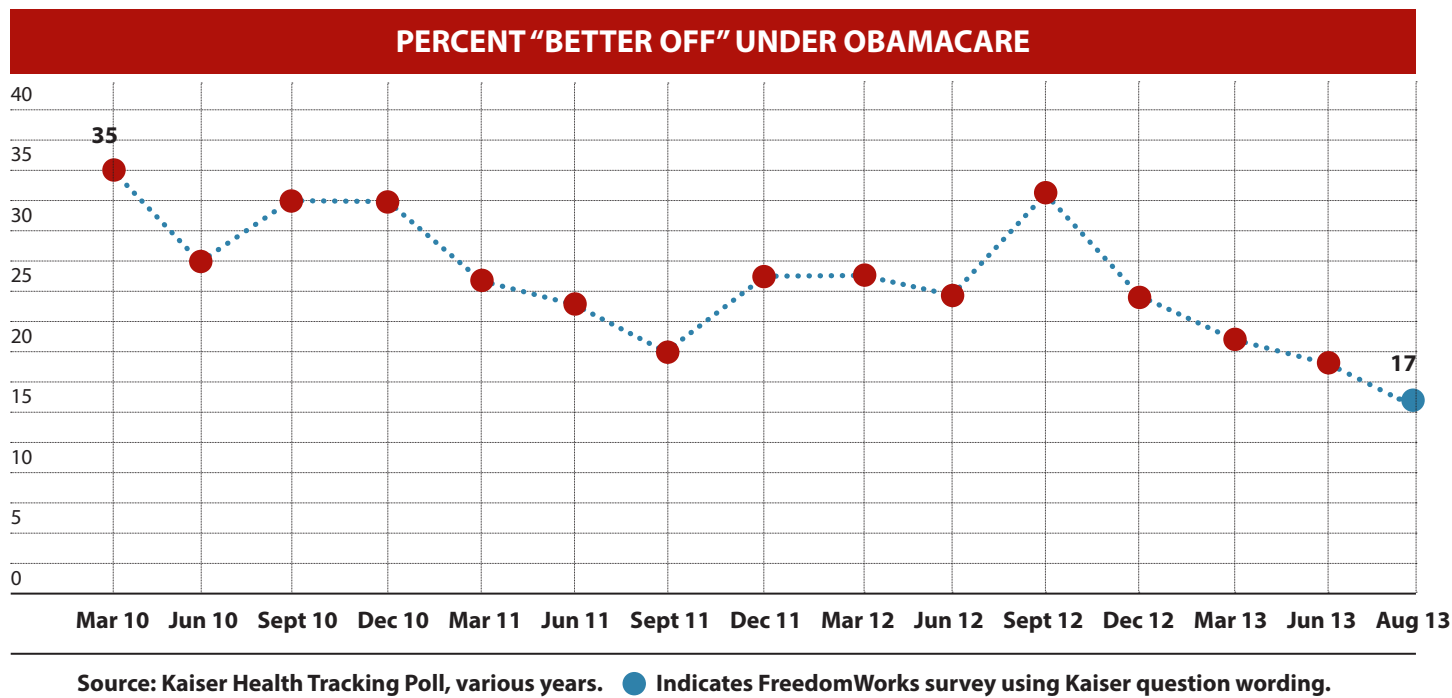
Since the President's health care reform passed in 2010, Kaiser Family Foundation has tracked whether the public thinks "you and your family" will be "better off" under the law. Using the very same question wording, FreedomWorks' poll shows that today only 17 percent of voters say they will be better off under Obamacare, a new low. Today, half as many

respondents say they will be "better off" than when the bill passed in March of 2010.

Skepticism about Obamacare is a bipartisan concern. Only 33 percent of Democrats say they'll be better off. Even among the law's supporters, only 38 percent say that their own situation will improve.

According to FreedomWorks' poll, concern about Obamacare remains a top issue. Nearly half—49 percent—oppose Obamacare, with 37 percent strongly opposing it. In contrast, only 41 percent support the legislation. Women believe health care to be a more important issue than any other subgroup, and are split on Obamacare 45 to 46 percent.

The Administration estimates they need to enroll 2.7



million young people in health insurance plans to avoid a “death spiral” of escalating costs and declining enrolment. The data show this will be a hard sell.

A majority of young voters (age 32 or younger) agree that it is unfair for to ask them to pay more for health care in order to “subsidize older generations.” When asked about the tradeoff between paying premium increases of “more than 40 percent,” or paying a fine of “a few hundred dollars” to go without insurance, less than half of young people choose to pay for insurance: 47 percent among 18-24 year olds and 49 percent among 25-32 year olds.

In remarks last month, President Obama said that if opponents “had some better ideas” on health care reform, he was “happy to hear them. But I haven’t heard any so far.” Yet patient choice has long been the reform alternative preferred by free market supporters, whether the President acknowledges it or not. In a head-to-head contest, a clear majority of 62 percent would prefer a health care system with a “patient-centered” approach that allows “competition and choice,” only 27 prefer a system like Obamacare.

## 2014 ISSUES: ECONOMY, OBAMACARE, JOBS

|                       | All Voters | White | Black | Hispanic | Ages<br>18-24 | Ages<br>25-32 | Men | Women |
|-----------------------|------------|-------|-------|----------|---------------|---------------|-----|-------|
| Economy               | 35%        | 36%   | 32%   | 35%      | 29%           | 27%           | 36% | 34%   |
| Health Care/Obamacare | 24%        | 25%   | 23%   | 22%      | 17%           | 25%           | 17% | 30%   |
| Jobs/Unemployment     | 20%        | 19%   | 28%   | 19%      | 11%           | 16%           | 16% | 22%   |
| Immigration           | 12%        | 11%   | 5%    | 18%      | 11%           | 11%           | 14% | 10%   |
| Education             | 9%         | 7%    | 16%   | 11%      | 9%            | 14%           | 6%  | 12%   |
| Gov’t Spending        | 7%         | 8%    | 3%    | 4%       | 5%            | 4%            | 9%  | 5%    |
| National Debt         | 7%         | 8%    | 5%    | 6%       | 9%            | 9%            | 10% | 4%    |
| Taxes                 | 5%         | 5%    | 4%    | 5%       | 5%            | 6%            | 7%  | 3%    |
| Abortion              | 3%         | 3%    | 2%    | 5%       | 7%            | 3%            | 2%  | 4%    |
| Marriage/Gay Marriage | 3%         | 2%    | 2%    | 4%       | 9%            | 4%            | 2%  | 2%    |

# NSA AND IRS SCANDALS

**LIBERTARIAN VIEWS WITHIN  
REPUBLICAN PARTY AT HIGHEST LEVEL  
SINCE 2000; 63 PERCENT CONCERNED  
ABOUT OBAMACARE RECORD-KEEPING;  
73 PERCENT OF REPUBLICANS SELF-  
IDENTIFY AS FISCALLY CONSERVATIVE,  
SOCIALLY MODERATE**

Civil liberties issues like the NSA and IRS scandals seem to have brought out the libertarian instincts of many Americans. Libertarian views within the Republican Party are at the highest level since 2000.

FreedomWorks' poll asked respondents about the Internal Revenue Service "applying more scrutiny to conservative and tea party organizations" and whether they believe it was a "political act by the Obama Administration" or a "mistake by a few employees." Predictably, partisans judge the scandal differently, with 70 percent of Republicans who believe it was a political act, compared to 68 percent of Democrats who believe it was a mistake by a few employees. A plurality (43 percent) of independents believes it was a political act, with 37 who believe it was a mistake, and 15 percent who don't know.

Americans are nonetheless wary of the employees who made the mistake, and are concerned about the implications of these scandals and Obamacare.

## DO YOU THINK THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS...

|                        | MAY 2013<br>(GALLUP) | AUGUST 2013<br>(FREEDOMWORKS) |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| TOO MUCH POWER         | 54%                  | 61%                           |
| ABOUT THE RIGHT AMOUNT | 36%                  | 30%                           |
| TOO LITTLE POWER       | 8%                   | 5%                            |

Almost two-thirds (65 percent) are concerned that the IRS official who was involved in the recent political targeting scandal is “implementing Obamacare” now. Another 63 percent are concerned the federal government will be keeping track of health insurance records through Obamacare, given the revelations about the scope of NSA’s surveillance programs.

As other polls have shown, Americans remain split over the NSA scandal, and question wording matters a great deal. Forty-six percent of Americans oppose the “NSA surveillance program” when justified in relation to “specific investigations,” and 46 percent favor it. Favor increases to 58 percent when the program is justified to identify “possible terrorist threats.” Interestingly, even security-minded Republicans have become suspicious. A majority of Republicans oppose the “NSA surveillance program” when justified in relation to “specific investigations.” This drops only slightly to 45 percent oppose even when justified to identify “possible terrorist threats.”

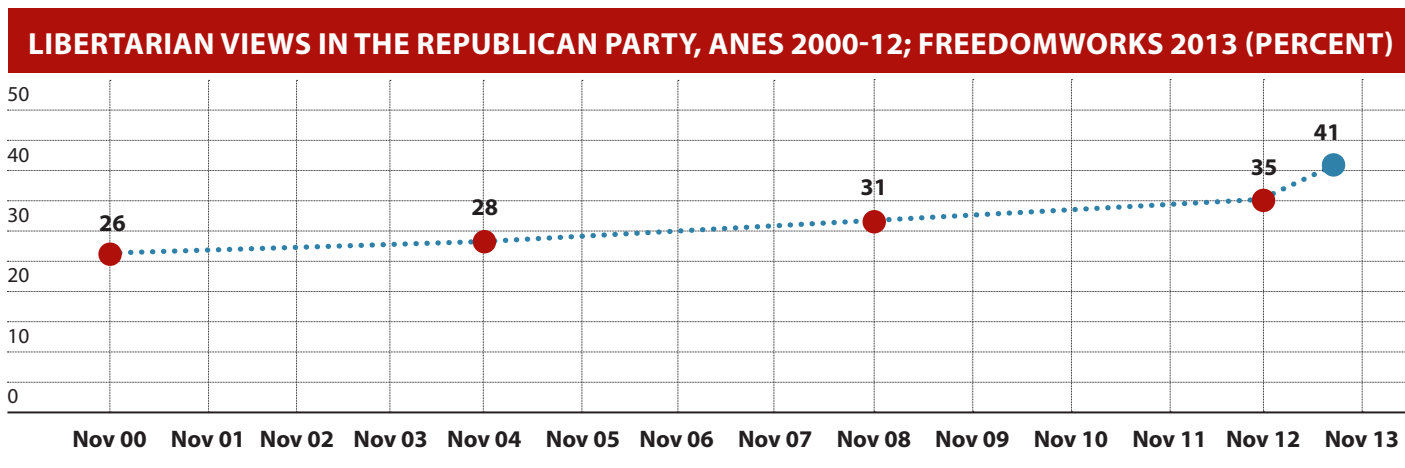
After hearing about the NSA surveillance programs, 61 percent of Americans believe that the federal government has “too much” power, while only 5 percent

say it has too little. In May 2013, Gallup asked the same question without any NSA questions first, and found that 54 percent said the federal government had too much power.

Civil liberties issues like these may be scrambling the old foundations of the Republican Party. In the 1980s, Reagan called the Republican coalition a “three-legged stool” of individual freedom, traditional values, and defense. Today, it’s a lopsided stool.

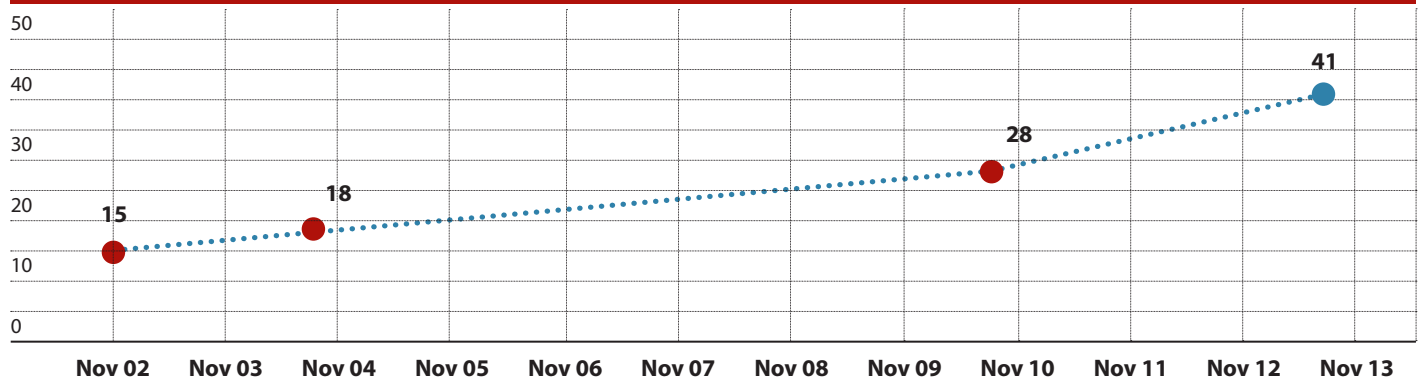
Forty percent of Republicans are most interested in promoting “individual freedom through lower taxes and reducing the size and scope of government” versus 27 percent “traditional values” or 18 percent “strong national defense.”

Libertarian views among Republican voters have increased in the last decade. Tracking ideology using a combination of questions on the role of government in economic and social spheres, a method long-used by Gallup<sup>3</sup> and the subject of several studies by the Cato Institute<sup>4</sup>, we find an increase in libertarian views in two well-respected data sources—American National Election Studies (ANES) and Gallup.



**Source:** FreedomWorks’ calculations based on American National Election Studies, various years. ● Indicates FreedomWorks’ poll, using similar question wording. Note: FreedomWorks’ poll is of registered voters, whereas ANES calculations include all voting age adults.

## LIBERTARIAN VIEWS IN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY, GALLUP 2002-10; FREEDOMWORKS 2013 (PERCENT)



Source: FreedomWorks' calculations based on American National Election Studies, various years. ● Indicates FreedomWorks' poll, using Gallup question wording. Note: FreedomWorks' poll is of registered voters, whereas Gallup calculations include all voting age adults.

ANES data show a 9 percentage point increase in libertarian views among Republicans and Republican leaning independents from 2000 to 2012. Gallup data show a 13 percentage point increase from 2002 to 2010.

(Note: this method identifies voters who can be fairly identified as "libertarian" based on their fiscally conservative, but socially moderate to liberal answers to questions on polls. We do not claim that these are hardcore libertarians who have all read Ayn Rand and F. A. Hayek, or are as ideologically self-aware as readers of Reason magazine. Rather, these voters' libertarian beliefs distinguish them from liberals and conservatives, even if the word "libertarian" may be unfamiliar to them.)

Today, FreedomWorks' poll shows that 41 percent of Republican voters hold libertarian views. Conventional wisdom is that many voters who are libertarian don't know the word. But this may well be changing. FreedomWorks' poll shows that 42 percent of Republicans have a favorable view of the word "libertarian," and only 10 percent don't know the word, compared to 27 percent who don't know nationally.

Moreover, messaging libertarian ideas around concepts like "don't hurt people and don't take their stuff" earns

an even larger approval among Republicans and Republican leaning independents.

Sixty-eight percent agree with the "libertarian view" that "individuals should be free to do as they like as long as they don't hurt others, and that the government should keep out of people's day-to-day lives." Three-quarters (78 percent) of Republicans consider themselves "fiscally conservative, but socially moderate." While many voters who hold libertarian views don't self-identify as such, a quarter (26 percent) of Republicans now self-identify as "libertarian" or "lean libertarian."

Many voters think of themselves outside of the convenient boxes that pollsters put them in, like "liberal" and "conservative." Indeed, 66 percent of all voters agree they are "fiscally conservative but socially moderate."

# A GENERATION IN FLUX: MILLENNIALS' VIEWS ON THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

## **MAJORITY OF YOUNG VOTERS FAVOR SMALLER GOVERNMENT, FEWER SERVICES, LOWER TAXES; TWO- THIRDS BELIEVE THEIR GENERATION WILL BE "WORSE OFF THAN THE GENERATION BEFORE"**

In a landmark 2010 study on Millennials<sup>5</sup>, Pew Research Center found that a majority, 53 percent, of young people believe "government should do more" compared to 42 percent "government doing too many things." Based on this and other measures, Pew concluded that "Millennials are significantly less critical of government on a number of dimensions than are other age cohorts."

Pollsters have long used variations of questions like these to measure attitudes about the role of government. Critics complain these questions do not balance the costs in extra taxes of government "doing more things," and skew respondents to be more favorable towards government.

FreedomWorks split test a question adding in the cost of taxes, and found interesting variations in the views of young people about the role of government. We asked young voters to weigh whether "you would favor a smaller government with few services but lower

taxes, or a larger government which provides more services but has higher taxes?"

Asked in this reflection-of-reality way, Millennials' views on the role of government flip. A majority of young voters favor "smaller government with fewer services but lower taxes." College-age and recent graduates (ages 18-24) favor smaller government by 51 to 45 percent. Young voters ages 25-32, who have been on the job market for a few years and are more likely to be paying taxes, favor smaller government by 64 to 24 percent.

Different generational dynamics are in play among these so called "older young people," ages 25-32. Many Millennials who are today ages 25-32 voted for the first time in 2008. Perhaps understandably many were swept up in the enthusiasm over President Obama. Pundits predicted a generational re-alignment towards progressivism would follow.

Five years later, the hope and change many young people came to expect has not materialized. Today, Pew reports that, "A record total of 21.6 million Millennials lived in their parents' home in 2012, up from 18.5 million of their same aged counterparts in 2007."<sup>6</sup> Jobs are hard to find. Careers have progressed slowly. FreedomWorks' poll shows that a slim majority of 18-24 year olds approve of Obama's job as president, while 25-32 year olds disapprove of the job Obama is doing by 47 to 45 percent.

**GIVEN THE CURRENT STATE OF THE ECONOMY, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING HAD YOU PLANNED TO DO AND MIGHT NOW DELAY DOING OR NOT DO AT ALL?**

|                                  | <b>AGES 18-24</b> | <b>AGES 25-32</b> |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>BUY OWN PLACE</b>             | <b>37%</b>        | <b>34%</b>        |
| <b>SAVE FOR RETIREMENT</b>       | <b>36%</b>        | <b>37%</b>        |
| <b>PAY OFF STUDENT LOAN/DEBT</b> | <b>34%</b>        | <b>32%</b>        |
| <b>GO BACK TO SCHOOL</b>         | <b>33%</b>        | <b>26%</b>        |
| <b>CHANGE JOBS/MOVE CITIES</b>   | <b>33%</b>        | <b>24%</b>        |
| <b>START A FAMILY</b>            | <b>29%</b>        | <b>19%</b>        |
| <b>GET MARRIED</b>               | <b>26%</b>        | <b>18%</b>        |

The day-to-day frustrations have taken a toll on Millennials' well-documented idealism. Today, FreedomWorks' polls finds that two-thirds of young people believe their generation will be "worse off than the generation before." Sixty-nine percent of 18-24 year olds and 60 percent of 25-32 year olds report themselves or their friends taking out "significant loans to pay for college and having a hard time finding a job." Over a third of young people report delaying key life milestones like buying their own place, saving for retirement, or paying off student

loans. Around 20 percent reports delaying starting a family or getting married.

Indeed, the April 2013 edition of Harvard Institute of Politics annual study on Millennials<sup>7</sup> reports the "traumatic effect" on the "political health of political health of tens of millions of once (and hopefully future) idealistic young people." The authors conclude that, "At no time since President Obama was elected in 2008 have we reported less trust, more cynicism and more partisanship among our nation's youngest voters."

The political implications of this are as of yet undetermined. Young people's ideology defies easy categorization. Old labels like "conservative" and "liberal" seems less relevant to a generation that has grown accustomed to personalizing everything, from smartphone apps and iPod playlists to lattes at Starbucks.

Two-thirds of young people feel favorably towards terms like "free-market." Yet only 39 percent of 18-24 year-olds and 41 percent of 25-32 year-olds feel favorable towards the word "libertarian," with almost a third who "don't know" the word.

While 54 percent of 18-24 year-olds and 60 percent of 25-32 year-olds think the economic policies coming out

of Washington are "hurting," nearly three-quarters hold out hope that "current economic conditions" "can be changed" by the "federal government in Washington."

These somewhat contradictory impulses portray a generation very much in flux. Neither Republicans nor Democrats have locked up Millennial voters, who favored Obama by six percentage points less in his 2012 re-election than in 2008. As the nearby chart shows, while many young people soured on Obama between the 2008 and 2012 elections, the GOP has lot further to go. Affinity with any particular political community seems loose and shifting. What is clearer is that at this point in Obama's second-term, talk of generational realignment in 2009 was overblown.

## THE YOUTH VOTE (18-29) BY KEY DEMOGRAPHICS

|                          | 2008              | 2012              | %CHANGE         |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| <b>MEN</b>               | <b>+27% OBAMA</b> | <b>+9% OBAMA</b>  | <b>+18% GOP</b> |
| <b>WOMEN</b>             | <b>+40% OBAMA</b> | <b>+34% OBAMA</b> | <b>+6% GOP</b>  |
| <b>WHITE</b>             | <b>+10% OBAMA</b> | <b>+7% GOP</b>    | <b>+17% GOP</b> |
| <b>AFRICAN-AMERICANS</b> | <b>+91% OBAMA</b> | <b>+83% OBAMA</b> | <b>+8% GOP</b>  |
| <b>HISPANICS</b>         | <b>+57% OBAMA</b> | <b>+51% OBAMA</b> | <b>+6% GOP</b>  |

# YOUNGER BLACKS MORE OPTIMISTIC ACHIEVED “A LOT OF PROGRESS” TOWARDS MARTIN LUTHER KING’S DREAM

## ONE-THIRD OF BLACK VOTERS THINK THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY “TAKES THEM FOR GRANTED”

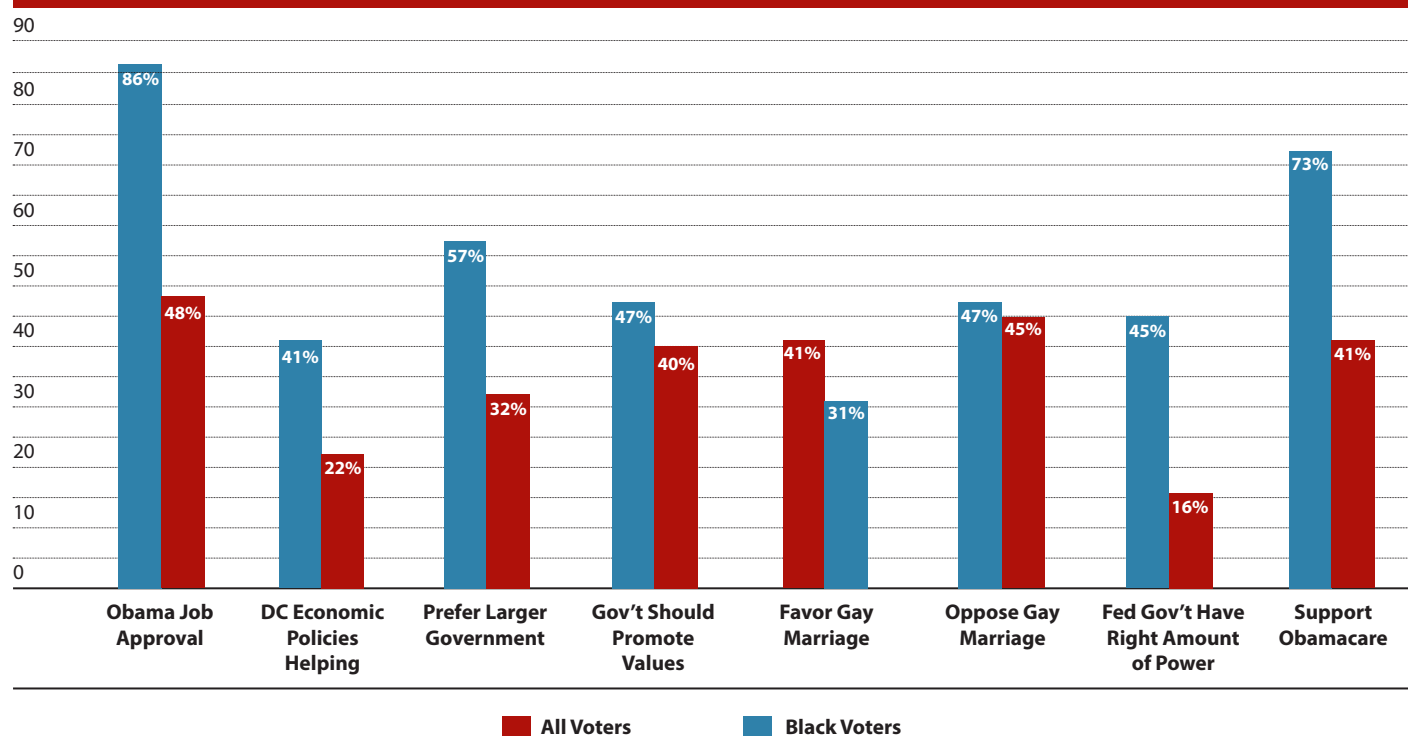
On the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech, those who were around during the tumultuous 1950s and 1960s are less optimistic about how much progress has been made, while their children and grandchildren are much more optimistic.

FreedomWorks’ poll asked black voters, “how much progress has America made?” Only 37 percent of black voters report that “a lot” of progress has been made towards achieving Dr. King’s dream of equality and liberty for black Americans and an end to racism in the United States. A majority—56 percent—say only a little progress has been made. (Only 1 percent says we have already achieved his dream, and only 2 percent say that no progress has been made.)

### IN YOUR OPINION, HOW MUCH PROGRESS HAS AMERICA MADE TOWARDS ACHIEVING DOCTOR KING’S DREAM?

|                   | AGES: | 18-24 | 25-32 | 55-64 | 65+ |
|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| A LOT OF PROGRESS |       | 43%   | 39%   | 29%   | 24% |
| A LITTLE PROGRESS |       | 43%   | 55%   | 61%   | 69% |

## BLACK VOTERS VIEWS ON THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT



However, there are stark generational differences. Black voters from the oldest generation (ages 65 and older) were born before 1950, and would have been late teenagers or later at the time Dr. King gave his speech. Of this group, only 24 percent say “a lot” of progress has been made, while 69 percent say “only a little.”

Younger generations are more split: of those ages 25-32 (born 1981 - 1988), 55 percent say “only a little” progress and 39 percent say “a lot of progress, while the youngest group tested, those age 18-24 (born 1989 - 1995) are split at 43 percent each.

Yet since King’s time, the Democratic Party has enjoyed 90-percent plus support among the black community. FreedomWorks’ poll asked, “Do you believe the Democratic Party works to earn the loyalty of black voters, or does the Democratic Party take the black vote for granted?” Barely a majority—52 percent—of black voters say that the Democratic Party works hard to earn their loyalty. Nearly one-third, or 32 percent,

say the Democratic Party takes them for granted.

Feeling that the Democratic Party takes them for granted is not as easy an opening for black voters as it may seem for Republicans. When asked which party they trust more to reform Washington D.C., 57 percent of all black voters say the Democratic Party, with only 5 percent saying Republican and 36 percent saying neither.

Among those who believe the Democratic Party takes their vote for granted, that drops 17 percentage points to 40 percent, but there is no increase in faith in the Republican Party. Instead, the “neither” party option increases to 50 percent.

That is to say, for black voters who feel that the Democratic Party may not represent their interests, they are more inclined to believe that no party in Washington D.C. does than believe that the Republican Party is a viable alternative.

Similarly, black voters are not in lockstep agreement with the Democratic Party. Notably, 41 percent believe that the economic policies coming out of Washington D.C. are hurting, rather than helping them. Another 56 percent say that government spending is a top issue or a top three issue.

Based off the polling company inc.'s six-point test on the issue of abortion, 43 percent of black voters are pro-life while 46 percent are pro-choice. "Pro-life" includes those who believe that abortion should be prohibited in all circumstances, abortion should only be legal to save the life of the mother, or abortion should only be legal in cases of rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother.

Even if black voters and the policies of the Democratic Party don't always match up, that may not matter as much as perception. A healthy majority—61 percent—say that the Democratic Party is the party in Washington D.C. more concerned with lower taxes. A plurality of 44 percent says that Democrats are the ones more concerned with government spending.

Republicans may have a generation of work ahead of themselves to make inroads with the black community. For the near term, outside groups like FreedomWorks who represent "neither" party maybe best positioned to reach out to the community based on shared values and issues.



# AMERICANS' VIEW OF GOP

## REPUBLICANS ARE FOR LOWER TAXES, JUST NOT FOR THE MIDDLE CLASS; CHALLENGES FOR THE REPUBLICAN BRAND ON TAXES AND SPENDING

In March 2013, the Republican National Committee published a wide ranging “autopsy” report on the Republican brand. FreedomWorks’ poll asked several questions around the reputation and image of the Republican Party.

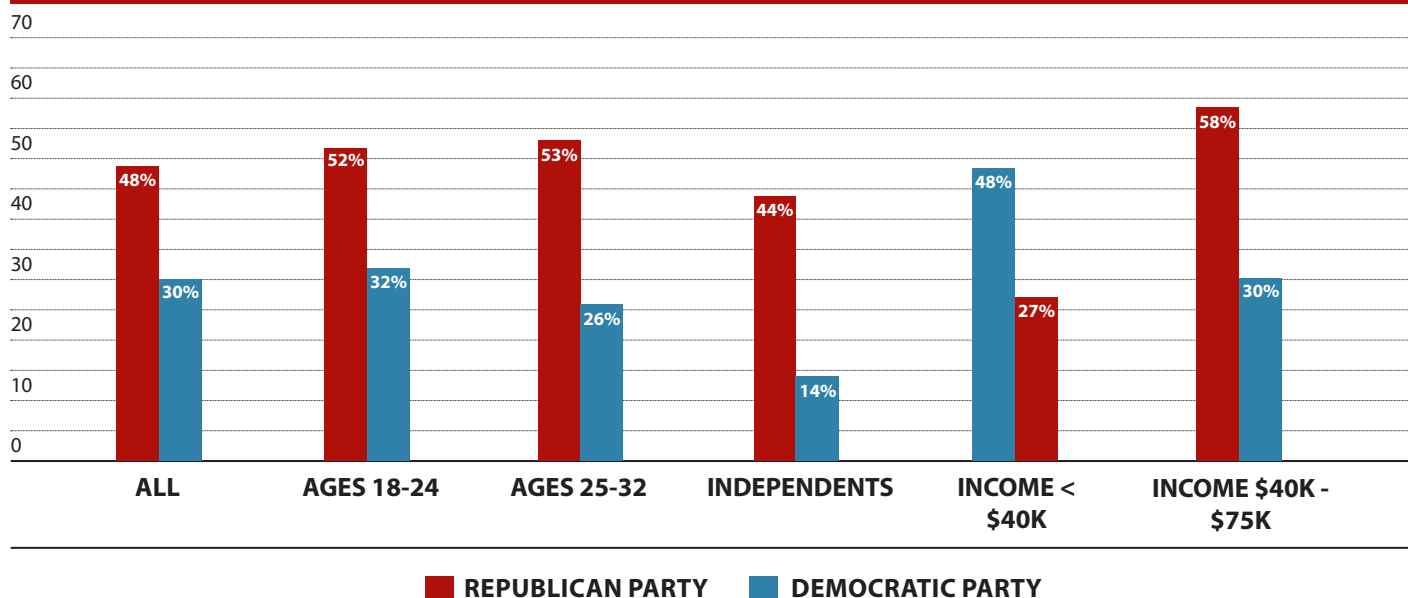
FreedomWorks’ poll presented the question about brand more substantively, with a focus on issues, not individuals; on policies, not politics. For instance, FreedomWorks’ poll asked half of the respondents which party in Washington was “more concerned about lower taxes.” Asked this way, nearly half, or 48

percent, said that Republicans were more concerned and 30 percent said Democrats, an 18 percentage point advantage for Republicans. Not so long ago, and for many years, the Republican Party enjoyed solid majorities agreeing that it was best on taxes.

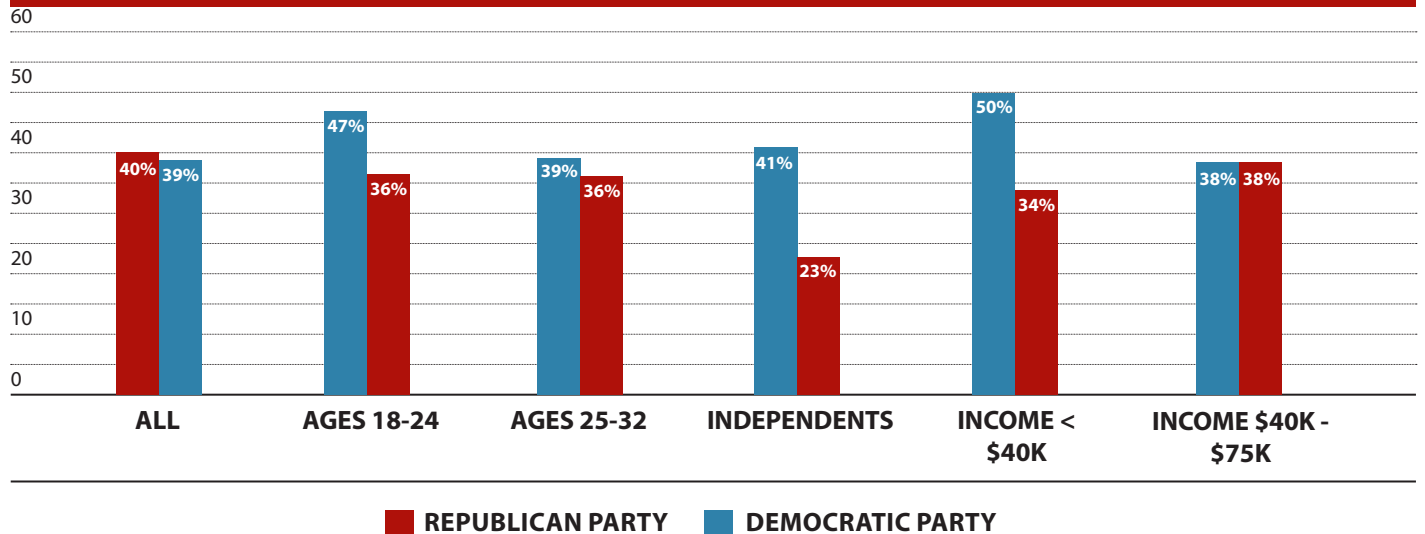
The other half of respondents were asked a variation of this question: which party was more concerned about lower taxes “for the middle class?” Republicans’ advantage disappears with 39 percent of voters who say Democrats are more concerned about taxes for the middle class, and 40 percent who say Republicans.

Democrats seem to be making inroads in the messaging war over the “middle class,” a particularly vexing fact given that most Americans consider themselves to be “middle class.” This Democratic advantage increases among key demographics, as 60

### (SPLIT) WHICH PARTY IN WASHINGTON D.C. IS MORE CONCERNED ABOUT LOWER TAXES (ROTATED) – THE REPUBLICAN PARTY OR THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY?



## (SPLIT) WHICH PARTY IN WASHINGTON D.C. IS MORE CONCERNED ABOUT LOWER TAXES FOR THE MIDDLE CLASS (ROTATED) – THE REPUBLICAN PARTY OR THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY?



percent of black voters and 58 percent of Hispanic voters believe Democrats are more concerned with lower taxes than Republicans.

Republicans won independents in 2012 (though by much smaller margins than Republicans needed to to overcome other deficits), but they represent the greatest swing in views over taxes when “for the middle class” is added to the construct. Independents say the GOP is the party more concerned with lower taxes by a 44 to 14 percent margin. But independents say that the Democratic Party is the one more concerned with lower taxes for the middle class by a 41 to 23 percent margin. Ouch.

The Republican Party also risks losing the next generation, too. While young voters (age 32 and under) say the Republican Party is for lower taxes, a plurality of this age bracket say the Democratic Party is more concerned with lower taxes for the middle class.

Republicans are on better ground on spending issues, but not by much. Only a slim majority, or 52 percent,

believe that the Republican Party is the most concerned about “putting an end to overspending by the federal government.” Sixteen percent of voters volunteered “neither” party is concerned about spending.

Less than half of independents (48 percent), Hispanics (48 percent), young people ages 25-32 (48 percent), and only a third of blacks (34 percent) say the Republican Party is more concerned with ending overspending.

# METHODOLOGY AND DEMOGRAPHICS

## METHODOLOGY

The polling company, inc./WomanTrend, on behalf of FreedomWorks, conducted interviews for the nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters between July 29 and August 5, 2013. Additionally, FreedomWorks over-sampled specific demographic groups, including 400 black voters, 400 Hispanic voters, 300 voters ages 18-24 and 400 voters ages 25-32.

All interviews included 85 percent landlines and 15 percent cell phone interviews. The margin of error (MoE) for the national survey is +/- 3.0 percent. The MoEs for the black and Hispanic voters over-samples are both +/- 4.9 percent. The MoEs for voters ages 18-24 and voters ages 25-32 are both +/- 5.6 percent. The survey was conducted using live interviewers at a Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing facility. Sampling controls were used to ensure proportionate and representative number of interviews across gender, age, ethnicity, and region, so the survey data need not be weight. The only exception is the oversample of young voters ages 18-24 which were weighted to match exit polls results of 2012 president vote choice.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

- 52 percent female, 48 percent male.
- 10 percent between the ages of 18-24, 13 percent between the ages of 25-32, 12 percent between the ages of 33-40, 26 percent between the ages of 41-54, 19 percent between the ages of 55-64, and 20 percent over the age of 65.
- 72 percent of the base survey were white/Caucasian, 14 percent black, 8 percent Hispanic, 2 percent Asian, and 2 percent other.
- A 9-region geographic break was used, separating the states into New England, Mid-Atlantic, South Atlantic, East and West North Central, East and West South Central, Mountain, and Pacific.
- 36 percent of respondents self-identified as Republican, while 41 percent self-identified as Democrats and another 17 percent considered themselves Independent. Respondents who initially answered "Independent" were asked if they lean in the direction of either party, and if so, those leaners were included as "Republican" or "Democrat."
- 49 percent of respondents self-identified as "conservative," while 25 percent called themselves "moderate" and 24 percent called themselves "liberal."

- 21 percent of the base survey received high school education or less; another 27 percent had some college or vocational schooling but had not graduated; 31 percent were college graduates and 19 percent had post-graduate degrees.
  - 61 percent of respondents were married; 8 percent were divorced and 7 percent widowed, while 18 percent were single and had never been married.
  - 42 percent of respondents had children living with them at home, another 35 percent had children who are no longer living at home, and 20 percent have never had children.
  - 23 percent are Catholic and 41 percent are Protestant, with 61 percent of Protestants considering themselves to be “Evangelical”. 2
- percent of the electorate are Jewish, 3 percent Mormon, and 7 percent agnostic or atheist (and another 11 percent who reported no religion).
- 41 percent of voters say they attend religious services every week or more frequently; another 14 percent say they attend a few times a month and 17 percent say they attend only a few times a year; 22 percent report seldom or never attending religious services.

## CITATIONS

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