

# **REPUBLICANS: AMERICANS WANT WHAT?**

## *GOP Continues to Be Out-of-Touch with the American People*

Over the last five months, Congressional Democrats worked with President Obama to improve the lives of Americans and help our nation through this economic crisis. On the other side of the aisle, Republicans have offered little more than empty rhetoric and distractions – ignoring the American people and playing politics with important issues. In this time of national crisis, it is critical to come together and listen to what Americans want. When will Republicans listen to those who elected them and work in a bipartisan way for the American people?

### **On Economic Recovery...**

In February, Democrats worked with President Obama to pass the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. While experts from across the political spectrum agreed that passing recovery legislation was critical, Republicans tried to undermine confidence in recovery efforts and persuade Americans that the economic recovery legislation would not work. In doing so, Republicans not only ignored the recommendations of many of their own party's economic experts, but also the support of a majority of Americans. At the very same time that Republicans claimed that Americans opposed recovery legislation, Americans said otherwise.

#### **...the American people said:**

**“Support for Obama’s economic recovery plan remains virtually unchanged with 60 percent of voters favoring passage. There is no evidence of eroding support.”** – Democracy Corps/ Greenberg Quinlan Rosner, 2/11/09

**“A majority of Americans (51%) say passing a new economic stimulus plan is ‘critically important’ for improving the nation's economy, while another 29% say it is important.”** – Gallup, 2/9/09

#### **...Republicans said:**

**“This is not what the American people want.”** – House Minority Leader John Boehner (R-OH), 2/06/09

**“The American people intuitively know this is not a good thing.”** – Rep Louie Gohmert (R-TX), 2/10/09

**“Americans believe the stimulus is just too slow, it's too expensive and... it's not gonna help rescue the economy.”** – Rep. Kevin Brady (R-TX), 2/10/09

**“The American people are increasingly recognizing the folly of this plan.”** – Rep. Tom Price (R-GA), 2/09/09

A majority of Americans say the economic recovery program and other actions taken to stabilize the economy are helping, and consumer confidence has improved since recovery legislation was enacted.

#### **...the American people say:**

**Fifty-nine percent (59%) of Americans think that the economic stimulus program has helped or will help the national economy.** – Washington Post/ABC News Poll, 4/26/09

**“Over two-thirds of Americans – 71% -- have a great deal or a fair amount of confidence in President Obama to do or recommend the right thing for the economy.”** – Gallup, 4/13/09

**“After two months of significant improvements, the Consumer Confidence Index is now at its highest level in eight months... Looking ahead, consumers are considerably less pessimistic than they were earlier this year, and expectations are that business conditions, the labor market and incomes will improve in the coming months... [A]s far as consumers are concerned, the worst is now behind us.”** – Consumer Confidence Survey™, 5/26/09

### **On Health Care Reform...**

Last month, Republicans invited pollster Frank Luntz to present a messaging strategy to oppose any Democratic plan for health care reform, including a directive previously ignored by their members: **“Acknowledge the ‘crisis’ or suffer the consequences.”** Luntz presented tactics that aim to invoke fear in the American people and prevent action, rather than ways to engage in a constructive debate to deliver the health reform the American people want.

#### **...the American people said:**

**“A majority of Americans (56 percent) believe that the country would be better off if Congress and the president do pass health care reform.”** – Kaiser Health Tracking Poll, 4/23/09

**On domestic issues other than the economy, a plurality (35 percent) of Americans cites health care as the most important.** – CBS News/New York Times Poll, 4/6/09

#### **...Republicans said:**

**“It’s okay (and even necessary) for your campaign to center around why this healthcare plan is bad for America.”** – Frank Luntz, Memo: “The Language of Healthcare 2009,” May 2009

### **On Energy Legislation...**

The House Committee on Energy and Commerce recently approved the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009, to create clean energy jobs, put America on a path to energy independence, and curb carbon pollution that causes global warming. From the beginning, Republicans indicated that they would attempt to bring the process to a halt by threatening to offer some 450 amendments. “[B]y being proactive – with industry players on board – on a major pollution initiative, the Republican committee plan of death by amendment will start to look more like obstruction” [Glenn Thrush, Politico, 5/19/09]. This attempt to “filibuster” by amendment was not constructive, but rather aimed to obstruct the regular order process and prevent the bill from passing out of committee.

#### **...the American people said:**

**“[O]n global warming, a new question finds 75 percent support for federal controls on the release of greenhouse gases in an effort to reduce global warming; indeed a substantial 54 percent support it ‘strongly.’”** – ABC News/Washington Post poll, 4/30/09

#### **...Republicans said:**

**“This is not going to be one of gentlemanly, pro forma markups,’ said Texas Rep. Joe Barton, the top Republican on the committee. ‘We’re prepared for it to take weeks or months.’”** – Politico, 5/14/09