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Ipsos Public Affairs

Public Release Date: September 2, 2009 10:00 am EST

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Washington, DC – President Obama's approval ratings have declined marginally – by two percentage points – over the past month, with 56% saying that they approve of how he is handling his job, according to a new telephone poll of over 1,000 adults conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs. In contrast, 40% say that they disapprove of the President's job performance.

A majority of Americans remain polarized when it comes to their approval of Obama. One third (31%) indicate that they *strongly approve* while nearly three in ten (28%) *strongly disapprove* of the way he is handling his job as President of the United States.

- Approval of Obama remains particularly high among African-Americans (99% approve), Hispanics (75%), those with a household income of less than \$25,000 (67%) and those with a high school education or less (64%). Critics are more prevalent among Southerners (47% disapprove), those who are 55 or older (46%) and those with a household income of at least \$50,000 (46%).
- Opinions vary sharply across party lines. Nearly nine in ten Democrats (88%) say that they are happy with the job that Obama is doing, while just 18% of Republicans feel this way. Independents fall in line with Americans overall, as 54% say that they approve of his job performance.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted August 27 –31, 2009. For the survey, a nationally representative, randomly selected sample of 1,057 adults aged 18 and older across the United States was interviewed by Ipsos. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate within 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population in the U.S. been polled. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error. These data were weighted to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the actual U.S. population according to U.S. Census figures. Respondents had the option to be interviewed in English or Spanish.

Americans Tire of Continuing War in Afghanistan

Despite President Obama's commitment of additional combat forces to Afghanistan, American attitudes signal the public's increasing frustration with the progress of the war. Currently, fewer than one third of Americans (29%) feel we are winning the war in Afghanistan, compared to a majority (54%) who believe we are not winning.

Additionally, the American public expresses pessimism regarding the effect of sending additional troops. Only one third (35%) of Americans favor sending additional combat troops, while a solid majority (56%) oppose this option.

- Women (60% oppose), those with household income below \$25,000 (70%), individuals with a high school education or less (67%), residents of the West (62%), Hispanics (86%), and



African-Americans (78%) express the greatest degree of pessimism regarding sending additional troops.

- A strong partisan divide also exists with regard to increasing U.S. forces in Afghanistan – a majority (52%) of Republicans support additional troops, compared to only 27% of Democrats and just 18% of Independents; a majority of Democrats (66%) and Independents (67%) oppose sending additional combat forces to Afghanistan.

Democrats Hold Advantage in Upcoming 2010 Congressional Elections

While Congressional elections remain more than a year away, generic Democratic candidates hold an advantage over Republican candidates, although a significant percentage of Americans are undecided or uninterested. Currently, 42% of Americans report that if elections were held today, they would vote for the Democratic candidate, compared to 34% who would vote for the Republican candidate; 5% would currently opt for a third party candidate. In contrast, 7% report that they would not vote and 12% are unsure for whom they would vote.

- Democratic candidates hold a strong advantage among traditional electoral strongholds – adults aged 18 to 34 (47% Democratic candidate), those with household income under \$25,000 (53%), Hispanics (57%), and African-Americans (84%).
- Partisans not surprisingly express support for their party's candidate – 79% of Democrats would vote for the Democratic candidate, while a similar 79% of Republicans would vote for the Republican candidate. At this early stage, Independents remain largely uncommitted (15% third party candidate; 21% do not plan to vote; 31% not sure).

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