

Americans, Left and Right, Agree On The Biggest Problem Facing United States

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Americans from both political parties think that the biggest problem facing the United States is “poor leadership” from government officials. A new poll from Gallup shows that people of all stripes have grown tired of the Biden Administration’s antics of sending SWAT Teams against political opponents, talking about banning gas stoves, and spending millions on hiring tens of thousands of more IRS agents to audit regular people.

The polling outfit writes, “More Americans name the government as the nation’s top problem in Gallup’s latest poll, which encompassed the rocky start of the 118th Congress’ term. With high prices persisting, inflation remains the second most-cited problem (15%), and amid elevated tensions about the southern U.S. border, illegal immigration edged up three percentage points to 11%. Mentions of the economy in general fell six points, to 10%, the lowest reading in a year.

The poll’s Jan. 2-22 field period included the four-day, 15-vote process in which Republicans, who now hold a slim majority in the U.S. House of Representatives, ultimately elected Kevin McCarthy to be Speaker of the House. Revelations about classified government documents from 2009 to 2017 found in President Joe Biden’s private office and home also surfaced while the poll was in the field. Although mentions of the government as the nation’s top problem rose six points this month to 21%, job approval ratings of Biden (41%) and Congress (21%) remained flat.

The government ranks as the top problem for both Republicans and Republican-leaning independents (24%) and Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents (18%). Inflation and immigration are each cited by 18% of Republicans, while mentions of inflation (11%), the economy in general and race relations (9% each) trail the government among Democrats. Democrats are more likely than Republicans to view unifying the country and the environment as top problems.

Americans' mentions of the government as the nation's most important problem have risen significantly in the past month, while inflation remains the next most-cited issue. Fewer name the economy in general, yet when asked about the economy directly, Americans continue to lack confidence in its current and future health. Views of the job market remain largely positive, but they are diminished from one year ago. While the U.S. unemployment rate remains relatively low, recent layoffs in the technology sector could affect opinions about the job market, and possibly the broader economy, in the coming months.

Forbes noted that Republicans and the state of the economy aren't helping the matter, either. "The poll's emphasis on poor governance doesn't mean Americans have a positive view of the economy, finding 83% of Americans consider the economy to be fair or poor and 72% believe it's getting worse. They were more optimistic about the job market, however, with 64% saying "it is a good time to find a quality job." Americans' views on both the economy and job market are statistically the same as they were in December, but are lower than a year ago, Gallup found.

Americans' growing distaste with the country's leadership comes as political controversies have dominated the news in January. Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) and his election as House Speaker as Congress' new term got underway garnered significant controversy and resulted in chaos on the House floor, with it ultimately taking 15 votes before he received enough support from his own party to be elected. Freshman Rep. George Santos (R-N.Y.) has also commanded attention—and numerous investigations—after it was revealed he appeared to fabricate much of his background and drew scrutiny for potential campaign finance issues, but has so far remained in Congress and refused to resign. Biden has come under fire as classified White House documents from the Obama Administration were found in his office and Delaware home, prompting the Justice Department to appoint a special counsel to investigate them, and classified documents from the Trump Administration were also found at former Vice President Mike Pence's home after already being found at former President Donald Trump's Mar-A-Lago estate."

"Republicans pick inflation and the economy (both at 18%) as the second-most pressing problems, followed by the economy (11%), declines in morality, ethics and the family (6%) and the federal budget deficit (5%)," wrote *The New York Post*.

Democrats, on the other hand, went with “inflation (11%), the economy (9%), then race relations (9%), unifying the country (8%) and the environment (6%).”