

Beat: Politics

Obama's foreign policy rating sinks to lowest level of his presidency

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USPA News - In the wake of numerous overseas challenges, including in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Russia, the percentage of Americans who approve of President Barack Obama's handling of foreign affairs has hit a new all-time low, according to a poll released on Wednesday. The poll, conducted by survey research firm Hart Research Associates for NBC News and the Wall Street Journal, showed a mere 37 percent - a new low - approve of Obama's foreign policy dealings while 57 percent - a new high - disapprove.

The approval numbers for foreign policy are the lowest since Obama took office in January 2009. Moreover, respondents were evenly split on whether Obama is a competent manager of the federal bureaucracy. A majority of respondents - 54 percent - say they no longer feel the president "is able to lead the country and get the job done," compared with the 42 percent who said he could. At 41 percent, down three points from April, Obama's overall job approval rating matches a previous low, reflecting the results of recent problems in regards to Iraq, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Russia, and Iran. "Whether it's [Vladimir] Putin, Ukraine, the VA hospitals, or Bowe Bergdahl, the events have controlled Obama, rather than Obama having controlled the events," Democratic pollster Peter Hart told NBC News. "He may be winning the issues debate, but he's losing the political debate, because they don't see him as a leader." Additionally, more disapprove of the Bergdahl prisoner exchange than those who support it. Respondents disagree with the Obama administration's decision to secure the release of U.S. Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl in exchange for five imprisoned Taliban fighters by a 44 percent-to-30 percent margin. 47 percent of respondents say the circumstances surrounding Bergdahl's disappearance from his base in Afghanistan matter in the U.S. decision to secure his release, while 46 percent say these details do not matter. Based on the president's approval ratings, the Democratic Party faces a significant disadvantage as they head into November's midterm election, as these numbers often forecast the general outcome. However, according to pollsters, the Republican party also faces noteworthy perception difficulties, which could restrict their potential profit. Yet while 38 percent of Americans view the Democratic Party favorable, only 29 percent of Americans have a positive view of the Republican Party, versus 45 percent who have a negative view. 45 percent of registered voters prefer a Democratic-controlled Congress while 43 percent want a GOP-held one, according to the poll. The poll was based on nationwide telephone interviews of 1,000 adults and surveyed a range of ages from 18 to 75-plus. It was conducted from June 11-15 by the polling organizations of Bill McInturff at Public Opinion Strategies and Fred Yang at Hart Research Associates. The data's margin of error is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

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