

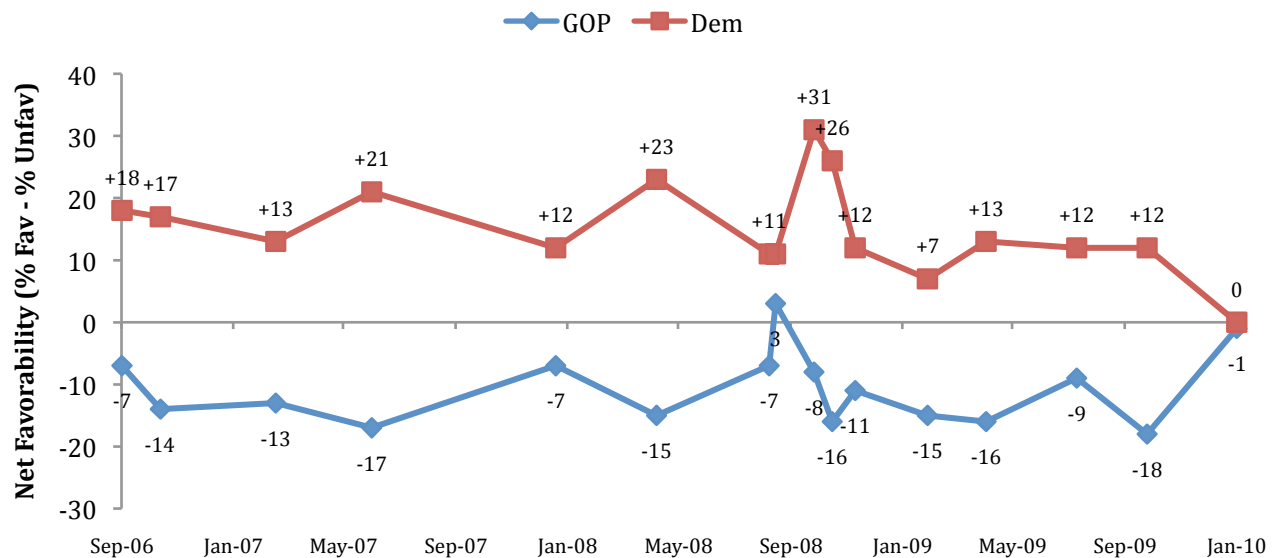
Polling News & Notes

Overlooked Recent Polling and Insights • February 4, 2010

Republicans' Image on the Rebound: Over the past year, as President Obama's job approval ratings plummeted, one consolation for the White House has been the Republican Party's poor public image. As recently as October, a CNN poll found that just 36% of Americans had a favorable opinion of the Republican Party, while 54% viewed the party unfavorably. But a new poll finds that Republicans have erased Democrats' favorability advantage—Democrats' favorability has dropped from positive double-digits to nearly even, while the GOP enjoys its best ratings since the 2008 Republican convention.

Political Parties' Net Favorability

CNN/ORC Polls, Sept. 2006 to Jan. 2010



Indeed, since last October, Democrats have gone from a 30-point advantage over Republicans in favorability (net +12 to Republicans' net -18) to a one-point advantage today as Americans continue to learn more about the Democrats' health care reform proposals. The loss of this advantage is also reflected in the two parties' electoral prospects—since October, Democrats have gone from a six-point lead on the generic ballot (49%-43%) to a 3-point deficit (45%-48%) in Gallup. The GOP's gains and margin are even larger in Rasmussen, whose latest survey shows a 7-point Republican lead.

There will be other significant changes before voters head to the polls this fall and party favorability will be just one of many factors that will determine the midterms' outcome. But it seems clear the 2010 elections will be vastly different for Republicans than were 2006 or 2008 elections. Democrats have squandered their advantage over the past year; now it will be up to Republicans to make the most of the opportunity.