

Congressional Job Approval and Voter Turnout: A new Gallup [report](#) examines congressional job approval at the time of a Midterm Election and how it is inversely correlated with voter turnout on Election Day. In the last five Midterms, congressional job approval was higher in 2002 (50%) and 1998 (44%) and lower in 2006 (26%), 1994 (23%), and 2010 (21%). Voter turnout was lower in years with high congressional approval, 39.5% in 2002 and 38.1% in 1998, whereas in 2006, 1994, and 2010, voter turnout was up to 40.4%, 41.1%, and 40.9%, respectively.

Gallup notes presidential job approval is similarly connected with Midterm turnout. Presidential job approval ratings were steady and high in years with low turnout (Bush's and Clinton's approval ratings were in the 60s in both 2002 and 1998), while they were low in years with high turnout (Clinton's, Bush's, and Obama's approval ratings were in the low 40s in 1994, 2006, and 2010).

What party stands to fare better with higher voter turnout driven by lower congressional and presidential approval ratings? Explaining the president's party typically loses House seats in midterm elections, Gallup names the Senate as the "more important playing ground," speculating lower congressional and presidential approval ratings will likely benefit Republicans looking to knock off incumbent Senate Democrats. Today's low congressional approval rating (around 13%), coupled with President Obama's low approval (41%) and Republicans' enthusiasm advantage, could cause several Senate Democrats to get pink slips this November.

Congressional Job Approval and Voter Turnout, Recent Midterm Elections

	Congressional job approval	Voter turnout
	%	%
2010	21	40.9
1994	23	41.1
2006	26	40.4
1998	44	38.1
2002	50	39.5

Congressional job approval is based on the final Gallup estimate before each midterm election. Turnout is the percentage of the voting eligible population who voted, based on estimates from The United States Elections Project website.

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