

## Polling News & Notes

*Overlooked Recent Polling and Insights • February 12, 2015*

**President Obama's Polarized Approval Ratings:** In his State of the Union address, President Barack Obama lectured Congress about bipartisanship. Despite his pledge to work with the Republican-led Congress, Mr. Obama has yet to make good on his promise and instead told Senate Democrats behind closed doors he planned to “play offense.”

It is no wonder a recent Gallup [poll](#) shows Mr. Obama is on track to be the most polarizing president since polls began measuring approval ratings. From January 2009 to present, an average of 13% of Republicans and 83% of Democrats approve of Mr. Obama, resulting in an average party gap of 70 points. President George W. Bush's presidency had an average party gap of 61 (84% Republican, 23% Democratic average approval ratings). Moreover, each of Mr. Obama's six years ranks among the top ten most polarized years since 1953.

When he first ran for president, then-Senator Obama declared, “we need a leader who can finally move beyond the divisive politics of Washington and bring Democrats, independents and Republicans together to get things done.” As he now threatens to veto bipartisan bills like the Keystone XL pipeline and ramps up incendiary attacks on political opponents, it is no wonder Americans are disappointed he has not been leader he promised to be.

*Average Gaps in Approval Ratings by Party for Presidents, Gallup Polls, 1953-2014*

President	Dates of presidency	Avg. approval, Republicans	Avg. approval, Democrats	Avg. party gap
		%	%	Pct. pts.
Obama	Jan 09-present	13	83	70
G.W. Bush	Jan 01-Jan 09	84	23	61
Clinton	Jan 93-Jan 01	26	82	56
G.H.W. Bush	Jan 89-Jan 93	82	44	38
Reagan	Jan 81-Jan 89	83	31	52
Carter	Jan 77-Jan 81	31	57	26
Ford	Aug 74-Jan 77	67	36	31
Nixon	Jan 69-Aug 74	75	34	41
Johnson	Nov 63-Jan 69	40	70	30
Kennedy	Jan 61-Nov 63	49	84	35
Eisenhower	Jan 53-Jan 61	88	49	39

GALLUP