

Subject: Expected Outcomes and Implications of Midterm Elections
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Fiscal policies over the next two years will be influenced by which party controls the House and the Senate. It is reasonable to assume that the economic expectations of consumers will also be contingent on the election outcomes. It is of some interest to know which party consumers thought would be best for their own financial situation and best for the overall economy in order to assess consumers' likely reactions to the election results. Regardless of which party wins control of the House or Senate, the most likely result is that the election outcome will be used to justify a wider rather than a narrower partisan divide.

Consumers were not asked which candidate they preferred or would vote for, but whether the Democrats or Republicans would win control. The data mirror the same findings as many other polls: the Democrats would regain control of the House and the Republicans would retain control of the Senate. Importantly, the results were much more decisive for Republicans retaining the Senate than for Democrats regaining control of the House. The column labeled "Balance" is the difference in percentage points and whether it favored Democrats or Republicans; a difference of 10 percentage points or more is generally required for a highly significant difference. Self-identified party affiliation was significantly related to who consumers anticipated would win control, with much larger differences than on age, income, or education. Republicans were anticipated to keep control of the Senate by every subgroup, with just one exception: self-identified Democrats were nearly as likely to anticipate control by the Democrats as the Republicans. Whereas all the demographic differences were highly significant for Republicans retaining control of the Senate, there were decidedly mixed results for the House, especially on education, with those with least education expecting Republican control and college degree holders expecting control by Democrats.

Consumers were also asked whether they thought the economy and their own personal finances would be better with a Democrat or Republican controlled Congress. The largest differences were again related to party preferences; of somewhat greater interest, self-identified Independents more often choose control by Republicans rather than Democrats as best for the economy and their personal finances. Nonetheless, about half of all Independents replied that it made no difference to the state of the economy or their own finances whether Republicans or Democrats were in control. In addition, all demographic subgroups significantly tilted toward Republicans as best for the economy and their own finances except for the youngest age group, those with incomes in the bottom third of the distribution, and those with a college degree or more.

Judgements about the Outcomes and Economic Implications of the Midterm Election (September and October 2018 surveys, 1219 cases; Don't Knows omitted from tables)														
	Which Party Will Control the House?			Which Party Will Control the Senate?			Which Party Better for National Economy?				Which Party Better for Personal Finances?			
	Dems	Repubs	Balance	Dems	Repubs	Balance	Dems	Repubs	No Diff	Balance	Dems	Repubs	No Diff	Balance
All	49%	44%	D+5	34%	60%	R+26	27%	36%	36%	R+9	23%	33%	42%	R+10
Political Party														
Democrats	74%	22%	D+52	49%	48%	D+1	59%	4%	36%	D+55	50%	6%	43%	D+44
Republicans	19%	76%	R+57	16%	80%	R+64	2%	80%	17%	R+78	1%	78%	20%	R+77
Independents	49%	44%	D+5	35%	58%	R+23	17%	34%	46%	R+17	16%	29%	53%	R+13
Age of Householder														
18 - 34	52%	43%	D+9	42%	52%	R+10	27%	24%	47%	D+3	21%	25%	53%	R+4
35 - 54	53%	41%	D+12	35%	60%	R+25	27%	36%	34%	R+9	23%	36%	40%	R+13
55 or older	46%	47%	R+1	31%	63%	R+32	26%	41%	32%	R+15	25%	35%	39%	R+10
Household Income														
Bottom third	47%	44%	D+3	40%	51%	R+11	29%	26%	42%	D+3	27%	22%	50%	D+5
Middle third	47%	47%	Even	35%	60%	R+25	25%	39%	34%	R+14	24%	37%	39%	R+13
Top third	57%	40%	D+17	30%	67%	R+37	27%	40%	32%	R+13	19%	40%	40%	R+21
Education														
High School or Less	34%	56%	R+22	32%	59%	R+27	19%	40%	38%	R+21	19%	35%	45%	R+16
Some College	47%	47%	Even	35%	59%	R+24	25%	38%	34%	R+13	22%	37%	40%	R+15
College Degree	57%	37%	D+20	35%	61%	R+26	31%	32%	36%	R+1	26%	30%	43%	R+4

The questions were: Looking ahead to the next two years or so, do you think economic conditions in the country as a whole would be better if the (Democratic/Republican) Party won the congressional election, would economic conditions be better if the (Republican/Democratic) Party won the congressional election, or wouldn't it make much difference? Now thinking about your (family's) financial situation over the next two years or so, do you think that you (and your family living there) would be better off financially if the (Democratic/Republican) Party won the congressional election, would you be better off financially if the (Republican/Democratic) Party won the congressional election, or wouldn't it make much difference? Now I would like to ask specifically about the House of Representatives. Regardless of how you intend to vote, which party do you think will actually win the majority in the House of Representatives in November 2018? What about the Senate. (Regardless of how you intend to vote), which party do you think will actually win the majority in the Senate in November 2018? [Note: Democrat and Republican rotated]