

Polling News & Notes

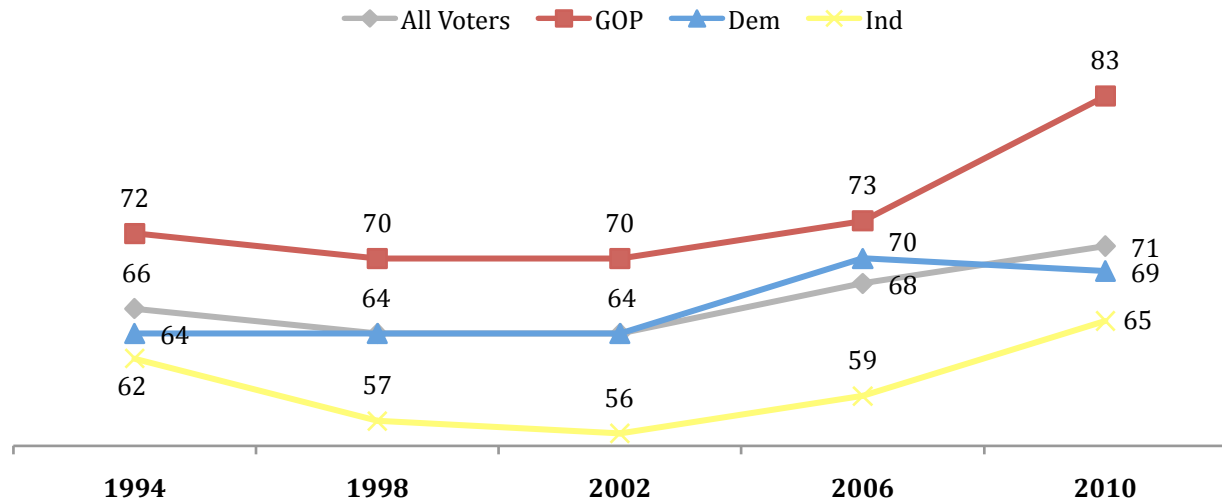
Overlooked Recent Polling and Insights • September 30, 2010

GOP Enthusiasm at Record Level, Independents Leaning Right: All year, Republicans have led Democrats in survey indicators of how likely they are to vote, sometimes called “intensity.” But this week, a new [survey](#) from the Pew Research Center put the GOP’s lead in historical context.

According to the Pew poll, 83% of Republicans now say they will “definitely” vote in November, compared to 71% of all voters and 69% of Democrats. Republicans’ 14-point advantage over Democrats in this predictor of turnout is more twice as large as it was in 1994. Independents are also more likely to turn out than in the past—at 65%, more independents say they will definitely vote this year than in any midterm since Pew began asking the question in 1994.

Pew Polls: Percent "Definitely Will Vote"

(September of Election Year, LVs)



The Pew poll also contained an in-depth look at independents’ voting intentions. Not only are independents more interested in voting this year than in years past, they have definitively shifted to the right. On the generic ballot, the GOP leads 49%-36% (+13) independents, a 31-point shift from 2006, when Democrats led 57%-39%. While Republicans have gained since 2006 with independents in all demographic groups, the swings have been especially pronounced among independents in the northeast (net +44 since 2006), independent men (+38), and independents with college degrees (+36). Compared to 2006, independents are also significantly more likely to prefer smaller government (+6 since 2006 to 59%) and believe Republicans are better able to handle the budget deficit (+26 to 44%).

The Pew survey’s trends may not be this strong by November, but if they are, the combination of an energized Republican base and right-leaning independents will be a potent one.

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