



THE O'LEARY REPORT

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Obama's First 30 Days Report Card

By Brad O'Leary

Washington, D.C. — President Obama recently signed his first major legislative accomplishment, a \$787 billion dollar economic stimulus bill, however, the President's win is beginning to look more and more like a Pyrrhic victory. In fact, in just 30 days on the job, the new president has alienated Independents, small business leaders, young voters, Catholics and Republicans on a number of legislative victories.

According to a recent ATI-News/Zogby poll, 66 percent of Independents think Obama's stimulus bill spends too much money on items that will *not* improve the economy. Fifty-three percent of young voters (age 18 to 29), 60 percent of small business leaders and 93 percent of Republicans all oppose the bill for the same reason.

While President Obama gets an A from voters on style, only Democrats give him a passing grade on substance, and barely at that, as only 55 percent of Democratic voters think his stimulus

bill spends money in the right places.

During the inauguration and even today, President Obama is seen as a young, handsome family man with movie screen elegance. But now that it's time for substance, things aren't going so smoothly.

President for a month, Obama is already working on his fourth choice for commerce secretary.

In addition, he reversed a federal law that prohibited foreign governments from using U.S. taxpayer dollars for abortions – while President Obama won the support of 54 percent of Catholics in the election, according to ATI-News/Zogby, 55 percent of Catholics are opposed to this action.

And, although closing the U.S. detention center in Guantanamo Bay earned him high praise, reality dictates that it was largely a symbolic move, as the center remains open and will remain open until President Obama decides

what to do with the roughly 245 suspected terrorists who occupy the center.

Here is a brief synopsis of President Obama's first 30 days:

• **President Obama has now officially taken ownership of the recession.**

President Obama fought incredibly hard for what a majority of Americans think is an pork barrel stimulus bill that isn't likely to turn around the economy.

According to a recent ATI-News/Zogby poll, 58 percent of Americans think that too much money in the bill goes toward non-stimulus expenditures, while only 30 percent think otherwise (12 percent are not sure).

As passage of the bill became more difficult, President Obama's rhetoric became more dire and urgent. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, Obama "turned fearmongering into an art form," and "repeatedly raised the specter of another Great Depression." By resorting to such rhetoric, President

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Poll Shows Americans Overwhelmingly Reject Obama's Pick for "Regulatory Czar"

By Brad O'Leary

Washington, D.C. — President Barack Obama has nominated his friend and Harvard law professor, Cass Sunstein, to head the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. As "regulatory czar," Sunstein will have enormous power over all major government regulations.

President Obama's nomination is

not without controversy, however, as Sunstein holds a number of views that are decidedly at odds with the vast majority of Americans. In particular, Sunstein has publicly taken extreme positions on animal "rights," gun ownership, hunting, medical testing using animals, meat eating, and livestock

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Obama Report Card

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Obama officially took ownership of the recession – for better or for worse.

• **President Obama has increased the partisan divide in Washington.** According to Congressman Dan Boren, a Democrat from Oklahoma, “The problem is that [the stimulus bill] became a Democrat bill and not an American bill, because [Obama] didn’t use any of the Republican ideas.” Of course, during the campaign, President Obama promised to change the sharply partisan nature of Washington and govern in a bipartisan fashion. During the campaign President Obama promised to “change the way Washington works” and “reach across the aisle” to “bridge partisan divides.” However, his final stimulus bill was rejected by seven Democrats and supported by only three Republicans. This is not exactly what he promised during the campaign.

• **President Obama is losing one of his core constituencies: young people.** According to an ATI-News/Zogby poll, voters age 18-29 years old, a majority of whom helped elect President Obama, are beginning to show signs of jumping ship. The poll found that 53 percent of such voters think President Obama’s stimulus bill will make economic recovery harder to achieve, while only 31 percent believe in his plan. The same was almost identically true for voters age 30 to 49 (53 to 30 percent).

• **President Obama is losing the Americans that should have the biggest hand in the recovery: small business leaders.** According to the same ATI-News/Zogby poll, 56 percent of mainly small business leaders think President Obama’s stimulus plan will make economic recovery harder, not easier. Only 32 percent thought it would be helpful to the economy. A staggering 60 percent of business leaders think that the President Obama’s bill spends too much on non-stimulus, pork items, as opposed to real measures that will improve the economy. This is crucial, as these business leaders are the ones who will ultimately create the jobs, wealth and commerce that will

turn around the economy. It is troubling that a clear majority of them see President Obama’s plan as a hindrance, not a help.

• **President Obama is talking down the economy at the worst possible time.** By repeatedly telling Americans that we’re on the cusp of another Great Depression, President Obama showed he was willing to employ fearmongering to gain a political victory. His comparison of today’s environment to the Great Depression is not only historically inaccurate, but it also threatens to have the very real effect of dampening Americans’ hope for the future. President Obama’s Treasury Secretary, Tim Geithner, also looked unprepared and offered little more than partisan rhetoric in his recent pitch for President Obama’s plan to save the banks (the immediate fallout from Secretary Geithner’s rhetoric was a 400 point drop in the Dow Jones Industrial Average).

Moreover, fifty-three percent of Americans think Obama’s stimulus bill will actually make economic recovery *harder* to achieve (according to a recent ATI-News/Zogby poll), while only 31 percent think it will spur recovery. In addition, 56 percent of Independents think the bill will hinder recovery, as do 53 percent of young voters age 18-29 years old, and 56 percent of small business leaders.

• **President Obama is now working on his fourth Commerce Secretary in only one-month’s time.** According to Republican aides close to the situation, President Obama’s pick for Commerce Secretary, Republican Senator Judd Gregg, withdrew his nomination in large part because he was angered that Republicans were shut out of the process. Gregg withdrew his nomination shortly after the ATI-News/Zogby poll was released, which showed the small business community’s negative perception of Obama’s stimulus effort. Gregg was President Obama’s third pick to run the Commerce department after New Mexico governor Bill Richardson was forced to withdraw his nomination, and Penny Pritzker publicly stated she did not want the post. President Obama will now have to find yet another to fill

the role of Commerce Secretary.

• **President Obama’s high standard for cabinet appointees never materialized.** During the campaign, President Obama stumped frequently about the high purity standards that his cabinet and advisors would have to meet. However, this standard never materialized, as Obama has nominated numerous people with tax problems and lobbyists to fill out his top-level staff. Indeed, there have been few exceptions to this “purity standard” that the Obama administration has not been willing to make.

• **President Obama has effectively undone many of the strides America has made on welfare reform.** Many of the provisions in the stimulus bill are actually designed to reverse gains made on welfare reform. As Michael Tanner writes in the *New York Post*: “[T]he bill would reward states for increasing caseloads, even if the growth came because the state had loosened its requirements for recipients to work. This is radical change. States that succeed in getting people off welfare would lose the opportunity for increased federal funding. And states that make it *easier* to stay on welfare (by, say, raising the time limit from two years to five) would get rewarded with more taxpayer cash. The bill would even let states with rising welfare rolls still collect their ‘case-load reduction’ bonuses.”

Victory frequently comes at a cost, but rarely is the price-tag this steep. Small business leaders, young voters, Independents and Republicans are now asking: Will President Obama’s stimulus bill create jobs, spur investment, free up credit and save the housing industry? This is how his economic recovery plan will be judged, and only then will he know if it was worth the tremendous personal, political and capital expense.

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Cass Sunstein Too Extreme?

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production.

According to a recent ATI-News/Zogby poll, a clear majority of Americans disagree with Cass Sunstein's extreme ideology. (The poll surveyed 7,010 likely voters and was conducted February 5-9. It has a margin of error of plus-or-minus 1.2 percentage points).

Question #1: ATI-News/Zogby asked likely voters, "In a 2007 speech at Harvard University, President Obama's regulatory czar, Cass Sunstein, said we ought to eliminate hunting and the practice of eating meat. Do you agree or disagree with Mr. Sunstein?"

Eighty-six percent of likely voters disagree with Sunstein's proposition that hunting and meat eating be eliminated. Seventy-four percent of Democratic voters disagree with Sunstein, as do 97 percent of Republicans and 90 percent of Independents. A clear majority (81 percent) of young voters age 18-29 also disagree, as do strong majorities of self-described Liberals (67 percent), Moderates (88 percent) and Conservatives (97 percent).

Question #2: ATI-News/Zogby asked likely voters, "President Obama's regu-

latory czar, Cass Sunstein, has argued that animals, this includes animals being used for medical research and animals that are hunted, should be entitled to initiate lawsuits with humans representing as their lawyers and guardians. Do you agree or disagree with this idea?"

Eighty-four percent of Americans disagree with Sunstein's view that animals should be able to obtain human council

Do you think Obama is off to a "good start"?

No: 53%

Yes: 47%

Total Votes: 278,034

Source: AOL

and sue. Seventy-one percent of Democrats disagree with Sunstein, as do 97 percent of Republicans and 88 percent of Independents. Seventy-eight percent of young voters age 18-29 also disagree, as do majorities of Liberals (68 percent), Moderates (84 percent) and Conservatives (96 percent).

On both questions, 97 percent of members of the National Rifle Association (NRA) disagree with Cass Sunstein, as do 83 percent of Americans who have never been members of the NRA.

In a 2007 speech at Harvard University, Sunstein proclaimed: "We ought to ban hunting." He also told the audience that animal suffering was "morally akin to slavery and mass extermination of human beings."

In his 2004 book, *Animal Rights: Current Debates and New Directions*, Sunstein wrote: "Animals should be permitted to bring suit, with human beings as their representatives."

And in his 2006 book, *Radicals in Robes: Why Extreme Right-Wing Courts are Wrong for America*, he wrote, "[A]lmost all gun control legislation is constitutionally fine... fundamentalism does not justify the view that the Second Amendment protects an individual right to bear arms."

These matters are likely to come up during Cass Sunstein's confirmation hearing before the Senate. It will be the Senate's job to determine if Sunstein's views fall outside the mainstream America.

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Americans Decidedly Opposed to Rebate Checks for Non-taxpayers

By Brad O'Leary

Washington, D.C. — Tax rebate checks are popular with most Americans, but should everyone receive them – even those who don't pay any federal income taxes? A majority of Americans say no, according to a recent ATI-News/Zogby poll.

The poll surveyed 7,010 likely voters and was conducted February 5-9. It has a margin of error of plus-or-minus 1.2 percentage points.

ATI-News/Zogby asked likely voters, "The 30 percent of the American

people who don't pay any federal income taxes are often still eligible for a rebate check from the federal government. Do you agree or disagree with this practice?"

Sixty-one percent of Americans disagree with rebate checks going to non-taxpayers, while only 32 percent agree with the practice (7 percent are not sure). Among taxpaying voters, 65 percent disagree and only 28 percent agree (7 percent are not sure). Among non-taxpayers, however, 45.6 percent think they're entitled to a tax rebate check,

while 44.6 percent think they are not (9.8 percent are not sure).

A majority (63 percent) of small business leaders also disagree with non-taxpayers being eligible for tax rebate checks.

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Where Do Voters Stand on the “Fairness Doctrine?”

- ◆ 47% oppose the Fairness Doctrine.
- ◆ 38% favor the Fairness Doctrine.
- ◆ 15% are not sure.
- ◆ 64% do not think conservatives have an unfair advantage in the media.
- ◆ 26% think conservatives have an unfair advantage in the media.
- ◆ 74% say it is possible for any political view to be heard in today’s media environment.
- ◆ 51% say it is likely that the Democratic-controlled Congress will restore the Fairness Doctrine.
- ◆ 37% say the Democratic-controlled Congress is unlikely to restore the Fairness Doctrine

Source: Rasmussen Reports national telephone survey of 1,000 Likely Voters was conducted by Rasmussen Reports February 12-13, 2009. The margin of error for the survey is +/- 3 percentage points



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Senator Schumer Wrong – Americans *DO* Care About Pork

By Brad O’Leary

Washington, D.C. — On the floor of the U.S. Senate Tuesday, Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) took it upon himself to speak for the American people, boldly declaring that, when it comes to pork, “the American people really don’t care.” However, according to a just-released ATI-News/Zogby poll, Schumer’s statement is incorrect.

The poll surveyed 7,010 likely voters. It was conducted February 5th through 9th and has a margin of error of plus-or-minus 1.2 percentage points. Here is a sampling of the results:

Question #1: ATI-News/Zogby asked likely voters, “The current stimulus package supported by President Obama contains \$650 million, renewing funding to help Americans buy digital converter boxes. Do you favor or oppose this spending provision?”

Overall, 56 percent of Americans oppose this \$650 million pork provision, while only 33 percent favor it (11 percent are not sure). Eighty-four percent of Republicans oppose it, as do 61 per-

cent of Independents. Fifty-five percent of young voters age 18-29 oppose, and only 34 percent favor it (11 percent are not sure).

Question #2: ATI-News/Zogby asked voters, “The current stimulus package supported by President Obama contains nearly \$4.2 billion for neighborhood stabilization activities that could go to organizations such as ACORN or the League of Women Voters, that would spend it on voter registration activities and other community involvement programs. Do you favor or oppose this spending provision?”

Fifty-eight percent of American voters oppose using the “stimulus” bill to send \$4.2 billion taxpayer dollars to community activist organizations. Ninety-three percent of Republicans oppose this pork, as do 64 percent of Independent voters.

Question #3: ATI-News/Zogby asked voters, “The stimulus bill would allow undocumented workers, who are also

referred to as illegal aliens, who are working and paying taxes to collect a tax rebate check of \$500 per person. Do you agree or disagree with this provision?”

Sixty-eight of all American voters disagree with using the economic recovery bill to give tax rebates to illegal aliens, while only 26 percent agree (6 percent are not sure). Ninety-two percent of Republicans disagree, as do 74 percent of Independents.

Next time, Senator Schumer may want to think twice before speaking on behalf of the American people. As this poll shows, a clear majority of the American electorate is opposed to using the economic stimulus bill as a vehicle for pork.

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