

NATIONAL GENERAL ELECTION POLL ON IMMIGRATION ISSUES
IN REPUBLICAN-HELD COMPETITIVE CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

Methodology

On November 2-3, 2013, Basswood Research conducted a survey of likely general election voters in 20 congressional districts. These districts are widely viewed as the 20 most competitive ones currently held by Republican incumbents. The districts surveyed were: CA-10, CA-21, CO-6, FL-2, FL-10, IA-3, IL-13, IN-2, MI-1, MI-7, MI-11, MN-2, NE-2, NV-3, NY-11, NY-19, NY-23, OH-6, OH-14, PA-8. The survey was conducted by live professional interviewers by telephone. The overall sample size was 1000, with a margin of error of +/- 3.1%, at a 95% confidence interval. Each district contributed 50 interviews to the sample; as such, data in individual districts is much less reliable.

Key Findings

- **Voters in key Republican districts are highly dissatisfied with political leadership in Washington across-the-board.**

President Obama's job approval rating is poor, with 41% approving and 58% disapproving. "Democrats in Congress" fare even worse, with 34% approving, and 63% disapproving. But it is "Republicans in Congress" who are in the worst shape in these Republican districts, with 27% approving and 70% disapproving of their job performance.

- **Voters in key Republican districts want action on immigration reform.**

Fixing the current immigration system is rated as "very important" by 70% of voters in these districts. An additional 23% rate action on immigration reform as "somewhat important." Only 5% rate immigration reform as either "not very important" or "not at all important."

- **Voters prefer an imperfect immigration solution to no solution.**

When given a choice between leaving the current immigration system the way it is, and "passing new laws that are not perfect, but do attempt to fix the serious flaws in the current system," voters choose imperfect solutions over the status quo by a massive 77%-15% margin. That includes 67% of voters who consider themselves "very conservative," and 72% of registered or affiliated Republicans.

- **The major elements of the comprehensive immigration reform proposals being considered in Congress have widespread support in these key Republican districts.**

E-Verify:	80% support; 13% oppose
Dream Act:	78% support; 16% oppose
Earned pathway to citizenship for undocumented:	71% support; 21% oppose
Increasing fines for employers who hire Undocumented immigrants:	72% support; 23% oppose
Increasing border patrol and border fencing:	67% support; 24% oppose
Increasing high tech legal immigration:	62% support; 30% oppose

- **The combination of enhanced border security and pathway to citizenship represents a consensus position.**

When presented with three options regarding the interconnection between border security to prevent future illegal immigration and citizenship for those who are presently in the country and undocumented, the following responses were found:

17% oppose a pathway to citizenship under all circumstances;
 26% favor a pathway to citizenship even without any increase in border security;
 50% favor a pathway to citizenship if it also includes substantially increased border security.

76% favor a pathway to citizenship, with or without enhanced border security.

- **The partisan composition of these 20 districts favors Republicans.**

By party registration/affiliation, respondents in this survey were 39% Republican, 35% Democratic, and 23% Independent. The generic party preference for Congress was +6.7 points Republican.

Conclusions

General election voters in these districts, including Republicans, support all the key provisions of comprehensive immigration reform by wide margins. Generally, the proposals regarding earned citizenship for undocumented immigrants are no less popular than the provisions regarding enhanced border security and employer sanctions. Action on these widely supported immigration reforms would be welcomed by voters who are highly dissatisfied by the dysfunction in Washington.

About Basswood Research

Since its founding in 2001, Basswood Research has conducted survey research in every state and in hundreds of congressional districts and local communities. Its founder and principal, Jon Lerner, has been recognized by *Roll Call*, *National Journal*, the *Washington Post* and others as one of the leading Republican pollsters in the nation. Basswood has helped elect more than two dozen U.S. Senators, Members of Congress, and Governors, including leading conservatives such as Senators Tom Coburn, Pat Toomey, and Tim Scott. It has served as pollster for leading conservative advocacy groups such as the Club for Growth. And it has conducted surveys for the national Republican Party committees at the RGA, the NRSC, and the NRCC.