

# THE TARRANCE GROUP

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** AUGUST 26, 2012

**TO:** PUBLIC NOTICE

**FROM:** THE TARRANCE GROUP

**RE:** FINDINGS FROM AUGUST MONITOR SURVEY

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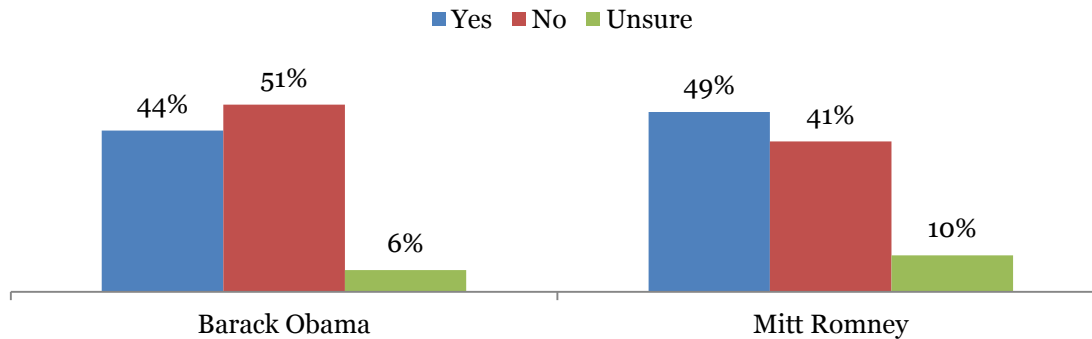
The Tarrance Group is pleased to present Public Notice with the key findings from a survey of “likely” voters throughout the country. The survey was conducted via telephone August 19-23, 2012, among N=801 registered “likely” voters. The margin of error on a sample of this type is +/- 3.5%. A total of N=617 interviews were conducted via landline telephone, while N=184 interviews were conducted via cellular telephone.

### **Key Findings**

- The presidential ballot test is virtually tied among likely voters, with 46% supporting Mitt Romney and 47% supporting Barack Obama. Another 7% are undecided. President Obama’s approval rating is mostly negative, with 46% approving and 50% disapproving of his job performance.
- Voters continue to hold mainly negative views of the country’s direction and financial situation. A majority (59%) say the country is on the wrong track, and only 26% say the economy is getting better. A plurality (44%) say the economy is getting worse, which is an increase of +7 points since June of this year.
- Economic issues are the most important to voters, with the top two issues being the economy and jobs (37%) and government spending and the federal deficit (17%). While Medicare is certainly in the news recently, only 7% of voters say this is the most important issue, including only 13% of seniors.
- Voters give President Obama weak ratings when it comes to the economy. A plurality (45%) say his economic policies have made the economy worse, and a majority (54%) say Obama does not fully understand how to fix the economy. When asked this of Romney, a plurality (46%) also say he does not fully understand how to fix the economy.

- A strong majority of voters see an impact from the rising federal debt, with a majority saying that the economy (67%) and they/their own family (53%) are extremely or very impacted by the debt. When it comes to plans for lowering the debt, a majority say Obama does **not** have a plan to lower the debt, while a plurality say Romney does.

### Have a Plan to Lower the Country's Debt?



- Half (49%) of voters have seen, read, or heard something about Paul Ryan's economic budget plan. Among those who are aware of it, a majority (52%) favor the plan, while 42% oppose it. Support for the plan is at majority level among Independents (55%) and seniors (54%).
- Voters clearly believe that something has to be done with Medicare, as a majority say the program needs major (46%) or modest (21%) changes. The perceived need for major changes to Medicare is driven by younger voters, with 55% of those under 55 saying major changes are needed. However, a plurality (45%) of near retirees (those 55-64) say major changes are needed, along with one third (33%) of seniors.

	Level of Change Needed to Medicare				
	Major Changes	Modest Changes	Minor Adjustment	No changes	Unsure/Refused
All	46%	21%	24%	3%	5%
18-34	54%	19%	19%	-	7%
35-44	53%	22%	13%	6%	7%
45-54	57%	16%	20%	-	6%
55-64	45%	24%	26%	2%	4%
65 or over	33%	24%	35%	4%	4%

- Voters are also pessimistic about the impact of President Obama's healthcare law on Medicare. A plurality (46%) say the law will make Medicare worse, while only 34% say it will make Medicare better. At least a plurality of seniors (49%), women (45%), households with children (50%), and Independents (51%) say Obama's healthcare law will make Medicare worse.

	<b>Impact of Obama Healthcare Law on Medicare</b>			
	Make Medicare Better	No Impact	Make Medicare Worse	Unsure
All	34%	11%	46%	9%
18-34	42%	18%	37%	3%
35-44	28%	12%	49%	10%
45-54	35%	7%	49%	9%
55-64	38%	10%	45%	7%
65 or over	31%	9%	49%	11%

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