



Insight

Polling and Policy In Washington State

DOUGLAS HOLTZ-EAKIN | OCTOBER 7, 2010

The American Action Forum released new [polling](#) on the intersection of policy and politics, this time focused in Washington State. Political pundits tend to focus on personalities (Patty Murray versus challenger Dino Rossi) or political “movements” (e.g., the Tea Party activists).

The Forum is dedicated to learning key facts about the policy landscape:

- Fifty eight percent of respondents say the country is on the wrong track, compared to only 33 percent who feel it is headed in the right direction. Importantly, the wrong track vote has risen slightly from polls take in June and July.
- The economy, unemployment and jobs are far and away the most important issue that influences votes – with 30 percent citing “jobs and the economy.” Again, this is up from only 23 percent in June polls.
- Government spending ranks second at 14 percent. Once more this is up slightly from earlier polls.
- Health care remains the 3rd most important issue; essentially unchanged at 10 percent.

These results suggest that incumbents will struggle because voters want a new strategy on economic growth, to reduce deficits by controlling spending, and to revisit the just-passed health care reform.

We encourage the wonks of the world to scour the full [results](#).

The Forum [polling](#) is a reflection of its commitment to the idea that policy matters and that the policy community is wise to remember that the pursuit of good policy is best informed by public opinion. The “best” policy serves the same electorate that ultimately shapes political realities.