



**Paul Simon
Public Policy Institute**

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

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Opposition to Tea Party Growing Among Illinois Voters

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Opposition to the Tea Party movement and its candidates has grown significantly over the past year in Illinois, according to the results of the fourth annual statewide poll conducted by the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

The poll also demonstrated that Illinois voters overwhelmingly say they would favor candidates who are willing to compromise to get things done.

“The good news in this poll is that voters in Illinois want to see more civility in politics,” said David Yepsen, the director of the Institute. “Voters of all types are tired of the bickering and want to see more results.”

A survey conducted October 11 through October 15, 2011, of 1000 registered voters shows that 25.5 percent either strongly agreed or agreed with the Tea Party movement. In last October’s Simon Poll, 37.9 percent fit in that category. *(See Table 1)*

This year, 42.2 percent either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the Tea Party, compared with last year’s 35.3 percent.

Also, a Tea Party affiliation only helps a candidate with about a third of the electorate, but hurts with about 60 percent of the voters, according to the survey.

When asked if they would be more likely or less likely to vote for a candidate who was affiliated with the Tea Party movement, a total of 31.1 percent of the voters said they were more likely to vote for a Tea Party-endorsed candidate, comparable with last year’s 30.2 percent who said they would be more likely to vote for one. *(See Table 2)*

However, the movement in the group “less likely” to vote for a Tea Party candidate was more dramatic in the last year. There are 59.9 percent who said they were less likely to vote for such a candidate compared to 46 percent last year.

“Overall from 40 to 60 percent of the Illinois voters expressed negative evaluations of the Tea Party and its candidates, with 26 percent to 31 percent who supported the Tea Party,” said John S. Jackson, one of the co-directors of the poll. “While this demonstrates the polarized climate of

opinion regarding the Tea Party, significantly more Illinois voters opposed than supported the Tea Party, and the opposition has increased markedly over the past year.”

Likelihood of voting for or against a Tea Party-affiliated candidate fell fairly predictably along party lines: 72.1 percent of Republicans said they would be more likely to vote for a Tea Party candidate, while 89.7 percent of Democrats said they would be less likely to do so.

More interesting, however, was the response of Independent voters: 30 percent said they would be more likely to vote for a Tea Party-affiliated candidate, while 57.5% of Independents said they would be less likely to cast a Tea Party vote.

Pro-Tea Party and anti-Tea Party voters view the political world quite differently. Only 11.6 percent of those who said they would be more likely to vote for a Tea Party candidate approved or strongly approved of the job President Obama is doing, while 87.8 percent disapproved.

By contrast, 80.3% of the anti-Tea Party voters approved of the job the president is doing and only 18.5 percent disapproved.

On the subject of civility in politics, respondents were asked if they would be more likely or less likely to vote for a political candidate who is willing to make compromises in order to get things done.

Over a majority, 51.4 percent, said they were much more likely to vote for a political candidate who is willing to compromise, and another 28.2 percent said they were somewhat more likely. Those who said they were much less likely to vote for such a candidate constituted only 5.3 percent of the sample and those who chose somewhat less likely were only 4.9 percent of the total. (*See Table 3*)

“It is interesting to note that a total of only 10 percent of Illinois voters regard the willingness to compromise to be a negative quality in their candidates, while almost 80 percent understand that the democratic process cannot function without compromise,” Jackson added.

The poll also posed a related question regarding who was to blame for the lack of civility, Republicans or Democrats. Almost four in ten (37.2 percent) blamed the Republicans most, while about two in ten (18.2 percent) blamed Democrats. Another 35.6 percent blamed both parties equally and 3.5 percent blamed neither party. There were 5.5 percent who said they did not know which party to blame. (*See Table 4*)

However, the pro-Tea Party voters blamed the Democrats over the Republicans by a margin of 46.7 percent to 7.0 percent. The anti-Tea Party respondents blamed the Republicans over the Democrats by a margin of 67.2 percent to 3.6 percent.

Even Tea Party backers said they’d like to see candidates willing to compromise. A total of 71.5 percent of the pro-Tea Party respondents said they were much more or somewhat more likely to vote for a candidate who is willing to compromise, leaving 16.3 percent who were somewhat less or much less likely to vote for such a candidate. The anti-Tea Party group produced 85.9 percent who were much more or somewhat more likely to vote for a candidate willing to compromise, compared to only 8.8 percent who were less likely to vote for a compromise-oriented candidate.

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The 2011 Simon Poll interviewed 1,000 registered voters across Illinois. It has a margin for error of plus or minus 3 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that if we were to conduct the survey 100 times, in 95 of those instances the results would vary by no more than plus or minus 3 points from the results obtained here. The margin for error will be larger for demographic, geographic and response subgroups.

Live telephone interviews were conducted by Issues + Answers Global Media Research of Virginia Beach, VA. Cell phone interviews were included as well as land-line interviews. Issues + Answers reports no Illinois political clients. The survey was paid for with non-tax dollars from the Institute's endowment fund.

Note: The "Paul Simon Public Policy Institute Poll," the "Simon Poll" and the "Southern Illinois Poll" are the copyrighted trademarks of the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University. Use and publication of these polls is encouraged – but only with credit to the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at SIUC.

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Table 1: Tea Party Agreement, 2010 and 2011

From what you know, do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the Tea Party movement, or don't you have an opinion either way?

	2010	2011
Strongly agree	14.3%	7.7%
Agree	23.6%	18.8%
Disagree	16.1%	13.9%
Strongly disagree	19.4%	28.3%
No opinion	23.3%	28.5%
Other/Don't know	3.3%	2.8%

Table 2: Likelihood of Voting for Tea Party Candidate, 2010 and 2011

Would you be more or less likely to vote for a candidate that was affiliated with the Tea Party movement?

	2010	2011*
Much more	NA	11.4%
Somewhat more	30.2%	19.8%
Somewhat Less	46.0%	9.8%
Much less	NA	50.1%
Neither	9.8%	4.4%
Other/Don't know	14.0%	4.7%

Total More	30.2%	31.1%
Total Less	46.0%	59.9%

* In 2010, asked "more or less likely" without the "much or somewhat" options.

Table 3: Vote for a Candidate Who Compromises to Get Things Done

Would you be more likely or less likely to vote for a political candidate who is willing to make compromises in order to get things done? (PROBE: Would you be much [more/less] likely or just somewhat [more/less] likely?)

Willingness to Vote	% Responding
Much more	51.4%
Somewhat more	28.2%
Somewhat less	4.9%
Much less	5.3%
Other/Don't know	10.2%

Table 4: Which Party to Blame for Lack of Civil Tone

Some people have said that government in Washington does not work well because of a lack of a civil tone. Who do you blame more for the lack of civility in Washington – [ROTATE ORDER] The Democrats in Washington or the Republicans in Washington?

Party	% Responding
Democrats	18.2%
Republicans	37.2%
Both (VOL)	35.6%
Neither (VOL)	3.5%
Other/Don't know	5.5%