



Majority of Voters Believe McCain-Feingold Infringes on First Amendment Rights, According to Recent Zogby/O'Leary Poll

Majority of Americans Reject Obama Stimulus Spending – Prefer Reducing Deficit to Aid the Economy

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Washington, D.C. — A strong majority of American voters believe the First Amendment protects the right of organizations to purchase political advertising that targets candidates running for political office, according to a recent Zogby International/*O'Leary Report* poll. The Supreme Court will take on this issue in September.

On the economic front, a majority of American voters do not agree with President Obama's strategy of growing the federal deficit in an attempt to stimulate the economy. The Zogby/O'Leary poll was conducted July 21-24, surveyed 4,470 voters, and has a margin-of-error of plus-or-minus 1.5 percentage points.

Campaign Finance Law

On September 9, the U.S. Supreme Court will convene for a special session to decide whether to uphold a ban on corporate spending in federal elections. At issue is a documentary about Hillary Clinton that was produced by the conservative group Citizens United and released in January 2008 when Clinton was running for president. Citing restrictions in the "McCain-Feingold" campaign finance law, a district court barred the group from advertising the documentary on television and distributing it through video-on-demand. Now the Supreme Court will decide if such a ban infringes on Americans' First Amendment rights.

Zogby/O'Leary asked voters:

“Do you agree or disagree that the First Amendment protects the right of organizations to buy political advertisements, in support of or opposition to, candidates for political office?”

Sixty-six percent of voters agree that the First Amendment protects organizations’ political speech during an election, while only 19 percent disagree. A majority of Republicans (82 percent), Democrats (54 percent) and Independents (64 percent) all agree as well. A large majority of young voters age 18-29 (70 percent) agree, while only 15 percent disagree. Among those who voted for President Obama, 53 percent agree and only 28 percent disagree.

Deficit Spending to Stimulate Economy

The Obama administration’s \$800 billion economic stimulus package is a substantial reason that the federal budget deficit is projected to nearly quadruple to \$1.75 trillion this year. As Vice President Joe Biden describes the President’s plan, “We have to go spend money to keep from going bankrupt.” A majority of American voters, however, disagree with this strategy.

Zogby/O’Leary asked voters:

“With which statement do you agree? Statement A: Attempt to stimulate the economy by spending money in an effort to save jobs, even if it creates a deficit. Statement B: Try to reduce spending to bring down the deficit as a way to create economic growth.”

A majority of voters (53 percent) agree with Statement B and believe that the government should reduce spending and the deficit as a way to create economic growth. Only 34 percent of American voters agree with Statement A – that the government should spend money it does not have as a way to help the economy.

A majority of Independent voters (55 percent) agree with Statement B, while just 25 percent agree with Statement A. Forty-three percent of young voters age 18-29 also agree with Statement B, and 38 percent agree with Statement A. A strong majority of Hispanic voters (58 percent) agree with Statement B, while only 23 percent side with Statement A. Likewise, 58 percent of small business owners agree with Statement B, and only 31 percent agree with Statement A.

Brad O’Leary is publisher of “The O’Leary Report,” a bestselling author, and is a former NBC Westwood One talk show host. His latest bestseller, “Shut Up, America! The End of Free Speech,” (www.EndofFreeSpeech.com) is available now in bookstores. To see more poll results, go to www.olearyreport.com. To interview Brad, contact Shawna Shriner at (703) 272-1500 or shawnashriner@pm-direct.com.