

Southerners most likely to blame Obama for direction of country

In 2008, President Obama had enough traction in the South to win a third of the region's Electoral College votes and convince millions of other Southerners to pick him for the presidency.



But since then, the trendlines have been all downhill, and -- as Facing South has reported before -- the South has emerged as Obama's achilles heel.

Consider the latest DailyKos/Research2000 poll, one of the few to provide regional breakdowns of its data. Their latest survey shows that, across the country, growing numbers of people believe the country is headed in the wrong direction:

QUESTION: Do you feel the country overall is heading in the right direction or wrong direction?

Region	Right	Wrong	Not Sure	Net Opinion
Northeast	47	49	4	-2
South	31	65	4	-34
Midwest	38	58	4	-20
West	40	56	4	-16

Source: DailyKos/Research2000, April 12-15, 2010

As you can see, every region of the country believes the country is headed in the "wrong direction." The South is definitely the leader, but the Midwest and West are strongly in negative territory.

But how do these regions view President Obama? When it comes to the president's approval ratings, only those in Southern states show a net disapproval:

OBAMA APPROVAL: By region

Region	Favorable	Unfavorable	Not Sure	Net Opinion
Northeast	66	27	7	+39
South	39	59	2	-20
Midwest	56	38	6	+18
West	57	37	6	+20

Source: DailyKos/Research2000, April 12-15, 2010

The difference is striking: People across the country are concerned about the direction of the country, but the South is the only region where a large majority seem to be holding President Obama responsible.

Contrast this regional dislike of Obama to how different regions view Congressional Democrats. According to the DailyKos/Research2000 poll, Southerners aren't fond of them, but the same is true for other parts of the country:

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CONGRESSIONAL DEMOCRATS APPROVAL: By region

Region	Favorable	Unfavorable	Not Sure	Net Opinion
Northeast	49	47	4	+2
South	32	63	5	-31
Midwest	37	58	5	-21
West	37	57	6	-20

Source: [DailyKos/Research2000](#), April 12-15, 2010

The South still leads the pack, but other regions outside the Northeast are just as likely to be disenchanted with Democrats in Congress.

Only one region -- the South -- focuses its displeasure so intently on the president.

Of course, as we've written before, the not-so-hidden element here is race. Not all Southerners disapprove of Obama's performance: The president still enjoys 91% favorable ratings among African-Americans and 69% among Latinos nationally, and while there's no regional breakdown in the DailyKos/Research2000 poll by race (the sample size would likely be too small to be reliable), I'm not aware of any data to suggest the approval of those groups is significantly lower in the South.

Which means that once you isolate for race, a stark reality becomes clear: White Southerners don't like Obama, and more than anywhere else in the country, they think he's to blame for moving the country in the wrong direction.



By Chris Kromm on April 27, 2010 8:00 AM

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