

**JAN 28 RELEASE:**

**CONGRESSIONAL RATINGS: DEMOCRATS SEEN AS DOING A BETTER JOB THAN REPUBLICANS**

***A Majority of Voters Want Action, Regardless of who is in Power***

New York, January 28, 2009 – Now that Democrats control both the White House and both Houses of Congress, Democrats in Congress currently find themselves as beneficiaries of President Obama’s high favorability and job approval ratings.

Specifically, The Diageo/*Hotline* Poll of 800 registered voters conducted by FD from January 21-24, 2009, finds that 49% of voters say they approve of the job Democrats in Congress are doing, while only 26% of voters who approve of the job Republicans in Congress are doing.

And, while the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress has been in session barely three weeks, the Poll finds that the Democratic candidate leads the Republican candidate 46%-22% in a generic 2010 congressional election match-up, with 27% of voters saying they are undecided.

However, the Poll also finds that voters are pragmatic and want action, regardless of which party is in power. Specifically, a majority of voters (51%) say it does not matter who is in power, as long as things get done.

“It is clear that voters are not in the mood for partisan posturing,” commented Brent McGoldrick, Vice President of FD. “Given the challenges facing the country and the wave of high approval ratings President Obama is currently riding, individual Republicans and Democrats in Congress would do well to find common ground with the President where they can.”

<b>Feelings About Democratic Control of White House and Congress</b>	
It <b>does not matter to me</b> who is in power, as long as they can get things done for the country.	51%
I am <b>excited</b> that, for the first time in a long time, the Democrats are in charge of both the Presidency and the Congress.	28%
I am <b>concerned</b> that the Democrats will control both the Presidency and the Congress.	20%

*(Please see next page for Jan 27 release)*

# DIAGEO | The Hotline

**JAN 27 RELEASE:**

**PRESIDENT OBAMA'S JOB APPROVAL RATING IS AT 63%**

***Voters Have Enormous Confidence in Obama to Bring "Change" and are "Inspired" by His Election and Inauguration***

***Poll Finds Broad Support for and Confidence in Stimulus Package***

***But Most Don't Expect Economic Recovery until Mid-way through Obama's First Term***

New York, January 27, 2009 – With one week into a new presidential administration, a substantial majority of Americans approve of the job Barack Obama is doing as president.

The Diageo/*Hotline* Poll of 800 registered voters conducted by FD from January 21-24, 2009, finds that 63% of voters say they approve of the job Barack Obama is doing as President, with 42% saying they "strongly approve."

*Voters Are Confident He Will Bring "Real Change" to Washington*

The Poll finds that 75% of voters are "confident" that President Obama will bring "real change to the way things are done in Washington, D.C." This represents a nine-point increase from the 66% of voters who said they were "confident" in his ability to bring real change in the Diageo/*Hotline* Poll conducted immediately after the Presidential Election.

The Poll also finds that 76% of voters hold a favorable impression of President Obama, while only 15% of voters hold an unfavorable impression.

*President Obama's Inauguration Address is Rated Highly and Inspired Both Optimism and Activism*

More than two-thirds of voters (68%) said they watched his Inauguration speech last week. And, among those who watched the speech, 78% of voters said that, compared to Inaugural speeches given by past presidents in their lifetimes, it was either the "best Inaugural speech" or "better than most." Furthermore, the Diageo/*Hotline* survey finds that 83% of those who watched the speech said it made them "more optimistic" that the U.S. will meet its challenges.

*"How would you rate his speech, compared to past Inaugural speeches given by previous presidents in your lifetime?"*

<u>Inauguration Speech Rating</u>	<u>Total</u>
The best Inaugural speech	33%
Better than most but not the best	45%
About the same as past speeches	16%
Worse than most but not the worst	1%
The worst Inaugural speech	1%

Moreover, the Poll finds that the election and Inauguration of President Obama has inspired Americans to become more involved in civic life: two-thirds of all voters (67%) say they are now inspired "to become more involved in helping the country meet its challenges."

# DIAGEO | *The Hotline*

*The Economy Remains the Top Issue and Voters Don't See Recovery from Recession for a Couple of Years. There Is Substantial Support for the Stimulus Package. But, the Second \$350 Billion of TARP is a "Bad Idea."*

Not surprisingly, "the Economy" remains at the top of voters' minds. A whopping 76% of voters say it is the most important issue facing the country. And, most voters do not see a quick road to economic recovery. Specifically, nearly seven-out-of-ten voters (69%) think that recovery will take longer than one year but less than four, virtually the length of President Obama's first term.

### *Expected Length of the Recession*

<u>Length of Recession</u>	<u>Total</u>
Less than 12 months	3%
More than 12 months but less than 2 years	26%
Between 2 and 4 years	43%
More than 4 years	25%
Don't Know	3%

Against this backdrop, the Diageo/*Hotline* Poll finds that a majority of voters approve of the proposed \$825 billion stimulus package, even if that means increasing the deficit to pay for it.

Specifically, when voters are asked if they support or oppose the stimulus package and no details of the plan are given to them, 54% of voters support the stimulus package. When voters are given the specifics of the stimulus package, 66% of voters support it.

Additionally, substantial majorities of voters are both confident that, if passed, the money allocated to the stimulus package "**will be spent and managed wisely**" (57% say they are confident) and that it also "**will be effective in turning around the economy**" (65% say they are confident).

### *Confidence in the Stimulus Package*

<u>Confidence that Stimulus Spending will be Spent Wisely</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>TOTAL CONFIDENT</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>TOTAL NOT CONFIDENT</b>	<b>41%</b>

N=401, Margin of Error= +/-4.9%

<u>Confidence that Stimulus Spending will be Effective</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>TOTAL CONFIDENT</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>TOTAL NOT CONFIDENT</b>	<b>32%</b>

N=399, Margin of Error= +/-4.9%

"Coming into his first significant challenge in getting his stimulus package passed, President Obama is in the driver's seat. He has the confidence of the American public and they not only support his stimulus plan, but they overwhelmingly believe it will help turn the economy around," commented Amy Walter, Editor-in-Chief of *The Hotline*. "The question is: 'Can he sustain this goodwill through what could be a vigorous fight over the specifics of this plan?'"

Voters' positive feelings evaporate, however, when it comes to the second half (\$350 billion) of the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP). Specifically, 56% of voters say it was a "bad idea" for the Senate to pass the second half of TARP spending, while only 32% of voters say it was a "good idea."

# DIAGEO | *The Hotline*

To obtain complete poll results, please visit [www.diageohotlinepoll.com](http://www.diageohotlinepoll.com)

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**Methodology:** The Diageo/*Hotline* Poll was conducted by telephone from January 21-24, 2009, among a random, representative sample of 800 registered voters, age 18 and older (margin of error +/- 3.5%).

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