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**National
Journal**

HEARTLAND MONITOR POLL

Sixth Allstate-National Journal Heartland Monitor Poll: Americans Experience Continued Economic Woes, Want Business and Government Action

*Decreased Confidence in Economy, Direction of Country, President's Policies;
70% Say Relatives or Close Friends Have Been Laid Off*

Washington, D.C., September 10, 2010 – The Allstate Corporation (NYSE: ALL) and *National Journal* today announced the results of the sixth Heartland Monitor Poll, the latest release in a groundbreaking series of surveys that has delivered new insights on how Americans are experiencing the recession economy, their faith in key leaders and institutions, and their expectations about the future.

The latest installment, arriving just as the 2010 mid-term election campaigns are entering the post-Labor Day high season, paints a portrait of a populace increasingly convinced that the country is on the wrong track, and unlikely to right itself soon. This pessimism appears primarily driven by Americans' personal circumstances and those of the friends and family around them. In addition, there is a significant "jobs now" sentiment that outweighs concerns about the deficit or the size of government.

"This poll gives middle class Americans a voice in shaping our economic future. They continue to be less confident in our economy, institutions and leadership. As a result, they will spend less and save more," said Thomas J. Wilson, Allstate chairman, president and chief executive officer.

"Economic success is defined as lower unemployment and Americans support a wide range of programs to create jobs. They also understand we are competing in a different global economy, one that requires business and government leaders to work together and act wisely to put the common good of the nation ahead of their own interests," concluded Wilson.

"This survey captures the continued coalescing of a prickly 'back-to-basics' streak among many Americans," said Ron Brownstein, Editorial Director of National Journal Group. "They increasingly believe that individual financial irresponsibility is a key factor in the economic mess and must be corrected for the economy to recover. There is also a strengthening chord of 'America First' sentiment, showing itself in greater anxiety about outsourcing and increased support for nationalist economic policies. Combined with a decreasing faith in major government and business institutions, unease about the prospects for the next generation, and deep divisions over the proper role for government in the economy, these attitudes explain why American politics could remain volatile long beyond the November election."

The latest survey ([PDE](#)) identifies several key trends and dynamics that can provide business and political leaders with insight into how Americans are reacting to the persistent economic downturn.

1) Americans are even less optimistic about the country and the economy than they were four months ago.

- A total of **62%** now say the country is on the wrong track, up from **54%** in April.
- A total of **40%** now believe the economy will worsen over the next 12 months, up from **27%** in April.

2) This pessimism continues to erode President Obama's political standing.

- The President's job approval rating is **46%**, down **two** points since April, and **10** points since last July.
- The gap between the President and Congressional Republicans on who is more trusted for economic solutions has narrowed to **five** points – **42%** for the President versus **37%** for Republicans in Congress. The President held an advantage of **seven** points in April, **eight** in January, and **21** in September 2009.

3) Americans judge the health of the economy more by personal circumstances than by economic statistics, and personal circumstances are not good.

- A total of **53%** say their personal experiences, and those of family and friends, have the most influence on how they gauge the economy, compared with **43%** who consider statistics such as the unemployment rate, the GDP, or the stock market.
- A total of **21%** say they are looking for work, and **70%** say a close friend or family member have been laid off since the beginning of the recession in late 2007.

4) Americans want action on jobs, even if that involves temporarily increasing the deficit or increasing government's role in the economy.

- A total of **52%** say they support tax incentives for business to hire more workers, even if it increases the deficit.
- **Sixty-one percent** say government should play an active role in the economy, though more than half of those express skepticism that they can trust government to do it effectively.
- A total of **68%** support either government support for critical industries (**32%**) or protectionist measures like tariffs and penalties for outsourcing (**36%**), versus **23%** who support a pure free trade policy.

5) Americans believe individual responsibility is important to help the U.S. economy recover from the recession.

- Choosing among individual actions, **83%** say reducing personal debt is extremely or very important, **81%** say the same about financial literacy, **73%** identify saving more, and **72%** cite additional education and training as extremely or very important to help the U.S. economy recover from the recession.
- Among government actions, **80%** say it's extremely or very important to make it easier for small businesses to start and grow, **74%** point to helping workers get more education and training, and **70%** prioritize reductions in outsourcing.
- Among possible business actions, the highest-rated is to shift more operations from overseas into the U.S. (**66%**), followed by working with the government to develop new economic growth ideas (**58%**).

Notes to Editors

Survey Methodology

National Sample of 1201 ADULTS AGE 18+

(Margin of Error = +/-2.8%)

Interviews Conducted via Telephone August 27-30, 2010

About Allstate

The Allstate Corporation (NYSE: ALL) is the nation's largest publicly held personal lines insurer. Widely known through the "You're In Good Hands With Allstate®" slogan, Allstate is reinventing protection and retirement to help more than 17 million households insure what they have today and better prepare for tomorrow. Consumers access Allstate insurance products ([auto](#), [home](#), [life](#) and [retirement](#)) and services through Allstate agencies, independent agencies, and Allstate exclusive financial representatives in the U.S. and Canada, as well as via www.allstate.com and 1-800 Allstate®. For an overview of the other Allstate-*National Journal* Heartland Monitor Polls, visit <http://www.allstate.com/heartland-monitor>.

About National Journal Group

Since 1969, National Journal Group has provided insight for insiders through nonpartisan reporting on current political and policy issues as well as tools professionals need to do their jobs well. National Journal Group properties include *National Journal*, *CongressDaily*, NationalJournal.com, *The Hotline*, The Almanac of American Politics and Global Security Newswire. It partners with WETA to produce "Washington Week With Gwen Ifill and *National Journal*."

About FD

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