



Should Older Americans Be Included in the Stimulus Package?: Attitudes of Likely Voters

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SHOULD OLDER AMERICANS BE INCLUDED IN THE STIMULUS PACKAGE?: ATTITUDES OF LIKELY VOTERS

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DATA COLLECTED BY WOELFEL RESEARCH, INC.**

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AARP collected the data for this study through a telephone survey administered by Woelfel Research, Inc. of Dunn Loring, VA. The report was prepared by S. Kathi Brown, AARP Strategic Issues Research. All media inquiries about this report should be directed to Jim Dau or David Nathan at (202) 434-2560. Other inquiries should be directed to S. Kathi Brown at (202) 434-6296.

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AARP commissioned this national telephone survey of 1,027 adults ages 18 and older who report that they are registered to vote and are likely to vote in the 2008 presidential elections. The telephone interviewing was conducted from February 1, 2008 to February 2, 2008 by Woelfel Research, Inc. The margin of sampling error for total respondents is +/- 3.1 percent.

KEY FINDINGS

The overwhelming majority (90%) of likely voters ages 18+ say that it is important to ensure that people, such as older Americans, who rely mostly on Social Security are eligible for rebates that may be provided to other Americans as part of an economic stimulus package. However, respondents are divided over whether a government rebate is a good way to stimulate the economy.

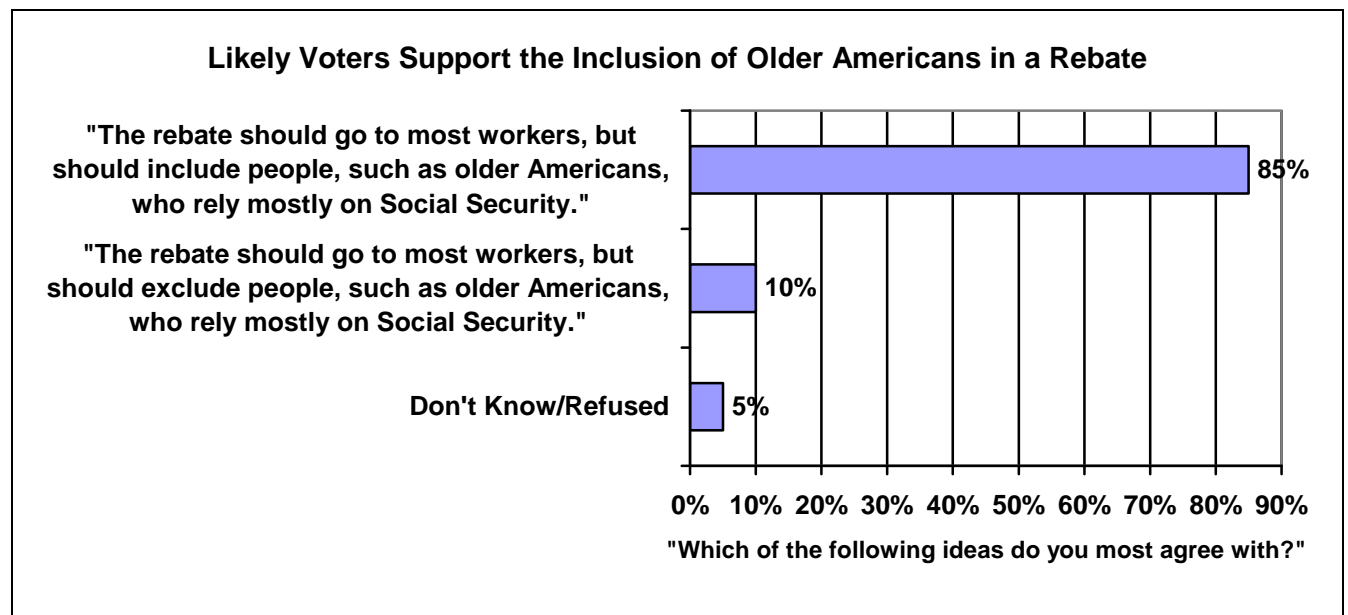
Recent Exposure to News about the Economy

Exposure to news about the condition of the economy is widespread among likely voters. Approximately half (53%) say that they have heard a “great deal” about the economy over the past week, while one third (33%) have heard a “fair amount.” Only 14 percent report that they have heard a little or nothing at all.

Attitudes Toward a Government Rebate

Respondents are divided over whether a rebate will help the economy. Specifically, when asked if they agree or disagree that a “rebate (or one-time payment from the government) to most Americans is a good way to stimulate the economy,” approximately half (52%) agree, but just over two in five (42%) disagree and a few (5%) report that they simply don’t know.

However, the vast majority (85%) of respondents report that, if such a rebate were issued, it should go to workers as well as people, such as older Americans, who rely mostly on Social Security. Only one in ten (10%) believe that a rebate should *exclude* people who rely mostly on Social Security.



In total, nine in ten (90%) respondents say that it is important for the government to ensure that people, such as older Americans, who rely mostly on Social Security are eligible to receive rebates provided to other Americans.

CONCLUSIONS

Likely voters clearly have the economy on their minds. Although they are not certain whether a rebate will help stimulate the economy, they overwhelmingly believe that a rebate issued in an attempt to stimulate the economy should include older Americans and others who rely mostly on Social Security.

APPENDIX: Annotated Questionnaire

Respondents: 1027 people ages 18+ who are registered to vote and likely to vote in the next presidential election.

Hello, this is _____ calling from Woelfel Research, Inc., a national opinion research firm. We are not telemarketers and are not trying to sell you anything. We would like to find out your opinions on some important issues about the United States economy. Your views are important and we would greatly appreciate your participation. All your responses will be kept entirely confidential.

S1. Are you between the ages of 18 and 64 or are you 65 years of age or older?

- 1. 18-64
- 2. 65 or Older
- 3. [DO NOT READ] Under 18 [ASK TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE 18 OR OLDER]
- 4. [DO NOT .READ] Refused [TERMINATE]

Q1. Are you currently registered to vote?

- Yes {continue}
- No {TERMINATE}

Q2. How likely are to vote in the 2008 elections in November? [READ LIST]
N=1027

%			
77	1.	Absolutely certain to vote	
17	2.	Very likely to vote	
7	3.	Possibly will vote	
-	4.	Not very likely to vote	{TERMINATE}
-	5.	Not at all likely to vote	{TERMINATE}
-	6.	[DON'T READ] Don't know	{TERMINATE}
-	7.	[DON'T READ] Refused	{TERMINATE}

Q3. Within the past week, how much have you heard or read about the condition of the economy? [READ LIST]

N=1027

%			
53	1.	A great deal	
33	2.	A fair amount	
12	3.	Very little	
2	4.	Nothing	
<0.5	5.	[DON'T READ] Don't know	
<0.5	6.	[DON'T READ] Refused	

Q4. After hearing the following statement about one idea regarding the economy, please indicate if you agree or disagree:

“Giving a rebate (or one-time payment from the government) to most Americans is a good way to stimulate the economy.”

Is that strongly or somewhat

N=1027

%		
21	1.	Strongly Agree
32	2.	Somewhat Agree
21	3.	Somewhat Disagree
20	4.	Strongly Disagree
5	5.	[DON'T READ] Don't know
1	6.	[DON'T READ] Refused

Q5. If a rebate (or one-time payment from the government) is given to Americans, which of the following ideas do you most agree with? **[ROTATE ORDER; SELECT ONE]** “The first idea is that . . . “, “The second idea is that . . . “

N=1027

%		
10	1.	The rebate should go to most workers, but should exclude people, such as older Americans, who rely mostly on Social Security
85	2.	The rebate should go to most workers, but should include people, such as older Americans, who rely mostly on Social Security
4	3.	[DON'T READ] Don't know
1	4.	[DON'T READ] Refused

6. In your opinion, how important is it for the government to ensure that people, such as older Americans, who rely mostly on Social Security are eligible to receive rebates provided to other Americans? **[READ LIST]**

N=1027

%		
65	1.	Very important
26	2.	Somewhat important
4	3.	Not too important
4	4.	Not at all important
2	5.	[DON'T READ] Don't know
<0.5	6.	[DON'T READ] Refused

The following questions are for statistical classification purposes only and will be kept entirely confidential.

D1. What is your age as of your last birthday? **[RECORD IN YEARS]**

N=1027

%		
51	1.	18-49
28	2.	50-64
18	3.	65+
3	4.	Refused

D2. What is your marital status? Are you currently....

N=1027

%		
64	1.	Married,
9	2.	Divorced,
1	3.	Separated,
8	4.	Widowed,
16	5.	Or have you never been married?
<0.5	6.	Living with partner [DO NOT READ]
-	7.	Don't know [DO NOT READ]
1	8.	Refused [DO NOT READ]

D3. What is the highest level of education you have completed? **[READ LIST]**

N=1027

%		
5	1.	Less than high school
21	2.	High school graduate or equivalent
29	3.	Some college or technical training beyond high school
25	4.	College graduate
18	5.	Or, Post-graduate or professional degree
-	6.	Don't know [DO NOT READ]
1	7.	Refused [DO NOT READ]

D4. Which of the following best describes your current employment status? Are you currently...**[READ LIST]**

N=1027

%		
48	1.	Employed full-time
10	2.	Employed part-time
20	3.	Retired and not working
4	4.	Unemployed and looking for work
6	5.	Homemaker
5	6.	Disabled
4	7.	Student
2	8.	Or something else [Specify: _____]
-	9.	Don't Know [DO NOT READ]
1	10.	Refused [DO NOT READ]

D5. For statistical purposes only, please stop me when I get to the category That includes your household's income before taxes in 2007. Was it... **[READ LIST]**

N=1027

%		
5	1.	Less than \$10,000
8	2.	\$10,000 but less than \$20,000
9	3.	\$20,000 but less than \$30,000
8	4.	\$30,000 but less than \$40,000
9	5.	\$40,000 but less than \$50,000
15	6.	\$50,000 but less than \$75,000
13	7.	\$75,000 but less than \$100,000
16	8.	\$100,000 or more
5	9.	Don't know [DO NOT READ]
12	10.	Refused [DO NOT READ]

D6. Are you Spanish, Latino, or Hispanic?

N=1027

%		
3	1.	Yes
96	2.	No
-	3.	Don't Know
1	4.	Refused

D7. Which of the following groups best describes your race? **[READ LIST]**
N=1027

%		
81	1.	White
11	2.	Black or African-American
1	3.	Asian
<0.5	4.	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
1	5.	American Indian or Alaska Native
4	6.	Other
<0.5	7.	Don't know
2	8.	Refused

D8. What is your gender?

N=1027

%		
46	1.	Male
54	2.	Female

D9. What is your 5-digit zip code?

D10. Do you consider yourself to be a **[READ LIST] [ROTATE ORDER]**

N=1027

%		
36	1.	Democrat
27	2.	Republican
26	3.	Independent
5	4.	Other
3	5.	[DON'T READ] Don't know
3	6.	[DON'T READ] Refused

D11. How would you characterize your political views? **[READ LIST] [ROTATE ORDER]**

N=1027

%		
36	1.	Conservative
33	2.	Moderate
16	3.	Liberal
12	4.	[DON'T READ] Don't know
3	5.	[DON'T READ] Refused