



# Political Insiders Poll



**With the Gulf oil spill, does it make political sense for President Obama to stick to his plans to allow increased oil and gas development along the coasts?**

## ■ Democrats (101 votes)

**Yes 26 percent**  
**No 70 percent**

*Volunteered: Pause, 3 percent; depends, 1 percent.*

### ■ Yes

"Hell, yes. We are going to get another oil price spike, and Democrats had better be drilling when that happens."

"Politically, it is trickier, but I don't think he can back off now. It does open a door for him to mandate very tough standards."

"Despite the spill, America is still too dependent on foreign oil. We need more domestic production."

"It would look far too opportunistic."

### ■ No

"He already hurt himself with his base with moves toward more drilling. Now, additional drilling will hurt with swing voters."

"If Obama goes ahead with drilling now, he can kiss a pretty critical part of his base goodbye forever."

"The BP oil spill has ended the offshore drilling comeback for many years to come. A comprehensive review of the safety and security of offshore drilling will be the new order of business."

"Democrats should pivot to the climate and energy bill: If this disaster doesn't rally support, nothing ever will."

"The president would need to be entirely tone deaf to pursue offshore drilling for the foreseeable future."

"If the slick hits the Florida Keys, it will have the same impact on offshore drilling that Three Mile Island had on nuclear power."

"It was a bad policy decision to begin with and was only offered to take [the issue] away from Republicans in Congress."

"Since climate change is unlikely to pass this year why pay the price of sticking to this position."

"'Drill, baby, drill' is dead, baby, dead."

## ■ Republicans (100 votes)

**Yes 57 percent**  
**No 38 percent**

*Volunteered: Too soon to tell, 2 percent; should but won't, 1 percent; yes and no, 1 percent; doesn't matter, 1 percent.*

### ■ Yes

"Sending billions to Saudi Arabia and Venezuela is not a better idea now than it was two weeks ago."

"People want it. He's not responsible for the current spill. And if he changes course, he'll look very weak."

"He can weather it because he is a Democrat, but he has lots of hoops to jump through now before it can become a reality."

"He will not get any credit from the left if he reverses himself but will likely doom a future energy bill."

"If he had any guts, he would stick with it and commit to the American people that this disaster is one that we can learn from."

"He has to think long-term. In two years, [the spill] will not be a story and he'll have to run on his energy plan."

"He needs the [offshore drilling] version of 'mend end, don't end it.'"

### ■ No

"His base is very depressed. And sticking a knife further into the environmental movement will further depress his base."

"When HBO's Bill Maher calls Obama out for looking like Bush with Katrina, you know the POTUS has problems."

"The president should call for a full investigation of what happened, which should give him some time to reformulate a new position."

"He supported expanding drilling that went against his ideological leanings. The spill gives him cover to go back to who he really is."

"He got burned on his transparent voyage into triangulation."

—JAMES A. BARNES AND PETER BELL

**■ Democratic Political Insiders** Jill Alper, Brad Bannon, Dave Beattie, Andy Bechhoefer, Cornell Belcher, Matt Bennett, Mitchell W. Berger, Mike Berman, Stephanie Bosh, Paul Brathwaite, Donna Brazile, Mark Brewer, Ed Bruley, George Bruno, Deb Callahan, Bonnie Campbell, Bill Carrick, Guy Cecil, Martin J. Chavez, Tony Coelho, Larry Cohen, Jerry Crawford, Stephanie Cutter, Jeff Danielson, Peter Daou, Howard Dean, Jim Demers, Tad Devine, David DiMartino, Debbie Dingell, Monica Dixon, Patrick Dorton, Anita Dunn, Jeff Eller, Steve Elmendorf, Carter Eskew, Eric Eve, Vic Fazio, Peter Fenn, Scott Ferson, Jim Fleischmann, Tina Flournoy, Don Foley, Don Fowler, Vincent Frillici, Gina Glantz, Niles Godes, John Michael Gonzalez, Joe Grandmaison, Anna Greenberg, Stan Greenberg, Pat Griffin, Larry Grisolan, Michael Gronstal, Lisa Grove, Marcia Hale, Jill Hanauer, Dick Harpootlian, Paul Harstad, Laura Hartigan, Mike Henry, Karen Hicks, Leo Hindery, Jr., Harold Ickes, Marcus Jadotte, John Jameson, Steve Jarding, Jonathan Jones, Jim Jordan, Gale Kaufman, Lisa Kountoupes, Kam Kuwata, Celinda Lake, David Lang, Penny Lee, Chris Leahane, Jeff Link, Bill Lynch, Bob Maloney, Steve Marchand, Jim Margolis, Paul Maslin, Keith Mason, Terry McAuliffe, Susan McCue, Gerald McEntee, Tom McMahon, Phil McNamara, David Medina, Mark Mellman, John Merrigan, Steve Murphy, Janet Napolitano, David Nassar, Marcia Nichols, John Norris, Tom Ochs, Tom O'Donnell, Scott Parven, Jeffrey Peck, Debora Pignatelli, Tony Podesta, Jack Quinn, Larry Rasky, Bruce Reed, Mame Reiley, Steve Ricchetti, Will Robinson, Steve Rosenthal, David Rudd, John Ryan, Wendy Sherman, Terry Shumaker, Sean Sinclair, Phil Singer, Erik Smith, Doug Sosnik, Greg Speed, Darryl Stragow, Ken Strasma, Katrina Sweet, Sarah Swisher, Jeffrey Trammell, Ed Turlington, Mike Veon, Rick Wiener, Bridgette Williams, James Williams, JoDee Winterhof, Brian Wolff, Jon Youngdahl and Jim Zogby.

**■ GOP Political Insiders** Dan Allen, Stan Anderson, Gary Andres, Saulius (Saul) Anuzis, Rich Ashooh, Whit Ayres, Brett Bader, Mitch Bainwol, Gary Bauer, David Beckwith, Clark Benson, Wayne Berman, Brian Bleron, Charlie Black, Kirk Blalock, Carmine Boal, Jeff Boeyink, Ron Bonjean, Jeff Buley, Luke Byars, Nick Calio, Al Cardenas, Danny Carroll, Ron Christie, Jim Cicconi, Rob Collins, Cesar Conda, Jake Coman, Scott Cottingham, Charlie Crist, Greg Crist, Diane Crookham-Johnson, Fergus Cullen, Tom Davis, Mike Dennehy, Ken Duberstein, Steve Duprey, Debi Durham, Frank Fahrenkopf, John Feehery, Don Fierce, Mindy Finn, Mindy Fletcher, Carl Forti, Alex Gage, Sam Geduldig, Adam Geller, Benjamin Ginsberg, David Girard-diCarlo, Bill Greener, Jonathan Grelia, Lanny Griffith, Janet Mullins Grissom, Doug Gross, Todd Harris, Steve Hart, Christopher Healy, Ralph Hellmann, Chris Henick, Terry Holt, David Iannelli, Barry Jackson, Clark Judge, David Keating, David Kensinger, Bruce Keough, Bob Kjellarner, Ed Kutler, Chris Laciotta, Jim Lake, Steve Lombardo, Kevin Madden, Joel Maiola, Gary Maloney, David Marin, Mary Matalin, Dan Mattoon, Brian McCormack, Mark McKinon, Kyle McSarrow, Ken Mehlman, Jim Merrill, Tim Morrison, Mike Murphy, Phil Musser, Ron Nehring, Terry Nelson, Neil Newhouse, David Norcross, Ziad Ojakli, Jack Oliver, Todd Olsen, Connie Partoyan, Dana Perino, Van B. Poole, Tom Rath, Scott Reed, David Rehr, Steve Roberts, Jason Roe, David Roederer, Dan Schnur, Russ Schriefer, Rich Schwarm, Brent Seaborn, Rick Shelby, Andrew Shore, Kevin Shuvalov, Don Sipple, Fred Steeper, Bob Stevenson, Eric Tanenblatt, Sara Taylor, Richard Temple, Heath Thompson, Jay Timmons, Warren Tompkins, Ted Van Der Meid, Dirk van Dongen, Jan van Lohuizen, Stewart Verdery, Dick Wadhams, John Weaver, Lezlee Westine, Tom Wilson, Dave Winston, Ginny Wolfe, and Fred Wszolek.



# Political Insiders Poll



**Generally, what's best for your party this year with regard to immigration?**

## Democrats (101 votes)

Push for comprehensive reform, including a pathway to citizenship	24 percent
Push for tougher enforcement, plus a pathway to citizenship	51 percent
Push for tougher enforcement, without a pathway to citizenship	1 percent
Stay away from the issue	22 percent

*Volunteered: Legalization, not citizenship, 1 percent; stay away plus enforcement, 1 percent.*

### Reform, plus pathway

"Clearly a case of the best policy and smartest politics aligning: The best policy is our best chance to mobilize and solidify the Hispanic vote in 2010 and beyond."

"We are already enforcing more than the previous administration ever did."

"I'd like to remind the children of 13 million illegal aliens that one party wants to make their parents felons."

### Tougher enforcement, plus pathway

"Voters know that Democrats are compassionate. What they want to hear is that we're tough on the border, fair to taxpayers, and practical regarding the 12 million illegal immigrants already here: Toughness first; path to citizenship second."

"Call for hearings and drafting legislation but put off a vote until next year."

"Republicans have dribbled this issue down their leg by being too strident in their approach. And Democrats would be wise not to make the same mistake in the other direction."

"Doing anything without including enforcement will be a serious political blunder."

"Obama needs to make some progress on the issue. But he should figure out what he can get done, which will be short of comprehensive reform."

"This could be a historic shift for Democrats if we play it correctly. Chances are, we still fumble our opportunity and lose the messaging advantage."

### Stay away from the issue

"Moving legislation will split the Democratic base."

"It is too politicized. And it is too uncertain that anything meaningful could pass either legislative chamber anyway."

"We have the issue. We don't need legislation."

## Republicans (100 votes)

Push for comprehensive reform, including a pathway to citizenship	8 percent
Push for tougher enforcement, plus a pathway to citizenship	22 percent
Push for tougher enforcement, without a pathway to citizenship	35 percent
Stay away from the issue	31 percent

*Volunteered: Tighten the borders, 3 percent; comprehensive reform without pathway to citizenship, 1 percent.*

### Reform, plus pathway

"This is the only sane and humane way of dealing with it. If Republicans are serious about taking control of Congress, they don't want this steaming pile on their plate waiting for them."

"Republicans need to get right on this issue, or we'll be out of luck [in the] long run."

### Tougher enforcement, plus pathway

"Otherwise, the issue stays on the table for eternity. And it's not good for the GOP to lose the Hispanic vote for an eternity."

"America can absorb these people, and we need their votes. They are with us on the freedom agenda."

"We need to gain control of the border first and foremost. Citizenship should be an option but not the priority."

### Tougher enforcement without pathway

"There's virtually no Republican constituency for a pathway to citizenship."

"U.S. voters are fed up with politicians who say they have been working on this issue when thousands are crossing the border each day."

"This year, the unemployment rate means little sympathy for illegals. And Hispanics are a tough base to mobilize in off years."

"Voters want first to secure the border. Then a pathway might be viable."

### Stay away from the issue

"The immigration issue splits Republicans and drives away Latino voters. Someone explain to me how this is politically helpful going into the midterm elections."

"Right now, this is the only cudgel Democrats can use to bludgeon Republicans. Call it shameless, and get back to the economy."

"We don't need to give radio talk a reason to abandon Republicans—again. Not this year."

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—JAMES A. BARNES AND PETER BELL