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## Just 17% Say Federal Government Represents Will of the People

Tuesday, June 03, 2008

As Election 2008 draws ever closer, it is hard to overstate the disconnect between the American people and their government.

Just 17% of voters say that the federal government represents the will of the American people. A Rasmussen Reports national telephone survey found that 68% disagree and 15% are not sure ([see video](#)). These views are consistent across partisan and demographic lines. Men, women, young, old, Republican, Democrat, conservative, liberal, all offer a bleak assessment of what is supposed to be a “government of the people, by the people, and for the people.”

Sixty-seven percent (67%) of voters say that the federal government has become a special interest group that looks out primarily for its own interest. Just 15% disagree with that assessment.

Only 51% believe that elections in the United States are fair to voters. Thirty percent (30%) disagree. Perhaps reflecting the end of Hillary Clinton’s campaign, women are less likely than men to see elections as fair.

Over the past decade, the number of people who see elections as fair has remained quite constant. One consistent theme over the past decade is that supporters of victorious candidates are more likely to see the election process as fair. When Democrats controlled the White House in the 1990s, Democrats were more likely than Republicans to see elections as fair. For the past seven plus years, with a Republican in the White House, Republicans are more likely to see elections as fair.

This survey data reflects a very high degree of discontent, but it is not a new phenomenon and it is not a fleeting moment of unhappiness among voters. These attitudes have remained consistent for more than a decade. The results tend to highlight a stark contrast between the way that Americans view their government and the way they view the nation. While 67% of Americans believe the federal government is a self-serving special interest group, [64% believe that American society is generally fair and decent.](#)

The survey also found that 76% of voters are confident their votes will be properly counted and that the appropriate candidate will be declared the winner.

See survey questions and [toplines](#). [Crosstabs](#) available for [Premium Members](#) only.

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### Survey of 1,200 Likely Voters Conducted May 31-June 1, 2008

Generally speaking, does the federal government represent the will of the people?

Yes	17%
No	68%
Not sure	15%

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Scott Rasmussen, president of Rasmussen Reports, has been an independent pollster for more than a decade.

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This survey of 1,200 Likely Voters was conducted by Rasmussen Reports May 31-June 1, 2008. The margin of sampling error for each survey is +/- 3 percentage points with a 95% level of confidence.

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