

Donald Trump Has Lowest Approval of Any First Year President



Washington, January 19 (RHC)-- U.S. President Donald Trump is wrapping up a year in office with the lowest average approval rating of any elected U.S. president in his first term. That is according to polling by Gallup, which shows that Trump has averaged just a 39 percent approval rating since his inauguration. The previous low was held by former President Bill Clinton, whose first-year average stood 10 points higher than Trump's, at 49 percent.

Recent surveys show most Americans view Trump as a divisive figure and even question his fitness for office. One relative bright spot for Trump is his handling of the economy, although even there his ratings are not as high as might be expected given a relatively strong economic report.

Trump's current approval rating in Gallup's weekly poll is comparable to his average rating, standing at just 38 percent, with 57 percent saying they disapprove. The persistence of Trump's first-year blues is unprecedented for a president so early in his term. Americans usually give their new presidents the benefit of the doubt, but Trump's "honeymoon period" -- to the extent he had one -- saw his approval rating only get as high as 45 percent. Since then, Trump has spent more time under 40 percent than any other first-year president.

Presidents have recovered from periods of low popularity before. For example, Clinton's rating fell to just 37 percent in June 1993 before quickly regaining ground, and he went on to win re-election in 1996.

Former President Harry Truman held the approval of less than 40 percent of Americans for significant chunks of his first term and was also re-elected. He went on to set Gallup's lowest-ever approval mark, at just 22 percent in 1952.

Trump's lowest point in Gallup's weekly polling – 35 percent– remains higher than those of several earlier presidents. Truman, Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter all had their ratings dip under 30 percent. Aside from the economy, surveys have suggested few policy bright spots for Trump.

Healthcare has been a consistent low point. Seven in 10 Americans in the December AP-NORC poll said they disapproved of Trump's handling of the issue, even as 85% called the issue very important to them personally. In another AP-NORC poll conducted late in 2017, just 23 percent of Americans said he has kept the promises he made while running for president, while 30 percent said he has tried and failed and 45 percent said he has not done so at all. More than half said the country is worse off since Donald Trump became president.

In a July Gallup poll that asked those who disapproved of Trump for their reasons why, most cited his personality or character over issues, policies or overall job performance. That stood in stark contrast to Gallup's polling on Obama in 2009 and George W Bush in 2001, when far fewer cited such concerns about personality or character as reasons for their negative opinions.

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