

# Jewish Americans support the Iran nuclear deal

By Scott  
Clement

July 27 at 3:25  
PM

GOP presidential hopeful Mike Huckabee says President Obama's Iran nuclear deal will "take the Israelis and [march them to the door of the oven](#)." Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is the deal's preeminent opponent.

But according to a rare national survey conducted in the wake of the agreement, a plurality of American Jews support the new Iran nuclear deal.

The [LA Jewish Journal survey](#) released Thursday found that 48 percent of Jews support the deal while 28 percent oppose it and 25 percent hadn't heard enough to form an opinion. The survey described key parts of the deal, which lifts major economic sanctions against Iran in exchange for Iran restricting its nuclear program in a way that makes it harder for it to produce nuclear weapons.

Jewish support for the deal was 20 percentage points higher than for Americans overall, according to a side-by-side poll of the general public. A separate question found 54 percent of Jews saying Congress should approve the deal, while 35 percent want Congress to block it. Both polls were conducted by telephone in the week after the deal was announced among 500 respondents each. (See below for more methodological details.)

The relatively pro-deal attitudes of American Jews might be surprising given the intensity displayed by Netanyahu and American Jewish groups pushing Congress to block the agreement. While some liberal Jewish groups have come out in support of a deal, they are probably financially [outgunned](#) by anti-deal groups, who are lobbying this week to persuade Democrats to help achieve the two-thirds-majority opposition needed in both the House and Senate to block the deal.

Jewish support for the deal is less surprising given two other facts: Jews are much more liberal than the overall public, and liberals largely support the Iran deal. Fully 53 percent of Jews in the poll identified as liberal, while 28 percent were moderate and 16 percent were conservative, which is similar to the findings of a larger [2013 survey](#) of American Jews by the Pew Research Center. In contrast, the survey of U.S. adults found slightly more conservatives than liberals, 36 to 31 percent.

Even among liberals, Jewish respondents were more supportive of the deal than the general public. By a 53 point margin, Jewish liberals said Congress should approve rather than oppose the deal. Liberals in the public at large favored congressional approval by a 36 point margin.

Jews' liberal background is borne out in their views of other aspects of the deal. Jews are more hopeful about the deal's potential impact on stability in the Middle East. Some 47 percent of them say the agreement will eventually lead to more stability in the Middle East, compared with 29 percent among the public overall.

Yet American Jews have reservations about the deal as well -- similar to the public overall. Many Jews agree with critics of the deal who say it puts Israel in danger from Iran in the future; 50 percent said the deal makes Israel "more endangered," while 28 percent said it makes it safer. In addition, American Jews are also not confident the deal will prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons in the next 10 years, with 54 percent saying they are "not so confident" or "not at all confident." Among the public overall, 63 percent lack confidence it will stop Iran from making nuclear weapons.

The tenuous confidence in the deal — evidenced by different results last week in polls with different question wording — indicates Jews and the public overall could be swayed by campaigns for support and opposition over the

coming weeks. But the latest poll also shows that Jewish reactions to the deal are largely in line with their general political position. If the debate breaks heavily along partisan lines, this might motivate Jews to support the deal, given their Democratic and liberal leanings.

#### *Methodological details*

*The Jewish Journal poll of U.S. Jews was conducted by telephone July 16-20 among a national sample of 500 self-identified Jews, including those who identified their religion as Jewish or said they identified as Jewish "for any reason." The sample of Jews was identified by calling households where a respondent had identified themselves as Jewish in a previous national random sample survey conducted on landline and cellular phones. The survey was weighted to match demographic estimates of the Jewish population from the 2013 Pew Research Center Portrait of Jewish Americans. Overall results for results among Jews have a margin of sampling error or plus or minus six percentage points. The results for the U.S. public overall were based on a random sample of adults reached on landline and cellular phones conducted over the same interview dates, and have an error margin of 5.2 percentage points.*

*Peyton M. Craighill contributed to this report.*

Scott Clement is a survey research analyst for The Washington Post. Scott specializes in public opinion about politics, election campaigns and public policy.