C-SPAN

New C-SPAN/Penn Schoen Berland Poll:

American Voters Suggest How to Make Congress More Accessible

--A third of respondents watch C-SPAN … and almost 70% of those, an estimated 54 million adults, watch C-SPAN's House coverage--

(Nov. 17, 2010; Washington, DC) -- As the incoming leaders of the U.S. House of Representatives consider measures "making the House more transparent and accountable," C-SPAN asked voters about what institutional changes might make Congress more accessible.

Penn Schoen Berland conducted a poll for C-SPAN, asking 1,200 Americans who voted in the 2010 mid-term elections about "possible institutional changes Congress could make to be more approachable to everyday people."

The poll demonstrated that respondents were familiar with the workings of Congress. A third of respondents (34% -- an estimated 79 million adults) said they watched C-SPAN in the past year. Of those C-SPAN viewers, essentially seven in ten, 69% (an estimated 54 million adults) reported watching C-SPAN coverage of the House of Representatives.

Asked to express their interest in a list of ten potential changes that could increase Congressional accessibility, here are the top five that respondents said would be most useful for a "more responsive and open Congress," ranked by popularity:

1) **Use everyday language** when talking about legislation (84% support)
2) Publish **bills online** (83% support)
3) **Issue alerts** when major votes are coming up (80% support)
4) Allow **TV cameras** to show the entire chamber (76% support)
5) Have **actual policy debates** where both sides speak (76% support)

Penn Schoen Berland Principal Robert Green said, "There's a clear message to the new House leadership in these national poll findings: accept the digital age. The quickest way to rebuild confidence in the institution of Congress, now at an all-time low, is to make it accessible. Let the people read legislation themselves by putting it online. Provide alerts when there are major votes and policy debates so that they might see you at work."

The study was conducted online November 6-8, 2010 among 1,200 Americans who voted in the 2010 mid-term election. The margin of error for the study is +/- 2.83%. Full poll results can be found here: http://cs.pn/ce7jIk.

Since 1979 in a public service created by America's cable companies, C-SPAN has been providing live coverage of the floor debates of the U.S. House of Representatives. Last week, C-SPAN sent a letter to the next speaker Rep. John Boehner (R-OH), requesting that the House allow floor proceedings to also be covered by C-SPAN cameras. Read the letter here: http://cs.pn/cINm6M

 About C-SPAN Now in over 100 million TV households, C-SPAN programs three public affairs television networks in both SD and HD; C-SPAN Radio, heard in Washington DC and nationwide via XM Satellite Radio; and a video-rich website which hosts the C-SPAN Video Library. Visit http://www.c-span.org/.

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