

Incumbents Facing Unemployment



Obama	2012	9.0%*	?
Ford	1976	7.8%	LOST
Carter	1980	7.5%	LOST
G.H.W. Bush	1992	7.4%	LOST
Reagan	1984	7.2%	WON
G.W. Bush	2004	5.4%	WON
Clinton	1996	5.4%	WON
Nixon	1972	5.3%	WON
Johnson	1964	4.8%	WON
Eisenhower	1956	4.3%	WON
Truman	1948	3.8%	WON

Ten incumbent Presidents have run for re-election since 1945. When the unemployment rate at election time was below 6%, they won. Above 6%, they lost—with one exception. Ronald Reagan got re-elected in 1984 when unemployment was over 7%. But it was coming down fast, from a peak of 10.8% in 1982.

* Current unemployment rate. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 6, 2011.

From *Inside Politics* with Bill Schneider, May 2011. Available at: <http://www.thirdway.org/publications/397>.



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