Rainey Center

February Policy Survey

February 25-27, 2026 | n = 1,008

This poll surveyed 1,008 registered voters via online panel from February 25, 2026 to February 27, 2026. Results were weighted by 2024 vote, gender, age, race, and education to match population demographics. The margin of error is ±3.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

Where do you get your political news?

Social media like TikTok, Facebook and X	45%
Newspaper	24%
Talk radio	15%
Cable News like CBS, CNN, Fox News, etc.	58%
Broadcast news like your local stations or network nightly news	51%
Friends and family	37%
Podcasts	21%

n = 1,008

When you think of the American Dream, you...

Have achieved it	25%
Are on the way to achieving it	34%
Achieving it is out of reach	41%

n = 1,008

When you think of the American Dream, your children...

Have achieved it	9%
Are on the way to achieving it	39%
Achieving it is out of reach	19%
I don't have children and don't expect to	32%

n = 1,008

Are you paying lower taxes now then you were when Biden was President?

Lower now	27%
Lower when Biden was President	33%
Not sure	40%

n = 1,008

Is the border more secure now than when Biden was President?

More secure now	57%
More secure when Biden was President	20%
Not sure	23%

n = 1,008

Are you the person who does the grocery shopping in your household?

Yes, I do most or all of the grocery shopping	94%
No, someone else does the grocery shopping	6%

n = 1,008

Over the past six months, have your grocery bills increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?

Increased significantly (more than 15%)	29%
Increased somewhat (5-15%)	29%
Increased slightly (less than 5%)	12%
Stayed about the same	18%
Decreased slightly (less than 5%)	5%
Decreased somewhat (5-15%)	3%
Decreased significantly (more than 15%)	2%
I don't know	3%

n = 1,006

How would you rate the affordability of groceries right now?

Very affordable	7%
Somewhat affordable	35%
Somewhat unaffordable	35%
Very unaffordable	22%
Not sure	1%

n = 1,008

Have grocery prices caused you to change your shopping behavior?

Yes, I buy less food overall	18%
Yes, I buy cheaper brands or different products	33%
Yes, I use more coupons	10%
Yes, I shop at different stores	11%
No, I haven't changed my behavior	27%

n = 1,008

What will be the DETERMINING FACTOR in whether you vote for the Republican or Democrat for Congress in 2026?

My personal financial situation	10%
The national economy overall	25%
Housing and rental prices	4%
Immigration and border security	9%
Healthcare costs	5%
Abortion and reproductive rights	2%
Crime and public safety	5%
Social Security and Medicare	12%
How I feel about President Trump	14%
Something else	4%
Not sure	9%

n = 1,008

How would you rate your personal financial situation right now?

Excellent	6%
Good	30%
Fair	38%
Poor	24%
Not sure	1%

n = 1,008

How often do personal finances and economic concerns come up in your conversations with family, friends, or coworkers?

Very often - it comes up almost every time I talk to people	16%
Somewhat often	38%
Not very often	31%
Never	12%
Not sure	2%

n = 1,008

When personal finances come up in conversation, what is the most common topic?

Rising prices / cost of living	53%
Housing costs (rent, mortgage, buying a home)	9%
Job security or wages	5%
Saving for retirement	5%
Debt (credit cards, student loans, etc.)	4%
Taxes	8%
Something else	4%
Personal finances don't come up	12%

n = 1,008

Do you feel federal, state and local taxes take too much of your paycheck?

Yes	74%
No	26%

n = 1,008

Some people describe feeling "squeezed" - where their income isn't keeping up with rising costs across food, housing, insurance, and other expenses all at once. Does this describe your situation?

Describes my situation very well	35%
Describes my situation somewhat	36%
Does not really describe my situation	15%
Does not describe my situation at all	9%
Not sure	5%

n = 1,008

Inflation has fallen from its peak of around 9% to approximately 2.7%. Which comes closer to your view?

Inflation is now at a manageable level and things are getting better	15%
Even though inflation has fallen, prices are still too high from previous increases	48%
Inflation is still too high and needs to come down further	31%
Not sure	7%

n = 1,007

Are you aware of the following economic developments? (Select all that apply)

Gas prices have fallen in many areas	49%
The stock market has risen significantly	42%
Unemployment remains below 4.5%	34%
GDP grew at over 4% last year	18%
Inflation has fallen to around 2.7%	38%
None of these	18%
Not sure	12%

n = 1,007

Which of the following, if any, have you personally benefited from? (Select all that apply)

Lower gas prices	47%
Stock market gains / retirement account growth	19%
Tax cuts or larger refund	17%
Wage increases or better job opportunities	13%
Lower interest rates	10%
None of these	32%
Not sure	5%

n = 1,007

How much credit does President Trump deserve for improvements in gas prices, the stock market, and economic growth?

A great deal of credit	26%
Some credit	23%
Not much credit	14%
No credit at all	28%
Not sure	9%

n = 1,007

Have you had a family member help you financially the last 6 months?

Yes	27%
No	73%

n = 1,008

Are you aware that large technology companies are building data centers in many communities across America to power AI and cloud computing?

Yes, very aware	37%
Somewhat aware	40%
Not very aware	11%
Not at all aware	12%

n = 1,008

Some people believe data centers use large amounts of water that gets wasted. Before today, did you believe this?

Yes, I believed data centers waste a lot of water	28%
Yes, I believed they use a lot of water but wasn't sure if it was wasted	27%
No, I didn't think they used much water	18%
I had no opinion on this	27%

n = 1,007

> *Modern data centers recycle water similarly to how car washes recycle water. Many facilities fill their cooling systems once and reuse the same water for up to 10 years. Some newer facilities use gel-based cooling systems that require minimal water.*

Does knowing this information change your view of data centers?

Much more supportive of data centers	12%
Somewhat more supportive of data centers	21%
No change in my view of data centers	41%
Somewhat less supportive of data centers	6%
Much less supportive of data centers	7%
Not sure	14%

n = 1,008

> *AI requires massive computing power housed in data centers. If the United States does not build enough data centers domestically, technology companies may build them in other countries, including China.*

Which comes closer to your view?

The U.S. should make it easier to build data centers domestically, even if it increases local electricity demand	32%
The U.S. should prioritize local concerns about electricity and water use, even if it means more data centers are built overseas	42%
Not sure	26%

n = 1,008

Do you believe data centers in your area are driving up your electricity costs?

Yes, significantly	15%
Yes, somewhat	19%
No, not really	14%
No, not at all	4%
There are no data centers in my area	23%
I don't know	24%

n = 1,008

Are you the person primarily responsible for paying your household's electricity bill?

Yes, I pay the electricity bill	83%
No, someone else pays or electricity is in my rent	17%

n = 1,007

Over the past year, has your monthly electricity bill increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?

Increased more than 25%	13%
Increased 10-25%	25%
Increased less than 10%	25%
Stayed about the same	26%
Decreased less than 10%	2%
Decreased 10-25%	1%
Decreased more than 25%	0%
I don't know	9%

n = 1,008

Approximately how much do you pay per month for electricity?

Less than $100	17%
$100 - $150	26%
$151 - $200	23%
$201 - $300	14%
More than $300	9%
I don't pay an electricity bill	6%
I don't know	5%

n = 1,008

How would you rate the affordability of your current electricity costs?

Very affordable	11%
Somewhat affordable	39%
Somewhat unaffordable	26%
Very unaffordable	16%
Not sure	8%

n = 1,008

Since President Trump took office, do you believe immigration enforcement has become more effective, less effective, or stayed about the same?

Much more effective	31%
Somewhat more effective	21%
Stayed about the same	17%
Somewhat less effective	10%
Much less effective	20%

n = 1,008

Do you feel the media fairly and accurately reports on Trump's successes on immigration, the border and crime?

Yes	31%
No	51%
Not sure	18%

n = 1,008

> *According to FBI data, violent crime rates in America have fallen significantly over the past two years and are near historic lows.*

Were you aware of this before now?

Yes, I was aware	45%
No, I was not aware	55%

n = 1,008

Do you feel safer, about the same, or less safe walking around your city and neighborhood now then you did 2 years ago?

I feel safer	15%
I feel about the same level of safety	71%
I feel less safe	14%

n = 1,007

Do you believe crime rates in America right now are:

At or near all-time lows	8%
Lower than average historically	23%
About average historically	31%
Higher than average historically	16%
At or near all-time highs	6%
Not sure	17%

n = 1,007

How would you rate the current security of the U.S.-Mexico border?

Very secure	25%
Somewhat secure	37%
Somewhat insecure	15%
Very insecure	7%
Not sure	15%

n = 1,007

President Trump campaigned on reducing crime and securing the border. Do you believe he has delivered on these promises?

Yes, he has delivered on both	38%
He has delivered on border security but not crime	20%
He has delivered on crime but not border security	4%
No, he has not delivered on either	27%
Not sure	10%

n = 1,007

Do you feel members of Congress get inside information and trade stock for financial gain?

Yes	81%
No	19%

n = 1,008

Would you support or oppose Congress banning stock trading for members?

Strongly support	57%
Somewhat support	15%
Somewhat oppose	7%
Strongly oppose	5%
Not sure	15%

n = 1,008

Do you currently have a valid government-issued photo ID?

Yes, I have a valid ID	90%
Yes, but it is expired	2%
No, I do not have one	5%
Not sure	3%

n = 1,008

Have you ever had trouble getting a government-issued photo ID?

Yes, I couldn't afford the fees	3%
Yes, I couldn't get the required documents (birth certificate, marriage/divorce records, etc.)	2%
Yes, the ID office was too far away or had inconvenient hours	2%
Yes, for other reasons	4%
No, I have not had difficulty	85%
Not sure	4%

n = 1,008

Do you think women will have difficulty getting IDs due to name changes from marriage, divorce, or other life events?

Yes, many women will have difficulty	14%
Yes, some women will have difficulty	21%
No, most women will not have difficulty	22%
No, very few women will have difficulty	29%
Not sure	14%

n = 1,008

> *The SAVE Act would require proof of citizenship, such as a passport or birth certificate, to register to vote in federal elections.*

Do you support or oppose this legislation?

Strongly support	42%
Somewhat support	20%
Somewhat oppose	9%
Strongly oppose	19%
Not sure	10%

n = 1,008

How closely have you followed news about Jeffrey Epstein and the release of documents related to his case?

Very closely	22%
Somewhat closely	39%
Not very closely	24%
Not at all	9%
Not sure	5%

n = 1,008

Do you believe there has been full public disclosure of everyone involved with Jeffrey Epstein?

Yes, there has been full disclosure, all information and names (except victims)	10%
There has been partial disclosure, but more names should be released	33%
No, there has not been meaningful disclosure	43%
Not sure	14%

n = 1,008

How important is it to you that the government fully disclose ALL information about who was involved with Jeffrey Epstein?

Very important	53%
Somewhat important	21%
Not very important	8%
Not at all important	8%
Not sure	10%

n = 1,008

Based on what you know about the Epstein files, which comes closer to your view?

The files show that primarily Democrats were involved with Epstein	13%
The files show that primarily Republicans were involved with Epstein	11%
The files show that our political system is corrupt regardless of party	52%
I haven't followed this closely enough to have an opinion	13%
Not sure	11%

n = 1,007

If the Epstein files are not fully released, how will this affect your likelihood of voting in the 2026 elections?

I will definitely still vote	67%
I will probably still vote	13%
I am less likely to vote	4%
I will not vote at all	4%
Not sure	12%

n = 1,008

> *U.S. electricity demand is projected to see its strongest growth since 2000, driven by data centers, manufacturing, and industrial expansion.*

How concerned are you about the reliability of America's electric grid to meet this growing demand?

Very concerned	**31%**
Somewhat concerned	**40%**
Not very concerned	**14%**
Not at all concerned	**5%**
Not sure	**10%**

n = 1,008

> *Battery energy storage facilities store electricity when demand is low and deliver it back to the grid during peak demand.*

Do you support or oppose building more battery energy storage facilities in the United States to strengthen grid reliability and reduce electricity costs?

Strongly support	**27%**
Somewhat support	**35%**
Somewhat oppose	**8%**
Strongly oppose	**5%**
Not sure	**25%**

n = 1,008

When it comes to regulating the safety of battery energy storage facilities, which approach do you prefer?

Uniform safety standards based on nationally recognized fire codes developed by fire safety professionals	**56%**
Allowing each city and county to set its own separate safety rules for battery storage facilities	**24%**
Not sure	**20%**

n = 1,008

> *The battery storage industry's failure rate has dropped 97% since 2018. Several states have passed legislation requiring all battery storage facilities to comply with national fire safety codes, provide emergency response plans, and fund first responder training at no cost to local agencies.*

Do you support or oppose your state passing similar legislation?

Strongly support	**43%**
Somewhat support	**30%**
Somewhat oppose	**4%**
Strongly oppose	**2%**
Not sure	**21%**

n = 1,008

How would you rate housing affordability in your area?

Very affordable	5%
Somewhat affordable	28%
Somewhat unaffordable	30%
Very unaffordable	28%
Not sure	9%

n = 1,008

Have you heard about housing legislation currently being debated in Congress?

Yes, heard a lot	4%
Yes, heard a little	31%
No, haven't heard	64%

n = 1,008

> *Congress is considering bipartisan housing legislation called the "Housing for the 21st Century Act" that aims to make it easier to build homes by cutting red tape, updating federal housing programs, and giving local communities more flexibility over housing decisions.*

Based on this description, do you support or oppose the Housing for the 21st Century Act?

Strongly support	26%
Somewhat support	40%
Somewhat oppose	6%
Strongly oppose	3%
Not sure	25%

n = 1,008

Do you support or oppose streamlining federal environmental reviews for small housing projects to speed up construction?

Strongly support	17%
Somewhat support	32%
Somewhat oppose	13%
Strongly oppose	8%
Not sure	30%

n = 1,008

> *Small-dollar mortgages (under $100,000) are often unprofitable for lenders, making it harder for buyers in rural areas or those purchasing manufactured homes to get financing.*

Do you support or oppose creating a federal pilot program to encourage lenders to offer more small-dollar mortgages?

Strongly support	34%
Somewhat support	34%
Somewhat oppose	6%
Strongly oppose	3%
Not sure	22%

n = 1,007

> *The "Don" Down Payment program would create a zero-to-low down payment option through the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) for creditworthy borrowers.*

Do you support or oppose this program?

Strongly support	33%
Somewhat support	33%
Somewhat oppose	6%
Strongly oppose	5%
Not sure	24%

n = 1,008

Do you support or oppose reducing regulations on small community banks to help them provide more home loans in their communities?

Strongly support	29%
Somewhat support	38%
Somewhat oppose	7%
Strongly oppose	4%
Not sure	22%

n = 1,008

Do you support or oppose selling or leasing underused federal government buildings and properties to expand access to affordable private-sector housing?

Strongly support	31%
Somewhat support	36%
Somewhat oppose	9%
Strongly oppose	2%
Not sure	23%

n = 1,007

Do you support or oppose requiring local governments that receive federal housing funds to publicly list undeveloped land they own?

Strongly support	28%
Somewhat support	31%
Somewhat oppose	7%
Strongly oppose	5%
Not sure	29%

n = 1,008

Do you support or oppose expanding federal home repair grants for low-income homeowners in rural areas?

Strongly support	39%
Somewhat support	35%
Somewhat oppose	5%
Strongly oppose	3%
Not sure	16%

n = 1,008

Do you support or oppose excluding veterans' disability benefits from income calculations when determining eligibility for federal housing assistance?

Strongly support	26%
Somewhat support	21%
Somewhat oppose	12%
Strongly oppose	15%
Not sure	26%

n = 1,007

When it comes to reducing emissions from cars, trucks, and shipping, which comes closer to your view?

The government should mandate that vehicles transition to electric as quickly as possible	11%
The government should pursue an all-of-the-above approach, including natural gas, hydrogen, renewable diesel, and electric, and let the market pick winners	44%
The government should not be involved in setting vehicle emissions standards	26%
Not sure	20%

n = 1,007

How concerned are you that the United States relies on China for critical parts of its transportation supply chain, including batteries, critical minerals, and shipping?

Very concerned	34%
Somewhat concerned	37%
Not too concerned	14%
Not at all concerned	5%
Not sure	10%

n = 1,008

Which of the following AI tools do you use at least once a week to assist with work, research, or following news?

OpenAI/ChatGPT	30%
Google Gemini	30%
Anthropic/Claude	3%
Perplexity	4%
Microsoft Copilot	18%
X/Grok	6%
None of these	47%

n = 1,006

How do you feel about the federal government awarding multi-billion dollar contracts to major tech companies to develop AI for national security?

Strongly approve	13%
Somewhat approve	24%
Somewhat disapprove	18%
Strongly disapprove	23%
Not sure	22%

n = 1,007

How do you feel about the federal government awarding multi-billion dollar contracts to major tech companies to develop AI for law enforcement?

Strongly approve	12%
Somewhat approve	23%
Somewhat disapprove	18%
Strongly disapprove	25%
Not sure	21%

n = 1,006

How do you feel about the federal government awarding multi-billion dollar contracts to major tech companies to develop AI for immigration enforcement?

Strongly approve	12%
Somewhat approve	21%
Somewhat disapprove	17%
Strongly disapprove	29%
Not sure	21%

n = 1,006

Where do you primarily encounter political "influencers" or independent commentators?

YouTube	46%
TikTok	23%
X/Twitter	23%
Instagram/Threads	20%
Substack	3%
LinkedIn	7%
Other	35%

n = 1,004

Do you believe the CEOs of major tech and AI companies should publicly endorse candidates or use their platforms to advocate for specific political policies?

Yes, it's their right	15%
No, they should remain neutral	54%
Only if the policy directly affects their industry	13%
Not sure	17%

n = 1,006

When it comes to the 2026 midterms, do you believe the federal government should "nationalize" the voting process, or should states retain the sole right to regulate their own elections?

National standards for security	36%
States' rights to determine their own rules and regulations	47%
Not sure	18%

n = 1,007

Looking ahead to the 2028 Presidential election, how important is it that a candidate has a clear, detailed plan for AI regulation and job protection?

Essential	43%
Important but not a priority	38%
Not important	7%
Not sure	12%

n = 1,007

How much of your political news do you receive through direct-to-inbox email newsletters (e.g., Substack, Axios, The Pour Over) compared to two years ago?

Significantly more	4%
Slightly more	12%
About the same	27%
Slightly less	5%
Significantly less	6%
I don't read newsletters	46%

n = 1,006

Which do you trust more to give you an accurate view of the 2026 midterms: an algorithmic social media feed or a newsletter/podcast you have specifically opted into?

Social media feed	21%
Opt-in newsletter/podcast	22%
Neither	57%

n = 1,006

Who did you vote for in the 2024 presidential election?

Democrat Kamala Harris	45%
Republican Donald Trump	48%
Green Jill Stein	1%
Libertarian Chase Oliver	0%
I did not vote	5%

n = 1,005

In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

Republican	37%
Democrat	37%
Independent	24%
Other	1%

n = 1,006

Are you currently registered to vote?

Yes	100%
No	0%
Not sure	0%

n = 1,006

What is your gender?

Male	47%
Female	53%

n = 1,006

Which of the following best describes your race or ethnicity?

White	74%
Black or African American	11%
Hispanic or Latino	9%
Asian	4%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%
Other	1%

n = 1,007

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

No high school diploma	1%
High school or GED	28%
Some college	31%
Bachelor's degree	28%
Graduate or professional degree	12%

n = 1,007