

# The State of The Union is Strong Policy Survey

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Rainey  
Center





# Voters See Clear Improvements in Crime, Immigration and Gas Prices

The Joseph Rainey Center for Public Policy's February 2026 omnibus poll surveyed 1,008 registered voters from February 25-27, just days before President Trump's State of the Union address. The survey results reveal broad public support for many of the themes the President highlighted in his speech, from a surging sense of economic optimism and widely recognized border security gains to energy independence, housing affordability, and American technological leadership.

## METHODOLOGY

This poll surveyed 1,008 registered voters via online panel from February 25-27, 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.





# The Economy, Groceries, and the American Dream

Belief in the American Dream surged between December 2025 and February 2026. A combined 59% of voters now say they have achieved or are on their way to achieving the American Dream (25% achieved, 34% on the way), while the share calling it “out of reach” fell to 41%. Among Republicans, 74% say they have achieved or are on their way, while 50% of Democrats and 50% of Independents say the same.

Grocery prices remain the top lingering concern. Seven in ten voters (70%) say their grocery bills have increased over the past six months, and 57% rate groceries as somewhat or very unaffordable. Seventy-three percent have changed their shopping behavior due to prices. Still, nearly half of voters (49%) give President Trump a great deal or some credit for improvements in gas prices, the stock market, and economic growth. The economy is the top voting issue for 2026, cited by a combined 35% of voters (25% national economy, 10% personal finances).



## Data Centers

Seventy-seven percent of voters are aware of the large-scale data center buildout (37% very aware, 40% somewhat). But misconceptions persist: a combined 55% of voters held negative or uncertain beliefs about data center water usage. When informed that modern data centers recycle water similarly to car washes, 33% of voters became more supportive while only 13% became less so, a net +20 point shift. Among Republicans the net shift was +23 points.

Voters' top concern is electricity costs: 34% believe data centers are driving up their bills (15% significantly, 19% somewhat), and 71% are concerned about the grid's ability to meet growing demand. The national security framing also matters. When told that insufficient domestic capacity could push data center construction to China, 32% said the U.S. should make it easier to build domestically even if it increases local electricity demand.



# Immigration and Crime

Fifty-seven percent of voters say the border is more secure now than under Biden, compared to just 20% who say the opposite. The partisan breakdowns are notable: 87% of Republicans, 56% of Independents, and 28% of Democrats say the border is more secure under Trump. When asked to rate current border security directly, 62% say the border is very or somewhat secure (25% very, 37% somewhat).

Immigration enforcement is seen as more effective by 52% of voters (31% much more, 21% somewhat more), including 82% of Republicans and 49% of Independents. A combined 62% credit Trump with delivering on at least one signature promise: 38% say he delivered on both border security and crime, and another 20% say he delivered on the border. Eighty-six percent of voters feel as safe or safer in their communities compared to two years ago (15% safer, 71% about the same). A majority of voters (51%) say media coverage of Trump on immigration is unfair.



# Housing

Nearly six in ten voters (58%) rate housing in their area as somewhat or very unaffordable (30% somewhat, 28% very). The Housing for the 21st Century Act commands 66% overall support (26% strongly, 40% somewhat), with only 9% opposed and 25% not sure. Support is strong across party lines: 70% of Republicans, 66% of Democrats, and 62% of Independents. Sixty-four percent of voters have not heard about the legislation at all, suggesting room for support to grow.

Every major provision polls at high levels. Rural home repair grants lead at 74% support (39% strongly, 35% somewhat). The small-dollar mortgage pilot program draws 68% support. Selling or leasing underused federal buildings for housing earns 67%. Reducing regulations on community banks polls at 67%. The “Don” Down Payment program through FHA polls at 66% (33% strongly, 33% somewhat). Requiring local governments to list undeveloped public land draws 59%.





# Rainey Center

[info@raineycenter.org](mailto:info@raineycenter.org)  
[raineycenter.org](http://raineycenter.org)