



To: Interested Parties
From: Build American AI
Date: 05/18/2026
Re: Results from a national survey on AI Policy

Americans are optimistic about AI and support national standards.

Build American AI recently partnered with RMG Research, founded by Scott Rasmussen, to conduct a national survey on AI policy among a representative sample of American voters. Americans are broadly optimistic about AI's potential, want Congress to pass strong and smart regulation at the national level to ensure we protect the safety of kids, users, and communities, and win the global AI race. To secure that leadership, they reject AI-doomer sentiment and want a proactive, strong, and smart agenda to ensure American companies stay competitive and their communities benefit.

The view expressed by the American public undercuts the doom-and-gloom messaging from agenda-driven advocacy groups and the cherry-picked information disseminated through the media. It's backed up by the real-world evidence of AI's popularity: overall AI usage is growing, AI apps dominate the top-download charts, and AI companies are growing and helping to make major advances in health care, opportunities for new business creation, and good paying jobs for American workers.

AI Optimism

Survey respondents were asked if they *"expect AI to have a positive or negative impact on the economy, society, and the future?"*

- 52% of Americans said "positive" impact, including 19% "very positive" and 33% "somewhat".
- 36% of Americans said "negative" impact, including 16% "very negative" and 20% "somewhat".
- This represents a +16% margin for the "positive", optimistic side of the debate.

American AI optimism extends across racial divides, with 49% of White voters saying they're optimistic, 68% of Black voters, and 52% of Hispanic voters. Optimism is especially high among Republicans (60% "positive"), 18-34 year olds (60%), 35-44 year olds (65%), and men (60%).

Importance of American AI Leadership

Survey respondents were asked *"How important is it that America remains the leader in AI technology, rather than allowing other countries, like China, to take the lead?"*

- 78% of Americans say this is important to them, with 44% saying "very" and 34% "somewhat".
- Just 7% say this is "not very important" to them, and another 7% say "not at all important".

Keeping America the global AI leader was important to almost every demographic group among voters, including men (84%), women (72%), White (80%), Black (81%), and Hispanic (68%). 87% of Republicans and 72% of Democrats think it's important.

What AI Rules Should Look Like

Survey respondents were given four choices on how government should handle artificial intelligence, spanning the numerous proposals being advanced in public discourse:

- 15% said *"The government should mostly stay out of the way and let AI companies innovate with minimal regulation."*
- 41% said *"The government should set basic safety standards for AI that are designed to keep American companies competitive."*
- **Total "Pro-Innovation" Coalition: 56%**
- 29% said *"The government should set strict regulations on AI that prioritize safety, even if it slows down innovation."*
- 12% said *"The government should do everything in its power to slow down AI development or stop it altogether."*
- **Total "AI-Skeptic" Coalition: 41%**

"Basic safety standards" is the plurality position across most demographic groups, and the pro-innovation coalition combining "minimal regulation" and "basic safety" is a clear 56% majority. This coalition holds among Republicans (62%), Democrats (51%), and Independents (55%).

National versus State Standards

Survey respondents were asked if they preferred for AI to be regulated by the federal government or individual state governments. The results were clear: Americans want AI regulated by Congress at the national level.

- 63% said "The federal government should make decisions so that the rules are the same everywhere."
- 29% said "Individual states should regulate in ways that suit their people and circumstances"

This is a truly bipartisan stance: 63% of Republicans, 62% of Democrats, and 65% of independents agree that AI should be regulated at the federal level.

Methodology

BAAI partnered with RMG research to survey 1000 registered voters in a nationally-representative sample from May 4-5, 2026, utilizing online panel methodology.

