

NATIONAL SURVEY · TOPLINES · WAVE 3

## Independent Candidates & the 2026 Midterms

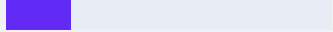
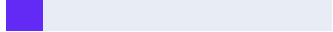
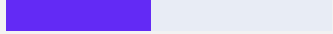
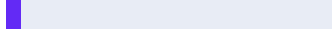
*A national survey of U.S. adults on awareness of and openness to independent candidates*

**Field dates:** August 08–10, 2026    **Sample:** 1,000 U.S. adults    **Registered voters:** 880 (88.0%)

**Methodology:** Survey of 1,000 U.S. adults conducted from Aug 08–10, 2026 by AlphaROC on behalf of the Independent Center Voice. All interviews were conducted online. Survey invitations were distributed randomly, with demographic balances aligned to general population benchmarks. The sample carries a margin of error of  $\pm 3.1$  points of the true population value 95% of the time. Figures below are unweighted.

### JOB APPROVAL

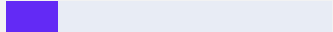
#### 1. Do you approve or disapprove of the job President Donald Trump is doing?

|                     |                                                                                       |       |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Strongly approve    |    | 19.5% |
| Somewhat approve    |    | 20.0% |
| Somewhat disapprove |   | 11.3% |
| Strongly disapprove |  | 44.6% |
| Not sure            |  | 4.6%  |

Total approve: 39.5% · Total disapprove: 55.9%

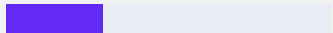
### GENERIC CONGRESSIONAL BALLOT

#### 2. If the election for U.S. Congress were held today, which party's candidate would you vote for in your district?

|                                         |                                                                                       |       |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| The Democratic candidate                |  | 41.0% |
| The Republican candidate                |  | 37.3% |
| An independent or third-party candidate |  | 5.8%  |
| Undecided                               |  | 15.9% |

### AWARENESS OF 2026 INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES

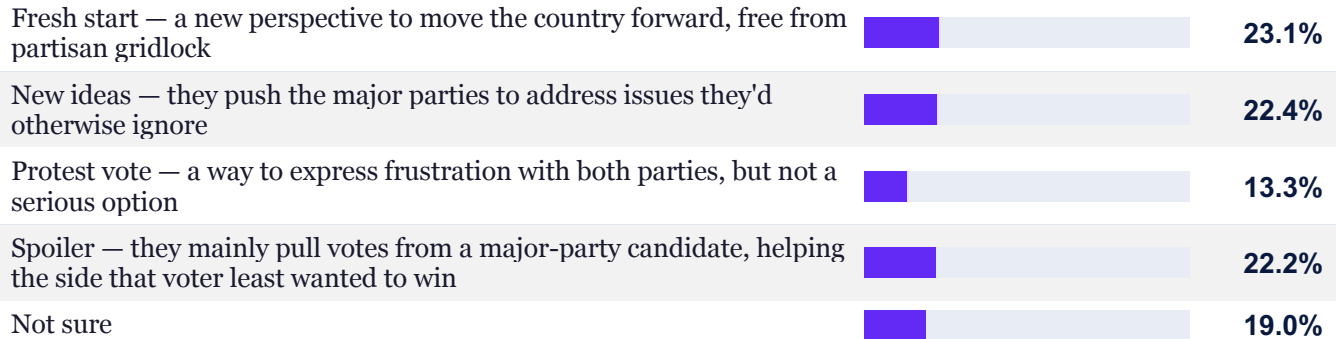
#### 3. How aware are you of independent candidates on the ballot for the 2026 midterm elections?

|                                               |                                                                                       |       |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| I'm actively following them                   |  | 10.7% |
| I'm aware of some candidates                  |  | 29.8% |
| I'd be interested, but haven't heard anything |  | 20.9% |
| I'm not aware of any                          |  | 28.5% |
| I'm not aware of any and don't care           |  | 10.1% |

Any awareness (following + aware of some): 40.5% · Interested but uninformed: 20.9%

#### FIRST THOUGHT ON THIRD-PARTY / INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES

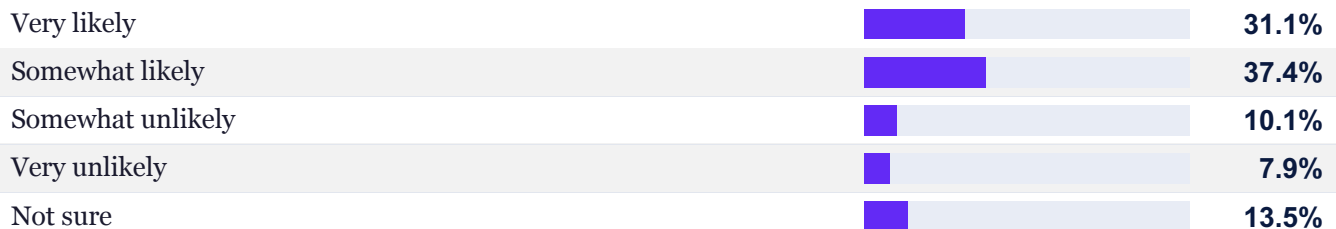
### 4. When you think about independent or third-party candidates in elections, which best describes your first reaction?



Net positive (fresh start + new ideas): 45.5% · Net negative (spoiler + protest): 35.5%

#### HYPOTHETICAL STRONG INDEPENDENT

### 5. Imagine a future congressional election with a strong, well-funded independent candidate, unaffiliated with either party, who shared many of your views and was willing to work with both sides. How likely would you be to vote for this candidate?

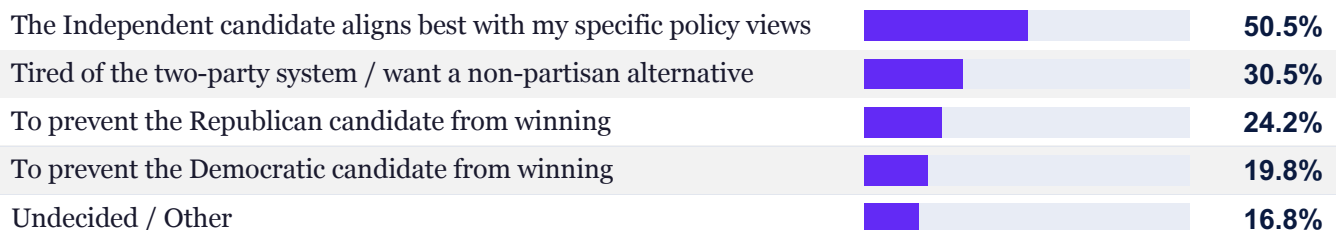


Net likely (very + somewhat): 68.5% · Net unlikely: 18.0%

#### REASONS TO CONSIDER AN INDEPENDENT

### 6. Regardless of your vote in the upcoming midterm elections, if there were a viable Independent in one of the races, select up to 2 reasons you would consider voting for an Independent candidate. NEW

Select up to two — percentages are of all respondents and sum to more than 100%.





# INDEPENDENT CENTER VOICE

I absolutely wouldn't consider voting for a viable Independent



11.9%

Pull motivations lead: ~64% cite at least one affirmative reason (policy fit or anti-duopoly) vs ~43% citing a defensive "prevent a party" reason. Only 11.9% would not consider an Independent at all.

## SAMPLE PROFILE

### Political affiliation

Republican 35.9% · Democrat 31.7% · Independent 25.9% · Undecided 6.5%

### Gender

Female 50.8% · Male 48.9% · Non-binary 0.3%

### Race

White 78.8% · Black 13.2% · Asian 3.8% · American Indian/AK Native 1.0% · NH/PI 0.3% · Other 2.9%

### Education

HS/GED 29.2% · Bachelor's 24.8% · Some college 16.2% · Graduate/professional 15.0% · Associate/technical 11.8% · Some HS or less 3.0%

### Registered voter

Yes 88.0% · No 12.0%

### Age

18–29: 18.9% · 30–44: 27.2% · 45–54: 16.5% · 55–64: 16.8% · 65–75: 14.5% · 75+: 6.1%

### Hispanic / Latino origin

No 85.6% · Yes 14.4%

### Household income

Under \$25k 14.9% · \$25–49.9k 18.0% · \$50–74.9k 16.5% · \$75–99.9k 13.4% · \$100–149.9k 18.0% · \$150k+ 19.2%