



Ronald Reagan

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NEW REAGAN INSTITUTE SURVEY: Americans Still Believe in Strong U.S. Global Leadership and Engagement, Including Young MAGA Republicans

As we mark the nation's 250th birthday, the survey results find that the bipartisan consensus that has underpinned America's leadership abroad is showing signs of concerning polarization

WASHINGTON, DC – The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute today released results of its annual Reagan Institute Summer Survey, a nationwide public opinion poll on foreign policy and national security issues. Released as the United States prepares to mark its 250th anniversary, the survey finds Americans continue to believe in the core of President Reagan's foreign policy vision: that American military strength and international engagement remain essential to U.S. security and prosperity.

For the first time, this year's survey included an oversample of self-identified MAGA Republicans under the age of 30. The results challenge the conventional narrative that younger MAGA Republicans are isolationist: 72 percent say the United States should be more engaged and take the lead in international events, while just 19 percent say the United States should be less engaged and react to events.

Overall, a majority of Americans, 61 percent, say it is better for the United States to be more engaged and take the lead in international events, while just 27 percent prefer a less engaged, more reactive posture. Support for engagement remains roughly 20 points higher than it was several years ago.

The belief in "peace through strength" remains even stronger. Eighty-two percent of Americans agree that a strong U.S. military is essential to maintaining peace and prosperity at home and abroad, including majorities across party lines.

The survey raises a warning sign: the bipartisan consensus behind American leadership is showing growing tension. Republican support for U.S. international leadership has held firm, while Democratic support has fallen over the past year. Republicans, however, are growing more skeptical of NATO, even as Democrats remain strongly supportive. And on Iran, Americans continue to see preventing a nuclear-armed regime as important to U.S. security, but the issue has become more politically divided than it was a year ago.

"These results show that President Reagan's principles remain timeless and durable as America celebrates 250 years of independence," said Roger Zakheim, Director of the Ronald Reagan Institute. "At a moment of rising threats and deep political division, Americans still believe in peace through strength, the importance of confronting adversaries, and the moral obligation to stand up for freedom abroad. At the same time, these results warn that bipartisan consensus on issues that have long underpinned America's global leadership is showing signs of strain, putting at risk support for key pillars of U.S. foreign policy dependent on which party occupies the White House."

Several areas of consensus remain clear, particularly on China. A bipartisan majority (73%) also believes America has mostly been a force for good over those two and a half centuries, including 82% of Republicans and 69% of Democrats. And 62% of Americans say the description of the United States as a “shining city upon a hill” – the image Reagan made his own – still fits the country today.

A summary and the complete survey results can be found online at www.reaganfoundation.org/reagan-institute/centers/freedom-democracy/survey/2026-reagan-institute-summer-survey

Additional key takeaways from the 2026 survey include:

- **Human Rights:** Eighty-one percent of Americans agree the United States has a moral obligation to stand up for human rights and democracy in international affairs whenever possible.
- **Defense Industrial Base:** Sixty-three percent say it is important for the United States to expand its domestic capacity to produce military equipment.
- **Middle East:** Seventy-six percent say preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon matters to U.S. security and prosperity, and 65 percent say Israel’s security matters to U.S. security and prosperity.
- **Taiwan:** Sixty-six percent say Taiwan’s security matters to U.S. security and prosperity, including 72 percent of Republicans and 62 percent of Democrats.
- **Ukraine:** Sixty-nine percent say the war between Russia and Ukraine matters to U.S. security and prosperity, and 58 percent support sending U.S. weapons to Ukraine.
- **Western Hemisphere:** Seventy percent support prosecuting Venezuelan officials for narco-terrorism and drug trafficking, and 69 percent support prosecuting Cuban officials for attacks on Americans and human rights abuses.
- **NATO:** Seventy-three percent say keeping the United States in NATO matters to U.S. security and prosperity, and 72 percent say the United States should respond with military force if a NATO ally is attacked.

The survey was conducted from May 26 to June 3, 2026, by a bipartisan research team at Beacon Research and Shaw & Company Research. It is based on a total sample of 1,555 respondents nationwide, with a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points. The survey used a mixed-mode design, including 501 live telephone interviews, 903 online panel interviews, and 151 text-to-web interviews. The survey also includes an oversample of 331 self-identified MAGA Republicans under 30 years of age, with a margin of error of plus or minus 5.0 percentage points.

About the Reagan Foundation and Institute

The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute (RRPFI) is the sole nonprofit organization created by President Reagan charged with advancing his legacy and principles – individual liberty, economic opportunity, freedom and democracy, peace through strength, and national pride.

A globally recognized nonpartisan organization based in Simi Valley, CA, with a leading policy institute in Washington, DC, RRPFI delivers impactful public affairs programming, policy convenings and projects of national and international significance, scholarly initiatives, and distinctive educational programs shaping the perspectives of middle, high school, and college students.

In addition, RRPFI sustains the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, the largest and most visited presidential library. A leading cultural institution, RRPFI houses a remarkable

125,000 square foot museum with unique historical pieces that tells the story of Ronald Reagan's life, presidency, and enduring impact, and hosts world-class special exhibitions.

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