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Public Support for American Leadership in the World on the Rise, Shows 2024 Reagan Institute Summer Survey

A bipartisan majority of Americans support U.S. defense of NATO allies, continued military aid to Ukraine and Israel, and deterrence in the Indo-Pacific

Washington, DC – The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute today released the results of the second annual Reagan Institute Summer Survey, a national public opinion poll on foreign policy and national security issues. The survey shows Americans want a return to strong U.S. leadership in the world: defending our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies, supporting Ukraine and Israel, and deterring Chinese aggression against Taiwan.

“These results show Americans are seeking the principled policies that President Reagan stood for,” said Roger Zakheim, Director of the Ronald Reagan Institute. “The American people want the United States to lead on the global stage, especially in light of conflict and chaos unraveling around the world—and they support President Reagan’s peace through strength philosophy. When it comes to countering threats from tyrants and terrorists, defending freedom and democracy, and supporting our allies, Americans believe our nation’s strength is important for peace and prosperity in the United States and around the world.”

The survey shows a significant increase in the number of Americans who want the United States to be more involved and take the lead in international events. A bipartisan majority thinks U.S. global leadership is beneficial to both the United States and the world.

A summary of the survey results can be found online at:

<https://reaganfoundation.org/summersurvey>

Key takeaways from the survey include:

- **The last six months have shown a 12-point increase in the percentage of Americans who want the United States to be more engaged in world events.** Fifty-four percent of Americans want the United States to be more engaged and lead on the world stage, as opposed to 42 percent just six months ago.
- **Americans remain concerned about the threat from China.** Eighty-two percent of Americans say they are concerned about China’s military build-up, and 75 percent are worried about China overtaking the United States as the world’s top superpower.
- **Support for NATO remains strong.** As NATO commemorates its 75th anniversary, a bipartisan majority of Americans have favorable views of the alliance (62 percent) and support NATO’s collective defense principle (72 percent).

- **Support for NATO collective defense drops if a country does not spend 2 percent of its GDP on defense:** While 72 percent of Americans support the United States responding militarily if a NATO ally in Europe is attacked, that number drops to 52 percent if the country is not meeting its 2 percent defense spending commitment.
- **An increasing number of Americans believe Russia is winning the war in Ukraine, and majority support for militarily aiding Ukraine remains steady.** Last year, 27 percent of Americans thought Russia was winning the war, whereas 31 percent perceived Ukraine had the advantage. Today, 39 percent believe Russia is winning, with only 19 percent believing Ukraine has the upper hand. Nonetheless, the percentage who believe it is important to America that Ukraine win the war remains steady at 75 percent since 2022.
- **A majority of Americans (56 percent) support sending military assistance to Israel, but there are sharp partisan divides about Israel's actions in the war against Hamas.** Forty-eight percent of Democrats think Israel's response to the October 7 attack has been too harsh, but only 18 percent of Republicans think the same. Sixty-eight percent of Republicans say Israel has the right to continue military action in Gaza until it defeats Hamas, while 60 percent of Democrats say it is time for a ceasefire.
- **The pro-Palestinian protests on college campuses largely have not swayed national opinion.** Forty percent of Americans said the protests did not impact their opinion in either direction, and 30 percent said the protests made them less sympathetic to the Palestinian cause.

The survey was conducted between May 20 and 27, 2024 by a bipartisan research team at Beacon Research and Shaw & Company Research. It is based on 1,257 respondents reflecting the demographics of the country, with 463 telephone interviews (split between landlines and cell phones) and 794 online surveys.

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The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute (RRPFI) is the sole nonprofit organization created by President Reagan charged with continuing his legacy and advancing his principles – limited government, individual liberty, economic opportunity, freedom and democracy, peace through strength, and national pride. The Foundation is a non-partisan organization which sustains the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum in Simi Valley, CA, the Reagan Center for Public Affairs, the Presidential Learning Center, The Air Force One Pavilion, the award-winning Reagan Leadership Academy, and the Reagan Institute, which carries out the Foundation's mission in Washington, D.C. The Reagan Library houses over 55 million pages of Gubernatorial, Presidential and personal papers and over 60,000 gifts and artifacts chronicling the lives of Ronald and Nancy Reagan. It also serves as the final resting place of America's 40th President and his First Lady. More information is available at reaganfoundation.org.