

## MEMO

**To:** Interested Parties

**From:** American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)

**Date:** October 2, 2025

**Subject:** New polling shows voters overwhelmingly support First Amendment rights and are concerned that they are under attack.

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**The First Amendment is the cornerstone of US democracy and gives Americans the freedom to speak without government interference, peacefully protest, gather with likeminded individuals, and it gives the press the freedom to report however they see fit.** However, the Trump administration is abusing its power to silence and punish people and organizations who criticize its policies or express a viewpoint the administration doesn't like.

New polling from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), in partnership with YouGov, shows the public isn't just concerned—they're firmly opposed to the Trump administration's actions that seek to silence dissent and push forward only government approved messages. **American voters overwhelmingly support the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment, and bipartisan majorities reject various recent attacks on the First Amendment.**

YouGov conducted a nationwide survey of 1,045 US registered voters between September 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, on behalf of the ACLU. The survey explored public attitudes toward free speech and First Amendment rights. Key findings include the following:

- 79 percent of voters are aware of recent news around free speech issues, including 62 percent of those who say they aren't usually following the news
- American voters overwhelmingly support the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment, and bipartisan majorities reject various recent attacks on the First Amendment. Even accounting for key factors like partisanship, ideology, and others, there is no significant constituency in the US for curtailing the guarantees spelled out in the First Amendment.
- Across key demographic factors, such as political partisanship, ideology, and others, support for First Amendment Freedoms typically exceeds 90 percent.
- At the same time, most Americans are worried about the state of free speech in the US today. Just 7 percent of Americans believe free speech is "completely secure," with 48 percent saying it is not secure.
- In particular, voters said they were worried about recent attacks on free speech such as threatening to arrest peaceful protestors (with 68 percent saying they were very or somewhat concerned about this), using federal agencies like the FCC and DOJ to attack speech the government disagrees with (67 percent), and targeting non-profit organizations that disagree with the president (63 percent).
- Voters said they agreed with various statements in favor of First Amendment freedoms, such as that free speech ensures the truth wins out (86%), , that free speech allows Americans to protest, debate and demand better (84%), that the government should not

police American comedy and entertainment (79%), and that free speech isn't partisan (75%).

**These findings paint a clear picture: Americans reject President Trump's efforts to violate the First Amendment and erode our freedom of speech.** Voters across the political spectrum are deeply concerned about the constitutional risks of weaponizing the government to suppress free speech and other rights protected by the First Amendment.

**This polling suggests that public backlash will only grow if President Trump escalates his threats against the First Amendment.**

*Jenna Leventoff, Senior Policy Counsel for the ACLU's Democracy and Technology Division, is available for interviews to discuss the polling results and the Trump administration's unconstitutional attacks on the First Amendment. For more information, email [pressaclu@evergreenstrategygroup.com](mailto:pressaclu@evergreenstrategygroup.com).*

**Methodology:** This survey is based on 1,045 interviews conducted by YouGov on the internet of registered voters. The sample was weighted according to gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, and geographic region based on voter registration lists, the U.S. Census American Community Survey, and the U.S. Census Current Population Survey, as well as 2020 Presidential vote and approximate 2024 Presidential vote based on available results. Respondents were selected from YouGov to be representative of registered voters. The margin of error (a 95% confidence interval) for a sample percentage based upon the subsetted sample is approximately 3.6%.