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American Promise/Ipsos Money in Politics and Free Speech Survey

Conducted by Ipsos using KnowledgePanel®
A survey of the American general population (ages 18+)
Interview dates: Jan. 9-11, 2026
Number of interviews: 1,036

Margin of error: +/- 3.2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level for all respondents
Margin of error: +/- 6.0 percentage points at the 95% confidence level for Republicans
Margin of error: +/- 5.6 percentage points at the 95% confidence level for Democrats
Margin of error: +/- 6.0 percentage points at the 95% confidence level for all Independents

NOTE: All results show percentages among all respondents, unless otherwise labeled. Reduced bases are unweighted values.

*NOTE: * = less than 0.5%, - = no respondents, N/A = not applicable*

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GAME CHANGERS



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Annotated Questionnaire

1. How familiar are you, if at all, with debates over the role of money in political campaigns and elections?

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Very familiar	14%	10%	18%	15%
Somewhat familiar	31%	31%	34%	35%
Have heard of, but that's it	32%	39%	27%	29%
Have not heard of this	21%	20%	20%	20%
Skipped	2%	-	0%	1%

2. In the past 12 months, have you done any of the following?

Total Yes Summary

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Engaged with political content online (e.g., liked, shared, commented)	26%	23%	38%	23%
Signed a petition about a political issue	20%	16%	27%	19%
Contacted an elected official (e.g., letter, email, phone call)	18%	15%	23%	18%
Donated money to a political candidate or campaign	10%	6%	17%	9%
Donated money to a political party	9%	7%	14%	6%
Attended a political rally, protest, or town hall	9%	2%	16%	11%
Volunteered for a campaign or political organization	5%	3%	6%	5%

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2_1. In the past 12 months, have you done any of the following? Donated money to a political candidate or campaign

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Yes	10%	6%	17%	9%
No	88%	93%	83%	90%
Skipped	2%	0%	-	1%

2_2. In the past 12 months, have you done any of the following? Donated money to a political party

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Yes	9%	7%	14%	6%
No	89%	92%	86%	93%
Skipped	2%	1%	-	1%

2_3. In the past 12 months, have you done any of the following? Contacted an elected official (e.g., letter, email, phone call)

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Yes	18%	15%	23%	18%
No	80%	84%	77%	81%
Skipped	2%	1%	-	1%

2_4. In the past 12 months, have you done any of the following? Signed a petition about a political issue

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Yes	20%	16%	27%	19%
No	78%	83%	73%	80%
Skipped	2%	1%	0%	1%

2_5. In the past 12 months, have you done any of the following? Attended a political rally, protest, or town hall

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Yes	9%	2%	16%	11%
No	89%	96%	84%	88%
Skipped	2%	2%	-	1%

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2_6. In the past 12 months, have you done any of the following? Volunteered for a campaign or political organization

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Yes	5%	3%	6%	5%
No	93%	96%	94%	94%
Skipped	2%	1%	0%	1%

2_7. In the past 12 months, have you done any of the following? Engaged with political content online (e.g., liked, shared, commented)

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Yes	26%	23%	38%	23%
No	72%	77%	62%	76%
Skipped	2%	0%	-	1%

3. How concerned, if at all, are you about the influence of money in American politics today?

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Very concerned	48%	30%	67%	52%
Somewhat concerned	34%	48%	24%	30%
Not very concerned	12%	17%	6%	13%
Not at all concerned	5%	4%	3%	4%
Skipped	2%	1%	1%	1%
<i>Concerned (Net)</i>	81%	78%	90%	82%
<i>Not Concerned (Net)</i>	16%	21%	9%	17%

4. Compared with 10 years ago, do you think the following have more, less, or about the same amount of influence over political candidates and campaigns

Total More Influence Summary

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Wealthy donors	68%	64%	81%	68%
Corporations	61%	53%	77%	60%
Foreign Governments	50%	44%	62%	53%
Political action committees (PACs)	47%	43%	56%	47%
Labor unions	18%	25%	16%	17%

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Small-dollar, individual donors	8%	10%	10%	6%
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4_1. Compared with 10 years ago, do you think the following have more, less, or about the same amount of influence over political candidates and campaigns? Small-dollar, individual donors

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
More influence	8%	10%	10%	6%
Less influence	45%	39%	54%	49%
About the same amount of influence	25%	30%	21%	26%
Don't know	19%	18%	14%	18%
Skipped	3%	2%	1%	1%

4_2. Compared with 10 years ago, do you think the following have more, less, or about the same amount of influence over political candidates and campaigns? Wealthy donors

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
More influence	68%	64%	81%	68%
Less influence	2%	3%	2%	2%
About the same amount of influence	13%	18%	8%	15%
Don't know	13%	14%	8%	13%
Skipped	3%	1%	1%	1%

4_3. Compared with 10 years ago, do you think the following have more, less, or about the same amount of influence over political candidates and campaigns? Corporations

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
More influence	61%	53%	77%	60%
Less influence	4%	4%	4%	5%
About the same amount of influence	17%	27%	10%	19%
Don't know	15%	15%	8%	16%
Skipped	3%	1%	1%	1%

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4_4. Compared with 10 years ago, do you think the following have more, less, or about the same amount of influence over political candidates and campaigns? Labor unions

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
More influence	18%	25%	16%	17%
Less influence	30%	23%	40%	31%
About the same amount of influence	26%	29%	25%	29%
Don't know	23%	21%	18%	22%
Skipped	3%	2%	1%	1%

4_5. Compared with 10 years ago, do you think the following have more, less, or about the same amount of influence over political candidates and campaigns? Political action committees (PACs)

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
More influence	47%	43%	56%	47%
Less influence	5%	4%	5%	7%
About the same amount of influence	21%	27%	20%	20%
Don't know	23%	24%	17%	24%
Skipped	3%	2%	1%	1%

4_6. Compared with 10 years ago, do you think the following have more, less, or about the same amount of influence over political candidates and campaigns? Foreign governments

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
More influence	50%	44%	62%	53%
Less influence	8%	9%	8%	9%
About the same amount of influence	19%	23%	14%	20%
Don't know	21%	22%	15%	18%
Skipped	3%	1%	1%	1%

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5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Total Agree Summary

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
[TREND] The influence of money in politics is a threat to our elections.	77%	76%	89%	79%
Large donors to political candidates and campaigns make it harder for ordinary Americans to have their voice heard by elected leaders.	76%	76%	86%	81%
Congress and the states should be able to reasonably regulate and limit money in campaigns and elections.	72%	69%	83%	78%
[TREND] Individuals and entities should be able to spend unlimited amounts of money to influence campaigns and elections.	10%	11%	11%	10%

5_1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Congress and the states should be able to reasonably regulate and limit money in campaigns and elections.

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Strongly agree	45%	30%	60%	52%
Somewhat agree	27%	38%	23%	26%
Somewhat disagree	6%	9%	6%	3%
Strongly disagree	2%	3%	2%	2%
Not sure	17%	18%	9%	15%
Skipped	3%	2%	1%	2%
Agree (Net)	72%	69%	83%	78%
Disagree (Net)	8%	12%	8%	5%

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5_2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? The influence of money in politics is a threat to our elections.

	Total (N=1,036)	Total 2025 (N=1,023)	Republica n (N=279)	Republica n 2025 (N=271)	Democra t (N=330)	Democra t 2025 (N=328)	Independen t (N=297)	Independen t 2025 (N=319)
Strongly agree	54%	58%	41%	46%	74%	73%	60%	60%
Somewha t agree	22%	24%	35%	34%	15%	19%	20%	21%
Somewha t disagree	6%	5%	7%	9%	2%	1%	6%	4%
Strongly disagree	2%	3%	2%	4%	1%	3%	3%	3%
Not sure	12%	9%	13%	7%	7%	5%	11%	10%
Skipped	3%	2%	2%	-	0%	-	2%	2%
Agree (Net)	77%	82%	76%	80%	89%	91%	79%	81%
Disagree (Net)	8%	7%	10%	13%	4%	4%	8%	7%

5_3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Individuals and entities should be able to spend unlimited amounts of money to influence campaigns and elections.

	Total (N=1,036)	Total 2025 (N=1,023)	Republica n (N=279)	Republica n 2025 (N=271)	Democra t (N=330)	Democra t 2025 (N=328)	Independen t (N=297)	Independen t 2025 (N=319)
Strongly agree	4%	2%	4%	3%	6%	1%	3%	2%
Somewha t agree	6%	7%	8%	10%	6%	4%	7%	8%
Somewha t disagree	19%	18%	30%	24%	15%	14%	15%	17%
Strongly disagree	52%	61%	43%	54%	65%	74%	58%	60%
Not sure	15%	10%	14%	9%	9%	6%	14%	12%
Skipped	3%	2%	2%	-	1%	1%	2%	2%
Agree (Net)	10%	9%	11%	13%	11%	6%	10%	10%

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Disagree (Net)	71%	79%	72%	78%	80%	88%	73%	77%
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5_4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Large donors to political candidates and campaigns make it harder for ordinary Americans to have their voice heard by elected leaders.

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Strongly agree	55%	40%	72%	62%
Somewhat agree	21%	35%	14%	19%
Somewhat disagree	5%	7%	4%	5%
Strongly disagree	3%	2%	3%	3%
Not sure	13%	13%	7%	10%
Skipped	3%	2%	0%	2%
Agree (Net)	76%	76%	86%	81%
Disagree (Net)	8%	9%	7%	8%

6. For each of the following, please indicate whether you consider it to be an example of free speech protected by the First Amendment, or not.

Total Yes Summary

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Expressing a political opinion in conversation	78%	84%	83%	83%
Posting political views on social media	74%	78%	76%	81%
Donating money to a political campaign	42%	51%	44%	41%
Spending unlimited amounts of money on political campaigns	15%	22%	12%	11%

6_1. For each of the following, please indicate whether you consider it to be an example of free speech protected by the First Amendment, or not. Expressing a political opinion in conversation

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Yes, protected free speech	78%	84%	83%	83%

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No, not protected free speech	4%	3%	5%	3%
Not sure	14%	12%	11%	13%
Skipped	3%	1%	1%	2%

6_2. For each of the following, please indicate whether you consider it to be an example of free speech protected by the First Amendment, or not. Posting political views on social media

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Yes, protected free speech	74%	78%	76%	81%
No, not protected free speech	7%	6%	10%	3%
Not sure	16%	15%	13%	14%
Skipped	3%	1%	1%	2%

6_3. For each of the following, please indicate whether you consider it to be an example of free speech protected by the First Amendment, or not. Donating money to a political campaign

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Yes, protected free speech	42%	51%	44%	41%
No, not protected free speech	27%	24%	30%	29%
Not sure	28%	24%	25%	29%
Skipped	3%	1%	1%	2%

6_4. For each of the following, please indicate whether you consider it to be an example of free speech protected by the First Amendment, or not. Spending unlimited amounts of money on political campaigns

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Yes, protected free speech	15%	22%	12%	11%
No, not protected free speech	50%	44%	61%	53%
Not sure	32%	33%	26%	34%
Skipped	3%	1%	1%	2%

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7. Before today, were you aware that the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that spending unlimited money on political campaigns is protected as free speech under the First Amendment?

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Yes, I was aware of this	22%	15%	27%	27%
No, I was not aware of this	76%	84%	73%	73%
Skipped	2%	1%	-	1%

8. When thinking about how laws surrounding money in politics could be made in this country, which of the following comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right?

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Voters and elected officials should be the primary decision makers on laws regarding money in politics	41%	37%	55%	40%
The Supreme Court should be the primary decision maker on laws regulating money in politics	12%	16%	11%	10%
Neither	14%	12%	13%	17%
Don't know	31%	34%	21%	32%
Skipped	2%	1%	-	1%

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9. 50 years ago, the Supreme Court ruled that spending money on political campaigns is a form of free speech. Since then, decisions about money in politics have been made primarily by the Supreme Court.

Having read that, please tell us once again which of the following statements comes closer to your view, even if neither is exactly right.

	Total (N=1,036)	Republican (N=279)	Democrat (N=330)	Independent (N=297)
Voters and elected officials should be the primary decision makers on laws regarding money in politics	47%	38%	64%	48%
The Supreme Court should be the primary decision maker on laws regulating money in politics	16%	24%	13%	13%
Neither	11%	12%	8%	12%
Don't know	25%	25%	15%	27%
Skipped	2%	0%	1%	1%

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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between January 9-11, 2026, on behalf of American Promise. For this survey, a sample of 1,036 adults age 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii was interviewed online in English. This sample includes 330 Democrats, 279 Republicans, and 297 Independents.

The survey was conducted using KnowledgePanel, the largest and most well-established online probability-based panel that is representative of the adult U.S. population. Our recruitment process employs a scientifically developed address-based sampling methodology using the latest Delivery Sequence File of the USPS – a database with full coverage of all delivery points in the U.S. Households invited to join the panel are randomly selected from all available households in the U.S. Persons in the sampled households are invited to join and participate in the panel. Those selected who do not already have internet access are provided a tablet and internet connection at no cost to the panel member. Those who join the panel and who are selected to participate in a survey are sent a unique password-protected log-in used to complete surveys online. As a result of our recruitment and sampling methodologies, samples from KnowledgePanel cover all households regardless of their phone or internet status and findings can be reported with a margin of sampling error and projected to the general population.

The data for the total sample were weighted to adjust for gender by age, race/ethnicity, education, Census region, metropolitan status, and household income. Party ID benchmarks are from the 2025 National Public Opinion Reference Survey (NPORS). The demographic benchmarks came from the 2025 March Supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS).

- Gender (Male, Female) by Age (18–29, 30–44, 45–59 and 60+)
- Race/Hispanic Ethnicity (White Non-Hispanic, Black Non-Hispanic, Other, Non-Hispanic, Hispanic, 2+ Races, Non-Hispanic)
- Education (Less than High School, High School, Some College, Bachelor or higher)
- Census Region (Northeast, Midwest, South, West)
- Metropolitan status (Metro, non-Metro)
- Household Income (Under \$25,000, \$25,000-\$49,999, \$50,000-\$74,999, \$75,000-\$99,999, \$100,000-\$149,999, \$150,000+)
- Party ID (Republican, Leans Republican, Independent/Other, Democrat, Leans Democrat)

The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3.2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level, for results based on the entire sample of adults. The margin of sampling error takes into account the design effect, which was 1.11. For Republicans, the margin of sampling error is plus or minus 6.0 percentage points, and the design effect is 1.04. For Democrats, the margin of sampling error is plus or minus 5.6 percentage points, and the design effect is 1.06. For independents, the margin of sampling error is plus or minus 6.0 percentage points, and the design effect is 1.13.

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The margin of sampling error is higher and varies for results based on sub-samples. In our reporting of the findings, percentage points are rounded off to the nearest whole number. As a result, percentages in a given table column may total slightly higher or lower than 100%. In questions that permit multiple responses, columns may total substantially more than 100%, depending on the number of different responses offered by each respondent.

The survey included both baseline and post-information questions related to attitudes about money in politics, including Question 9, which followed brief factual background about Supreme Court rulings.

This topline is trended with data from a previous American Promise/Ipsos poll:

- The 2025 poll was fielded July 25-27, 2025. For this survey, a sample of 1,023 adults age 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii was interviewed online in English.

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About Ipsos

Ipsos is one of the largest market research and polling companies globally, operating in 90 markets and employing nearly 20,000 people.

Our passionately curious research professionals, analysts and scientists have built unique multi-specialist capabilities that provide true understanding and powerful insights into the actions, opinions and motivations of citizens, consumers, patients, customers or employees. Our 75 business solutions are based on primary data from our surveys, social media monitoring, and qualitative or observational techniques.

“Game Changers” – our tagline – summarizes our ambition to help our 5,000 clients navigate with confidence our rapidly changing world.

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