



# AAIPP Bulletin

January 2026

## The Trump Presidency

One year into his second term, President Donald Trump’s job approval rating average stands at 42.8% approve and 54.8% disapprove, according to [RealClearPolitics average of polls \(1/8 – 1/22\)](#). His net approval has gone from +6.2% on January 27, 2025 to -7.1% on July 22, 2025, and to -12.0% on January 22, 2026. None of the individual polls in January 2026 shows a positive net approval.

On specific issues, voters disapprove of how President Trump has handled inflation (RCP average spread: -23%), the economy (RCP average spread: -14.6%), immigration (RCP average spread: -6.2%), and foreign policy (RCP average spread: -12.7%).

President Trump's Job Approval by Race & Ethnicity - December 2025/January 2026							
		U.S. Voters	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/PI	Other
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the job Donald J. Trump is doing as President of the United States?</i>							
<b>Emerson College Polling</b>							
	Approve	43.2%	49.7%	17.4%	43.3%	17.9%	41.4%
	Disapprove	<b>51.3%</b>	47.5%	<b>72.6%</b>	45.4%	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>53.0%</b>
	Neutral / No opinion	5.4%	2.9%	10.0%	11.3%	15.6%	5.6%
<b>AtlasIntel Poll</b>							
	Approve	39.3%	42.2%	22.5%	37.9%	25.2%	43.2%
	Disapprove	<b>59.6%</b>	<b>57.1%</b>	<b>77.5%</b>	<b>57.1%</b>	<b>74.8%</b>	<b>56.8%</b>
	Neutral / No opinion	1.1%	0.7%	0.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Harvard CAPS - Harris Poll</b>							
	Approve (Net)	47.0%	<b>53.0%</b>	30.0%	38.0%	33.0%	37%
	Disapprove (Net)	49.0%	45.0%	<b>62.0%</b>	<b>55.0%</b>	<b>64.0%</b>	49%

Sources: Emerson College January 2026 national survey of U.S. registered voters conducted January 17-19, 2026; AtlasIntel National Poll of U.S. adults conducted December 15-19, 2025, and Harvard CAPS-Harris poll of registered voters conducted online within the U.S. December 2-4, 2025.

With respect to Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) voters’ views, three polls by [Emerson College](#), [AtlasIntel](#), and [Harvard CAPS-Harris](#) offer quite consistent findings. AAPI voters overwhelmingly disapprove of President Trump’s overall job performance, with disapprove/approve spread being 48.6%, 49.6%, and 34% respectively. According to the AtlasIntel poll, the top five issues of concern among AAPIs are inflation/cost of

living (50.2%), the U.S. economy & job market (40.4%), health care (38%), safeguarding democracy (30.8%), and climate change (30.1%).

**Quiz:** On April 2, 2025, the Trump administration announced steep, sweeping import duties—the “Liberation Day” tariffs. Central to the policy’s justification is that tariffs are a tool to extract concessions from trading partners while generating revenue for the U.S. government—at no cost to American households. Practically, how much have American importers and consumers absorbed the cost of tariffs – quite minimal, less than 50%, or more than 50%? (See answer at the end of the newsletter).

## 2026 Midterm Elections

According to Cook Political Report’s most recent [House race ratings](#), 189 seats are considered solid Democrat, 186 solid Republican. 18 races are considered competitive, including 14 leaning Democrat and 4 leaning Republican. In addition, 18 races are considered most competitive or toss-up, including 4 current Democratic seats and 14 Republican.

When asked who they would be most likely to vote for in a hypothetical congressional election, voters’ responses in nine January 2026 polls indicated that Democratic candidates were consistently favored by two to six percentage points. [The RCP average](#) of these polls shows 45.7% for Democrats to 41.2% for Republicans.

As reported in two recent national polls, [Emerson College Polling \(January 2026\)](#) and [AtlasIntel \(December 2025\)](#), AAPI voters overwhelmingly favor the Democratic candidate if the midterm House elections were held today.

2026 Midterm Elections: Views of U.S. Adults/Voters (by race & ethnicity)							
	U.S. Adults	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/PI	Other	
<i>If the midterm elections for the House of Representatives were held today, who would you be most likely to vote for?</i>							
<b>Emerson College Polling</b>							
The Democratic candidate	48.1%	43.6%	<b>70.6%</b>	41.9%	<b>71.1%</b>	46.3%	
The Republican candidate	41.7%	48.3%	13.1%	39.3%	28.9%	39.2%	
Undecided	10.2%	8.0%	16.3%	18.8%	0.0%	14.4%	
<b>AtlasIntel</b>							
The Democratic candidate	<b>54.4%</b>	<b>52.0%</b>	<b>75.6%</b>	<b>51.2%</b>	<b>71.6%</b>	44.4%	
The Republican candidate	38.4%	40.1%	22.5%	43.4%	25.2%	40.3%	
Don't know	6.0%	6.3%	1.9%	4.4%	3.1%	14.6%	
Would not vote	1.2%	1.5%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.8%	

Sources: Emerson College Polling January 2026 national survey of U.S. registered voters conducted January 14-17, 2026; AtlasIntel national poll of U.S. adults conducted December 15-19, 2025.

## Health Care Affordability

In a [recent Washington Post column](#), Dr. Leana S. Wen, an emergency physician, clinical associate professor at George Washington University and a Washington Post

contributing columnist, identifies 10 public health issues to watch closely in the year ahead: GLP-1 medications, health care affordability, vaccine policy, infectious diseases, improved diagnostics, new lifesaving treatments, artificial intelligence, limits on social media, cannabis policy, and tried-and-true lifestyle management.

With respect to health care affordability, Dr. Wen explains that the Trump administration has emphasized efforts to rein in prescription drug prices, and 2026 will be an early test for whether those policies translate into real savings for patients. Meanwhile, independent analyses project that millions of Americans could lose health insurance coverage as premiums rise and federal protections narrow. How these forces play out will be a defining policy tension.

A [December 2025 KFF data note](#) summarizes its recent polling on the public’s experiences with health care costs. Main takeaways include:

- Nearly half of U.S. adults say it is difficult to afford health care costs.
- About one-third (36%) of adults say that in the past 12 months they have skipped or postponed getting health care they needed because of the cost.
- The cost of prescription drugs prevents some people from filling prescriptions.

<b>Health Care Affordability</b>			
In general, how easy or difficult is it for you to afford your health care costs?			
	Very/Somewhat easy	Very/Somewhat difficult	
U.S. adults	56%	44%	
Black	50%	49%	
Hispanic	44%	55%	
Asian	57%	43%	
White	61%	39%	
Percent who say, in the past 12 months, they have skipped or postponed getting health care they needed because of the cost:			
U.S. adults	36%		
Black	40%		
Hispanic	43%		
Asian	27%		
White	34%		
Percent who say in the past 12 months, they have done each of the following due to cost:			
	Taken an over-the-counter drug instead of getting a prescription filled	Not filled a prescription for a medicine	Cut pills in half or skipped doses of medicine
U.S. adults	23%	21%	15%
Black	26%	24%	17%
Hispanic	38%	26%	18%
Asian	28%	23%	15%
White	18%	19%	15%
Source: KFF Health Tracking Poll (May 5-26, 2025)			

[AAPI Data/AP-NORC's December 2025 poll](#) also identifies health care costs as a key concern among Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders. 60 percents of AAPIs are extremely or very concerned about their health care costs increasing, while about 4 in 10 are concerned about not being able to access health care when they need it, not being able to pay for health care, or losing health insurance. These concerns mirror those of the general population.

## **Recent Releases**

### [AAPI Adults Identify Priorities and Expectations for 2026](#)

AAPI Data / AP-NORC (January 22, 2026)

This poll conducted in December 2025 explores what Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders identify, in their own words, up to five issues that they would like the government to address in 2026. Much like the [general public](#), AAPI adults cite economic issues like inflation and the cost of living, immigration, and health care as top priorities for the upcoming year.

### [State of Chinese Americans Survey 2025](#)

Committee of 100 & NORC at the University of Chicago (January 21, 2026)

This third annual State of Chinese American survey examines U.S. public views on U.S.-China relations, related domestic policies, and how they affect Chinese Americans. This report, the first of several that will be releasing this year, outlines several stark conclusions on U.S.-China cooperation and the impact of current political rhetoric on this topic on the national level. They include: a bipartisan consensus on desiring increased U.S.-China cooperation (60%), and a majority of Americans (54%) believing that China-related rhetoric by President Donald Trump negatively impacts the treatment of Chinese Americans in the United States.

### [Unleashing Power in New Ways: Immigration in the First Year of Trump 2.0](#)

Migration Policy Institute (January 13, 2026)

Having campaigned on and won re-election with immigration as a top issue, President Trump has advanced sweeping changes to immigration policy since returning to office, unprecedented in their breadth and reach. These changes have made the United States more hostile to unauthorized immigrants while also altering how the government treats immigration and immigrants of all legal statuses and the communities in which they live. This article offers a comprehensive review of the changes to U.S. immigration policy during the first year of the second Trump term.

### [Macroeconomic Implications of Immigration Flows in 2025 and 2026: January 2026 Update](#)

Brookings (January 13, 2026)

The first year of the second Trump administration has seen dramatic changes in immigration policy, resulting in a sharp slowdown in net migration to the United States. Building on work released in late 2024 and mid-2025, Brookings researchers use available data combined with judgment to estimate a range of likely outcomes for net migration for the years 2025 and 2026. They conclude that net migration was likely close to zero or negative over calendar year 2025 and very low or negative for 2026 as

well. Reduced migration will dampen growth in the labor force, consumer spending, and gross domestic product (GDP).

### [Beyond MAGA: A Profile of the Trump Coalition](#)

More in Common (January 2026)

This is a comprehensive segmentation study of 2024 Trump voters. Based on over 18,000 interviews over six survey waves from April 2025 through early January 2026, the study identifies four types of Trump voters, each with distinct values and motivations: MAGA Hardliners, Anti-Woke Conservatives, Mainline Republicans, and the Reluctant Right. These groups share common concerns about illegal immigration, progressive overreach, and American decline, but hold distinct identities, competing priorities, and sometimes clashing worldviews.

### [Social Connection in America: 2025 Survey Report](#)

Barnes Family Foundation (January 2026)

This study is part of a new 25-year research project that plumbs the “loneliness crisis” identified by Biden administration surgeon general Vivek Murthy. Almost four in 10 Americans have two or fewer close relationships, according to the survey, which was conducted by Social Connection in America with funding from the North Carolina-based Barnes Family Foundation. The majority of Americans report that they do not volunteer or attend clubs or religious worship.

### [Baby Boomers Are Turning 80: A closer look at the generation that reshaped America](#)

Brookings Institute (January 7, 2026)

As of January 1, 2026, the nation’s first baby boomers have started to turn 80 years old. During their younger years, baby boomers advanced the causes of civil rights and women’s equality, setting the stage for broader shifts among later generations. They have affected the business world and popular culture in ways that still endure, and represented four U.S. presidents, each serving two terms. This report examines how they compare to both the generations before and after them, as well as how their influence may change in the coming years.

### [Mapping Chinatown: Displacement in Boston, New York City, and Philadelphia](#)

Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (December 2025)

Tracking a decade of demographic and land use changes, this report provides on-the-ground insight into the health of three swiftly changing neighborhoods across the Northeast, the historic Chinatowns of Boston, Manhattan, and Philadelphia. A common theme emerged in both the survey of land uses and conversations with residents, small businesses, and community organizations: Chinatowns are more vulnerable to gentrification and displacement than ever.

### [The New GOP: Survey Analysis of Americans Overall, Today’s Republican Coalition, and the Minorities of MAGA](#)

Manhattan Institute (December 1, 2025)

This recent survey conducted October 15-26, 2025 examines today’s Republican Party and the coalition assembled by Donald Trump in 2024. Nearly 3,000 voters were asked

about a wide range of policy issues, as well as identity politics, populism, conspiracy theories antisemitism, and other forms of racial bias.

The survey findings point to a coalition that is divided into two broad segments: The majority are consistently conservative on economic, foreign policy, and social issues. A sizable minority look markedly different -- younger, more racially diverse, and more likely to have voted for Democratic candidates in the recent past. A significant share reports openly racist or antisemitic views and express potential support for political violence.

### [The Rise of Chinese American Leaders in U.S. Higher Education: Stories and Roadmaps](#)

Editors: Honggang Yang, Wenying Xu  
Springer Cham (December 2023)

This book is a collection of stories and reflections that represent Chinese American leaders and depict their tortuous journeys in U.S. higher education that comes at a critical point in time - a time that not only witnesses an increase in Chinese American leaders on U.S. campuses but also mounting incidents of discriminatory treatment of this group. Being showcased are 36 stories and reflections from past, present, and future leaders who hold different ideological values in various academic fields, positions, stages of careers, professional trajectories, generations, Chinese ethnic groups, and geographical locations.

### **Answer to Quiz**

A recent [study](#) by the Kiel Institute for the World Economy based in Germany reveals that American importers and consumers have borne nearly all the cost of tariffs. Analysis of shipment-level data covering over 25 million transactions valued at nearly \$4 trillion shows that foreign exporters absorb only about 4% of the tariff burden—the remaining 96% is passed through to US buyers. US customs revenue surged by approximately \$200 billion in 2025—a tax paid almost entirely by Americans.

### **ABOUT AAIPP**

The Asian American Institute for Public Policy (AAIPP) is a national, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to advancing equality and full participation for Asian Americans. It works to amplify Asian American voice and thought leadership to address community concerns and to contribute pragmatic solutions to vital social, economic, and political issues in America. Through an inclusive perspective and a politically balanced approach, AAIPP seeks to promote reasoned dialogue and informed policy discourse that is guided by empirical research and critical analysis. [www.aaipp.org](http://www.aaipp.org)  
Contact: Cao K. O, President [cao@aaipp.org](mailto:cao@aaipp.org)