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Years of Polling Show Overwhelming Voter Support for a Crackdown on AI

Any lawmaker aligned with AI and Big Tech is on the wrong side of public opinion.

Public Citizen | November 2025

American voters in both parties overwhelmingly oppose AI's development and deployment, support aggressive regulation or prohibition of AI, and reject efforts to stop state-level regulation of AI, especially to protect kids online. These findings are consistent across [dozens of polls](#) conducted over the past decade – with public opinion turning even more sharply against AI and Big Tech in the last few years, as AI company recklessness and abuses have become more evident. The polls show strong and consistent demand among Democratic, Independent, and Republican voters for a crackdown against Big Tech companies generally and AI specifically.

At President Donald Trump's behest, Congressional Republicans are maneuvering to completely preempt state AI laws with a provision in the must-pass National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), and the White House is preparing an executive order that aims to undermine state AI regulation. Public Citizen opposes both measures.

Across Parties, the Public Agrees AI Must be Regulated

Almost all Americans (97%) Agree That AI Safety and Security Should Be Subject to Rules and Regulations ([Gallup / Special Competitive Studies Project: Sept. 2025](#)).

- 80% of U.S. adults believe the government should maintain rules for AI safety and data security, even if it means developing AI capabilities more slowly. This view is held by 88% of Democrats and 79% of Republicans and Independents.
- More than seven in 10 (72%) say independent experts should conduct safety tests and evaluations of AI products and services.
- Six in 10 Americans distrust AI somewhat (40%) or fully (20%).
- Only 2% of U.S. adults fully trust AI's capability to make fair and unbiased decisions, a figure within the poll's margin of error.

AI is the Industry Americans Most Want to Regulate ([YouGov: Sept. 2024](#)).

- 72% of Americans want more regulation of the AI industry, a 15-point increase since a similar poll a year earlier. This includes 83% of Harris supporters and 66% of Trump supporters.
- Across the 40 industries asked about in the poll, AI is the industry that both Americans in general and Trump supporters specifically are most eager to regulate.

Americans Overwhelmingly Reject the Idea that Competition with China Justifies Leaving AI Unregulated ([Artificial Intelligence Policy Institute: July 2024](#)).

- Three out of four American voters are skeptical of the argument that the U.S. should race ahead to build ever more powerful artificial intelligence, unconstrained by domestic regulations, in an effort to compete with China.
- 75% of Democrats and 75% of Republicans believe that “taking a careful, controlled approach” to AI by preventing the release of tools that terrorists and foreign adversaries could use against the U.S. is preferable to “moving forward on AI as fast as possible to be the first country to get extremely powerful AI.”

Two Thirds of Americans Want AI Regulation ([Center Square Voters' Voice / Noble Predictive Insights: April 2025](#)).

- 64% of registered voters want the government to regulate AI.

On a Bipartisan Basis, Voters Overwhelmingly Favor Candidates Who Support AI Regulation ([Artificial Intelligence Policy Institute: Jan. 2024](#)).

- 76% of voters, including 71% of Republicans, prefer a candidate running in their district who supports regulating AI because the risks it poses are so large.
- 77% of voters, including 75% of Republicans, say government should do more to regulate AI.

By a 6-1 Margin, Americans Reject Tech Industry Self-Regulation of AI Risks ([YouGov / Artificial Intelligence Policy Institute: Aug. 2023](#)).

- 72% percent of voters said they preferred slowing down the development of AI.
- 82% of voters said they don't trust tech company executives to self-regulate, and 56% said they would support a federal agency to regulate AI.

Americans Reject Federal Preemption of State AI Regulation

By a Greater Than 2-1 Margin, Voters Overwhelmingly Reject Federal Preemption of State AI Regulation ([Echelon Insights / Common Sense Media: May 2025](#)).

- Nearly three out of five likely voters oppose a moratorium on state-level AI regulation, including half of Republicans. A majority (53%) of likely voters said they trusted state and local leaders more than politicians in Congress when it comes to regulating AI appropriately.
- By a more than three-to-one margin, voters trust states to regulate AI over the federal government.
- 81% of likely voters agree that Congress should not ban states from enacting or enforcing their own laws when it comes to protecting kids' safety and privacy

online. 87% agree that states should be able to enforce laws and regulations around social media, including requiring warning labels for children.

Americans are Demanding *Stronger* AI Regulation

Americans Overwhelming Support (73%) “Slow, Heavily Regulated” Development of AI ([Future of Life Institute: Oct. 2025](#)).

- 57% of adults reject the development of “expert-level AI” under current conditions; 17% feel it should never be developed; and 40% think it should be halted until proven controllable and safe. Shockingly, only 5% of adults agree that AI should be developed “as quickly as possible.”
- Almost three-in-four Americans support regulation “like pharmaceuticals with extensive testing before deployment.” Two-thirds (64%) of adults would like to see an “immediate pause” on the development of advanced AI until the technology is proven to be safe.

Public Worries About Inadequate AI Regulation ([Pew Research Center: April 2025](#)).

- Both the public and experts worry the U.S. government will not go far enough in regulating AI. About six in ten U.S. adults and 56% of experts surveyed say they’re more concerned about this than about the government going too far.
- Majorities in both parties – 64% of Democrats and 55% of Republicans – are concerned about insufficient AI regulation.
- 59% of the public and 55% of surveyed experts have little or no confidence in U.S. companies to develop and use AI responsibly.

Americans Agree the Country Needs More AI Regulation ([Quinnipiac: April 2025](#)).

- 73% of Americans think that businesses are not doing enough to be transparent about their use of AI.
- 69% of Americans think government is not doing enough to regulate AI.
- 86% of Americans are either very or somewhat concerned about political leaders using AI to distribute fake or misleading information.

Americans Are Worried About AI Risks ([Pew Research Center: Sept. 2025](#))

- A majority of Americans (57%) rate the risks of AI for society as high. Far fewer (25%) see high benefits.

Americans Support a Wide Range of Specific AI Regulations

Americans Support Required Pre-Approval of New AI Technologies ([AI Policy Institute for Transformer: Jan. 2025](#)).

- 73% of Americans support requiring companies to implement safety measures and security standards for advanced AI models, and mandatory pre-deployment approval from a government board that certified companies have properly accounted for extreme risks. Democrats and Republicans gave this proposal identical levels of support.
- Only 7% of Americans want no regulation of AI.

Americans Overwhelmingly Favor Requiring Disclosure of Deepfake Political Ads ([Tech Policy Press / YouGov: Aug. 2024](#)).

- 87% of voters back a disclosure requirement for generative AI in political ads.
- 78% of voters want a ban on deceptive AI-generated content on social media that targets a candidate for federal office with the intent of influencing an election or soliciting funds.
- 77% of voters want candidates for federal office to be able to sue to take down content when their voice or likeness is used in deceptive AI-generated content.

Voters Overwhelmingly Believe in Regulating Deepfakes and the Use of Artificial Intelligence ([Data for Progress / Accountable Tech: Feb. 2024](#))

- 85% of Democrats, 84% of Independents, and 81% of Republicans believe AI companies should be required to label AI-generated content when it's used to influence an election.

Americans Favor Regulation to Protect Creators from AI Training ([Artificial Intelligence Policy Institute: May 2024](#)).

- 60% of respondents said AI companies should not be able to train freely on public data, and nearly three out of four respondents said companies should be required to compensate the creators of that data.
- 78% said there should be regulations on the use of public data to train AI models.
- 61% favored taxing AI companies' high energy use to support and upgrade the electrical grid infrastructure.

There is Massive Public Concern About Impact of AI Chatbots and Companions on Kids ([Echelon Insights / Common Sense Media: May 2025](#)).

- 85% of registered voters are concerned about the effect of AI chatbots and AI companions on kids and teenagers.
- 92% of registered voters are concerned about the impact of deepfakes.
- 93% of registered voters are concerned about kids being exposed to AI-generated sexualized content.

Americans Worried About AI Deployment in Transportation, Job Decisions, Lending Decisions ([Axios / Illinois Institute of Technology: Dec. 2021](#)).

- More than 70% of respondents distrust the use of AI for self-driving buses and airplane autopilot systems.
- 69% percent said they would limit the use of AI for hiring decisions.
- Nearly 60% distrust AI for loan applications and mortgage rates.
- More than seven in ten liberals and conservatives overwhelmingly agree that there should be public or government oversight of the use of algorithms.
- Three-quarters of those polled said tech companies are too big (80% of liberals and 83% of conservatives).
- 81% think the government should be doing more to protect online privacy.

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