



## Cache political parties unite to condemn yard sign thefts

*In a rare joint statement, the Democratic and Republican parties of Cache County have united to condemn a recent rash of stolen and vandalized campaign yard signs.*

October 12, 2020

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Local Republicans and Democrats are uniting to condemn a recent rash of campaign yard signs being stolen from county residents' homes.

It is never okay to disrespect and/or vandalize people's private property by taking and/or destroying signs

"It's one thing to disagree with someone's candidate of choice," according to a joint statement released by GOP County Chairman Chris Booth and Danny Beus, chairman of the Cache Democrats. "But it is never okay to disrespect and/or vandalize people's private property by taking and/or destroying signs."

"Let's continue to show everyone around us why Cache County is the best place to live," the statement continues. "Be respectful, be civil, be kind and, most importantly, be ready to exercise your constitutional right and vote."

The vandalizing of political signage and campaign billboards is by no means strictly a Cache County problem. Similar incidents have been reported throughout Utah and across the country as the November general election approaches. Political scientists and psychologists are suggesting the trend is a form of silent protest by Americans who feel frustrated by their inability to openly express their views due to a climate of political correctness.

A recent national survey by the conservative Cato Institute found that self-censorship is on the rise in the United States. Nearly two-thirds of Americans say the political climate these days prevents them from saying things they believe because others might find them offensive.

The share of Americans who self-censor has increased since 2017 when 58% of Americans reported that they felt social pressure to conceal or downplay their political views.

The Cato survey found that worry about giving offense in face-to-face interactions was felt across the political spectrum. Nearly 77 percent of Republicans say they are reluctant to share

their opinions, along with 59 percent of people who self-identify as independent voters and 52 percent of Democrats.

Only liberal ideologues appear to be immune to such social pressure. Regardless of their political affiliation, nearly 60 percent of staunch liberals say they feel free to unreservedly advocate for their opinions, especially via social media.

The perceived need to self-censor in public also crosses racial lines. The Cato survey found that nearly two-thirds of U.S. Latinos and Whites agreed that the current highly charged political atmosphere prevents them from expressing their true beliefs, along with 49 percent of African-Americans.

The obvious root of these concerns, experts suggest, is political polarization in America.

But Booth and Beus apparently needed no survey to reach that same conclusion.

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“It is no secret that our country is more divided now than in a very long time on numerous issues,” they wrote. “Cache County has been and should continue to be the standard (of public civility) for everyone else!”

The findings of the Cato Institute were based on a survey of 2,000 Americans over 18 years of age polled during early July of this year.