



Majority of Americans afraid to share political views, but staunch liberals feel they can freely express themselves

Paul Sacca

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A majority of Americans are self-censoring and not sharing their political beliefs because they are fearful of the ramifications, according to a new survey from the [Cato Institute](#). Nearly a third of employed Americans fear their political opinions could cost them their jobs or career opportunities.

A Cato Institute/YouGov national survey found that 62% of Americans say the current political climate prevents them from voicing their political convictions because "others might find them offensive." This is up from the [survey](#) taken in 2017 when 58% said they were afraid to share their own political beliefs.

Self-identified Republicans were the highest percentage to practice self-censorship at 77%, followed by independents at 59%, and 52% of Democrats.

Self-identified "strong liberals" were the only ideological group in the country who held a majority in feeling they could freely express themselves. The poll found that 58% of staunch liberals are not afraid to tell others their political beliefs. But even strong liberals are self-censoring themselves more these days — 42% in 2020 compared to 30% in 2017.

There are 32% of employed Americans who are worried that they might lose their job or miss out on career opportunities if their political beliefs were revealed. Broken down by political party, 28% of Democrats, 31% of independents, and 38% of Republicans are concerned their political opinions could harm their career trajectories.

"This suggests that it's not necessarily just one particular set of views that has moved outside of acceptable public discourse," [Emily Ekins](#), research fellow and director of polling at the Cato Institute, wrote. "Instead these results are more consistent with a 'walking on eggshells' thesis that people increasingly fear a wide range of political views could offend others or could negatively impact themselves."

At 51%, young Republicans under the age of 30 are the most concerned about their political opinions hurting their career prospects, compared to 39% of those between the ages of 30 and 44, 34% of those between the age of 45 and 54, and 28% of Republicans between the age of 55 and 64.

Conservatives with the highest levels of education are the most worried about being punished for their political ideology. The survey found that 60% of Republicans with post-graduate degrees are concerned their political views could hurt them at work. That's far higher than post-grad liberals — only 25% are worried their political ideas could negatively affect their careers.

The survey also found that 31% of Americans wanted to use cancel culture tactics and were in favor of terminating a business executive who personally donated to Donald Trump's re-election campaign for president. Support for firing an executive who personally donated to President Trump rises to 50% among strong liberals.

Among everyone, 22% support firing an executive who gave a donation to Joe Biden's presidential campaign. There were 36% of staunch conservatives who are in favor of firing an executive who donated to Biden's presidential campaign.

The Cato Institute/YouGov survey collected 2,000 responses online between July 1-6 from a national sample of U.S. citizens who are age 18 and older.