

Townhall

62% of Americans Censor Their Political Opinions

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July 10, 2021

A new survey discovered that the majority of Americans are hesitant to share their political views due to the current political climate, fearing that peers may find their opinions to be offensive.

The 2020 poll conducted by the [Cato Institute](#), a libertarian think tank, found that 62 percent of Americans self-censor their views to avoid offending others, an increase from 2017, when only 58 percent felt the same way.

Most conservatives and liberals said that they censor themselves. However, the survey found that, while 77 percent of all conservatives refrain from voicing political opinions, there is a larger divide among liberals as only staunch liberals said they were comfortable sharing their views.

While 52 percent of liberals and 64 percent of moderates refrain from political dialogue, only 42 percent of strong liberals said the current political climate stops them from expressing political opinions.

Despite strong liberals being the only group that feels they can voice their beliefs, there was an increase in the group of those who felt pressured to self-censor. The percentage of strong liberals who felt they could share their political views dropped 12 points since 2017.

The share of moderates and conservatives who self-censor saw a 7 point increase from 2017 to 2020. Moderates went from 57 percent to 64 percent while conservatives rose from 70 percent to 77 percent. Strong conservatives are the only ones to have not wavered on their decision to hold back their opinions they only endured a slight increase since 2017, from 76 percent to 77 percent, in respondents saying they refrain from expressing their views.

Nearly a third of Americans, or 32 percent, across ideologies said they were also fearful of their political views impacting their employment opportunities. Of employed Americans, 31 percent of liberals, 30 percent of moderates and 34 percent of conservatives said they were afraid of getting fired from their job or missing out on employment due to their views being known.

Half of the strong liberals surveyed said they would support the firing of a person who privately donated to former President Donald Trump while 36 percent of strong conservatives said they would support the termination of a private donor of President Joe Biden.

The survey conducted by the Cato Institute in collaboration with YouGov surveyed 2,000 American adults during July 1–6, 2020. The margin of error is +/- 2.36 percentage points with a 95% level of confidence.