

## NEW SURVEY FINDS TWO-THIRDS OF AMERICANS DON'T THINK PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN ADDRESSES THEIR MOST IMPORTANT CONCERNS

The issues that matter most to the public overall are health care, Social Security, education, and terrorism. Partisan differences exist in the levels of importance.

**CHICAGO, Sept. 24, 2016** — Americans remain just as frustrated and angry about the election in the last six weeks of the 2016 presidential campaign as they were in May when the primaries were drawing to a close. In the latest national poll conducted by [The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research](#), the public says the campaigns are not addressing their issues and concerns, and that there is too much focus on personal aspects of the candidates and not enough on their qualifications.

The issues that matter most to the public overall are health care, Social Security, education, and terrorism. Priorities differ between parties, however, with Republicans caring more about issues like terrorism and taxes while Democrats are more concerned with health care and the environment.

“Even though interest in the campaign is generally high, a significant proportion of the public feels marginalized by this election,” said [Trevor Tompson](#), director of The AP-NORC Center. “More than a third of Americans don’t hold favorable opinions of either the Democratic or Republican candidate and an overwhelming majority of them tell us they are frustrated by the campaign. With six weeks until the election, many people in this group have tuned out.”

### Some of the poll’s key findings are:

- The public is more inclined to have negative emotions regarding the 2016 presidential election than positive ones. Three-quarters are frustrated and more than half say the campaign is making them feel angry or helpless. In comparison, only 4 in 10 are hopeful, a quarter are excited, and less than 2 in 10 say they are proud.
- Thirty-five percent of Americans do not have a positive view of either Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump. These people are particularly likely to express feelings of frustration, anger and helplessness about the campaign.
- Two-thirds of Americans do not think the presidential campaign is adequately addressing the concerns and the issues that matter most to them. While more than half of the public says coverage of the candidates’ experience and qualifications is getting short shrift, about the same number say there is too much focus on the candidates’ personal qualities.

- While Americans may be unhappy with how the campaign is developing this year, they are not uninterested. Less than 3 in 10 say they are bored by the campaign. Fully 6 in 10 are paying a considerable amount of attention to the campaign so far.
- Top issues among Republicans include terrorism and national security, economic growth, and taxes, with at least 8 in 10 saying each of these are important to them.
- For Democrats, their top priorities include health care, education, and Social Security, also with at least 8 in 10 saying each is important to them.
- The presidential election may be monopolizing the focus of the media, while overlooking other campaigns. Nearly half of Americans say there is not enough media attention being given to down-ticket races in their state, while only a quarter of the public think the media are giving too much attention to those non-presidential campaigns.

### **About the Survey**

This survey was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and with funding from NORC at the University of Chicago. Data were collected using AmeriSpeak Omnibus®. The survey was part of a larger study that included questions about other topics not included in this report. Interviews for this survey were conducted between September 15 and 18, 2016 with adults age 18 and over representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,022 completed the survey—821 via the web and 201 via telephone. The final stage completion rate is 29.6 percent, the weighted household panel response rate is 26.2 percent, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 95.0 percent, for a cumulative response rate of 7.4 percent. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 3.7 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect. The margin of sampling error may be higher for subgroups.

### **About The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research**

The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research taps into the power of social science research and the highest-quality journalism to bring key information to people across the nation and throughout the world.

[www.apnorc.org](http://www.apnorc.org)

The Associated Press (AP) is the essential global news network, delivering fast, unbiased news from every corner of the world to all media platforms and formats. Founded in 1846, AP today is the most trusted source of independent news and information. On any given day, more than half the world's population sees news from AP.

[www.ap.org](http://www.ap.org)

NORC at the University of Chicago is an independent research institution that delivers reliable data and rigorous analysis to guide critical programmatic, business, and policy decisions. Since 1941, NORC has conducted groundbreaking studies, created and applied innovative methods and tools, and advanced principles of scientific integrity and collaboration. Today, government, corporate, and nonprofit clients around the world partner with NORC to transform increasingly complex information into useful



The Associated Press-NORC  
Center for Public Affairs Research

knowledge.

[www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org)

The two organizations have established The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research to conduct, analyze, and distribute social science research in the public interest on newsworthy topics, and to use the power of journalism to tell the stories that research reveals.

### **About AmeriSpeak Omnibus**

AmeriSpeak Omnibus is a once-a-month, multi-client survey using a probability sample of at least 1,000 nationally representative adults age 18 and older. Respondents are interviewed online and by phone from NORC's AmeriSpeak Panel—the most scientifically rigorous multi-client household panel in the United States. AmeriSpeak households are selected randomly from NORC's National Sample Frame, the industry leader in sample coverage. The National Frame is representative of over 99 percent of U.S. households and includes additional coverage of hard-to-survey population segments, such as rural and low-income households, that are underrepresented in other sample frames. More information about AmeriSpeak is available at [AmeriSpeak.norc.org](http://AmeriSpeak.norc.org).

###

**Contact:** For more information, contact Eric Young for NORC at [young-eric@norc.org](mailto:young-eric@norc.org) or (703) 217-6814 (cell); Ray Boyer for NORC at [boyer-ray@norc.org](mailto:boyer-ray@norc.org) or (312) 330-6433; or Paul Colford for AP at [pcolford@ap.org](mailto:pcolford@ap.org).