

Mike Berman's

WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

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* Any statements in this issue of the Watch which are not sourced are mine and identified by “WW”.

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State of the Nation

24% of registered voters say the country is headed in the right direction.
63% of registered voters say the country is on the wrong track.

	<u>Right track</u>	<u>Wrong track</u>
Democrats	43%	35%
Republicans	8%	87%
Independents	18%	71%

[Econ/YouGov 12/21/21]

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Younger U.S. adults are less likely to see big differences between the political parties or to feel well represented by them. Below is an analysis based on how much difference they see.

	<u>A great deal</u>	<u>A fair amount</u>	<u>Hardly any</u>
Total	59%	31%	9%
Ages 18-29	42	43	14
30-49	53	36	11
50-64	64	26	9
65+	77	19	3

84% of Republicans ages 65 and older say the GOP represents the interests of people like them at least somewhat well, compared with 59% of Republicans under 30.

89% of Democrats ages 65 and older say the Democratic Party represents the interests of people like them at least somewhat well compared with 65% of Democrats 18-29 years of age

Overall, younger adults in the United States are less likely than older adults to identify with a party. [PEW 12/7/21]

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54% of American adults are currently proud of the way democracy works in America while 46% are not proud. That represents a significant decline in the number of people who are proud of the way democracy works in the U.S.

In the fall of 2017, 63% were proud while 36% were not proud. And in 2002, 90% of Americans were proud while 9% were not proud. [WP/U of Maryland 12/19/21]

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In December, the Gallup poll asked a representative sample of Americans whether they approve or disapprove of the way each of the following individuals is handling their job. Each person selected is a public official in the Judicial, Congressional, or Executive branch of government.

	<u>App/Disapprove</u>
U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts	60%/34%
Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell	53%/40%
Director of the NIAID Dr. Anthony Fauci	52%/47%
Secretary of State Antony Blinkin	49%/43%
Attorney General Merrick Garland	49%/43%
House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy	46%/49%
Vice President Kamala Harris	44%/54%
Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer	44%/53%
President Joe Biden	43%/51%
Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi	40%/58%
Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell	34%/53%

In this group of leaders, Roberts is the only one who receives majority approval from Republicans 57%, Democrats 55%, and political independents 64%. [Gallup 12/16/21]

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The following are some of the Pew Research Center's most striking research findings over the last year.

44% of non-parents ages 18-49 say it is unlikely they will ever have children.

72% of U.S. Adults (in August) said they personally know someone who has been hospitalized or died from COVID-19. This group includes 82% of Black adults and 78% of Hispanic adults.

In the 2020 presidential election, turnout rose in every state. Minnesota had the highest turnout of any state with 79.4% of estimated eligible voters casting ballots. The lowest turnout state was Oklahoma with 54.8% turnout. 80% of Asian Americans say violence against them in the United States has increased.

Only 17% of Americans believe that democracy in the United States is a good example for other countries to follow.

35% of Republicans have at least some trust in national news organizations, a drop from 70% who had that view in 2016. 78% of Democrats have some trust in national news organizations.

Women in the U.S. are more likely than men to have a four-year college degree – 39% to 37%. Among those aged 25-34, 46% of women as opposed to 36% of men are more likely to have a bachelor’s degree.

78% of Democrats as opposed to 57% of Republicans believe voting is a fundamental right.

29% of Americans are religiously unaffiliated. This is an increase from 16% who had this view in 2007.

For the first time, the number of Americans who identify as white declined between 2010 and 2020.

Only 34% of U.S. adults under the age of 30 now get TV through cable or satellite, down from 65% in 2015. There was an attendant drop of 27 percentage points among those 30 to 49 and a 14-point drop among those 50 to 64. [PEW 12/17/21]

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1.4% of the more than \$82 trillion in US-based assets is managed by firms owned or run by women or people of color. 98.6% of all US-based assets are managed by firms owned or run by white men. [Closing the Gap 12/16/21]

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Voter confidence in the US educational system to prepare students for the future is not strong. Republicans and Independents are much less confident than Democrats in the current system.

	<u>Confident</u>	<u>Not Confident</u>
Republicans	45%	52%
Independents	35	54
Democrats	72	33

[Winning Issues 12/15/21]

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The population of the United States on December 27, 2021 was 333,881,850 and represents 4.25% of the world's population. It is the 3rd largest country in the world (by population). The largest country by population is China with a population of 1,439,333,775 accounting for 18.47% of the population of the world. In second place is India with a population of 1,380,104,385 accounting for 17.70% of the world population.

Of the 10 most populous U.S. states in 2021, six of them shrunk in the year between July 1, 2020 and July 1, 2021; four of them grew.

States that grew: Texas, Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina

States that shrunk: California, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan

The following are the 10 states that have had the largest percentage growth in the year ending on July 1, 2021.

Idaho 2.9%

Utah 1.7%

Montana 1.7%

Arizona 1.4%

South Carolina 1.2%

Delaware 1.2%

Texas 1.1%

Florida 1.0%

Nevada 1.0%

South Dakota .09%

[Census Bureau and other sources]

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95% of American adults use the internet or email, at least occasionally. 44% use it almost constantly while another 42% use it several times a day.

Only 20% of internet users trust Facebook “a great deal or a good amount”

to responsibly handle their personal information and data on their internet activity while 72% trust it “not much or at all.”

The following are the scores for other major internet companies and services.

	<u>Trust a great deal/good amount</u>	<u>Trust not much/not at all</u>
Amazon	53%	40%
Apple	44	40
Google	48	47
Microsoft	43	42
YouTube	35	53
Facebook	20	72
Instagram	19	60
WhatsApp	15	53
TikTok	12	63

64% think the government should do more to regulate how internet companies handle privacy issues, while 34% think the government should not get more involved.

73% believe that email, search, and social networking companies collecting information from their users is “an unjustified use of people’s private information.”
[WP/Schar school 11/4/21]

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When did the various broadcast television networks, start broadcasting?

- NBC – 11/15/1926
- CBS – 9/18/1927
- ABC – 10/12/1943
- PBS – 11/3/1969
- CNN – 6/1/1980
- MSNBC – 7/15/1996
- FOX – 10/7/1996

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The following represent Americans’ main sources for news about politics and government. Each respondent in this survey was able to list multiple sources.

Local TV	39%	Local radio	15%
CNN or CNN.com	28	Facebook	14
NBC	26	NYT	14
ABC or ABCnews.com	26	Wash Post	13
Fox News or Fox News.com	26	Another	
CBS or CBSNews.com	23	newspaper	10
NPR	19	Another TV	
MSNBC	18	network	7
		Other	21

[WP/Univ of Maryland 12/19/21]

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One of the most dramatic findings of the above survey, is that 34% of Americans believe it can be justified for citizens to take violent action against the government. 62% say it is never justified.

54% of adults believe that the protesters who entered the Capitol on January 6, 2021, were mostly violent and 51% believe that the legal punishments of those people were not harsh enough. [WP/Univ of Maryland 12/19/21]

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529 public officials faced recall in 2021 compared to 301 in 2020 and 233 in 2019. 25 recall elections were successful in 2021 compared to 35 in 2020 and 38 in 2019. In 2021 school board members faced more recall elections than any other office type. [Ballotpedia 1/4/22]

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At the start of 2022, 41.7% of Americans (138 million) live in a state with a Republican trifecta. (Trifecta defined as having the top 3 government officials from the same political party.) 34% of Americans (113 million) live in a state with a Democratic trifecta. The remaining 24.3% of Americans (80 million) live in a state with a divided government.

There are 37 trifectas – 23 Republican and 14 Democratic – and 13 states with divided governments. In 1992, there were 19 trifectas – 3 Republican and 16 Democratic. [Ballotpedia 1/7/22]

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In Memorium

Harry Mason Reid Jr.
Born December 2, 1939
Died December 28, 2021

United States Senator 1987 – 2017
Senate Majority Leader – 2007 -2015
Senate Minority Leader – 2015 2017
Chair of the Senate Democratic Caucus 2005 -2017
Senate Minority Whip – 2003 – 2005
Senate Minority Whip January to June 2001
Senate Minority Whip 1999- 2001
Senate Majority Whip 2001 – 2003
Senate Majority Whip Jan 3 - 20, 2001
Member U.S. House of Representatives 1983-1987
Chair of the Nevada Gaming Commission 1977-1981
Lieutenant Governor of Nevada 1971- 1975
Member of the Nevada Assembly 1969 – 1971

Harry Reid was the Senate Majority Leader from 2007 to 2014. Since the position's creation in the 1920s, only two senators held the position longer: Democrats Mike Mansfield of Montana (1961-1976), and Alben W. Barkley of Kentucky (1937-1946).

“Many stories already have been written about the Democratic leader’s legacy – his legislative and political accomplishments; his colorful past as a boxer, gaming commissioner and Capitol Hill police officer; and his quirky habits – like not saying goodbye before hanging up the phone. But this portrait would be incomplete without a few words about Reid’s accomplishments as an employer – most notably his ability to create an environment that supported working parents in an institution that is better known for long, unpredictable hours and a clubby, male-centric culture.

“We were fortunate to enjoy paid time at home with our newborn babies, but as a father of five and grandfather of 19, Reid understood that a generous paid parental-leave policy was neither the starting nor the ending point for a truly family-friendly workplace.” [Previous two paragraphs from the Las Vegas Sun 12/30/21]

A personal note from Mike Berman:

The year was 1974 and I was a volunteer for the Democratic Senate Campaign Committee which was chaired by Nordy Hoffman. (Hoffman, who in college was a pulling guard in front of the 4 Horsemen of Notre Dame, went on to serve as the Sergeant at Arms of the United States Senate from 1975 to 1981.) Marty Franks ran the Committee. The three of us traveled the country running training sessions for Democratic candidates for the United States Senate.

We slipped into Las Vegas, Nevada and did a training session, long before the primary, with Harry Reid who was then engaged in a primary for the U.S. Senate with Maya Miller. Reid was the Lt. Governor at the time.

Miller's campaign manager heard we had been in town and complained loudly. Subsequently, we returned to Nevada to do a duplicate session for the Miller campaign.

Reid won the primary but lost the general election to Paul Laxalt by less than 100 votes.

In that same year, 1974, the three of us did a training session for Patrick Leahy of Vermont, who was elected to the Senate in that year.

Reid was subsequently elected to the Senate in November of 1986.

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Employment

The official BLS seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for December 2021, is 3.9%. That unemployment rate is lower than the 4.2% in November and substantially less than the 6.7% unemployment rate of December 2020.

If one considers the total number of unemployed + those marginally attached to the labor force + those working part-time who want full-time work, the unemployment rate in December was 7.3% down from 7.7% in November and less than 11.7% a year earlier.

The Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) in December is 61.9%, up from 61.8% in November 2021.

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The Demographics of Unemployment for December 2021

Unemployment by Gender (20 years and older)

Women –3.1% (down from last month)

Men –3.0% (down from last month)

Unemployment by Race

White – 3.2% (down from last month)

Black – 7.1% (up from last month)

Hispanic – 4.9% (down from last month)

Asian –3.8% (down from last month)

Unemployment by Education (25 years & over)

Less than high school –5.2% (down from last month)

High School –4.6% (down from last month)

Some college –3.6% (down from last month)

Bachelor’s Degree or higher – 2.1% (down from last month)

In November 2021, 25 states had unemployment rates below the national average of 4.2%. One state had an unemployment rate that was the same as the national average. 26 states, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, had unemployment rates that were above the national average.

The state with the highest unemployment rate in November was Puerto Rico at 7.8%.

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An estimated 4.5 million workers quit or changed in November. This follows 4.2 million people who left or changed jobs in October and 4.4 million who did the same in September. [WP/BLS 1/3/22]

The United States added 6.4 million jobs in 2021. [BLS 1/5/22]

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This and That

Once again, The Washington Post has published the winning submissions to its yearly contest, in which readers are asked to supply alternative meanings for common words. The winners are:

1. Coffee (N.), the person upon whom one coughs.
2. Flabbergasted (adj.), appalled over how much weight you have gained.
3. Abdicate (V.), to give up all hope of ever having a flat stomach.
4. Esplanade (V.), to attempt an explanation while drunk.
5. Willy-nilly (Adj.), impotent.
6. Negligent (Adj.), describes a condition in which you absentmindedly answer the door in your nightgown.
7. Lymph (V.), to walk with a lisp.
8. Gargoyle (N.), olive-flavored mouthwash.
9. Flatulence (N.) emergency vehicle that picks you up after you are run over by a steamroller.
10. Balderdash (N.), a rapidly receding hairline.
11. Testicle (N.), a humorous question on an exam.
12. Rectitude (N.), the formal, dignified bearing adopted by proctologists.
13. Pokemon (N), a Rastafarian proctologist.
14. Oyster (N.), a person who sprinkles his conversation with Yiddishisms.
15. Frisbeetarianism (N.), (back by popular demand): The belief that, when you die, your Soul flies up onto the roof and gets stuck there.
16. Circumvent (N.), an opening in the front of boxer shorts worn by Jewish men.

[Thanks to Ron Liebman]

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A federal appeals court in Boston will not rehear the appeal of Equal Rights Amendment supporters arguing the proposed addition to the U.S. Constitution has been ratified, leaving in place a lower court decision to dismiss their lawsuit for lack of standing and setting it up for a possible Supreme Court review.

The plaintiffs, led by advocacy group Equal Means Equal, are seeking a court order to force U.S. Archivist David Ferriero to publish the would-be 28th Amendment to the Constitution, sent to the states by Congress in 1972.

Ferriero has refused to publish it, relying on a Justice Department legal memo saying the 1979 deadline that Congress had set for states to ratify the ERA is valid and legally binding. The final three states to ratify it—Illinois, Nevada, and Virginia—took ratification votes four decades after the deadline, with Virginia legislators granting their approval in January 2020.

The Boston plaintiffs had asked the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit to rehear their appeal with its full slate of judges, after a three-judge panel of the court ruled against them last June. The appellate court denied that en banc rehearing request in a single paragraph ruling Tuesday. [Source – Jason Berman]

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SUVs' share of the global auto market reached a new high accounting for 45.9% of the total auto sales in 2021. [Mike Allen – Axios PM 12/22/21]

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In a recent survey of Americans commissioned by Axios and the Illinois Institute of Technology...

81% think that the government should be doing more to protect privacy
78% think they are being targeted by online advertisers
80% of liberals and 83% of conservatives think Big Tech companies are too big
71% think there should be public oversight in use of algorithms
69% would limit the use of AI for hiring decisions
60% distrust AI for processing loan applications and setting mortgage rates
56% think we are dependent on smartphones.
31% say they feel anxious without their smartphones.
46% say their friends feel anxious without their smartphones
50% think they're targeted for online ads based on their offline conversations
53% of respondents said the government should be responsible for ensuring competition and more choices in online services.

[Axios Login, YouGov 7/29-8/5/21]

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The top 0.01% of individuals in the world now hold about 11% of the world's wealth. This compares to just over 10% in 2020. [Mike Allen Axios.com 12/7/21]

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Female physicians earn an average of \$2 million - or nearly 25% - less than their male counterparts, over their careers. The gender pay gap was largest among surgical specialists (\$2.5 million) and nonsurgical specialists (\$1.6 million) whereas the difference between men and women in primary care was roughly \$900,000. [Political Pulse 12/7/21]

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The body mass of animals shrank by 98% during the period from 1.5 million years ago to 11,700 years or 10,500 years ago. [Haaretz 12/20/21]

(Haaretz is an Israeli newspaper founded in 1918, making it the longest running newspaper currently in print in Israel, published in Hebrew and English)

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22% of health and fitness clubs (about 9,100 locations) have closed during the pandemic. [Mike/Axios AM 1/2/22]

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Odds and Ends

“President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who held 11 state dinners, famously served King George VI and Queen Elizabeth hot dogs and beer at a 1939 state dinner.” This line was published in the last Washington Watch, and it triggered the following from a Washington Watch reader.

Senator Birch Bayh’s parents - Birch & Leah Bayh - stood outside the British Embassy on June 8, 1939 to catch sight of King George and Queen Elizabeth as it was apparently the “first time a reigning monarch visited the United States”. The temperature rose to 108 degrees that day as the streets were lined with onlookers.

Leah wrote, “The King and Queen rode in an open car with the top laid back. The Queen was dressed in a lovely white organdie dress, wore a large white hat, long white kid gloves and carried a fancy parasol to protect her from the sun. She smiled sweetly and waved to everyone, but the King didn’t smile and looked tired.” [Thanks to Kitty Bayh.]

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The average merino wool sweater will travel 18,000 miles of the course of its production before it reaches a store shelf. [NYT 12/12/21]

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The U.S. Navy is offering free maternity uniforms to pregnant sailors as part of a pilot program offering a “full array” of pregnancy garb through September 2026. The program... is being offered to 400 volunteers from enlisted and officer ranks, *Stars and Stripes* reports... Expectant sailors hoping to join the program will

be chosen on a first come, first-serve basis, and they must return the uniforms when their pregnancy ends. [Daily Beast – Cheat Sheet 12/22/21]

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Barack Obama approved 5.3% of clemency requests, which is the lowest rate of all presidents. [NYT 12/26/21]

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Fifty trans or gender-nonconforming Americans have died by violence in 2021, cementing it as the deadliest year on record for trans people. [NYT 12/26/21]

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GM’s 90-year reign as the best-selling car maker in the U.S. is over. Toyota finally overtook the Detroit giant in 2021. [Quartz Daily Brief 1/5/22]

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A “femtosecond” is one-millionth of one-billionth of a second. [NYT 1/1/22]

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January 6, 1872: Duluth mayor tagged for city’s first speeding ticket

On this day in Duluth in 1872, the *Minnesotan* reported that Mayor Clinton Markell and his party received the first ticket for speeding in Duluth—and possibly in the state. Just weeks earlier the city government had passed an ordinance making it illegal for those on horseback or in a horse-powered wagon to cross over the Lake Avenue Viaduct, which carried traffic over the railroad tracks south of Michigan Street, faster than a “walk.” On January 1, 1872, Markell—along with former mayor J. B. Culver, town of Duluth founder William Nettleton (whom Markell had defeated in the mayoral election), County Attorney (and future mayor and district court judge) J. D. Ensign, and two others—hired a four-horse sleigh from Pratt & Co. to take them about the city making “calls” on their fellow citizens.

A teamster named Trowbridge was at the reigns, and his team “got into a ‘tantrum’” while crossing the bridge, which “propelled them over it a good deal faster than a ‘walk.’” The spectacle was witnessed by “that indefatigable police officer” Thompson, who made a complaint against Trowbridge the next day. The driver and his employer were fined a total of \$8, and according to the newspaper,

“every man in the sleigh cheerfully ‘forked’ over his share of the penalty”. [Source – WW/Mike Berman, born and raised in Duluth]

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Quotes

Rudeness begets rudeness. Disrespect begets disrespect. And when someone like Musk ignores the societal obligation his wealth and success have granted him, it sets a terrible example for those who look up to him. [Chris Cillizza 12/15/21]

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“The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched – They must be felt with the heart.”

Hellen Keller

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P.S. Six out of seven ain’t bad. Depends on which six.

P.P.S. The Scottish word for the last day of the old year is Hogmanay. And here I thought the word described Congressional deliberations. [Source – Gerry Kauvar]

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“Liz Cheney...is now persona non grata in the GOP because she is willing to defend the Constitution and the rule of law...When Liz Cheney is more despised in the party than...Donald Trump Jr., you know that the GOP has lost its moral bearings.”

Bill Kristol

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Quotes by Mother Teresa

“If we really want to love, we must learn how to forgive.”

“I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things.”

“The hunger for love is much more difficult to remove than the hunger for bread.”

“What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight; build it anyway.”

“I go of my free choice, with the blessing of obedience.”

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George Washington’s Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior

“The gestures of the body must be suited to the discourse you are on.”

“Do not puff up the cheeks; loll not out the tongue, rub the hands, or beard, thrust out.”

“Shake not the head, feet, or legs; roll not the eyes; lift not one eyebrow higher than the other; wry not the mouth; and bedew no man’s face with your spittle by approaching too near him when you speak.”

“If anyone come to speak to you while you are sitting, stand up, though he be your inferior; and when you present seats, let it be to everyone according to his degree.”

“When you meet with one of greater quality than yourself, stop, and retire, especially if it be a door or any straight place to give way for him to pass.”

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President Biden

Regardless of whom they supported in the 2020 election. 69% of adults think that Biden’s election was legitimate while 29% believe it was not legitimate.

In 2017, 57% saw Trump’s election as legitimate while 85% saw Barack Obama’s election as being legitimate. In 2001, 62% saw the election of President Bush as being legitimate.

68% believe there is no solid evidence that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 election. [WP/U of Maryland 12/19/21]

(The following is based on registered voters unless indicated otherwise.)

President Biden's job approval ratings

<u>Date</u>	<u>NBC</u>	<u>WP/ABC</u>	<u>CNN</u>	<u>FOX</u>	<u>QUINNIPIAC</u>
DEC'21	xxx	xxx	48/52	47/51	xxx
NOV'21	xxx	xxx	45/54	xxx	xxx
NOV'21	xxx	38/57	48/52	44/54	38/53
OCT'21	45/52	xxx	xxx	xxx	40/51
OCT'21	xxx	xxx	50/50	46/53	40/53
SEPT'21	xxx	xxx	xxx	50/49	44/50
SEPT'21	XXX	44/51A	52/48	XXX	XXX
AUG'21	49/48A	xxx	xxx	53/46	47/44
JULY'21	CNBC	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
JULY'21	48/45A	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
JUNE'21	xxx	xxx	xxx	56/43	xxx
MAY'21	xxx	xxx	xxx	54/42	49/41
APR'21	51/43	52/42	52/45	54/43	48/42

<u>Date</u>	<u>AP-NORC</u>	<u>ECON/YOUGOV</u>	<u>POL/MORNCON</u>
JAN '22	xxx	43/51	xxx
DEC'21	xxx	42/50	xxx
DEC'21	xxx	43/51	43/53
DEC'21	xxx	42/53	46/51
NOV'21	xxx	44/50	xxx
NOV'21	xxx	43/51	44/53
NOV'21	xxx	45/49	46/51
OCT'21	xxx	xxx	45/52
OCT'21	xxx	42/51	46/51
OCT'21	xxx	44/49	45/52
SEPT'21	50/49	46/48	47/50
SEPT'21	xxx	43/52	XXX
AUG'21	xxx	47/46	47/49
AUG'21	54/46	48/46	50/48
AUG'21	xxx	47/47	51/46
AUG'21	xxx	49/44	52/46
JULY'21	59/41	49/45	52/45
JULY'21	xxx	50/43	52/44
JUNE'21	55/44	52/44	53/44
	xxx	51/43	52/43
MAY'21	xxx	52/42	55/41
APR'21	63/36 A	xxx	xxx

As of January 1, 2022, the following is Biden’s approval rating based on Real Clear Politics:

	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>	
Over all	42.9%	53.5%	1/2/22
On the economy	40.3%	55.3 %	12/21
On foreign policy	41.0%	52.5%	12/20

Gallup now does monthly or semi-monthly surveys of all adults. WW will include a periodic polling summary—Registered and Likely Voters—by FiveThirtyEight.

Gallup (All Adults)			FiveThirtyEight (Reg/Likely voters)	
<u>Date</u>	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>
12/16/21	43%	51%	43.7%	50.7%
11/16/21	42%	55%	42.8%	51.7%
10/19/21	42%	52%	44.1%	49.9%
9/17/21	43%	53%	45.7%	48.8%
8/17/21	49%	48%	48.5%	45.9%
6/18/21	56%	42%	51.8%	42.4%
5/18/21	54%	40%	52.7%	40.7%
4/21/21	57%	40%	53.4%	40.1%
3/15/21	54%	42%	53.8%	40.2%
2/18/21	56%	40%	54.4%	37.8%

Vice President Harris has an approval/disapproval rate among adults of 41.3% approval and a disapproval rate 50.4%.

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Other elected presidents’ approval ratings in December of their first year in office.

	<u>Approval</u>	
Joe Biden	43%	December 2021
Donald Trump	35	December 2017
Barack Obama	51	December 2009
George W. Bush	86	December 2001
Bill Clinton	54	December 1993
George H.W. Bush	71	December 1989
Ronald Reagan	49	December 1981

Jimmy Carter	57	December 1977
Richard Nixon	59	December 1969

[Gallup]

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Judges Nominated and Confirmed to Date

President Biden has been able to affect the federal judiciary early. This is the most Article III judicial nominees confirmed through this point in all presidencies since 1981 when Ronald Reagan appointed the same number in his first year. Going back as far as Franklin Delano Roosevelt the only President to have confirmed more judges in his first year in office was John Kennedy who had 58 judges confirmed in his first year as president.

As of December 18, 2021, 40 judges nominated by Biden have been confirmed, 11 to the Courts of Appeals, and 29 to the District Courts.

There are currently an additional 65 vacancies in Article III courts, 3 in the U.S. Courts of Appeals, 62 in the U.S. District Courts, and 2 in the in the U.S. Courts of International Trade.

President Biden has nominated an additional 31 individuals, 26 to the district, and 5 to the circuit courts, and has announced the names of two people that he plans to nominate U.S. Courts of Appeals.

Among Biden’s nominees are the first LGBTQ woman to serve on any federal circuit, the first Muslim American federal judge in history, and the first Korean American woman to serve as a federal appellate judge.

The chart below reflects the number of Article III court judges appointed by every U.S. president since Jimmy Carter.

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Supreme Ct</u>	<u>Appeals Ct</u>	<u>District Ct</u>	<u>Int’l Trade</u>
Biden – 11 months	40	0	11	29	
Trump – 4 years	234	3	54	174	3
Obama – 8 years	325	2	55	268	
GW Bush – 8 years	325	2	62	261	
Clinton – 8 years	373	2	66	305	
GHW Bush – 4 years	192	2	42	148	

Reagan – 8 years	376	4	83	290
Carter – 4 years	261	0	59	203

[USCourts/Wikipedia/List of federal judges appointed by Joe Biden]

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There are roughly 4,000 politically appointed positions in the executive branch and independent agencies including more than 1,200 that require Senate confirmation.

The Washington Post and the Partnership for Public Service are tracking 801 of those 1200 positions.

266 have been confirmed by the Senate.

171 nominees are being considered by the Senate.

22 picks are awaiting formal nomination.

141 positions have no Biden nominee.

201 appointees are serving in termed positions or were held over from previous administrations.

Compared to nominees confirmed by this date, by recent presidents Biden is running in 3rd place; Bush – 403, Obama 383, Biden 266, Trump 238.

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The following are the favorability ratings for a variety of political leaders based on the Real Clear Politics averages for 12/21/2021.

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
Joe Biden	42.3	52.4
Donald Trump	40.9	51.8
Kamala Harris	39.7	52.7
Nancy Pelosi	33.1	57.9
Chuck Schumer	31.2	45.6
Kevin McCarthy	23.3	42.3
Mitch McConnell	22.8	59.2

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2022 Election

64% of Americans are confident that votes across the country will be counted accurately and 65% believe that all eligible citizens will have a fair opportunity to vote.

On the other hand, 36% of Americans are less confident that votes will be counted accurately and 34% are less confident that all eligible citizens will have a fair opportunity to vote. [WP/U of Md/12/19/21]

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The president's party usually loses House seats in the mid-term elections. Starting with the 1946 election, the president's party lost seats in 17 of the election years (GOP-9/Dem-8) and gained seats in 2 of the election years. (GOP+1/Dem +1)

The president's party loses Senate seats in the mid-term elections but not in as many election years as are lost in the House. Starting with 1946, the president's party lost seats in 13 of the election years (GOP – 6/Dem – 7) gained seats in 4 of the election years (GOP +3/Dem +1) and were even in 2 of the election years. [FiveThirtyEight 1/3/22]

On average, since the Truman Era, the president's party loses more than 29 House seats in his first midterm election. In 2022, the Republicans need to pick up only 5 seats to win back the House.

Here are the incumbent president's House losses or gains starting with the 1990 election.

2018 – Trump -40
2010 – Obama – 63
2002 – Bush +8
1994 – Clinton – 54
1990 – Bush -8

In the 7 times when the president's job-approval rating was below 50 percent, his party lost an average of 43 House seats. (Stay tuned) [NBC- First Read 1/3/22]

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The 117th Congress

Congress

Approval of the Congress in 2021 peaked in August and has basically continued downward since then.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
Real Clear Pol. 12/21/21	23%	65.8%
Real Clear Pol. 11/30/21	22.2%	68.6%
Real Clear Pol. 10/12/21	25.0%	65.8%
Real Clear Pol. 9/1/21	28.5%	60.3%
Real Clear Pol. 8/3/21	31.4%	59.6%
Real Clear Pol. 6/15/21	28.8%	60.5%
Real Clear Pol. 5/18/21	35%	56.3%
Real Clear Pol. 5/4/21	36.3%	55.5%
Real Clear Pol. 4/6/21	34.3%	57.0%
Real Clear Pol. 3/2/21	29.7%	60.0%
Real Clear Pol. 2/22/21	26.3%	60.0%
Real Clear Pol. 1/5/21	18.7%	70.3%

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THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Washington Watch uses the Cook Political Report for its report on elections in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Currently:

Democrats - 221 seats

Republicans - 213 seats

Vacancies - 1 seat

FL – 20, special election 1/11/22 – Dem Seat

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As of December 21, 2021, there are currently 36 seats in which incumbents have announced they are not running for re-election because they are either running for another office or retiring. 11 of those seats are currently held by Republicans and 25 by Democrats.

Four Republican members of the House and five Democratic members of the House are running for the U.S. Senate. One Democratic member of the House and one Republican member of the House are running for governor.

One Republican member and one Democrat member are running for attorney general. One Democrat is running for mayor and one Republican is running for Secretary of State.

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THE SENATE

[WW uses Jessica Taylor of the Cook Political Report and Inside Elections for the Senate chart below. When those two organizations do not agree, WW uses Sabato as a tie breaker.]

Republicans – 50
 Democrats – 48
 Independents – 2

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Independent</u>
Seats not up in 2022	34	30	2
Safe in 2022	10	16	
	Padilla	Murkowski	
	Bennet	AL – open	
	Blumenthal	Boozman	
	Schatz	Grassley	
	Duckworth	Crapo	
	Van Hollen	Young	
	Schumer	Moran	
	Wyden	Paul	
	OPEN (Leahy)	Kennedy	
	Murray	MO – open	
		OH – Open	
		Hoeven	
		Lankford	
		Scott	
		Thune	
		Lee	
Likely	0	1	

		Rubio
Lean	1	2
	Hasan	NC - open
		PA - open
Toss Up	3	
	Masto	1
	Warnock	Johnson
	Kelly	

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2024 Election

The following people have indicated or been commonly named as someone thinking about or planning to run for president in 2024, some only if Biden decides not to run for re-election.

For the Republican nomination

Donald Trump

Kristi Noem – Governor of South Dakota

Nikki Haley – Former governor of South Carolina (Announced she will not run if Trump runs)

Mike Pompeo – Former Secretary of State

Larry Hogan – Governor of Maryland

Ben Sasse – U.S. Senator

Ron DeSantis – Governor of Florida

Tom Cotton – U.S. Senator

Josh Hawley – U.S. Senator

Rick Scott – U.S. Senator

Ted Cruz – U.S. Senator

Tim Scott – U.S. Senator

Mike Pence – Former Vice President

Chris Christie – Former Governor New Jersey

For the Democrat nomination if Biden does not run

Kamala Harris – Vice President

Pete Buttigieg – Secretary of Transportation

Elizabeth Warren – U.S. Senator

Amy Klobuchar – U.S. Senator

Roy Cooper – Governor of North Carolina

Mitch Landrieu – former Mayor of New Orleans (now working to implement infrastructure bill)
Gina Raimondo – Secretary of Commerce, former Governor of Rhode Island
Gretchen Whitmer – Governor of Michigan
Phil Murphy – Governor of New Jersey
J.B. Pritzker – Governor of Illinois
Stacey Abrams – currently running for Governor of Georgia
(Bob Iger who had announced that he was thinking of running for President has announced that he is not going to run for President.)

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Women Will Get It Done

The U.S. Senate extended Jessica Rosenworcel’s tenure at the Federal Communications Commission, elevating her from acting chair to permanent chair and making her the first woman to ever hold the post. [Public Policy Law360 12/7/21]

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Nassau County (New York) Chief of Detectives has nominated Keechant Sewell to be the first female and third Black Commissioner of the New York Police Department. [NPR 12/15/21]

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Starting in January the city of Las Cruces, New Mexico will have women representing all six of its city council district seats. [The 19th 12/12/21]

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Christine Wormuth is the first woman Secretary of the Army [USAToday 5/27/21]

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Amy Schneider, a Jeopardy champion, is the first woman and 4th person to win more than \$1 million. [1/8/22]

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Rachel Balkovec is the first female manager of a minor league baseball team. She will be the manager of the Low-A Tarpons, next season. The team is part of the New York Yankees organization. She has been part of the Yankee organization since 2019 as a minor league hitting coach. [People 1/10/22]

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WW Recommends Books & Other Things

In this feature of the Washington Watch, WW will primarily recommend books you may find interesting but may also now and then mention a TV program or other things. I welcome your suggestions and your input. What have you been reading or watching that you think WW readers might like?

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Black Ballerinas: My Journey to our Legacy
Misty Copeland (Author)
Salena Barnes (Illustrator)

From *New York Times* bestselling and award-winning author and American Ballet Theatre principal dancer Misty Copeland comes an illustrated nonfiction collection celebrating dancers of color who have influenced her on and off the stage.

As a young girl living in a motel with her mother and her five siblings, Misty Copeland didn't have a lot of exposure to ballet or prominent dancers. She was sixteen when she saw a black ballerina on a magazine cover for the first time. The experience emboldened Misty and told her that she wasn't alone—and her dream wasn't impossible.

In the years since, Misty has only learned more about the trailblazing women who made her own success possible by pushing back against repression and racism with their talent and tenacity. Misty brings these women's stories to a new generation of readers and gives them the recognition they deserve.

With an introduction from Misty about the legacy these women have had on dance and on her career itself, this book delves into the lives and careers of women of color who fundamentally changed the landscape of American ballet from the early 20th century to today

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Momofuku: A Cookbook
David Chang, Author

David Chang The founder of Momofuku cooks at home . . . and that means mostly ignoring recipes, using tools like the microwave, and taking inspiration from his

mom to get a great dinner done fast.

David Chang came up as a chef in kitchens where you had to do everything the hard way. But his mother, one of the best cooks he knows, never cooked like that. Nor did food writer Priya Krishna's mom. So Dave and Priya set out to think through the smartest, fastest, least meticulous, most delicious, absolutely imperfect ways to cook.

From figuring out the best ways to use frozen vegetables to learning when to ditch recipes and just taste and adjust your way to a terrific meal no matter what, this is Dave's guide to substituting, adapting, shortcutting, and sandbagging—like pancooking chicken in a microwave before blasting it with flavor in a four-minute stir-fry or a ten-minute stew.

It's all about how to think like a chef . . . who's learned to stop thinking like a chef

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Call Us What We Carry: Poems

Amanda Gorman, Author

The instant #1 *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *USA Today* bestseller

The breakout poetry collection by #1 *New York Times* bestselling author and presidential inaugural poet Amanda Gorman

Formerly titled *The Hill We Climb and Other Poems*, the luminous poetry collection by #1 *New York Times* bestselling author and presidential inaugural poet Amanda Gorman captures a shipwrecked moment in time and transforms it into a lyric of hope and healing. In *Call Us What We Carry*, Gorman explores history, language, identity, and erasure through an imaginative and intimate collage. Harnessing the collective grief of a global pandemic, this beautifully designed volume features poems in many inventive styles and structures and shines a light on a moment of reckoning. *Call Us What We Carry* reveals that Gorman has become our messenger from the past, our voice for the future

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Who Are Your People
Hardcover – Picture Book

Bakari Sellers – Author
Reggie Brown - Illustrator

This inspiring picture book by *New York Times* bestselling author Bakari Sellers is a tribute to the family and community that help make us who we are. Perfect for sharing and gifting.

When you meet someone for the first time, they might ask, "Who are your people?" and "Where are you from?"

Children are shaped by their ancestors, and this book celebrates the village it takes to raise a child.

In the vein of *I Am Enough* and *Eyes That Kiss in the Corners*, this powerful picture book with beautiful illustrations by Reggie Brown is a joyful recognition of the people and places that help define young readers and adults alike.

Don't miss this picture book debut from Bakari Sellers, author of the acclaimed *New York Times* bestseller *My Vanishing Country: A Memoir*

Mike

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