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Donald Trump

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# Trump pivots to distractions as polls show collapsing support for his agenda | Opinion

*Americans give Trump a failing grade on the budget, trade and immigration. That's tough to swallow for a politician who gauges everything on public perception.*



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## Key Points AI-assisted summary

Recent polling data indicates that the majority of Americans disapprove of President Trump's budget bill, particularly its cuts to Medicaid.

Trump's immigration policies, including increased ICE raids, are facing declining public support.

The president's trade policies are also unpopular, with a majority of Americans disapproving of his approach.

Trump's overall job approval rating has fallen since he took office, with more Americans disapproving than approving of his performance.

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Donald Trump's plan for his second term as president has been to run the table quickly to score one quick and big budget victory pushed through on artificial deadlines and whip the vote for Republican support in Congress.

Trump paired that objective with two other staples of his reelection campaign – punishing America's allies with illogical trade wars and setting a historical record for the economy-disrupting mass deportation of undocumented immigrants.

It's summer now, and the report card has arrived. Americans give Trump a failing grade on the budget, trade and immigration. That's tough to swallow for a politician who gauges everything on public perception.

Trump, being Trump, is now [pivoting to distractions](#), touting a military parade that flopped as [an expensive boondoggle](#) and then flipping from diplomacy with Iran to [potentially ordering air strikes](#) on that country.

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## Americans disapprove of budget bill slashing Medicaid

Let's start with Trump's budget, which Republican leaders in Congress call the "[one big, beautiful bill](#)" in honor of their continuing deference to whatever he wants and the dereliction of their duty to serve as a coequal branch of our government.

The version that narrowly passed the House [slashed federal safety net programs](#) to boost tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans. Some senators, seeking to make things even better for the rich at the expense of the poor, [want bigger cuts to Medicaid, food stamps](#) and other programs.

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A batch of recent polls shows Americans reject that:

A [June 11 Quinnipiac University poll](#) found that 53% of American voters oppose the budget bill, while 27% approve it. Nearly half of the voters polled said funding for Medicaid should go up, not down, while 40% said it should stay the same and just 10% wanted it cut.

A [June 16 Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research](#) poll found that 50% of Americans think we spend too little on Medicaid, while 31% say we spend enough and just 18% say we spend too much. Forty-five percent of Americans think we should spend more on food and nutrition assistance, while 30% say we spend enough and 24% say we spend too much.

A [June 17 KFF Health Tracking Poll](#) found that 64% of Americans hold an unfavorable view of Trump's budget bill, while 83% of them hold a favorable view of Medicaid. Republican support for the bill came in strong at 61% at first, but

then dropped by 20 points when the Republicans polled heard details about how the legislation would force millions off their health care plans.

## **Polling finds Americans disagree with Trump on immigration, economy, border security**

This much seems clear: The more Americans learn about Trump's [One Big Beautiful Bill Act](#), the more they find it small-minded and ugly.

That explains the artificial deadlines.

Trump and his Republican allies in Congress [want to wrap this up by July 4](#). But Republican infighting – moderates who fear it goes too far, far-righters who complain it doesn't go far enough – will make for a contentious Congress for at least the next two weeks.

While we wait, Trump is seeing his support on immigration – once his strongest issue – melt away in the summer of Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids. The [Quinnipiac University poll](#) found 54% of the registered voters surveyed opposed his approach to immigration, while 43% approve and 3% had no opinion.

Trump [campaigns in 2024 on reviving America's economy](#). But his trade wars, which have hit our country's international allies just as hard or harder than our geopolitical foes, are unpopular. Quinnipiac found that just 38% approve of Trump's trade policy, while 57% disapprove and 6% had no opinion.

The [AP-NORC poll](#) found that 32% of Americans think we spend too much on border security, while 37% think we spend the right amount and 29% think we spend too little.

## **Trump's approval rating continues to tank. Does it matter?**

In this time of divisiveness, a majority of Americans can agree on one thing: Trump is disappointing them as president. Just 38% of the votes surveyed by Quinnipiac approve of Trump's job performance, while 54% disapprove.

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That tracks with a [Pew Research Center poll](#) released June 17, which found that 41% of those polled approve of Trump's performance while 58% disapprove.

Pew noted that Trump [has lost ground in his approval rating](#) since he was sworn into office again on Jan. 20.

Don't expect Trump to spend too much time worrying about what Americans tell pollsters. He has a long history of [touting polls when they hold good news](#) for him and dismissing them when they don't. He also [suggested just before the 2024 election](#) that releasing poll results he didn't like "should be illegal."

Here's what you can expect: more distractions from Trump as the Republicans fight it out on which version of his budget bill passes or fails in Congress. If they listened to Americans, they would kill the bill and start from scratch.

*Follow USA TODAY columnist Chris Brennan on X, formerly known as Twitter: [@ByChrisBrennan](#). Sign up for his weekly newsletter, [Translating Politics](#), [here](#).*