

National Speech Index: July 2026 Topline Results

When it comes to whether people are able to freely express their views do you think things in America are heading in the RIGHT or WRONG direction?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Heading in the RIGHT direction	325	32
Heading in the WRONG direction	675	68

The First Amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution more than 225 years ago. This is what it says: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

Based on your own thoughts about the First Amendment, can you tell us what you think about the following statement: “The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.”

Response	Frequency	Percent
Does not describe my thoughts at all	546	55
Slightly describes my thoughts	77	8
Somewhat describes my thoughts	170	17
Mostly describes my thoughts	112	11
Describes my thoughts completely	95	10

How secure do you think the right to freedom of speech is in America today?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all secure	132	13
Not very secure	314	31
Somewhat secure	372	37
Very secure	127	13
Completely secure	54	5

How worried, if at all, are you about losing your job because someone complains about something you have said?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all worried	370	37
Not too worried	252	25
Slightly worried	170	17
Somewhat worried	124	12
Very worried	85	8

Think specifically about your life and all the interactions you have had in the past month. How often have you watched what you said – that is, possibly censored your comments, questions, or words?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Never	202	20
Rarely, once or twice	246	25
Occasionally, a handful of times	323	32
Fairly often, a couple times a week	145	15
Very often, nearly every day	84	8

How important, if at all, is it for governments to protect your free speech when regulating use of artificial intelligence to express ideas?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not important at all	32	3
Not that important	37	4
Somewhat important	294	29
Very important	276	28
Extremely important	361	36

How concerned, if at all, are you ...

About your use of AI?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all concerned	247	25
Not very concerned	289	29
Somewhat concerned	234	23
Very concerned	118	12
Extremely concerned	112	11

About the government's role in regulating your speech that involves the use of AI?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all concerned	121	12
Not very concerned	181	18
Somewhat concerned	326	33
Very concerned	222	22
Extremely concerned	150	15

That laws restricting use of AI-generated content could discourage you from sharing content on social media?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all concerned	251	25
Not very concerned	251	25
Somewhat concerned	276	28
Very concerned	130	13
Extremely concerned	92	9
(Missing)	1	0

That laws restricting AI-generated content could be used by government officials to suppress your criticism of elected officials?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all concerned	102	10
Not very concerned	196	20
Somewhat concerned	288	29
Very concerned	219	22
Extremely concerned	194	19
(Missing)	1	0

About laws that would prohibit you from using AI to alter a photo or video as part of a parody or satire?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all concerned	195	19
Not very concerned	297	30
Somewhat concerned	268	27
Very concerned	148	15
Extremely concerned	93	9

About laws that would overly restrict your AI usage instead of holding individuals accountable for harmful actions they commit?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all concerned	136	14
Not very concerned	204	20
Somewhat concerned	327	33
Very concerned	201	20
Extremely concerned	132	13

About government pressure on AI developers to weaken or remove safeguards for the purpose of domestic surveillance or autonomous weapon systems?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all concerned	72	7
Not very concerned	145	14
Somewhat concerned	291	29
Very concerned	235	24
Extremely concerned	258	26

About your AI queries, interactions, and usage of AI systems being tracked or incorporated into a government database?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all concerned	114	11
Not very concerned	123	12
Somewhat concerned	294	29
Very concerned	252	25
Extremely concerned	218	22

How comfortable, if at all, do you feel sharing your thoughts about the following topics without fear of reprimand?

Race in America

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all comfortable	129	13
Not very comfortable	218	22
Somewhat comfortable	375	37
Very comfortable	279	28

Transgender rights

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all comfortable	187	19
Not very comfortable	242	24
Somewhat comfortable	303	30
Very comfortable	267	27

Transgender treatment for minors

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all comfortable	209	21
Not very comfortable	224	22
Somewhat comfortable	305	30
Very comfortable	262	26

Abortion rights

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all comfortable	127	13
Not very comfortable	222	22
Somewhat comfortable	335	34
Very comfortable	316	32

The Israeli/Palestinian conflict

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all comfortable	142	14
Not very comfortable	313	31
Somewhat comfortable	312	31
Very comfortable	232	23

War in Iran

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all comfortable	147	15
Not very comfortable	225	23
Somewhat comfortable	339	34
Very comfortable	289	29

Immigration and Customs Enforcement operations

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all comfortable	148	15
Not very comfortable	228	23
Somewhat comfortable	339	34
Very comfortable	285	28

How much, if at all, does the following statement describe your thoughts: “Words can be violence.”

Response	Frequency	Percent
Describes my thoughts completely	137	14
Mostly describes my thoughts	176	18
Somewhat describes my thoughts	316	32
Slightly describes my thoughts	143	14
Does not describe my thoughts at all	227	23

How much of a problem, if at all, is the lack of ideological diversity in higher education?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not a problem at all	156	16
Very small problem	269	27
Somewhat serious problem	385	38
Very serious problem	191	19