

National Speech Index: January 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	273	27
Heading in the WRONG direction	727	73

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	534	53
Slightly describes my thoughts	81	8
Somewhat describes my thoughts	167	17
Mostly describes my thoughts	100	10
Describes my thoughts completely	119	12

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

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all secure	201	20
Not very secure	338	34
Somewhat secure	297	30
Very secure	129	13
Completely secure	36	4

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	450	45
Not too worried	201	20
Slightly worried	158	16
Somewhat worried	113	11
Very worried	78	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	198	20
Rarely, once or twice	279	28
Occasionally, a handful of times	318	32
Fairly often, a couple times a week	122	12
Very often, nearly every day	84	8

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

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not important at all	35	4
Not that important	49	5
Somewhat important	317	32
Very important	310	31
Extremely important	289	29

In the following questions, “AI” refers to artificial intelligence. How concerned, if at all, are you ...

About people’s everyday use of AI?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all concerned	100	10
Not very concerned	187	19
Somewhat concerned	307	31
Very concerned	188	19
Extremely concerned	219	22

About the government’s role in regulating human expression that involves the use of AI?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all concerned	101	10
Not very concerned	179	18
Somewhat concerned	372	37
Very concerned	207	21
Extremely concerned	141	14

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

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all concerned	258	26
Not very concerned	269	27
Somewhat concerned	276	28
Very concerned	110	11
Extremely concerned	85	8
(Missing)	1	0

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

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all concerned	113	11
Not very concerned	147	15
Somewhat concerned	331	33
Very concerned	210	21
Extremely concerned	198	20

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

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all concerned	232	23
Not very concerned	250	25
Somewhat concerned	264	26
Very concerned	140	14
Extremely concerned	114	11

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

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all concerned	132	13
Not very concerned	188	19
Somewhat concerned	363	36
Very concerned	192	19
Extremely concerned	124	12

How much confidence, if any, do you have that the Supreme Court will protect your First Amendment rights?

Response	Frequency	Percent
No confidence at all	181	18
Very little confidence	271	27
Some confidence	330	33
Quite a lot of confidence	168	17
My full confidence	49	5

How much confidence, if any, do you have that Gavin Newsom will protect your First Amendment rights?

Response	Frequency	Percent
No confidence at all	342	34
Very little confidence	192	19
Some confidence	266	27
Quite a lot of confidence	120	12
My full confidence	79	8

How much confidence, if any, do you have that Donald Trump will protect your First Amendment rights?

Response	Frequency	Percent
No confidence at all	473	47
Very little confidence	119	12
Some confidence	145	15
Quite a lot of confidence	113	11
My full confidence	149	15