

Conservative vs. Liberal Beliefs

We all want the same things in life. We want freedom; we want the chance for prosperity; we want as few people suffering as possible; we want healthy children; we want to have crime-free streets. The argument is how to achieve them...

Liberals believe in government action to achieve equal opportunity and equality for all. It is the duty of the government to alleviate social ills and to protect civil liberties and individual and human rights. Believe the role of the government should be to guarantee that no one is in need. Liberal policies generally emphasize the need for the government to solve problems.

Conservatives believe in personal responsibility, limited government, free markets, individual liberty, the rule of law, traditional American values and a strong national defense. Believe the role of government should be to provide people the freedom necessary to pursue their own goals. Conservative policies generally emphasize empowerment of the individual to solve problems.

NOTE: The terms “left” and “right” define opposite ends of the political spectrum. In the United States, liberals are referred to as the left or left-wing and conservatives are referred to as the right or right-wing. On the U.S. political map, blue represents the Democratic Party (which generally upholds liberal principles) and red represents the Republican party (which generally upholds conservative principles).

THE ISSUES

(In alphabetical order)

Abortion

Liberal

A woman has the right to decide what happens with her body. A fetus is not a human life, so it does not have separate individual rights. The government should provide taxpayer funded abortions for women who cannot afford them. The decision to have an abortion is a personal choice of a woman regarding her own body and the government must protect this right. Women have the right to affordable, safe and legal abortions, including partial birth abortion.

Conservative

Human life begins at conception. Abortion is the murder of a human being. An unborn baby, as a living human being, has separate rights from those of the mother. Oppose taxpayer-funded abortion. Taxpayer dollars should not be used for the government to provide abortions. Support legislation to prohibit partial birth abortions, called the “Partial Birth Abortion* Ban” (**Partial Birth Abortion: the killing of an unborn baby of at least 20 weeks by pulling it out of the birth canal with forceps, but leaving the head inside. An incision is made in the back of the baby’s neck and the brain tissue is suctioned out. The head is then removed from the uterus.*)

NOTE: The U.S. Supreme Court’s ***Roe v. Wade decision of 1973*** ruled that a right to abortion was protected under the Due Process Clause of the U.S. Constitution’s Fourteenth Amendment. The Court interpreted this clause to include a woman’s right to privacy, which the Court noted encompasses the decision of whether or not to terminate a pregnancy. On June 24, 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe* in ***Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization***, holding that the Court’s 1973 ruling was incorrect.

The Court concluded that the Constitution does not protect the right to an abortion, allowing states to legislate on the matter. The decision argued that the Constitution makes no mention of abortion and that the right to an abortion is not implicitly protected by any constitutional provision. With *Roe v. Wade* overturned, the authority to regulate or ban abortion has been returned to state governments. This has resulted in some states enacting near-total bans on abortion, while others maintain access with varying restrictions. The issue of abortion remains highly contested, with ongoing legal challenges and political debates at the state and federal levels. (Google AI and FRC)

Affirmative Action

Liberal

Due to prevalent racism in the past, minorities were deprived of the same education and employment opportunities as whites. The government must work to make up for that. America is still a racist society, therefore a federal affirmative action law is necessary. Due to unequal opportunity, minorities still lag behind whites in all statistical measurements of success.

Conservative

Individuals should be admitted to schools and hired for jobs based on their ability. It is unfair to use race as a factor in the selection process. Reverse-discrimination is not a solution for racism. Some individuals in society are racist, but American institutions and American society as a whole are not. Preferential treatment of certain races through affirmative action is wrong.

NOTE: In a 2023 ruling, the Supreme Court, in the cases *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* (who argued that Affirmative Action policies discriminated against Asian American applicants) and *Students for Fair Admissions v. University of North Carolina* (who argued that Affirmative Action policies discriminated against Asian American and white applicants), ruled that race-based admission to college is unlawful.

The court found that the admissions programs at Harvard and UNC violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The decision effectively bans colleges and universities from using race as a factor in admissions decisions.

In a wide-sweeping **executive order** on Jan. 23, 2025, President Donald Trump eliminated the requirement that federal contractors must maintain affirmative action programs in their hiring practices.

Crime and Public Safety

Liberal

Crime in the cities is not a problem. The crime rate has gone down in recent years. Criminal justice reform is necessary to address systemic problems like racial inequality and mass incarceration. End mass incarceration by decriminalizing drug and non-violent crimes and reduce sentencing.

Advocate for:

–**Bail reform** (no cash bail) is necessary to make the criminal justice system equal. Traditional cash bail system discriminates against poorer defendants.

–**Raise the Age laws**, which raises the age of criminal responsibility. Sixteen and 17-year-olds, who would have previously been automatically tried as adults, are now tried as juvenile offenders in family court.

–**End prosecution of certain misdemeanors**, especially non-violent, low-level offenses including shoplifting/petty theft (under a certain dollar amount, e.g. \$950 or \$1,000), drug possession (small amounts for personal use), disorderly conduct, trespassing, resisting arrest and more. Not prosecuting these crimes leads to less crime.

–**Sentencing reforms** that would shorten the sentences of some who have been convicted of violent crimes.

NOTE: A speaker at the DNC Summer 2025 conference said crime and public safety “don’t matter to that many Americans.”

NYC’s Democrat nominee for the 2025 mayoral election, Zohran Mamdani, is a Democratic Socialist like AOC and Bernie Sanders. He wants to end the enforcement of all misdemeanor offenses.

Conservative

Crime rates are on the rise. People should feel safe in their homes and neighborhoods. Those who commit crimes should be arrested and prosecuted. Enforce the law. Prosecute criminals. Protect victims.

Believe that:

–**Cashless bail** risks public safety by releasing potentially dangerous defendants prematurely. Law abiding citizens can be exposed to repeat offenses and potential violent crime in their neighborhoods because accused individuals are swiftly released. Cashless bail has caused crime to rise.

–**Raise the Age laws** are harmful. They increase juvenile crime rates including gun crimes, assaults, carjackings, and thefts and increase the number of repeat offenders. They allow gangs to exploit teens to transport drugs or weapons.

–**Ending prosecution of certain misdemeanors** can harm communities primarily by potentially increasing public safety risks and undermining deterrence of minor crimes – and may lead to higher rates of disorderly conduct or property crimes, negatively affecting community well-being. Doing so leads to more crime.

The government has a duty to protect its citizens. Principles from the U.S. Constitution, Article IV, Section 4 and the 14th Amendment, along with the Bill of Rights and the preamble, imply an obligation for the government to safeguard the life, liberty, and property of the people.

President Donald Trump signed an **Executive Order** on Aug. 25, 2025 taking steps to eliminate cashless bail in the federal district of Washington, D.C.

Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory promotes the idea that the U.S. is inherently racist, that racial bias is inherent in many parts of western society, especially in its legal and social institutions, on the claim that they were primarily designed for and implemented by white people. CRT teaches that whites are the oppressors. CRT teachings have been implemented in many K-12 schools as well as colleges and universities.

Liberal

Support teaching of Critical Race Theory in schools and universities. Believe there is **systemic** racism in America. Agree with CRT which says that racism is not only individual prejudice, but is embedded in U.S. laws, policies, and institutions. In general, only white people are racist. Claiming to not be racist shows that you are racist.

Conservative

Critical Race Theory is a false premise that only divides people. Reject the concept of **systemic** racism, arguing that racial discrimination is primarily a matter of individual prejudice, noting that significant progress has been made in achieving racial equality. People should be judged on merit, not on race or identity-based preferences.

DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion)

Liberal

Companies, the military and government agencies, universities and K-12 schools must be required to provide DEI training and guidelines for all employees to make these environments more diverse, equitable, and inclusive. DEI initiatives are necessary because straight, white men generally have an unfair advantage in society, as evidenced by their disproportionate employment in top positions in the realms of wealth and power. This is due to a heteronormative, capitalist patriarchy, which is oppressive toward minority races, women, and LGBTQ individuals. Therefore, a focus on DEI, usually through trainings and guidelines, is important in creating diverse, inclusive environments and helping underrepresented or oppressed groups move towards equity, ie, gaining proportionate status and power in society relative to overrepresented groups. (AllSides)

DEI training helps employees understand their unconscious biases and microaggressions, which can lead to discrimination and unfair treatment. By implementing fair and equitable practices, organizations can create a more inclusive environment where all employees feel safe and respected.

Conservative

DEI initiatives placing a focus on identity (gender, race or sexuality) instead of merit, achievement or ability increase divisions by setting groups against each other. DEI programs implement the opposite of the dream of Martin Luther King, Jr. “that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.”

DEI policies have no place in the military, schools or corporations – people should be hired/promoted etc. based on their merit, not their gender, race or sexuality.

The diversity and inclusion aspect of DEI is actually exclusionary and promotes lack of diversity. DEI policies are actually racist.

Rather than increasing diversity, equity and inclusion, DEI reduces diversity of thought, creates a mindset of victimhood that leads to less accomplishment (less equal), and teaches people to exclude those who do not share their perspectives on diversity and other issues.

Death Penalty

Liberal

The death penalty should be abolished. It is inhumane and is ‘cruel and unusual’ punishment. Imprisonment is the appropriate punishment for murder. Every execution risks killing an innocent person.

Conservative

The death penalty is a punishment that fits the crime of murder; it is neither ‘cruel’ nor ‘unusual.’ Executing a murderer is the appropriate punishment for taking an innocent life.

Economy

Liberal

A market system in which government regulates the economy is best. Government must protect citizens from the greed of big business. Unlike the private sector, the government is motivated by public interest. Government regulation in all areas of the economy is needed to level the playing field. Raise taxes on the rich.

Conservative

The free market system, competitive capitalism, and private enterprise create the greatest opportunity and the highest standard of living for all. Free markets produce more economic growth, more jobs and higher standards of living than those systems burdened by excessive government regulation.

Education – *vouchers & charter schools*

What are vouchers? Vouchers allow some of the tax dollars designated for a child's education to be used by a parent to pay for tuition at a private school for that child.

What are charter schools? Charter schools are intended to improve student achievement and offer innovative educational designs. A charter school is a tuition-free public school that operates with more autonomy than a traditional district school, but is accountable for student performance through a charter, or contract, from a state-approved authorizer. They offer more choices in learning environments and teaching methods, but their admissions and operation can vary by state, with some having non-discriminatory lotteries for enrollment.

Liberal

Vouchers: Vouchers take money away from public schools. Vouchers take scarce funding from students in public schools and give those resources to unaccountable private schools. Government should focus additional funds on existing public schools, raising teacher salaries and reducing class size.

Charter Schools: When students leave traditional public schools for charter schools, the funding that would have supported their education in the public school often goes with them, potentially leading to resource shortages in the public school system. Traditional public schools are the best way to educate students.

Conservative

Vouchers: School vouchers create competition and therefore encourage regular public schools to improve performance. Vouchers will give all parents the right to choose good schools for their children, not just those who can afford private schools. When a parent moves their child from a public school to a private school, a portion of the funding for their child stays behind in the local public school district. This means public schools are left with more funding per student.

Charter Schools: Charter schools are also public schools. They can tailor their programs to meet the unique needs of their student populations. This can include alternative schedules, teaching styles, or thematic focuses (such as arts, STEM, language immersion). A lot of students find greater success in charter schools. The presence of charter schools can create competitive pressure on traditional public schools, motivating them to improve their offerings to attract and retain students.

Elections – (Voter ID, How to Vote, When to Vote)

President Donald Trump has proposed a four-part solution to ensure the integrity of U.S. elections: The US should switch exclusively to paper ballots, require proof of citizenship to register to vote, require voters to show ID at the polls, and eliminate mail-in voting by holding the entire election in-person on just one day.

--Voter ID

Liberal

Voter ID: Requiring identification disproportionately affects low-income, minority, elderly, and disabled voters who may lack access to IDs or the means to get them. Requiring ID to vote creates voter disenfranchisement. Voter ID laws are designed to suppress votes from groups likely to support Democrats. Voter ID laws are unnecessary as voter fraud is rare. Many Democrat-led states do not require voters to present identification to vote and strongly oppose requiring voters to show ID. Some believe non-citizens living in the U.S. should be permitted to vote.

Find Voter ID laws by state at [Ballotpedia.com](https://www.ballotpedia.com).

Conservative

Requiring voters to show ID ensures only eligible voters can cast ballots. IDs are a simple safeguard against impersonation or non-citizen voting. By preventing or detecting fraud by requiring photo ID, states are better able to ensure honest and fair elections.

All states offer free identification to voters who are unable to afford one. Americans are required to have proof of identification for many areas of life, including: purchasing alcohol or tobacco, opening a bank account, renting an apartment, visiting a doctors' office or hospital, flying, applying for medicaid, social security, SNAP or unemployment benefits, attending school, making a return to stores without a receipt.

--How to vote

Liberal

Electronic voting – Support electronic voting machines. These are trustworthy, even without a paper trail. Support the use of ballot dropboxes being placed throughout towns and cities for 6 weeks prior to the election, which will offer convenience and accessibility and increase voter turnout.

Support ballot harvesting (also known as ballot collection), which is the practice of collecting and submitting a voter's completed absentee or mail-in ballot on their behalf. It is necessary to increase voter access and participation, especially for voters who can't vote in person or mail in their ballots themselves.

Conservative

Electronic voting – Oppose electronic-only voting. There must be paper backup to verify accuracy and in the event of a recount. In order to prevent hacking/fraud, states should have some type of paper backup for every vote. Eliminate the use of ballot drop boxes, due to concerns of potential for fraud (including ballot box stuffing) and lack of security.

Oppose ballot harvesting, also known as ballot collection, where one person gathers absentee/mail-in ballots from many voters (bundling) for submission at a mail or drop box, due to potential for fraud (including ballot box stuffing).

--When to vote

Liberal

Support early voting/multiple days of voting. Support voting anytime (can be as early as 6 weeks prior to election day). Believe this increases voter turnout and shortens the time it takes to vote.

Support extending mail-in ballot deadlines to ensure that ballots postmarked by Election Day are still counted even if they experience delays and arrive up to 7 days after election day.

Conservative

Support single-day voting to eliminate voter fraud and ensure the integrity of elections. (Some would consider the possibility of early voting for up to 1 week before the election, only at designated early polling locations. This approach would provide convenience while maintaining security and streamlining the voting process).

Opposed to mail-in ballots. The only mail-in ballots that should be used are absentee ballots, where a voter has to request a ballot be mailed to them.

Votes must be counted no later than election day. Accepting late ballots would cause uncertainty and chaos.

Elections - Interesting to note:

Most countries of the world hold elections on only one designated election day (a single day of voting), including:

- Canada, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand and Israel
- Most European countries like Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.
- Many in South America such as Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela.
- Asian countries such as Japan, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia. China does not hold elections: it is a one-party authoritarian state led by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and national leaders are elected by the Communist leaders.
- (India, with almost 1.5 billion people, holds elections over multiple days.)

Embryonic Stem Cell Research

Liberal

Support the use of **embryonic stem cells** for research. It is necessary (and ethical) for the government to fund **embryonic** stem cell research, which will assist scientists in finding treatments and cures for diseases. An embryo is not a human. The tiny blastocyst (embryos used in embryonic stem cell research) has no human features. Experimenting on embryos/embryonic stem cells is not murder. **Embryonic stem cells** have the potential to cure chronic and degenerative diseases which current medicine has been unable to effectively treat. **Embryonic stem cells** have been shown to be effective in treating heart damage in mice.

Conservative

Support the use of **adult and umbilical cord stem cells only** for research. Human life begins at conception. It is morally and ethically wrong for the government to fund **embryonic** stem cell research. The extraction of stem cells from an embryo requires its destruction. In other words, it requires that a human life be killed. **Adult stem cells** have already been used to treat spinal cord injuries, Leukemia, and even Parkinson's disease. Adult and umbilical cord stem cell therapies are validated and approved for many autoimmune, blood, metabolic, and degenerative conditions, with proven cures for some blood diseases and effective treatments for many others. **Embryonic stem cells** have not been successfully used to help cure disease.

Energy

Liberal

Oil is a depleting resource. The continued use of fossil fuels (coal, oil, gas) is leading to catastrophic climate change. The government must pass the Green New Deal, a law that aims to address climate change through a rapid transition to 100% clean, renewable, and zero-emission energy sources (wind and solar), using government subsidies, while also creating high-wage jobs and promoting economic and social justice for all communities. Support increased exploration of alternative energy sources such as wind and solar power. Support increased government regulation of gas and electric industries to promote environmental protection and a transition to renewable energy.

Conservative

Oil, gas and coal are all good sources of energy and are abundant in the U.S. Oil drilling should be increased both on land and at sea. Increased domestic production creates lower prices and less dependence on other countries for oil. Support increased production of nuclear energy. Wind and solar sources will never provide plentiful, affordable sources of power. Oppose windmills off the east and west coasts. Windmills destroy the fishing industry, harm whales and other sea life, and kill birds. Solar farms kill birds. Support private ownership of gas and electric industries and less government regulation over people's use of electricity/heating/cooling.

Euthanasia & Physician-assisted suicide

Liberal

Euthanasia should be legalized. A person has a right to die with dignity, by his own choice. A terminally ill person should have the right to choose to end pain and suffering. It is wrong for the government to take away the means for a terminally ill person to hasten his death. It is wrong to force a person to go through so much pain and suffering. Legalizing euthanasia would not lead to doctor-assisted suicides of non-critical patients. Permitting euthanasia would reduce health care costs, which would then make funds available for those who could truly benefit from medical care.

Conservative

Neither euthanasia nor physician-assisted suicide should be legalized. It is immoral and unethical to deliberately end the life of a terminally ill person (euthanasia), or enable another person to end their own life (assisted suicide). The goal should be compassionate care and easing the suffering of terminally ill people. Legalizing euthanasia could lead to doctor-assisted suicides of non-critical patients. If euthanasia were legalized, insurance companies could pressure doctors to withhold life-saving treatment for dying patients. Many religions prohibit suicide and euthanasia. These practices devalue human life.

Global Warming/Climate Change

Liberal

Global warming is caused by an increased production of carbon dioxide through the burning of fossil fuels (coal, oil and natural gas). The U.S. is a major contributor to global warming because it produces 25% of the world's carbon dioxide. Proposed laws to reduce carbon emissions in the U.S. are urgently needed and should be enacted immediately to save the planet. Government subsidized wind and solar companies, as well as government subsidized residential solar roof panels are necessary. The proposed Green New Deal must be passed into law.

Conservative

Change in global temperature is natural over long periods of time. Science has not shown that humans can affect permanent change to the earth's temperature. Proposed laws to reduce carbon emissions will do nothing to help the environment and will cause significant price increases for all Americans (see Aug. 2025 NJ energy price increases due to state government's forced reduction in energy derived from fossil fuels). Extreme government climate change policies (AOC/Bernie Sanders/Joe Biden's "Green New Deal") are unnecessary and harm humans.

Gun Control / Gun Rights

Liberal

The Second Amendment does not give citizens the right to keep and bear arms, but only allows for the state to keep a militia (National Guard). Individuals do not need guns for protection; it is the role of local and federal government to protect the people through law enforcement agencies and the military. Additional gun control laws are necessary to stop gun violence and limit the ability of criminals to obtain guns. More guns mean more violence.

Conservative

The Second Amendment gives citizens the right to keep and bear arms. Individuals have the right to defend themselves. There are too many gun control laws – additional laws will not lower gun crime rates. What is needed is enforcement of current laws. Gun control laws do not prevent criminals from obtaining guns. More guns in the hands of law-abiding citizens mean less crime.

Full text of the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

Healthcare

Liberal

Support free or low-cost government controlled health care. There are millions of Americans who can't afford health care and are deprived of this basic right. Every American has a right to affordable health care. The government should provide equal health care benefits for all, regardless of their ability to pay.

Conservative

Support competitive, free market health care system. All Americans have access to health care. The debate is about who should pay for it. Free and low-cost government-run programs (socialized medicine) result in higher costs and everyone receiving the same poor-quality health care. Health care should remain privatized. The problem of uninsured individuals should be addressed and solved within the free market healthcare system – the government should not control healthcare.

Immigration and Border Security

NOTE: Illegal border crossings during President Biden's term saw unprecedented highs (Border Patrol reported almost 11 million encounters) and so far in the first six months of President Trump's second term have seen record lows. (lower than the past 25 years). CBS News reported "The last time Border Patrol averaged [less] monthly apprehensions along the southern border over a year was in the late 1960s."

Sanctuary cities are those that limit cooperation with federal immigration authorities. They limit the extent to which local resources are used to enforce federal immigration laws. This often involves not holding individuals solely based on immigration detainers or not sharing information about immigration status with federal agencies. Sanctuary cities often prohibit local law enforcement's involvement in immigration enforcement activities. Sanctuary cities will not hold a criminal illegal alien for ICE officers or notify ICE they are being released from custody.

Liberal

Support amnesty for those who enter the U.S. illegally (undocumented migrants). Support sanctuary cities. Deporting those here illegally breaks up families. Also believe that undocumented immigrants have a right to:

- all educational and health benefits that citizens receive (financial aid, welfare, social security and medicaid), regardless of legal status.
- the same rights as American citizens. It is unfair to arrest millions of undocumented immigrants.

Demand **due process** for criminal illegal immigrants.

Conservative

Support legal immigration only. Oppose amnesty for those who enter the U.S. illegally (illegal immigrants). Oppose sanctuary city laws. Those who break the law by entering the U.S. illegally do not have the same rights as those who obey the law and enter legally. The Federal Government should secure the borders and enforce current immigration law. Criminal illegal immigrants should be deported immediately. Over 300,000 children brought in over the border illegally are missing. Illegal immigration causes grave danger and harm to women and children.

Religion & Government

Liberal

Support the separation of church and state. The Bill of Rights implies a separation of church and state. Religious expression has no place in government. The two should be completely separate. Government should not support religious expression in any way. All reference to God in public and government spaces should be removed (eg., the Ten Commandments should not be displayed in Federal buildings). Religious expression has no place in government.

Conservative

The phrase "**separation of church and state**" is not in the Constitution. The First Amendment to the Constitution states "**Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...**" This prevents the government from establishing a national church/denomination. However, it does not prohibit God from being acknowledged in schools and government buildings. Government should not interfere with religion and religious freedom.

Same-sex Marriage

Liberal

Marriage is the union of people who love each other. It should be legal for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals, to ensure equal rights for all. Support same-sex marriage. All individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation, have the right to marry. Prohibiting same-sex citizens from marrying denies them their civil rights. [Opinions vary on whether this issue is equal to civil rights for African Americans.]

Conservative

Marriage is the union of one man and one woman. Oppose same-sex marriage. Support Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), passed in 1996, which affirms the right of states not to recognize same-sex marriages licensed in other states. Requiring citizens to sanction same-sex relationships violates moral and religious beliefs of millions of Christians, Jews, Muslims and others, who believe marriage is the union of one man and one woman.

NOTE: The U.S. Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage nationwide in its 2015 decision in **Obergefell v. Hodges**. This landmark ruling declared that the right to marry is guaranteed to same-sex couples by both the Fourteenth Amendment's **Due Process Clause** and **Equal Protection Clause**. The decision required all states to both issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples and recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states.

Social Security

Liberal

The Social Security system should be protected without change at all costs. Reduction in future benefits is not a reasonable option. (Opinions vary on the extent of the current system's financial stability.) Social Security provides a safety net for the nation's poor and needy. Changing the system would cause a reduction in benefits and many people would suffer as a result. Focus on increasing revenue through progressive tax increases rather than cutting benefits. These include eliminating or raising the payroll tax cap, increasing payroll tax rates and imposing a tax on investment income.

Conservative

Conservatives believe Social Security is in financial trouble. President Trump has promised he will not cut Social Security benefits or raise the retirement age. He has focused on addressing the program's problems by eliminating fraud, waste, and abuse, including reducing improper payments and preventing illegal aliens from receiving benefits. He says he will find efficiencies and increase economic growth to avoid cuts.

The president also tried to eliminate taxes on Social Security benefits and partially succeeded: the July 2025 "Big Beautiful Bill" "ensures that nearly 90% of Social Security beneficiaries will no longer pay federal income taxes on their benefits."

Taxes

Liberal

Emphasize the importance of a progressive tax system where those with higher incomes and wealth pay a larger percentage of income to support public programs and reduce inequality. Advocate for increasing taxes on the wealthy. Believe in wealth redistribution through government policies.

Generally oppose broad tax cuts, saying they disproportionately benefit the wealthy.

Favor ensuring corporations and the rich "pay their fair share."

Conservative

Support lower tax rates and tax cuts for all to promote economic growth, spur investment, and reward entrepreneurship and innovation. Oppose broad redistributive tax policies and emphasize limiting government spending and reducing the tax burden to encourage entrepreneurship and free-market dynamics.

Favor a simpler tax code, restrained government fiscal intervention, and balanced budgets, stressing that taxes should only fund essential government functions.

Terrorism / National Security

Liberal

Climate change, not terrorism, poses the greatest threat to the U.S. Terrorism is a result of arrogant U.S. foreign policy. Good diplomacy is the best way to deal with terrorism. Relying on military force to defeat terrorism creates hatred that leads to more terrorism. Captured terrorists should be handled by law enforcement and tried in civilian courts.

Conservative

Terrorism poses one of the greatest threats to the U.S. The world toward which militant Islamists strive cannot peacefully co-exist with the Western world. In the last decade, militant Islamists have repeatedly attacked Americans and American interests here and abroad. Terrorists must be stopped and destroyed. The use of intelligence-gathering and military force are the best ways to defeat terrorism around the world. Captured terrorists should be treated as enemy combatants and tried in military courts.

Transgender issues

NOTE: Conservative and liberal views on transgender transitions for children are highly polarized, with conservatives opposing medical transitions for minors and liberals supporting these procedures. Regarding girls/women's sports: conservatives oppose biological males playing on girls teams; liberals support trans women playing on girls teams.

Liberal

Transgender treatment:

Support access to gender-affirming care (puberty blockers, hormone therapy, surgery), viewing it as a necessary and beneficial treatment for transgender individuals, including minors. These treatments are important for mental health and wellbeing.

Emphasize the importance of self-determination and reducing distress caused by gender dysphoria. Believe gender-affirming care reduces gender dysphoria, a condition associated with severe distress caused by the incongruence between one's gender identity and assigned sex.

Gender-affirming care improves mental health outcomes and quality of life for transgender people.

Oppose restrictions or bans. Conservative-driven bans are harmful and based on misinformation or fear.

Transgender athletes:

Support inclusion of trans women on teams matching their gender identity as a matter of non-discrimination and civil rights.

Reject the idea that trans athletes have an inherent unfair advantage, emphasizing that trans women vary greatly in athletic ability and face discrimination in sports.

Exclusionary policies cause harm to trans youth, including increased bullying, mental health risks, and denial of participation rights.

Argue that policies supporting trans women in sports affirm human dignity and inclusion without significantly compromising fairness in competition.

Conservative

Transgender treatment:

Gender is determined by biological sex at birth, it is not fluid and cannot be changed during childhood.

Support a ban on gender transition treatment/surgery for minors. Children are being permanently harmed by such procedures. Those who medically transitioned as minors and want to transition back are not medically able to do so. Medical transitions (puberty blockers, hormone therapy, surgery) for minors are wrong, risky, and even harmful.

Republican-led states have enacted laws banning or restricting gender-affirming treatments for children, calling such treatments mutilation and child abuse. The bans protect children as there is insufficient scientific evidence regarding the safety and effectiveness of treatments for minors. (The liberal UK banned puberty blockers in 2024 due to an "unacceptable safety risk"; Sweden mostly banned puberty blockers in 2022.)

Transgender athletes:

Oppose biological men in women's sports, locker rooms or bathrooms. Trans athletes should compete on teams that match their sex assigned at birth.

Allowing trans women (biological men) to compete in girls' sports is unfair because biological males have inherent physical advantages in strength, endurance, and athletic performance.

Allowing trans women (biological men) to compete in girls' sports poses safety risks to female athletes because trans women maintain advantages in height, reach, and muscle strength.

The inclusion of trans women in female sports undermines women's sports and Title IX protections.

United Nations (UN)

Liberal

The UN promotes peace and human rights. The United States has a moral and a legal obligation to support the United Nations (UN). The U.S. should not act as a sovereign nation, but as one member of a world community. The U.S. should submit its national interests to the greater good of the global community (as defined by the UN). The U.S. should defer to the UN in military/peacekeeping matters. The United Nations Charter gives the United Nations Security Council the power and responsibility to take collective action to maintain international peace and security. U.S. troops should submit to UN command.

Conservative

The UN has repeatedly failed in its essential mission to promote world peace and human rights. The wars, genocide and human rights abuses taking place in many Human Rights Council member states (and the UN's failure to stop them) prove this point. History shows that the United States, not the UN, is the global force for spreading freedom, prosperity, tolerance and peace. The U.S. should never subvert its national interests to those of the UN. The U.S. should never place troops under UN control. U.S. military should always wear the U.S. military uniform, not that of UN peacekeepers. [Opinions vary on whether the U.S. should withdraw from the UN.]

Welfare

Liberal

Support welfare, including long-term welfare. Welfare is a safety net which provides for the needs of the poor. Welfare is necessary to bring fairness to American economic life. Welfare programs should be expanded as a means to promote social equity and support for vulnerable populations. Welfare programs are essential to ensure basic security, reduce poverty, and promote greater social equity.

Conservative

Oppose long-term welfare. Welfare creates dependency and discourages able-bodied adults from seeking employment, resulting in unnecessary reliance on government support. It is far more compassionate and effective to encourage people to become self-reliant, rather than allowing them to remain dependent on the government for provisions. Opportunities should be provided to make it possible for those in need to become self-reliant. Welfare should be narrowly targeted, with mandatory work requirements for able-bodied adults.