

FOR RELEASE September 19, 2023

Americans' Dismal Views of the Nation's Politics

65% say they always or often feel exhausted when thinking about politics

FOR MEDIA OR OTHER INQUIRIES:

Carroll Doherty, Director of Political Research
Jocelyn Kiley, Associate Director, Research
Nida Asheer, Senior Communications Manager
Talia Price, Communications Associate

202.419.4372

www.pewresearch.org

RECOMMENDED CITATION

Pew Research Center, September, 2023,
"Americans' Dismal Views of the Nation's Politics"

About Pew Research Center

Pew Research Center is a nonpartisan, nonadvocacy fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes and trends shaping the world. It does not take policy positions. The Center conducts public opinion polling, demographic research, computational social science research and other data-driven research. It studies politics and policy; news habits and media; the internet and technology; religion; race and ethnicity; international affairs; social, demographic and economic trends; science; research methodology and data science; and immigration and migration. Pew Research Center is a subsidiary of The Pew Charitable Trusts, its primary funder.

© Pew Research Center 2023

10. How Americans view proposals to change the political system

Reflecting the public's [unhappiness with the U.S. political system](#), there is broad support for a number of significant structural changes to politics:

Term limits for members of Congress.

An overwhelming majority of adults (87%) favor limiting the number of terms that members of Congress are allowed to serve. This includes a majority (56%) who *strongly* favor this proposal; just 12% are opposed.

Maximum age limits for elected officials in Washington, D.C., and Supreme Court justices.

Nearly eight-in-ten adults (79%) favor maximum age limits for elected officials in Washington, while 74% favor a maximum age limit for Supreme Court justices.

Broad public support for term limits for Congress, age limits for federal elected officials and Supreme Court

% who ____ each of the following proposals

	Oppose	Favor
Limiting the number of terms that members of Congress can serve	12	87
Putting a maximum age limit in place for elected officials in Washington, D.C.	20	79
Requiring all voters to show government-issued photo identification to vote	22	76
Putting a maximum age limit in place for Supreme Court justices	24	74
Automatically registering all eligible citizens to vote	37	62
Increasing the number of justices on the Supreme Court	51	46

Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 10-16, 2023.
"Americans' Dismal Views of the Nation's Politics"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Requiring voters to show government-issued identification. By more than three-to-one (76% to 22%), Americans support requiring all voters to show government-issued photo identification in order to vote. These views [are little changed from 2021](#).

A narrower majority (62%) favors automatically registering all eligible citizens to vote.

A proposal to increase the number of justices on the Supreme Court, by contrast, draws slightly more opposition (51%) than support (46%).

Overwhelming majorities in both parties favor term limits for members of Congress

Term limits for members of Congress are widely popular with both Republicans and Republican-leaning independents (90%) and Democrats and Democratic leaners (86%).

Establishing age limits for elected officials in Washington, D.C., also draws broad bipartisan support.

There are wider partisan differences in views of putting a maximum age limit for Supreme Court justices. Still, 82% of Democrats and 68% of Republicans support age limits for the justices.

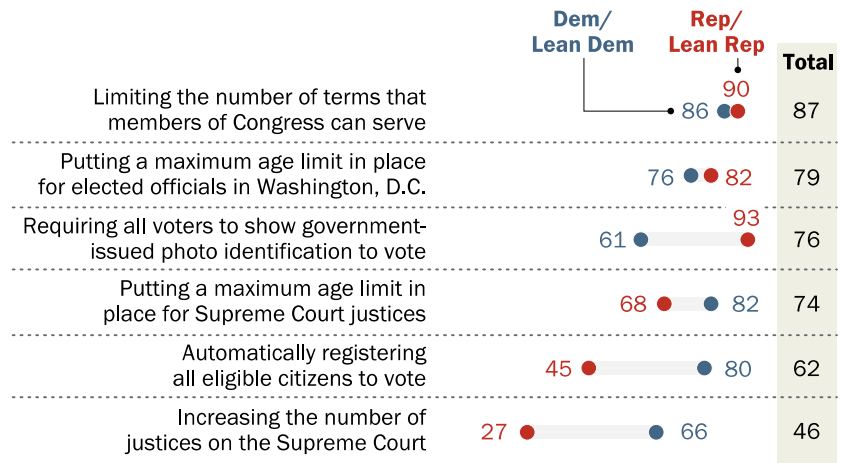
As in past surveys, Republicans and Democrats hold different views of proposals to change how voting works in this country.

Nearly all Republicans support requiring all voters to show government-issued identification (93% favor this), compared with a narrower majority (61%) of Democrats. Meanwhile, Democrats (80%) are much more likely than Republicans (45%) to favor automatically registering all eligible citizens to vote.

Increasing the number of justices on the Supreme Court is supported by about two-thirds of Democrats (66% favor). But only about a quarter of Republicans (27%) favor expanding the size of the court, while more than twice as many (72%) are opposed.

Term limits draw bipartisan support; wide partisan gap in views of expanding Supreme Court

% who favor each of the following proposals



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 10-16, 2023.
"Americans' Dismal Views of the Nation's Politics"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Young adults more likely than older people to support adding Supreme Court justices

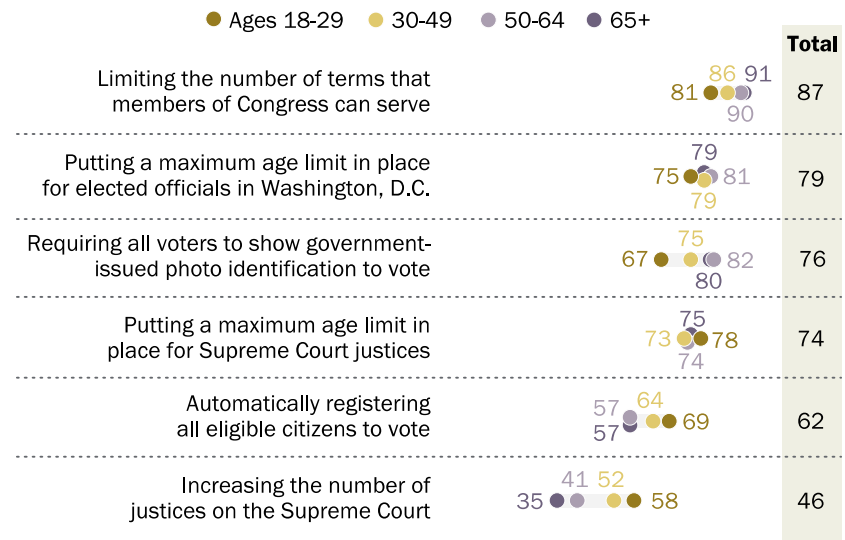
There are fairly modest age differences in views of most of these proposals. However, adults under age 50 are more likely than those 50 and older to favor automatically registering all eligible citizens to vote (66% vs. 57%).

And a majority of adults under 30 (58%) favor increasing the number of justices on the Supreme Court. Support for this proposal decreases with age: About a third (35%) of those 65 and older favor this.

These age differences are more pronounced among Republicans than Democrats. About four-in-ten Republicans ages 18 to 29 (44%) favor expanding the court, but that drops steadily with age; just 13% of Republicans 65 and older support this. In contrast, Democrats in all age groups are nearly equally likely to favor increasing the number of justices on the court.

Older and younger adults are equally likely to favor maximum age limits for federal elected officials

% who favor each of the following proposals



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 10-16, 2023.
"Americans' Dismal Views of the Nation's Politics"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Acknowledgments

This report is a collaborative effort based on the input and analysis of the following individuals:

Research team

Carroll Doherty, *Director, Political Research*
Jocelyn Kiley, *Associate Director, Political Research*
Baxter Oliphant, *Senior Researcher*
Hannah Hartig, *Senior Researcher*
Gabe Borelli, *Research Associate*
Andrew Daniller, *Research Associate*
Ted Van Green, *Research Analyst*
Andy Cerda, *Research Assistant*
Shanay Gracia, *Research Assistant*

Amina Dunn, *Former Research Analyst*
Katy Lin, *Former Research Intern*

Communications and editorial

Nida Asheer, *Senior Communications Manager*
Talia Price, *Communications Associate*
Caleb Keller, *Communications Assistant*
Jayme Link, *Communications Assistant*
David Kent, *Senior Copy Editor*

Rachel Lim, *Former Communications Intern*

Graphic design and web publishing

Alissa Scheller, *Information Graphics Designer*
Reem Nadeem, *Associate Digital Producer*

Methodology

Andrew Mercer, *Senior Research Methodologist*
Dorene Asare-Marfo, *Panel Manager*
Dana Popky, *Associate Panel Manager*
Arnold Lau, *Research Methodologist*

Pew Research Center is also grateful to Jennifer Wolak, a professor in the Department of Political Science at Michigan State University, for discussing her work on attitudes about government with the research team.