

Poll finds Floridians disapprove of Donald Trump's performance



President Donald Trump boards Air Force One at Palm Beach International Airport in West Palm Beach on Monday, Feb. 6, 2017. (Susan Walsh)



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After a tumultuous two weeks filled with momentous and controversial presidential pronouncements and decisions, two-thirds of Florida voters disapprove of President **Donald Trump's** performance.

A poll released Monday by Florida Atlantic University found 66 percent disapproving of Trump's job performance. He has approval of 34 percent. Trump's national approval rating is 45 percent, according to a Real Clear Politics compilation.

The FAU survey showed the partisan differences that marked the election season continue as strong as ever.

Among **Republicans**, an overwhelming 73 percent approve of the president's job performance and 27 percent disapprove.

Among **Democrats**, just 8 percent approve of the job he's doing so far, with 92 percent disapproving.

Among no party affiliation/independent voters, 32 percent approved and 68 percent disapproved.

There was a relatively small gender difference. Among men, 37 percent approve and 64 percent disapprove of Trump's performance; among women, 31 percent approve and 69 percent disapprove.

The survey of 600 Florida residents was conducted online from Wednesday through Saturday. The respondents were 148 Democrats, 147 Republicans, 144 independents and 161 nonaffiliated. The Florida Atlantic University Business and Economics Polling Initiative, which conducted the poll, said it had a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percent.

Sanctuary communities

One of many hot issues that have emerged since Trump became president is sanctuary communities. On Jan. 25, he signed an executive order threatening to cut off federal funding to communities that provide sanctuary to immigrants who aren't legally in the country.

A majority of Floridians – 52 percent to 36 percent – do not want the federal government to cut off funding to sanctuary cities. The poll used the common term “sanctuary cities.”

And a related question found 46 percent of respondents don't want the **U.S. Department of Justice** to take action against sanctuary cities – but 38 percent support Justice Department action.

Monica Escaleras, director of the FAU Business and Economics Polling Initiative, said in a written analysis of the results that “this means that Floridians support sanctuary policies that commit a city to serving all individuals without regard to immigration status.”

The results don't show broad public approval of sanctuary cities, which the pollsters defined as offering “safe harbor for undocumented immigrants who might otherwise be deported by federal immigration law enforcement officials.”

Many people aren't familiar with the topic. When asked an initial question – whether they were familiar with the term sanctuary city – 55 percent said they were and 45 percent said they weren't familiar with the term or weren't sure.

Trump's executive order, and administration threats to withhold federal grant money from sanctuary communities, has drawn a firestorm of opposition from Democratic mayors and political activists. Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez became the first prominent local official in the country to publicly go along with what Trump demanded, something that has prompted outpourings of protest in the county.

Border wall

On another major issue, 44 percent of Floridians surveyed support construction of the wall Trump has planned for the U.S.-Mexican border, with 56 percent opposed. A partisan divide was clear on the wall: 70 percent of Republicans support the plan, 62 percent of Democrats oppose it and 60 percent of independents oppose it.

When respondents were asked if they'd support a wall if it cost \$15 billion, support fell among all political groups and opposition increased. Overall 34 percent favored a \$15 billion wall and 66 percent opposed it.

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