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May 22, 2025

This release is also available online.

New Marquette Law School Poll national survey finds strong support for authority of courts in cases involving president

- The U.S. president must obey rulings by either the Supreme Court or lower federal courts; majorities oppose call to impeach judges
- Majority say President Trump lacks power to freeze spending and close agencies; presidents should not have power to make laws if Congress fails to act
- Approval of the Supreme Court remains above 50%, rising from below 50% in 2022-2024.

Please note: Complete Poll results and methodology information can be found online at law.marquette.edu/poll/

MILWAUKEE – A new Marquette Law School Poll national survey finds strong support for federal courts when they rule against the president on legal matters. When asked whether a president must obey a ruling by a federal court, 79% say the president must obey and 21% say the president can ignore the ruling. When the question asks about a ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court, slightly more, 84%, say the president must obey the Supreme Court, while 16% say the president can ignore the order.

When asked in December, 79% said the president must obey rulings of the Supreme Court. There has been a small increase in the percentage since then, as shown in Table 1. The question about a ruling by “a federal court” was asked for the first time in the May survey. (All results in the tables are stated as percentages.)

Table 1: Must a president obey ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court

Among adults

Poll dates	Obey ruling	
	The president has the power to ignore the ruling	The president is required to do as the ruling says
5/5-15/25	16	84
3/17-27/25	17	83
1/27-2/6/25	17	83
12/2-11/24	21	79

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, latest: May 5-15, 2025

Question: If the Supreme Court rules against the president in a case, does the president have the power to ignore that ruling, or is the president required to do as the ruling says?

The survey was conducted May 5-15, 2025, interviewing 1,004 adults nationwide, with a margin of error of +/-3.6 percentage points.

Large majorities of all partisan groups say the president must obey court rulings, as shown in Table 2. There is variation across partisan identification, with Republicans and independents somewhat more likely to say presidents can ignore rulings than are Democrats, but more than 70% of each party say judicial rulings must be followed, whether the phrasing of the question involves a ruling from a lower federal court or a ruling from the Supreme Court.

Table 2: Must a president obey court rulings, by party identification

Among adults

Party ID	Obey court ruling	
	The president has the power to ignore the ruling	The president is required to do as the ruling says
phrasing “If the Supreme Court rules”		
Republican	22	78
Independent	22	78
Democrat	7	93
phrasing “If a federal court rules”		
Republican	28	72
Independent	24	76
Democrat	13	87

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, May 5-15, 2025

Question: If the Supreme Court rules against the president in a case, does the president have the power to ignore that ruling, or is the president required to do as the ruling says?

Question: If a federal court rules against the president in a case, does the president have the power to ignore that ruling, or is the president required to do as the ruling says?

There has been very little change in opinion among Republicans since December, when 79% of Republicans said a president must obey the Supreme Court. In May, 78% said that. Likewise, independents have not changed at all, with 78% in both December and May saying a president must obey the Court. Among Democrats, in contrast, there has been a sharp rise in the percentage saying a president must obey the Court, from 79% in December to 93% in May.

In recent months, as both federal district courts and the Supreme Court have ruled against President Donald Trump’s administration in a number of cases, both members of Congress and Trump have called for judges to be impeached for ruling against some of Trump’s actions. Seventy percent of survey respondents say judges should not be impeached for such rulings, while 30% say they should be impeached. These percentages remain identical whether the question mentions “members of Congress” or “President Trump” calling for impeachment.

Mentioning Trump, however, does shift opinion for Republicans in favor of impeachment compared to mentioning members of Congress, while mentioning Trump shifts opinion of independents and Democrats in the opposite direction: against impeachment.

- Among Republicans, 54% favor impeaching judges when the question says Trump has called for this, compared to 44% when members of Congress are mentioned.
- For independents, there is less support for impeaching judges, 26%, when Trump is mentioned compared to 31% when members of Congress are mentioned.
- Among Democrats, there is a small shift, with less support when Trump calls for impeachment, 9%, than when he is not mentioned, 12%.

When asked whether court orders that have temporarily blocked some of the Trump administration's executive actions are a proper use of judicial authority, 64% say they are proper and 36% say they are not. Partisan differences are greater on this question. A majority of Republicans, 61%, say they are not proper, while 87% of Democrats say they are proper, as do 69% of independents, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Are court orders blocking administration actions proper use of judicial authority

Among adults

Party ID	Proper use of judicial authority	
	Yes	No
Republican	39	61
Independent	69	31
Democrat	87	13

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, May 5-15, 2025

Question: Federal courts have issued orders temporarily blocking a number of the Trump administration's executive actions. Do you think such orders can be a proper use of judicial authority?

Presidential power

Since taking office, Trump has frozen spending and closed agencies that have been authorized by Congress. Sixty-two percent say this is beyond the president's authority, while 38% say the president has this authority. These views are little changed from March when 64% said this exceeds his authority.

On this matter, 63% of Republicans say the president has the authority to freeze or close agencies, while 64% of independents and 88% of Democrats say he does not have this power, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Does the president have authority to close agencies authorized by Congress

Among adults

Party ID	Authority	
	Beyond the president's authority	Has the authority without congressional approval
Republican	37	63
Independent	64	35
Democrat	88	12

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, May 5-15, 2025

Question: Do you think agencies and spending that have been authorized by Congress are beyond the president's authority to close or freeze, or do you think the president has the authority to take these actions without congressional approval?

When Congress fails to act, 19% say the president should have the power to make laws on his own, while 81% say he should not be able to do so. Opposition to such additional presidential power has increased a little since 2020, when 72% said the president should not be able to unilaterally make laws, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Should president be able to make laws if Congress fails to act

Among adults

Poll dates	President make laws	
	Yes, president should be able to make laws	No, president should not be able to make laws
5/5-15/25	19	81
12/2-11/24	22	78
9/8-15/20	28	72

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, latest: May 5-15, 2025

Question: When Congress fails to act, should the president have the power to make laws on his own?

While a majority of all partisan groups are opposed to allowing the president to make laws, there is greater support for this power among Republicans, 31%, than among independents, 21%, or among Democrats, 6%, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Should president be able to make laws if Congress fails to act, by party identification

Among adults

Party ID	Make laws	
	Yes, president should be able to make laws	No, president should not be able to make laws
Republican	31	69
Independent	21	79
Democrat	6	94

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, May 5-15, 2025

Question: When Congress fails to act, should the president have the power to make laws on his own?

Recent Supreme Court cases

In April, the Supreme Court ruled that federal law requires the Trump administration to facilitate the return of a man, Kilmar Abrego Garcia, erroneously deported to El Salvador. This ruling is favored by 67% in the survey and opposed by 33%. A majority of Republicans oppose this ruling, 59%, while majorities of independents, 65%, and Democrats, 94%, favor the Court's ruling.

Also in April, the Supreme Court said that those the administration is seeking to deport under the Alien Enemies Act must receive notice that they are subject to deportation within a reasonable time and in such a manner as will allow them to actually seek court review before such deportation occurs. Sixty-five percent favor this ruling and 35% oppose it. A majority of Republicans oppose the ruling, 57%, while majorities of independents, 61%, and Democrats, 90%, favor it.

In the case of Republicans who oppose these two rulings, large majorities nonetheless say the president must obey Supreme Court decisions. Among those Republicans who oppose the decision to facilitate the return of a prisoner from El Salvador, 75% say the presidents must obey Supreme Court rulings. Likewise among those Republicans opposed to the due process ruling, 79% say presidents must obey the Court.

In April, the Supreme Court heard arguments in a case asking whether parents of elementary school students should be able to opt their children out of reading classes concerning stories about LGBTQ+ characters if those stories conflict with the families' religious beliefs. A majority, 70%, say parents should be able to opt their children out, while 30% say they should not.

Parents of school-age children are only slightly more likely to favor requiring the opt-out option, 72%, than are those without children, 69%.

There are large differences in opinion on this case by religious affiliation, as shown in Table 7. While majorities of each religious group favor the ability to opt out, the variance of support is substantial.

Table 7: Should parents be able to opt children out of classes, by religion

Among adults

Religion	Opt out	
	Parents should be able to opt out	The schools should set the curriculum for all
Born-again Protestant	87	13
Mainline Protestant	66	34
Roman Catholic	72	28
No religion	58	42
Other religion	67	33

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, May 5-15, 2025

Question: In April, the Supreme Court heard arguments in a case asking whether parents of elementary school students should be able to opt their children out of reading classes concerning stories about LGBTQ+ characters, if those stories conflict with the families' religious beliefs. How do you think the Court should rule?

Approval of the Supreme Court

Approval of the Supreme Court in May stands at 53%, with 47% who disapprove. Approval has held above 50% in January, March, and May 2025 surveys by the Marquette Law School Poll. Prior to that, approval of the Court was below 50% from May 2022 through December 2024. Approval had been above 50% from September 2020 through March 2022, with one exception at 49%, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Approval of the U.S. Supreme Court

Among adults

Poll dates	Approval	
	Approve	Disapprove
5/5-15/25	53	47
3/17-27/25	54	46
1/27-2/6/25	51	49
12/2-11/24	48	52
10/1-10/24	45	55
7/24-8/1/24	43	57
5/6-15/24	39	61
3/18-28/24	47	53
2/5-15/24	40	60
11/2-7/23	41	59
9/18-25/23	43	57
7/7-12/23	45	55
5/8-18/23	41	59
3/13-22/23	44	56
1/9-20/23	47	53
11/15-22/22	44	56
9/7-14/22	40	60
7/5-12/22	38	61
5/9-19/22	44	55
3/14-24/22	54	45
1/10-21/22	52	46
11/1-10/21	54	46
9/7-16/21	49	50
7/16-26/21	60	39
9/8-15/20	66	33

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, latest: May 5-15, 2025

Question: Overall, how much do you approve or disapprove of the way the U.S. Supreme Court is handling its job?

In May, approval of the Court was at 78% among Republicans, 43% among independents, and 31% among Democrats. Approval among Republicans rose by 10 percentage points from December to January and has declined by 6 percentage points since. Approval among independents was unchanged from December to January and has declined 3 percentage points since then. In contrast, approval among Democrats is substantially greater in March and May than it was in December or January, rising to 31% in May from a low of 19%. These recent trends by party are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Supreme Court approval, by party identification

Among adults

Poll dates	Approval	
	Approve	Disapprove
Republican		
5/5-15/25	78	22
3/17-27/25	79	21
1/27-2/6/25	84	16
12/2-11/24	74	26
Independent		
5/5-15/25	43	57
3/17-27/25	45	55
1/27-2/6/25	46	54
12/2-11/24	46	54
Democrat		
5/5-15/25	31	69
3/17-27/25	31	69
1/27-2/6/25	19	81
12/2-11/24	21	79

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Question: Overall, how much do you approve or disapprove of the way the U.S. Supreme Court is handling its job?

About the Marquette Law School Poll

The survey was conducted May 5-15, 2025, interviewing 1,004 adults nationwide, with a margin of error of +/-3.6 percentage points.

Interviews were conducted using the SSRS Opinion Panel, a national probability sample with interviews conducted online. Certain other data from this survey (focusing on views of the Trump administration and policy issues) were [released on May 21](#). The detailed methodology statement, survey instrument, topline results, and crosstabs for this release are available on the [Marquette Law Poll website](#).

Wording of questions about recent and past Supreme Court decisions: These items do not attempt to exactly frame the particular issues in specific cases but rather address the topic in more general terms. The wording of questions about recent cases include:

Noem v. Abrego Garcia

- In April, the Supreme Court ruled that federal law requires the Trump administration to facilitate the return of a man erroneously deported to El Salvador. How much do you favor or oppose this decision?

Trump v. J.G.G.

- In April, the Supreme Court said that those the administration is seeking to deport under the Alien Enemies Act must receive notice that they are subject to deportation within a reasonable time and in such a manner as will allow them to actually seek court review before such deportation occurs. How much do you favor or oppose this decision?

Mahmoud v. Taylor

- In April, the Supreme Court heard arguments in a case asking whether parents of elementary school students should be able to opt their children out of reading classes concerning stories about

LGBTQ+ characters, if those stories conflict with the families' religious beliefs. How do you think the Court should rule?

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