



Pulse on America

Political Violence and Election Interference



October 2024

American consumers and employees expect business leaders to speak out against political violence and election interference

The Weber Shandwick Collective (TWSC) – including Weber Shandwick, Powell Tate and United Minds in partnership with KRC Research – surveyed American consumers and employees on the role of business in national elections, including how business should respond in the event of election interference, political violence and a contested election.

The findings show that, across political affiliations, Americans want businesses to speak out in the event of election interference and political violence, despite ongoing expectations of political neutrality from businesses.

Americans want business leaders to help keep the election fair and peaceful

In July, TWSC found that Americans expect business leaders to “take a stand to protect democracy” and denounce political violence. The latest research sharpens these findings, outlining specific expectations for business leaders in the event of mass election interference, violence or a refusal of a candidate to concede.

Roughly two-thirds of U.S. adults want American business leaders to be engaged when it comes to protecting a free and fair election.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements...

(Among U.S. adults)

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Not sure Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree

American business leaders should publicly condemn political violence in connection with the 2024 presidential election.



American business leaders should publicly condemn election interference in connection with the 2024 presidential election.



After the presidential election, American business leaders should use their influence to facilitate a peaceful transfer of power.





During the presidential election, American business leaders should use their influence to stop or discourage election interference.



If a presidential candidate refuses to concede based on official election results, American business leaders should call on that candidate to concede.



While support for business leaders condemning political violence and election interference crosses demographic groups, support for business leaders calling on a losing candidate to concede is more concentrated among Democrats + Democratic leaners (72%, versus 52% of Republicans + Republican leaners).

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements...

(Among U.S. adults)

% Strongly agree + Somewhat agree

	Total (1015) % Agree	Democrat / leaning (458) % Agree	Republican / leaning (383) % Agree	Independent/ non-leaning (118) % Agree
American business leaders should publicly condemn political violence in connection with the 2024 presidential election.	74%	78%	73%	64%
American business leaders should publicly condemn election interference in connection with the 2024 presidential election.	71%	77%	71%	52%
After the presidential election, American business leaders should use their influence to facilitate a peaceful transfer of power.	69%	77%	66%	58%
During the presidential election, American business leaders should use their influence to stop or discourage election interference.	69%	76%	66%	56%
If a presidential candidate refuses to concede based on official election results, American business leaders should call on that candidate to concede.	61%	73%	52%	47%

Consumers expect businesses to act in response to election interference and political violence

In July’s survey, 55% of American consumers and 51% of employees said they expect businesses to speak out against political violence.

According to the latest Pulse on America poll, key actions would trigger a desire for businesses to publicly speak out and/or act to help stop election interference.





Indicate what businesses and employers should do, if anything, if there is evidence of the following election interference related to the upcoming presidential election... (Among U.S. adults)

% Do something (Publicly speak out + Publicly speak out AND take action)

	Total (1015) % Agree	Democrat / leaning (458) % Agree	Republican / leaning (383) % Agree	Independent/ non-leaning (118) % Agree
Mass harassment or intimidation at the polls	74%	79%	72%	63%
Mass illegal voting	73%	74%	77%	62%
Mass rigging of voting machines	72%	73%	75%	63%
Interference with the postal system or vote count	72%	75%	74%	60%
Significant violence related to the outcome of the vote	72%	76%	71%	62%
Attempts to illegitimately overturn election results	71%	75%	69%	61%
Voiding mass numbers of votes	68%	72%	67%	56%
Overturning vote counts	67%	72%	66%	64%
Voter suppression activities, like reducing early voting, purging voter rolls, closing polling places	67%	75%	64%	58%
Refusing to accept the results of the election	60%	69%	55%	48%
Mass protests related to the outcome of the vote	60%	66%	57%	48%

Counsel to leaders

"As the realities of hyperpartisanship reach a fever pitch this election cycle, Americans are clear about what they expect from business leaders: stability and zero tolerance for political violence. They want businesses to stay neutral politically and to stay above the fray – but to play an important role in defending our democracy and its institutions. Finding the right voice, tone and setting for this support will be a critical challenge in the run-up to November 5, as well as following the election should there be a protracted process for determining the winner."

Pam Jenkins, Chief Public Affairs Officer for The Weber Shandwick Collective

Method:

KRC Research, TWSC’s research firm, conducted the survey among 1,015 Americans, 18 years of age and over, from September 20 to 22, 2024. The survey, conducted online, is demographically representative of the U.S. adult population. Approximately half the sample (502) are employed. The national survey is the 17th installment since March 2020.

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