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**To:** Interested Parties  
**From:** Alex Lundry, Redbud Consulting  
**Date:** July 24, 2026  
**Re:** New national survey

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## **THE BOTTOM LINE**

The inaugural wave of the Centerline Liberties Tracker, a new monthly national survey of registered voters, finds an electorate that has adopted AI faster than it has learned to trust it: a majority use it every week, three-quarters worry about it, and a stunning 87% want government rules governing it. In a country that can't agree on anything, voters of every party back every single AI guardrail we tested - by margins of 40 points or more.

And AI is only part of the story. The same survey finds one in five voters delaying medical care over money, one in five reporting frequent loneliness, and four in five showing at least one sign of political burnout.

## **KEY FINDINGS**

**AI has gone mainstream.** 57% of registered voters now use AI tools like ChatGPT, Claude, Grok or Gemini at least weekly - including 31% who use them every day or almost every day. Just 17% have never tried them. This is no longer an early-adopter technology; it's a daily habit crossing every demographic line.

**But worry outruns hope - by 13 points.** 76% of voters are worried AI could be misused or cause harm; 63% are hopeful it could improve their daily lives. And the worry runs deeper: 39% are worried "a great deal," versus 31% who are that hopeful. Voters hold both feelings at once - but anxiety is winning.

**Optimism close to home, dread for the next generation.** Asked whether AI will mostly help or mostly harm over the next ten years, voters are net-positive about themselves and their families (+14) - and net-negative about job opportunities for the next generation (-8, with a 42% plurality saying AI will mostly harm them). Voters think they'll be fine. It's their kids they're worried about.

**Voters believe AI can crunch, but it can't care.** 62% say AI will eventually solve technical and factual problems as well as a person. But barely one in five believe it will ever show real empathy (20%), make moral judgments (19%), or truly understand what another person is feeling (22%). Call it the Competence-Compassion Divide - and it's why voters refuse to let AI make the big calls.

**They won't hand AI the keys.** On all five high-stakes decisions we tested - insurance approvals, medical treatment, pretrial release, mental-health counseling, battlefield weapons - voters say AI would do a worse job than a person. The resistance peaks exactly where the stakes are most human: 57% say AI would be worse at providing therapy, and half or more reject AI judgment in the courtroom (50%) and in combat (52%).

**The mandate for guardrails is enormous - and bipartisan.** 87% want government to set rules for AI; just 13% say the government should mostly stay out of the way. By 2-to-1 (68%-32%), voters say the

federal government should be able to shut down an AI system it considers a national-security risk - even over the objections of a private company. And every specific guardrail we tested wins in a landslide: labeling AI-generated content (88% support), guaranteed human control of important decisions (86%), criminal liability for tech executives whose AI causes serious harm (83%), pre-release government approval of new systems (82%), and banning autonomous weapons (73%). Republicans, Democrats, and independents all net out at +42 or better on every single one.

**The twist: AI's believers want the fewest rules.** The voters most bullish on AI's abilities - younger and non-white voters - are also the most open to letting it make decisions and the *least* supportive of regulating it. The pro-guardrail coalition is anchored by the skeptics: older voters and women. The regulation debate ahead won't be left versus right; it'll be believers versus doubters.

## **BEYOND AI: AN ELECTORATE UNDER STRAIN**

**One in five voters delayed medical care over money.** In the past year, 37% of voter households put off a major life event for financial reasons - led by 21% who delayed medical care or skipped filling a prescription, 18% who put off changing jobs or starting a business, and 11% who postponed buying a home.

**Loneliness runs deep - especially among the young.** One in five voters say they *often* feel they lack companionship, and only 22% report no loneliness at all. On a 0-100 loneliness index, voters under 35 score a 48 - voters 55 and older score a 29. The loneliest Americans are the youngest ones.

**Politics is driving voters to retreat.** In just the past week, 28% avoided the news because it was too stressful, 20% avoided a person or place over political disagreement, and 19% muted or blocked someone online. All told, 80% of voters show at least one sign of political acrimony. The hopeful note: 38% also managed a friendly conversation with someone across the aisle.

**Online sports betting has reached a third of the electorate.** 35% of voters used a betting app like DraftKings or FanDuel in the past month - a mainstream behavior worth watching.

## **WHY IT MATTERS**

Every camp in the AI debate will find something here. The industry gets adoption numbers it could only dream of two years ago. Advocates get proof that guardrails aren't a niche cause - they're an 87% issue. And elected officials get something rarer still: permission. On AI regulation, voters aren't waiting to be persuaded; they're waiting for someone to act. The Centerline Tracker will be back in the field every month to measure who does.

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*Methodology: The Centerline Tracker Wave 1 survey was conducted online July 2026 by Redbud Consulting on behalf of Centerline Liberties, among N=400 nationally representative registered voters. Results are weighted to national registered-voter targets; the margin of error is approximately  $\pm 4.9\%$ . Full question wording, toplines, and charts available on request.*