

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Shannon-Janean Currie, BSG / Kristen Soltis Anderson, Echelon Insights
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RE: Findings from New National Survey

Though many discussions on the challenges facing Americans tend to highlight division and disagreement, new polling shows that Americans are united on some of the biggest and most pressing issues of the day. There is strong support around areas like improving education, protecting the environment and building strong communities.

Furthermore, many Americans believe that nonprofits and philanthropic organizations have an important role to play in helping achieve these shared goals. They have specific suggestions and recommendations for how nonprofits can have the greatest impact.

The following findings are from a nationally representative survey of 1,504 American adults, conducted online from August 28th to September 4th, 2024 by BSG and Echelon Insights. Data was weighted to ensure representativeness, resulting in an overall margin of error of +/- 2.53% at a 95% confidence level. Subgroup analysis will yield a higher margin of error.

More than 7 in 10 Americans think it is extremely or very important for organizations trying to make a difference to address these issues in their communities:

- Clean and Safe Water - 78%
- Quality, Affordable Healthcare - 72%
- Quality of K-12 Education - 71%
- Safe, Affordable Housing - 70%
- Healthy & Affordable Food - 70%

Americans think that nonprofits as well as local governments are effective at driving change:

- 72% say nonprofits are effective at improving the lives of people in their communities compared with just 53% who feel the same about the federal government.
- Americans view the following as highly effective in driving positive change:
 - Local governments - 65%
 - Local businesses - 74%
 - Community members - 69%
- 81% say that nonprofits having a “bold” vision is essential for success.

Americans think listening matters, and crave responsive, community-centered leadership:

- 83% of Americans believe it's important for nonprofits to listen to those affected by their work.
- 68% believe we need fundamentally different approaches to solving problems.

Community engagement is critical for success in building stronger communities:

- 82% of Americans believe it's important for nonprofits to "bring people together to solve problems."
- 17% believe that the biggest challenge facing nonprofits is "making decisions without engaging the communities where it works."
- 93% agree that empowering those most affected is crucial for making a difference.

Community

- Americans overwhelmingly believe that community well-being hinges on a strong sense of belonging (85% say it's important) and opportunities for residents to connect and build relationships (82%). This sentiment is shared across party lines, with 86% of Democrats, 83% of Independents and 84% of Republicans agreeing.
- Across all age groups, Americans recognize the importance of a community where everyone feels welcome and respected (87% say this is very important).