



BECKET
Religious Liberty for All

**RELIGIOUS
FREEDOM
INDEX**

American
Perspectives on the
First Amendment
Fifth Edition

We are excited to present the fifth edition of the Religious Freedom Index. This year's Index provides insight on some of the most pressing issues of the day, including ongoing court cases, the rights of parents to educate their children in their religious tradition, how the next generation is shaping ideas around faith in America, and more. In 2023, the Index score rose to 69—its highest score ever—and showed that despite generational differences and ideological divides, America's commitment to religious liberty remained strong.

Survey Instrument

21

Index Questions –
Same questions every year

15+

Additional Questions –
Change to ask about timely topics

n=1,000

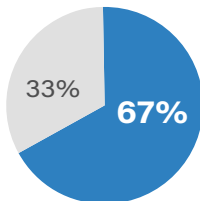
Sample Size –
*Nationally representative of
American adults*

2023 Key Findings

Americans rally in support of parental rights:

Across a wide variety of questions, Americans support the right to a religious education for families of faith.

Supporting Opt-outs



67% of respondents support opt-outs from school curriculum that parents think is morally objectionable or inappropriate.

Bouncing back after a slump:

2020 was a poor year for the Index—but in 2023, three years later, Americans are regaining their faith in religion.

Religion is part of the solution

+9 points
since 2022



59% of Americans believe religion is part of the solution to America's problems, up 9 percentage points from 2022.

New generation, different focus:

This year, the Index shows that younger Americans have different priorities than their older counterparts—for better or worse.

Gen Z supports Religion in the Workplace



Gen Z is significantly more accepting than other Americans of religious clothing and religious days off in the workplace.

Index Results

The Index questions group six statistical dimensions of religious freedom scaled 0 to 100, where 0 indicates complete opposition to principles of religious freedom and 100 indicates robust support.

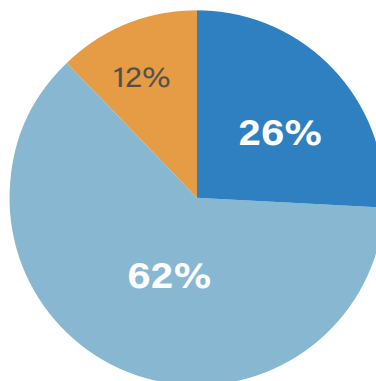
The average of these dimensions creates the new composite Index score, which reached a new all-time high of 69 in 2023, up 1 from last year.

Church & State	59	+3
Religion in Society	65	+3
Religion in Action	68	+0
Religion & Policy	66	+1
Religious Sharing	72	+0
Religious Pluralism	84	+0
2023 Index Composite Score	69	+1 points since 2022

Americans embrace the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) standard

November 2023 was the 30th Anniversary of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. As one of our yearly questions, we asked Americans about the RFRA standard, which says that the federal government cannot burden religious freedom without 1) a compelling reason, and 2) choosing the option least restrictive of religious freedom.

An overwhelming 88% of Americans favored RFRA or an even stronger standard for religious freedom. Only 12% thought that RFRA went too far.



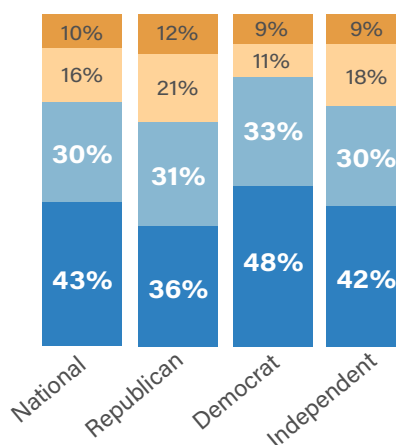
The RFRA standard

- Not protective enough of religious freedom
- Just about right
- Too protective of religious freedom

Americans prioritize Native American sacred sites over mining minerals

This year's Index also asked a question about a RFRA case currently pending in federal court, *Apache Stronghold v. United States*, where Native Americans seek to preserve an ancient sacred site from destruction by a copper mine.

We found that Americans overwhelmingly support protecting sacred sites, even when told that mining advocates believe the mine will create jobs and produce copper, necessary for electric vehicles.



Native American sacred sites

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose

Americans now oppose school districts enacting pronoun policies

In a dramatic reversal, a strong majority (58%) of Americans now disagree with school policies that require students and employees to use a person's preferred pronouns.

This is a 12-point swing since 2021, when only 46% of Americans disagreed with school pronoun policies.

Implementing school pronoun policies

- Oppose school pronoun policies
- Support school pronoun policies

