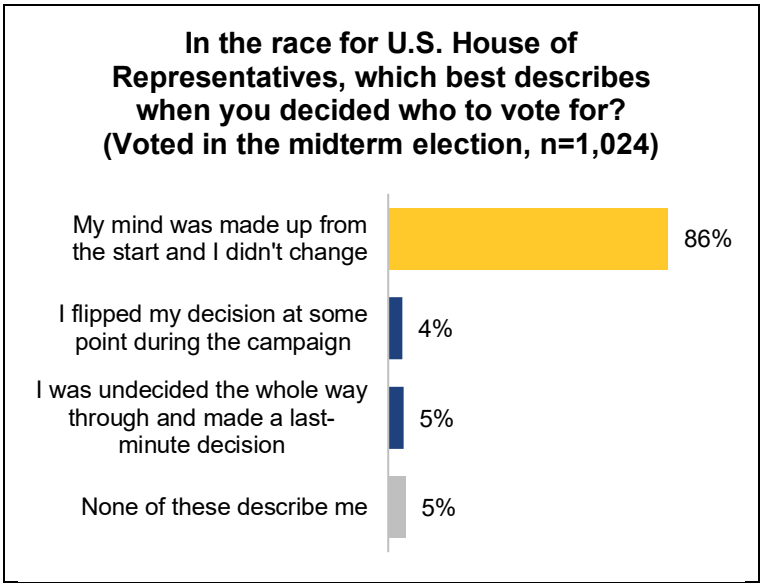
angus reid global

every opinion tells a story

Despite record ad spend, voters were unwavering in their decision

Just 4% of voters say they changed their mind during the campaign, while half of Americans (51%) believe people who made large donations tried to influence the outcome unfairly



November 5, 2026 – The 2026 midterm campaign set a record for political advertising, with an estimated $11.2 billion spent or reserved, according to ad-tracking firm AdImpact. Most voters say they had made up their minds before the campaign began.

New data from Angus Reid Global finds that, among those who voted, 86% say their mind was made up from the start and did not change when deciding their vote for the U.S. House of Representatives. Just 4% say they changed their mind at some point during the campaign, and 5% say they stayed undecided until making a last-minute choice.

Those small groups can still matter in close races, and they are larger among voters without a party attachment. Among voters who lean toward neither party, 73% say their mind was made up from the start, compared with 92% of Democrats and 84% of Republicans. Among these unattached voters, 12% say they stayed undecided until the last minute.

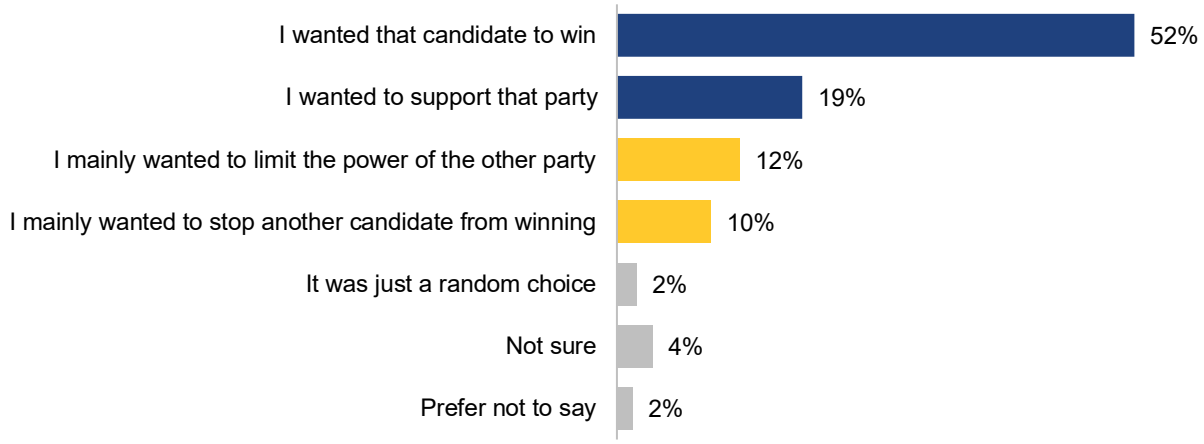
Most voters backed a candidate, but one-in-five voted mainly against something

Asked for the main reason behind their House vote, about half of voters (52%) say they wanted that candidate to win, and 19% say they wanted to support that party. One-in-five (22%) voted mainly against something: 12% wanted to limit the power of the other party, and 10% wanted to stop another candidate from winning.

Younger voters were less settled. Among voters aged 18 to 34, 81% say their mind was made up from the start, compared with 90% of those 55 and older.

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Thinking about the contest for the House of Representatives, which comes closest to your main reason for voting for the candidate you voted for?
(Voted in the midterm election, n=1,024)

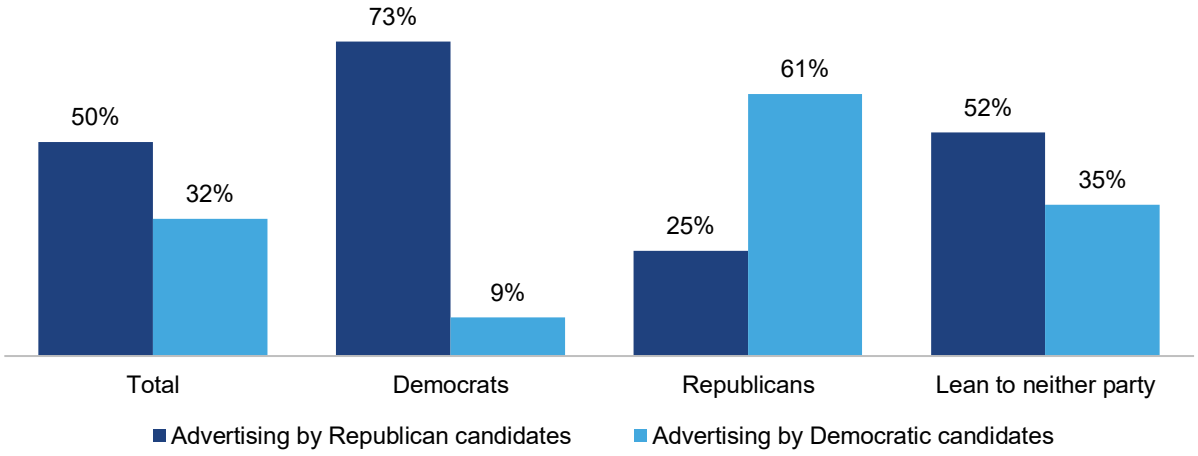


Republican advertising seen as more disrespectful than Democratic advertising

Americans did not think much of the tone of this year's campaign. Half (50%) say advertising by Republican candidates was disrespectful, compared with one-third (32%) who say the same of advertising by Democratic candidates.

Views split along party lines. Among Democrats, 73% call Republican advertising disrespectful, while 61% of Republicans say the same of Democratic advertising. Among those who lean toward neither party, 52% say Republican advertising was disrespectful and 35% say the same of Democratic advertising.

Thinking about this year's midterm election campaign, how respectful or disrespectful did each of these seem to you? (Net: disrespectful)
(All respondents, n=1,336; by party, including those who lean)



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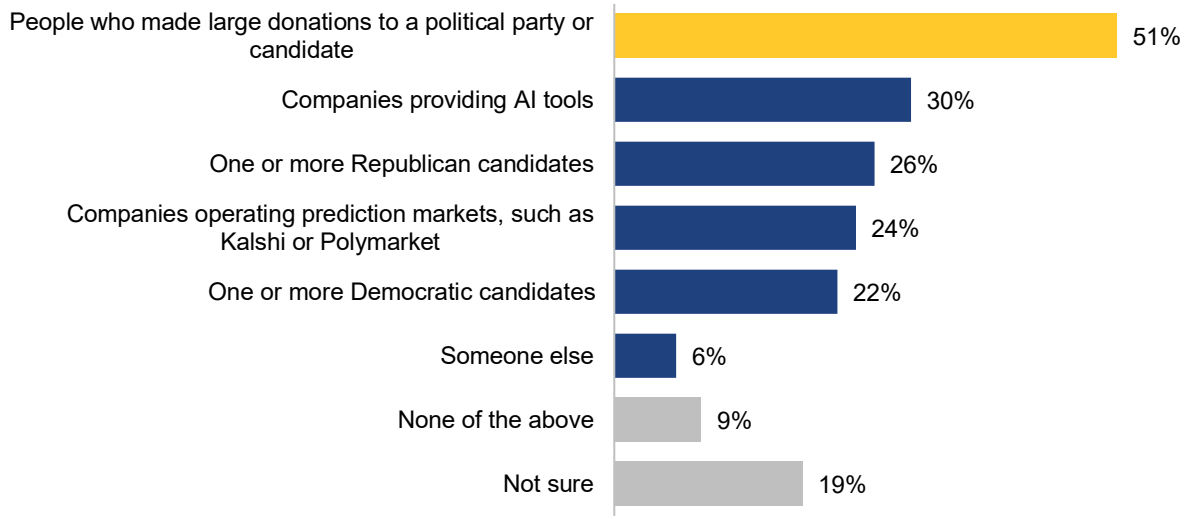
Half say large donors tried to influence the outcome unfairly

Asked which groups, if any, tried to influence the outcome of the election in ways that were unfair or illegal, half of Americans (51%) name people who made large donations to a political party or candidate. That is well ahead of companies providing AI tools (30%), Republican candidates (26%), companies operating prediction markets such as Kalshi or Polymarket (24%) and Democratic candidates (22%). Another 19% are not sure.

Concern about large donors crosses party lines, including majorities of Democrats (61%) and those who lean toward neither party (54%), and 43% of Republicans. It is higher among those 55 and older (58%) than among those aged 18 to 34 (44%), and higher among those with household incomes of $100,000 or more (60%) than among those with incomes under $50,000 (43%).

"Record spending bought a lot of airtime, but voters had already made up their minds. Many came away more concerned about who was paying for the ads than about what the ads said," said Natalie Lacey, executive vice president at Angus Reid Global.

Based on what you've seen or heard, do you think any of the following tried to influence the outcome of this election in ways that were unfair or illegal?
(All respondents, n=1,336; respondents could select more than one)



Methodology

Angus Reid Global conducted an online survey Nov. 4-5, 2026, among a representative sample of 1,336 American adults aged 18 and older who are members of the Angus Reid Forum US panel. The data were weighted by age, gender, education, region and 2024 presidential vote. Questions about how people voted were asked of the 1,024 respondents who said they voted in the midterm election. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of plus or minus 2.7 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Totals may not add to 100 because of rounding. The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by Angus Reid Global.

For detailed results by age, gender, region, household income and party affiliation, click here.

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