

Confidence Gap Widens as Democrats' Trust in U.S. Institutions Hits Historic Low

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A new Gallup poll reveals a sharp decline in Democrats' trust in key U.S. institutions, falling to just 26%, the lowest ever recorded. In contrast, Republicans' confidence has risen to 37%, highlighting a growing partisan divide in how Americans view foundational pillars of governance and public service.

The survey, conducted between June 2 and June 26, 2025, shows overall public confidence in nine long-tracked American institutions holding steady at 28%. However, the data reflects a notable divergence: while Republican respondents showed a 9-point increase in confidence since last year, Democratic trust dropped by 5 points, widening the partisan gap to its largest margin in over four decades.

The most striking drop among Democrats came in their trust of the presidency, which fell by 58 percentage points. Confidence in the U.S. military dropped by 21 points, while trust in police fell by 16 points. These are particularly significant losses given the central roles these institutions play in maintaining national security and civil order. Republicans, on the other hand, reported higher levels of confidence in all three.

Among all adults surveyed, only three institutions received majority-level trust: small business (70%), the military (62%), and science (61%). Institutions such as Congress, the Supreme Court, public schools, and the criminal justice system continue to languish at or near record lows across the political spectrum.

This stark contrast in public sentiment reflects a broader trend of politicized trust in American institutions. Confidence now appears to be more closely aligned with which political party holds power, rather than based on institutional effectiveness or integrity. For Democrats, the erosion suggests growing disillusionment or perhaps unrealistic expectations of government performance under Republican leadership.

It's worth noting that this sharp decline mirrors a broader cultural shift. The Democratic base, increasingly influenced by progressive activists

and media narratives, seems less inclined to trust traditional authority figures such as the military and police institutions historically respected across party lines.

For Republicans, the increase in institutional trust likely stems from alignment with current leadership and a belief that key systems are finally being returned to order after years of perceived decline.

As the 2026 midterms approach, the challenge for both parties is not just electoral, but institutional: restoring cross-partisan faith in the pillars that underpin American democracy, without allowing trust to rise or fall solely along partisan lines.