

# Newsweek Donald Trump's Approval Rating Implodes with Independent Voters

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Newsweek By Sam Stevenson -- Feb 25, 2026

**Independent voters have turned sharply against President Donald Trump, according to data from two national polls, with a new survey showing his approval collapsing since the early days of his second term.**

## Why It Matters

Independent voters often decide close races, and their patience with presidents can wear thin as governing records take shape.

With midterm elections approaching, sustained weakness here could reshape the electoral battlefield.

[**Note by RP Lynch:** This means in virtually every major Senate and House Race, the Independent Voter's will tip the balance of the voting scales. If a good candidate opposes Trump, the chances of winning the election are quite high.]

## What To Know

**Independent voters were uneasy about Trump at the start of his second term.**

**A year later, that unease appears to have hardened into firm opposition.**

In late January 2025, just days after Trump returned to office, an Economist/YouGov poll showed independents narrowly disapproving of his performance. Some 41 percent said they approved of the way he was handling the presidency, while 45 percent disapproved, putting his net approval (those who approve minus those who disapprove) at -4.

**By February 2026, that balance had collapsed.**

**In a new Economist/YouGov survey, only 25 percent of independents said they approved of Trump's job performance.**

Meanwhile, 66 percent said they disapproved, leaving him with a net approval rating of -41 among voters who do not identify with either major party.

That shift represents a 37 point erosion in net approval since Trump took office in January 2025—an unusually steep decline for a group that often swings between parties and tends to be slower to lock in negative views.

The February 2026 poll, also sponsored by The Economist and conducted by YouGov, surveyed 1,551 U.S. adult citizens between February 20 and 23 and carried a 3.3 percent margin of error.

**The topline results point to a sharp break with independents, rather than a slow drift.**

Presidents often lose some ground outside their base as policy fights mount and political costs accumulate. The scale of this decline, however, suggests Trump is no longer just polarizing independents—he is actively losing them.