

ARIZONA SHOOTING

Few Americans Blame Political Climate for Arizona Shooting

More than a third of respondents expect more events similar to the Arizona shooting to happen in America over the next few months.

[NEW YORK – Jan. 11, 2011] – Many Americans are following news stories related to the shooting that took place in Arizona just a few days ago, and more than half believe that the incident is not related to the current political climate in the United States, a new Vision Critical poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative sample of 1,008 American adults, 73 per cent of respondents say they are following news related to the shooting “very closely” or “moderately closely.”

The shooting took place near Tucson, Arizona, on Jan. 8, as Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords held a meeting with constituents. A 22-year-old man, Jared Lee Loughner, faces five federal charges, including the attempted assassination of Giffords.

A majority of respondents (51%) believe the shooting is the result of an individual’s actions and should be regarded as an isolated incident, while a smaller proportion (31%) think the shooting is the result of the current negative tone of politics in America.

However, more than a third of Americans (37%) say they expect more events similar to the Arizona shooting to happen in the U.S. over the next few months.

KEY FINDINGS

- **51% say the shooting is the result of an individual’s actions and should be regarded as an isolated incident; 31% believe it is the result of the current negative tone of politics in America**
- **37% expect more events similar to the Arizona shooting to happen in America over the next few months**
- **Democrats and Independents more likely to call for stricter firearms laws; Republicans would keep existing regulations**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From January 10 to January 11, 2011, Vision Critical conducted an online survey among 1,008 American adults who are Springboard America panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of the United States. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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President Barack Obama gets good marks for his handling of the aftermath of the Arizona shooting, with 56 per cent of respondents saying they are satisfied with his actions. The Media in America gets a slightly lower rating, with 50 per cent voicing satisfaction with the way it has covered the incident.

Views on Gun Laws

This Vision Critical survey asked the same questions that were included in [an Angus Reid study on gun laws](#) in June 2010. In all, 85 per cent of Americans say that the Second Amendment guarantees the rights of individuals to keep and bear arms, while only eight per cent disagree with this assessment.

Across the country, 45 per cent of respondents say they are satisfied with existing federal regulations related to firearm ownership, while 41 per cent are dissatisfied. Half of Americans (50%) say they would prefer to have stricter firearms laws—including 65 per cent of Democrats and 51 per cent of Independents. About one-in-four respondents (27%) would retain the existing regulations, including two-in-five Republicans (44%).

While Americans continue to reject the possibility of semi-automatic firearms being available for every American who is eligible to own firearms (only 23% support this idea), more than two-thirds believe that handguns (70%) and rifles or shotguns (73%) should remain legal.

On the question of concealed carry—where states have enacted different regulations—almost half of respondents (47%) agree with the notion that citizens should be granted a permit to carry a concealed weapon if they meet specific criteria laid out in the law. Fewer Americans are in favour of banning people from carrying concealed weapons (24%), issuing permits based on the recommendation of local authorities (16%), or allowing people to carry concealed weapons without a permit (9%).

Analysis

When this survey's responses are compared with the findings of the June 2010 survey, there is very little fluctuation on the way Americans feel about firearms regulations. The interpretation of the Second Amendment remains practically universal, and the "shall-issue" approach for carrying firearms in public—which entails granting permits under specific legal criteria—continues to be the most popular option across the country. The only noticeable change comes from Independents, whose support for stricter firearms regulations has increased by ten points.

Republicans and Independents are definitely more likely than Democrats to look at the events of Jan. 8 as an isolated incident. However, about two-in-five Democrats and Independents expect similar events to happen in the United States, compared to three-in-ten Republicans. The thesis that the current political climate led to the Arizona shooting is rejected by a majority of Americans, who point the finger solely at the alleged perpetrator.

For all our polls, go to our [website](#) / Follow us on [Twitter](#)

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About Vision Critical®

Vision Critical is a global research and technology firm that creates software and services solutions for over 600 clients, including one-in-four of the world's top 100 brands. The company has offices across North America, Europe and Australia as well as a Global Partner Program that provides other research companies and consultants with access to top-of-the-line technology. Its Sparq™ product is the most widely adopted community panel platform on the planet.

About the Vision Critical Public Affairs practice

The Vision Critical Public Affairs practice is headed by Dr. Angus Reid: an industry visionary who has spent more than four decades asking questions to figure out what people feel, how they think and who they will vote for. A team of talented and experienced practitioners with a unique and profound understanding of global issues conduct high quality research throughout the world on a daily basis for corporations, governments, academic researchers, and non-profit organizations.

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

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Firearms				
The Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution reads: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." For you, personally, what does the Second Amendment mean?				
	United States	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
That individuals have the right to keep and bear arms	85%	79%	91%	86%
That individuals do not have the right to keep and bear arms	8%	11%	5%	9%
Not sure	7%	10%	3%	5%

Firearms				
At this point, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with existing federal regulations related to firearm ownership?				
	United States	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
Satisfied	45%	44%	57%	41%
Dissatisfied	41%	40%	33%	51%
Not sure	14%	16%	10%	9%

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Firearms				
If it were up to you, would you prefer to have stricter firearm laws, looser firearm laws, or would you keep existing regulations the way they are?				
	United States	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
Stricter firearms laws	50%	65%	30%	51%
Looser firearm laws	13%	6%	19%	15%
Keep existing regulations	27%	18%	44%	31%
Not sure	10%	10%	7%	4%

Firearms			
Below is a list of weapons. For each one, please say whether this type of weapon should be available to every American who is eligible to own firearms, or only to the police and other authorized persons.			
	Handguns	Rifles / Shotguns	Semi-automatic firearms
Every American who is eligible to own firearms should have access to these weapons	70%	73%	26%
Only the police and other authorized persons should have access to these weapons	21%	18%	63%
Not sure	9%	8%	10%

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Firearms				
Across the U.S, states have different regulations related to how individuals can carry a concealed weapon in public. Thinking about your own state, which one of these options would you prefer to implement?				
	United States	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
Citizens should not be allowed to carry a concealed weapon at all	24%	32%	15%	25%
Citizens should be granted a permit to carry a concealed weapon if local authorities agree to it	16%	17%	19%	16%
Citizens should be granted a permit to carry a concealed weapon if they meet specific criteria laid out in the law	47%	45%	54%	44%
Citizens should be allowed to carry a concealed weapon without any permit	9%	4%	11%	11%
Not sure	4%	2%	2%	4%

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Arizona Shooting				
How closely have you followed news related to the shooting that took place on Jan. 8 near Tucson, Arizona?				
	United States	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
Very closely	30%	32%	32%	31%
Moderately closely	43%	42%	46%	45%
Not too closely	18%	18%	18%	17%
Not closely at all	9%	8%	5%	7%

Arizona Shooting				
From what you have seen, read or heard about the Arizona shooting, which of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?				
	United States	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
This shooting is the result of the current negative tone of politics in America	31%	38%	26%	32%
This shooting is the result of an individual's actions and should be regarded as an isolated incident	51%	43%	64%	52%
Not sure	18%	19%	10%	16%

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Arizona Shooting				
All things considered, do you expect more events similar to the Arizona shooting to happen in America over the next few months?				
	United States	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
Yes, I do	37%	38%	29%	40%
No, I do not	32%	28%	37%	35%
Not sure	32%	34%	33%	25%

Arizona Shooting		
Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way each of the following have handled the aftermath of the Arizona shooting?		
	President Barack Obama	The Media in America
Satisfied	56%	50%
Dissatisfied	26%	36%
Not sure	18%	14%

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