


Adults with Disabilities Make Up Massive Voter Bloc, but Largely Overlooked by Candidates -- New Easterseals Survey Reveals 35MM are Prepared to Vote in 2024 Election Despite Overwhelming Barriers to Cast Their Ballot

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Easterseals released the results of a new nationwide survey of adult Americans with disabilities, revealing a politically engaged community with 37 million registered voters -- 87% of whom plan to vote, along with 7% who have already voted early -- are determined to make their voices heard in the 2024 presidential election, despite facing overwhelming barriers to cast their vote. "Regardless of so many roadblocks, people with disabilities will not be deterred and will show up at the polls," says Ben Trockman, disability advocate and City Councilman in Evansville, Indiana, the first quadriplegic to serve in the state. "Fortunately, we are a passionate group and problem solvers who are finding creative ways around difficult and unnecessary obstacles." "What's more, candidates are missing out in understanding our issues, especially when our perspectives have an important place in this election. My hope is that anyone and everyone with a disability receives the appropriate accommodations that legally must be provided and with common sense courtesy," adds Trockman. Survey respondents identify healthcare and economic security as top reasons for voting in this year's presidential election. They express concerns about meeting their own economic needs and strengthening health care.

- Adults with disabilities face unique economic challenges, including low employment rates and heavy reliance on government health and economic programs resulting in significant difficulty making ends meet.
- When asked, respondents rank these health care priorities at the top: Ensuring the right to make your own healthcare decisions without government interference (79%); Ensuring health insurance coverage of mental health services (71%); and, Protecting and expanding SSDI and SSI benefits (69%).
- But, despite the size of this voter bloc, adults with disabilities feel they are largely ignored and unheard by elected officials, political candidates, and the media.
- In fact, 88% say they haven't received any communications from candidates running for office that specifically address issues affecting voters with disabilities.

A majority rate the performance of elected officials in Washington, D.C., as inadequate addressing issues specific to their community, with 63% holding a negative view.

Lisa Schur and Douglas Kruse, co-directors of the Program for Disability Research at Rutgers University, have studied the patterns of voters with disabilities for years and released their 2024 [Voter Turnout and Voting Accessibility research](#).

The survey highlights the resilience of voters with disabilities, many of whom face structural barriers that complicate their participation in elections, but don't deter them from getting to the ballot box.

- Among registered voters with disabilities 46% report needing at least one accommodation to vote, including 21% who require transportation assistance, 17% who need in-person help from an election official, 16% who need assistance with absentee voting from someone they know, and 15% who require a wheelchair ramp at their polling location.
- 75% of respondents agree (and strongly) that new state laws that reduce early voting periods, limit who can vote by mail, and eliminate absentee ballot drop box locations make it much more difficult for people with disabilities to vote.

"As we approach the 2024 Presidential election, we hope this survey serves as a wakeup call to candidates, policymakers and the media," says Mark Whitley, President and CEO of [Easterseals Southern California](#). "They should devote more time and energy talking directly to the disability community and addressing the issues that matter most." "This voting community is ready to participate in the democratic process, and turn out in large numbers, despite facing significant barriers," Whitley adds. "Disabled voters should not be underestimated, because they do have the ability to influence election outcomes. It's time their voices and priorities are heard." **Methodology**

The survey, conducted by [Pathfinder Opinion Research](#) from October 4-9, 2024, included a representative sample of 800 adult Americans with disabilities. The survey was conducted online, and respondents self-identified based on disability categories used by the U.S. Census Bureau. Data were weighted to reflect the demographic characteristics of the U.S. population with disabilities as reported by the 2023 American Community Survey. For more information about the survey or to access the full results, visit [Easterseals Southern California's voting advocacy page](#). Review the full Easterseals State of Voters with Disabilities key findings and full methodology as reported by Pathfinder Opinion Research.

About Easterseals

Easterseals empowers people to live independent, full lives. We make a lasting difference in the lives of millions of people each year by providing essential services to children and adults with disabilities, older adults, veterans, and their families. Our national network of 70 Affiliates is trusted to provide programs customized to meet the needs of each community we serve from coast-to-coast—trust earned for more than 100 years. We positively shape perceptions and address the evolving needs of more than one in four Americans with disabilities through public education, policy, and advocacy. That's our impact. In thousands of communities across America.
