When citizens and leaders listen, learn and work together, we can make progress on our greatest challenges
“Public Agenda is a nonprofit organization dedicated to unbiased public opinion research.”

> Reuters

“Scientists and the public don’t often speak the same language. Public Agenda has proven to be very skilled at bringing together scientists and citizens for a genuine dialogue on issues of common concern.”

> Alan I. Leshner, CEO, American Association for the Advancement of Science

“Public Agenda’s help was invaluable in our efforts to engage Nebraska’s citizens and develop an approach to academic standards that was right for our state.”

> Dr. Douglas D. Christensen, Nebraska Commissioner of Education
WHO WE ARE
Public Agenda is a nonpartisan, nonprofit research and public engagement organization. Founded in 1975 by social scientist Daniel Yankelovich and former U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, we are dedicated to helping the nation tackle tough issues by bridging the gap between leaders and the public. We work to ensure that the public has the best possible conditions and opportunities to engage thoughtfully in public life, and that decision-making by leaders is well-informed by people’s values, ideas and aspirations.

WHAT WE DO
Our work includes:
   · IN-DEPTH, UNBIASED PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH on critical public policy questions.
   · PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT that brings together people with diverse perspectives to build common ground and solve problems.
   · BROAD-BASED COMMUNICATIONS, including web sites and multimedia products.

WHY WE DO IT
Our work aims to:
   · INFORM PUBLIC POLICY, making sure leaders understand the public’s deep-seated values and evolving views on such issues as education reform, foreign policy, HIV prevention and climate change.
   · STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES AND THEIR CRITICAL INSTITUTIONS by providing tools and technical assistance to leaders for more inclusive and effective problem-solving.
   · EDUCATE AND EMPOWER CITIZENS by helping them understand the pros and cons of different solutions to the challenges facing their communities and the nation.

OUR PARTNERS AND FUNDERS
Our partners and funders share our commitment to unbiased, open inquiry and to pragmatic and sustainable solutions that reflect the public’s values. Thanks to their support, we are able to conduct projects that make a difference on a wide range of issues, from access to higher education to the nation’s energy future.
Recent funders of our research and engagement initiatives include: the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; the Carnegie Corporation of New York; the GE Foundation; The George Washington University; the IBM International Foundation; The Joyce Foundation; the Kettering Foundation; the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation; Learning Point Associates; the Peter G. Peterson Foundation; the Ford Foundation; the Lumina Foundation for Education; the Rockefeller Brothers Fund; The Wallace Foundation; The William And Flora Hewlett Foundation; the W.K. Kellogg Foundation; and the U.S. Department of Education.

To discuss becoming a partner with Public Agenda in public problem-solving, contact:
Ruth A. Wooden, President
212.686.6610
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Public Agenda specializes in public and stakeholder research on issues such as education reform, energy, AIDS prevention and foreign policy. Our research serves to:

- **Identify common ground and gaps** among leaders, experts and the public and among different segments of the public.
- **Assess the effects** of public policies early in their implementation so mid-course adjustments can be made.
- **Illuminate the public’s “learning curve”** on issues.
- **Inform strategies for engaging people** in problem-solving.

Public Agenda research is marked by its commitment to:

- **Nonpartisanship.** We are well-known for being as evenhanded and nonpartisan as possible.
- **Depth.** Our research does not focus on the ways in which public opinion shifts from week to week in response to current events. Rather, we specialize in plumbing the concerns, values and perceptions that drive people’s views and behaviors.
- **Multiple methods.** We believe that both qualitative and quantitative methods have strengths and weaknesses, and that a facility with both is crucial to finding the right approach to a given problem.

While Public Agenda’s research covers many issues, education has been our specialty for many years. Our education research unit, Education Insights, has produced dozens of influential studies, ensuring that the voices of parents, students, teachers and other critical stakeholders are heard during critical junctures in recent education reform debates.
BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER TO ADDRESS COMMON CONCERNS

Public Agenda has been a pioneer of public and stakeholder engagement since 1975, with hands-on experience in hundreds of communities with dozens of tough issues. While always adapted to the task at hand, our work revolves around three interrelated practices:

- **Framing issues for deliberation** in accessible and evenhanded ways that help people understand their stake in an issue and a range of ideas for addressing it.
- **Working with public officials, civil society organizations and grassroots leaders** to engage stakeholders in collaborative problem-solving.
- **Strengthening local capacity** for engagement beyond our direct involvement through tools, training and support networks.

COMMUNICATIONS

BROADENING OUTREACH AND INFLUENCE

Public Agenda has expertise in various forms of communications, including:

- Print, online and multimedia products and publications
- Media relations and partnerships
- Social networking
- Leadership briefings

Our reputation for nonpartisanship enhances the credibility of our communications efforts. As a result, our research and engagement work can have the broadest possible impact. Also as a result, Public Agenda can act as an effective advocate for a fair and inclusive democratic process, one that enables citizens to have a stake in the critical issues of the day.

CENTER FOR ADVANCES IN PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

CAPE is Public Agenda’s think tank dedicated to the theory and practice of deliberative democracy. Through CAPE we produce original research and thought pieces that support a more inclusive, effective and robust democratic process.

PUBLICAGENDA.ORG

PublicAgenda.org is the recipient of two Webby nominations. Our Web site is a reliable source of unbiased information and evenhanded analysis—and a destination for people who are looking for dialogue that crosses partisan boundaries.
TO INFORM PUBLIC POLICY

Through research and stakeholder engagement we help leaders gain the critical insight they need to develop sound and sustainable policies, assess their impact over time and refine them when needed.

Examples of our policy reports include Assignment Incomplete: The Unfinished Business of Education Reform; Let the People Speak: Report of the N.J. Citizen’s Tax Assembly; Important, But Not for Me: Kansas and Missouri Students Talk about Math, Science and Technology Education; The Public’s Energy Learning Curve; Campus Commons?: What Faculty, Financial Officers and Others Think About Controlling College Costs.

“As serious and sober a look at public policy questions as one could ask for.”

> The New York Times

TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES AND THEIR VITAL INSTITUTIONS

Public Agenda has worked in hundreds of communities to support problem-solving by public officials, community-based organizations and grassroots volunteers. Whether the issue is increasing student success at schools and community colleges, enhancing community policing initiatives or informing regional planning efforts, we always seek to strengthen local capacity by sharing tools and strategies that bring people and organizations together in productive ways to address common problems.

To learn more about our community work, see Transforming Public Life: A Decade of Citizen Engagement in Bridgeport, CT, and Public Engagement: A Primer from Public Agenda.

“Public Agenda has provided not only a unique service to our schools and students, but one that is of significant importance to community-based organizations.”

> Jesse Hamilton, Executive Director, Crown Heights (Brooklyn) Service Center

TO EDUCATE AND EMPOWER CITIZENS

Public Agenda’s mission is to help citizens better understand complex issues and enable them to contribute to solutions. We seek to inoculate citizens against the spin machines on all sides by presenting different points of views on complex challenges and identifying the tough choices and tradeoffs that an issue presents, so people can make up their own minds.

Examples of our citizen education work include Planet Forward (www.planetforward.org), Facing Up to the Nation’s Finances (www.facingup.org), and our Citizen’s Survival Kit (www.publicagenda.org).

“For democracy to flourish, it is not enough to get out the vote. We need better public judgment, and we need to know how to cultivate it.”

> Daniel Yankelovich, Public Agenda co-founder & author of Coming to Public Judgment
“After the ‘storm,’ we were flooded with more than water... Experts came from everywhere to solve our problems for us. You were the first to bring an agenda that empowered the average citizen. I thank you for that.”

> Citizen in Moss Point, Miss.

“The Public Agenda model truly opens up dialogue so that people are fully valued for their opinions, experiences, and contributions.”

> Organizer of a Community Conversation at Valencia Community College in Orlando, Fla.