

# CANADIANS MORE LIKELY THAN AMERICANS TO AGREE THAT BURNING THE FLAG SHOULD BE ILLEGAL

ASSOCIATION FOR CANADIAN STUDIES

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# INTRODUCTION

- Canada has no laws prohibiting flag desecration. Acts of this nature are forms of expression protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- However in the United States, the first federal Flag Protection Act was passed by Congress in 1968 in response to protest burnings of the flag at demonstrations against the Vietnam War. Over time, 48 of the 50 U.S. states also enacted similar flag protection laws. All of these statutes were overturned by the US Supreme Court by a 5–4 vote in the case *Texas vs. Johnson* as unconstitutional restrictions of public expression. Congress responded to the *Johnson* decision by passing a Flag Protection Act, only to see the Supreme Court reaffirm *Johnson* by the same 5–4 majority declaring that flag burning was constitutionally-protected free speech.
- The most recent attempt to adopt a flag desecration amendment failed in the US Senate by one vote on June 27, 2006.

# METHODOLOGY

- Leger Marketing consulted 1,519 Canadians across the country for the Canadian Institute for Identities and Migration during the week of November 12, 2018 with a probabilistic margin of error of 3.5 points 19 times out of 20. The sample included some 403 Quebecers with 86 surveyed in English and 317 in French. (in 2017, the US based Cato Institute asked the question in a survey they conducted on free speech)

<https://www.cato.org/survey-reports/state-free-speech-tolerance-am%C3%A9rica>

# CANADIANS MORE LIKELY THAN AMERICANS TO BELIEVE THAT BURNING THE FLAG SHOULD BE ILLEGAL

Cato Institute, United States October, 2017	Burning the flag should be illegal				
	Strongly agree/favor	Somewhat agree/favor	Somewhat disagree/oppose	Strongly disagree/ oppose	Don't Know
Leger for CIIM, November 2018					
United States	41	17	15	27	-
Canada	56	18	9	8	6

# MOST CANADIANS STRONGLY AGREE THAT FLAG BURNING SHOULD BE ILLEGAL; QUEBECERS A BIT LESS STRIDENT ON THE ISSUE

	Burning the Canadian flag should be illegal			
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Alberta	57.9%	18.1%	8.8%	7.6%
British Columbia	52.9%	23.8%	10.2%	6.3%
Manitoba	69.8%	9.4%	7.5%	9.4%
New Brunswick	69.7%	12.1%	6.1%	3.0%
Newfoundland	58.8%	17.6%	5.9%	5.9%
Nova Scotia	63.4%	9.8%	17.1%	2.4%
Ontario	58.9%	16.4%	8.2%	7.9%
Prince Edward Island	57.1%	7.1%	7.1%	14.3%
Quebec	45.6%	23.4%	10.1%	11.3%
Saskatchewan	61.7%	12.8%	8.5%	6.4%
Total	55.7%	18.5%	9.1%	8.2%

# YOUNGEST CANADIANS LEAST LIKELY TO “STRONGLY AGREE” THAT BURNING FLAG SHOULD BE ILLEGAL

	Burning the Canadian flag should be illegal					
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Total
Between 18 and 24	47.3%	21.2%	12.7%	9.7%	9.1%	100%
Between 25 and 34	52.0%	18.4%	9.6%	10.0%	7.6%	100%
Between 35 and 44	51.4%	19.2%	12.2%	8.6%	7.3%	100%
Between 45 and 54	57.0%	18.4%	7.4%	8.1%	5.5%	100%
Between 55 and 64	61.3%	12.0%	11.3%	7.9%	5.3%	100%
Between 65 and 74	61.5%	21.5%	5.3%	5.7%	3.6%	100%
75 or older	58.9%	24.7%	2.7%	6.8%	6.8%	100%
Total	55.8%	18.5%	9.2%	8.2%	6.3%	100%

# 2 OF 3 CANADIANS VERY ATTACHED TO CANADA FAVOR MAKING FLAG BURNING ILLEGAL

Do you feel very attached, somewhat attached, not very attached or not attached at all to the following? - My country-Canada	Burning the Canadian flag should be illegal			
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Very attached	66.7%	15.1%	6.8%	5.9%
Somewhat attached	44.9%	24.8%	12.4%	9.1%
Not very attached	32.7%	20.9%	13.6%	15.5%
Not attached at all	26.2%	16.7%	14.3%	28.6%
Total	55.8%	18.5%	9.2%	8.2%

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***Canadians More Likely Than Americans to Agree That  
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