

Young Alabama Voters: Frustrated, Broke, and Ready to Make Change

October 2026

Young registered voters (ages 18-29) in Alabama are under intense economic pressure and deeply dissatisfied with the country's direction, leaving them anxious and frustrated. Polling from URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity shows that instead of turning towards apathy, Gen Z Alabamians are active online and in their communities, believe in their collective power, and motivated to vote.

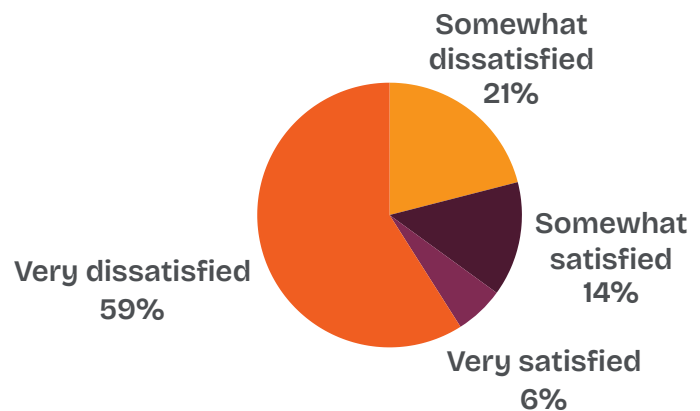
KEY FINDINGS

Dissatisfaction is broad

Eighty percent (80%) of young Alabama voters are dissatisfied with the country's direction, including 59% who are very dissatisfied.

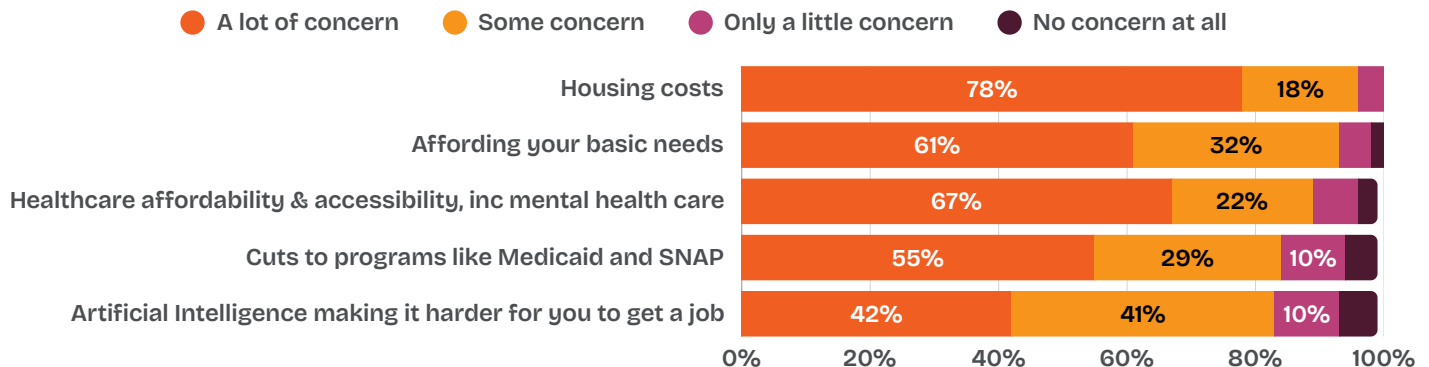
When asked to choose words to describe how they feel about the state of the country, the most common responses were frustrated (39%), anxious (38%), and angry (31%).

Satisfaction with the Direction of the Country



Young adults are struggling financially

More than four in five respondents report little or no room to build financial security: 35% are struggling to pay bills, 48% make only enough to cover them, and just 16% say they can pay bills and save money. Housing costs produce the greatest intensity of concern, with 96% concerned overall and 78% expressing a lot of concern. Affording basic needs concerns 93% of Alabama's Gen Z voters, while 89% are concerned about affordable, accessible healthcare, including mental healthcare.



Economic concerns coexist with concerns about rights and government action

Daily economic pressure does not displace concerns about rights, personal freedom, and fair treatment. Young Alabama voters report high concern across a wide range of issues: 83% are concerned about ICE tactics, 81% about discrimination against immigrants, 80% about laws restricting or banning abortion, and 74% about discrimination against transgender people.



Frustration has not developed into electoral apathy.

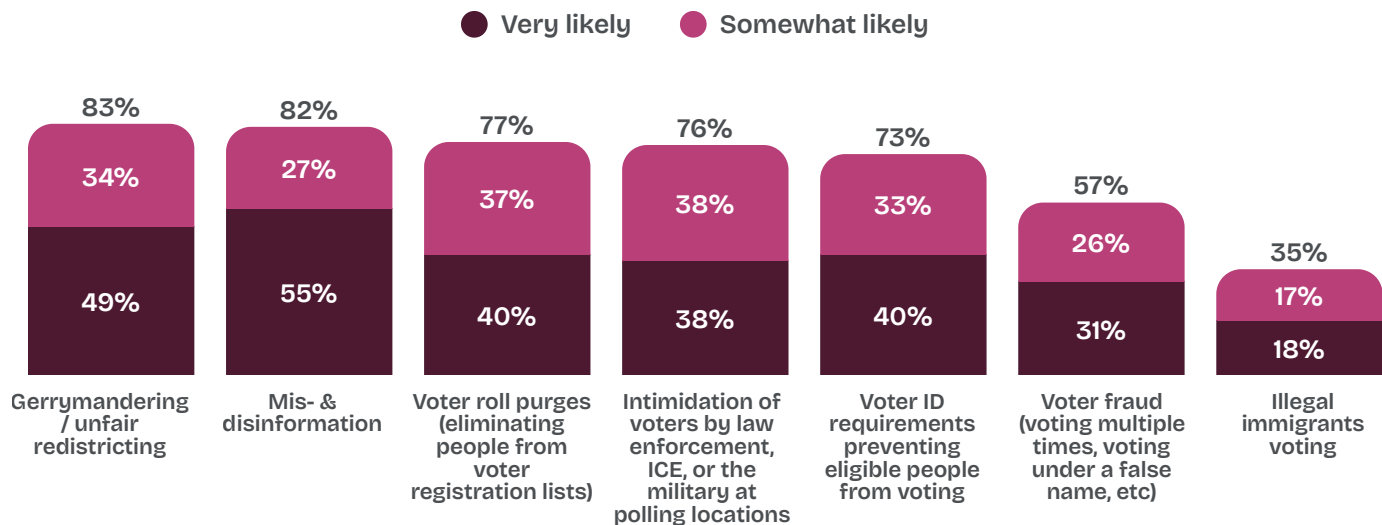
Seventy-nine percent (79%) of respondents say they are motivated to vote in the 2026 midterms, including 53% who are very motivated. Further, 93% say they are almost certain to vote. Far and away, the leading reason motivating Gen Z Alabamians' voting is "to make change on issues that matter," selected by 45% of those surveyed.

GEN Z ALABAMIAN VOTERS' TOP 3...	
most motivating reasons to vote	things that make them feel less motivated to vote
To make change on issues that matter to me	Corporations and the ultra-wealthy's influence in politics
To make my voice heard	The two-party system
To protect my community	The voting system is rigged so my vote doesn't count

Motivation to vote sits alongside concern about fair elections.

Large majorities believe voter suppression efforts are likely to affect who wins the midterms, helping explain why young voters can value voting while remaining skeptical of the process.

Likelihood of the following to impact who wins the upcoming midterm elections



Gen Z Alabamians believe in their power, but see wealthy interests standing in the way.

Fifty-one percent (51%) of Gen Z Alabamians rate their generation's power to create change at 7 or higher on a 10-point scale. Yet, they see that power competing with concentrated wealth: 90% are concerned about the power of billionaires and the wealthiest 1%, while 44% say corporate and ultra-wealthy influence in politics makes them less motivated to vote.

Civic participation extends beyond elections.

In the past year, 50% of Gen Z Alabama voters boycotted a corporation, brand, or business, 48% posted about politics online, 44% signed a petition, and 34% volunteered for a cause or organization. Seventy percent are encouraged by people coming together to protest and boycott, and 65% are encouraged by mutual-aid networks meeting local needs.

About the research

URGE commissioned HIT Strategies to examine how Alabama voters ages 18 to 29 view power, community, civic participation, and Reproductive Justice. The survey included 418 registered voters and was conducted by phone, text-to-web, and online panel from June 24 through July 9, 2026. The margin of error is +/- 4.95 percentage points.

