

PRESS RELEASE

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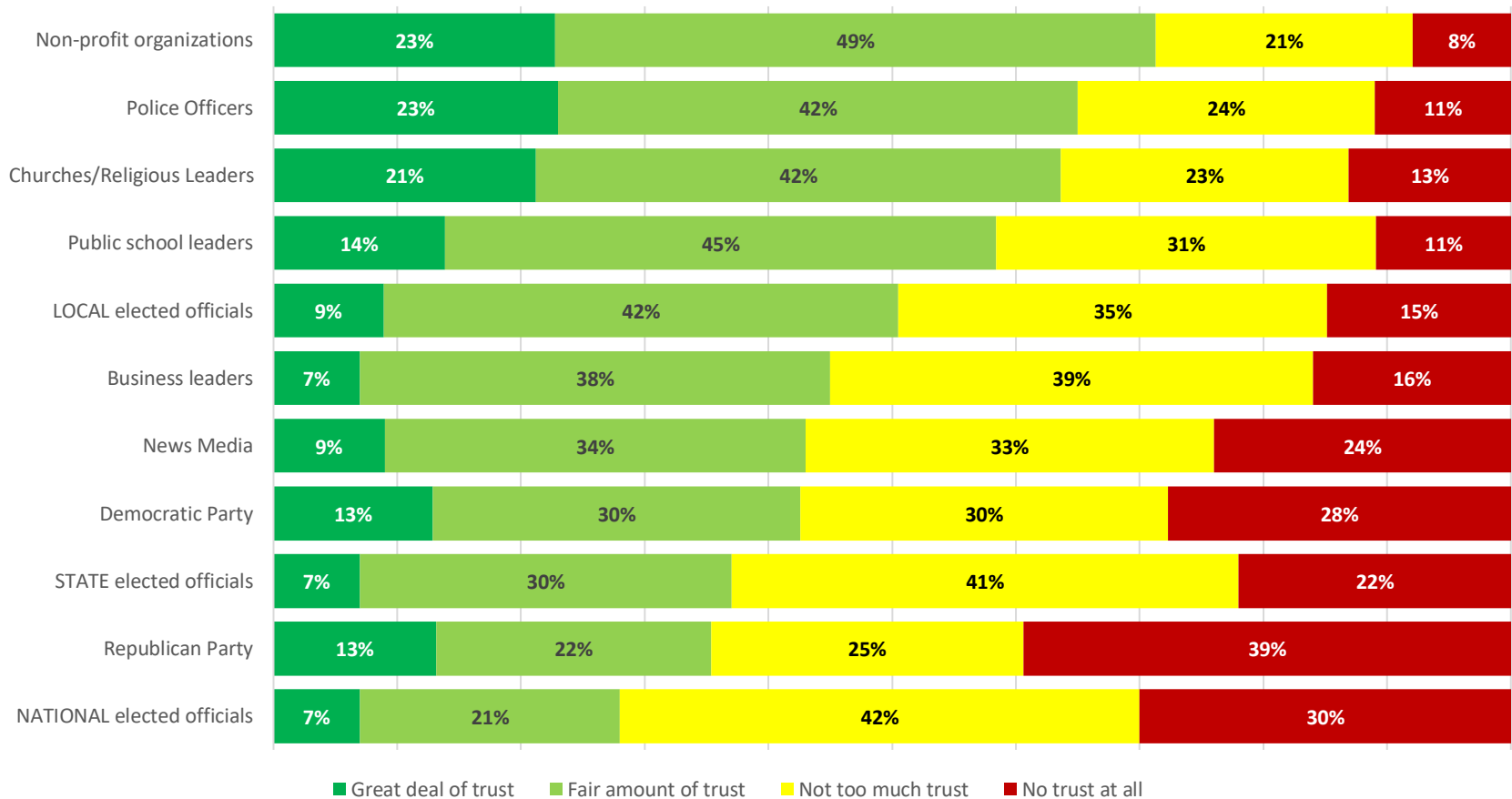
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## Summit County Residents Express Highest Trust in Non-Profits, Lowest in National Elected Officials

**Akron, OH**— Results from the 2026 Summit Poll, conducted by the Center for Marketing and Opinion Research (CMOR), show that Summit County residents continue to place the greatest trust and confidence in non-profit organizations, while confidence in elected officials and political institutions remains significantly lower.

### Trust in Acting in BEST Interest of Public, 2026

*How much trust and confidence, if any, do you have in each of the following to act in the BEST INTEREST OF THE PUBLIC?*



The 2026 Summit Poll surveyed 800 Summit County residents between February 5 and March 12, 2026, providing a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5% at a 95% confidence level. The annual poll is conducted through CMOR's Collaborative Poll Program and examines residents' opinions on quality of life, community issues, and public attitudes toward institutions and organizations throughout Summit County.

For the third consecutive year, residents were asked how much trust and confidence they have in various groups to act in the best interest of the public. Non-profit organizations received the strongest overall ratings, with 72% of residents reporting at least a fair amount of trust and confidence in non-profits. Police officers followed closely behind at 65%, while churches and religious leaders received a 64% trust rating.

Public school leaders received moderate trust ratings, with 58% of residents expressing at least some level of confidence in them to act in the public's best interest. Trust in local elected officials was evenly divided, with 50% expressing trust and 50% indicating little or no trust.

Business leaders and news media both received lower overall trust ratings, with 45% and 43% of residents, respectively, reporting confidence in those institutions. Political organizations and elected officials ranked lowest overall. Only 42% of residents reported trust in the Democratic Party, while 35% expressed trust in the Republican Party. Trust in state elected officials fell to 37%, and national elected officials received the lowest ratings overall, with only 28% of residents expressing confidence in them to act in the public's best interest.

The findings also reveal **notable demographic differences in levels of trust**. Residents more likely to express confidence in institutions generally included older residents, homeowners, suburban residents, married individuals, registered voters, and those who reported living comfortably financially. Conversely, younger residents, renters, Akron residents, non-registered voters, and residents experiencing financial hardship were generally more likely to express lower levels of trust across many institutions. Political affiliation also played a significant role in shaping perceptions of trust, particularly regarding government entities, political parties, police, and news media.

The sharpest declines in public trust compared to 2025 were seen for the Republican Party and national elected officials, both of which experienced an 8-percentage-point decrease in trust and confidence ratings year-over-year. These declines were among the largest shifts measured in the survey and contributed to national political institutions receiving some of the lowest overall trust ratings among Summit County residents.

“The findings reveal a clear hierarchy in public trust among Summit County residents. Non-profit organizations, police officers, churches and religious leaders, public school leaders, and local elected officials all received comparatively stronger ratings of trust and confidence, suggesting that residents continue to place greater faith in organizations and leaders they perceive as having a direct connection to their local communities and everyday lives” said Amanda Barna, co-founder of CMOR. “By contrast, institutions operating at broader state and national levels — including state and national elected officials, political parties, and the news media — were significantly more likely to receive ratings of ‘not too much trust’ or ‘no trust at all.’ Overall, the survey demonstrates that residents continue to place the greatest confidence in organizations and leaders they perceive as actively present and invested in their communities.”

The Summit Poll is conducted annually by CMOR in partnership with participating organizations and agencies throughout Summit County. Separate reports are developed for participating organizations based on survey questions designed to meet their specific information needs.

For additional information about the Summit Poll or CMOR’s Collaborative Poll Program, contact the Center for Marketing and Opinion Research at 330-685-9279 or email [abarna@cmoresearch.com](mailto:abarna@cmoresearch.com)

The Center for Marketing and Opinion Research (CMOR) conducts public opinion research studies for community organizations and government agencies. For more information, please contact Amanda Barna at 330-607-3968 or email at [abarna@cmoresearch.com](mailto:abarna@cmoresearch.com) to speak with a member of our research team. [www.CMOResearch.com](http://www.CMOResearch.com)

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