



Majority of Americans Alarmed by Growing Threat of Pandemics, New Poll Shows *Respondents Believe U.S. Government Should Invest More in Pandemic Preparedness at Home and Abroad*

Three years since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, a new national poll shows that the pandemic has left a lasting impact on a large majority of Americans. Roughly two-thirds of Americans think the federal government was not prepared for the COVID-19 pandemic and remain concerned about the growing threat of future deadly pandemics, and they expect the federal government to increase funding to strengthen pandemic preparedness in the United States and around the world.

The poll shows that Americans' heightened concerns about pandemic preparedness are driven by their personal experiences of loss due to COVID-19. More than 103 million people have reported getting sick, and more than 1.12 million people have died due to COVID-19. The poll finds that the pandemic continues to affect the daily lives of Americans, from economic hardships to strained relationships and struggles with mental health. Nearly 4 in 10 (37%) report knowing someone who died due to COVID-19, while more than a quarter, 28%, report worsening mental health, 31% suffered economic loss, and 14% lost their job.

An overwhelming majority, 88%, believe the federal government should prioritize pandemic preparedness in its annual budget and planning.

- Strong majorities (66% and 63%) support investing in pandemic preparedness at federal or state and local levels, while a plurality (46%) support investing in global preparedness.
- 50% support increasing funding to pay more for pandemic preparedness rather than simply reallocating existing expenditures.
- When asked to pick the top three reasons why it might be important to strengthen pandemic preparedness, the overwhelming majority of respondents — 77.5% — picked saving lives as one of the top three reasons.

"PAX sapiens commissioned the poll on the COVID pandemic to understand our citizens' perspective," said **Marcel Arsenault, the founder and CEO of PAX sapiens**. "American citizens confirmed that pandemic prevention is a critical need. They want our government to address pandemic prevention and preparedness as a priority and citizens are willing to pay for it."

"People in the United States were deeply affected by the COVID-19 pandemic that began three years ago," said **Conor Seyle, Ph.D., vice president of operations for PAX sapiens**. "It was surprising to me that 61% of people responded that they think it's possible that a new pandemic or deadly disease could impact them. People are increasingly concerned about their personal risk of contracting, or being impacted by, another global disease and they expect the U.S. government to act accordingly to reduce that risk."

"Less than half of Americans believe we are more prepared for the next pandemic than we were for COVID-19, and they expect the government to do what it takes to make sure this doesn't happen again," said **Carolyn Reynolds, co-founder of the Pandemic Action Network**. "Now is the time for Congress to approve the increased investments needed in pandemic preparedness in the United States and around the world to help us stop future disease outbreaks before they become another devastating pandemic."

About the poll

PAX *sapiens* in partnership with Pandemic Action Network commissioned YouGov to conduct a high-quality national poll of 2,000 Americans from January 4-19, 2023, on their perspectives on pandemic preparedness. Full poll results and analysis are available [here](#).

About PAX *sapiens*

[PAX *sapiens*](#) is a private grantmaking foundation established by Marcel Arsenault and Cynda Collins Arsenault. PAX *sapiens* works with partners to collaboratively develop projects that can help create systems of sustainable governance to address problems that drive armed conflict. Current PAX *sapiens* priorities include preventing global pandemics, and preventing military conflict between the US and China while improving the bilateral relationship.

About Pandemic Action Network

[Pandemic Action Network](#) drives collective action to end the COVID-19 crisis and prevent the next pandemic. The Network consists of more than 350 partners across sectors and geographies working to build and sustain political will, enact the policies and mobilize the resources necessary to ensure that the lessons from the COVID crisis translate into a future where humanity is better prepared to deal with emerging infectious disease outbreaks and stop a deadly and costly pandemic from happening again.

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