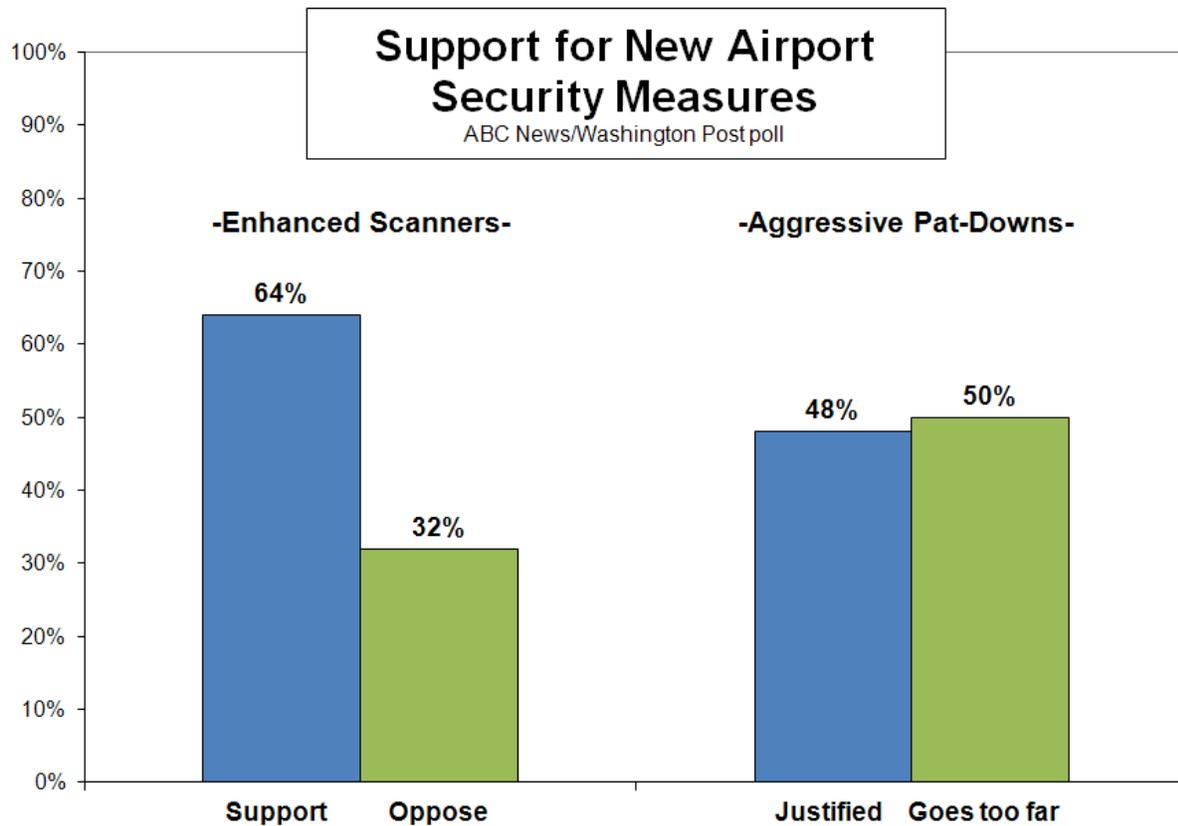


## **Enhanced Scanners Win 2-1 Support, But Half Say Hands Off to Pat-Downs**

Americans by a 2-1 margin support the use of naked-image full-body x-ray scanners in airport security lines, but fewer than half back aggressive new pat-down procedures – and opposition to both rises among those most affected: people who fly with any frequency.

Overall results in this ABC News/Washington Post poll mark the public’s longstanding emphasis on security over privacy. Sixty-four percent support the use of the scanning machines, even though they produce x-ray images of a passenger’s unclothed body that security officials can see. Half as many are opposed, and “strong” supporters outnumber strong opponents, also by 2-1.

Views are more divided, though, on the Transportation Security Administration’s new pat-down procedures, to be used on people who decline the full-body scan or whose electronic screening indicates a need for further examination. While 48 percent see the new pat-downs as justified, 50 percent say they go too far – including a majority, 54 percent, of people who fly at least once a year. And strength of sentiment runs negatively on this issue: Among all adults 37 percent are strongly opposed, vs. 29 percent who strongly support the pat-down rule.

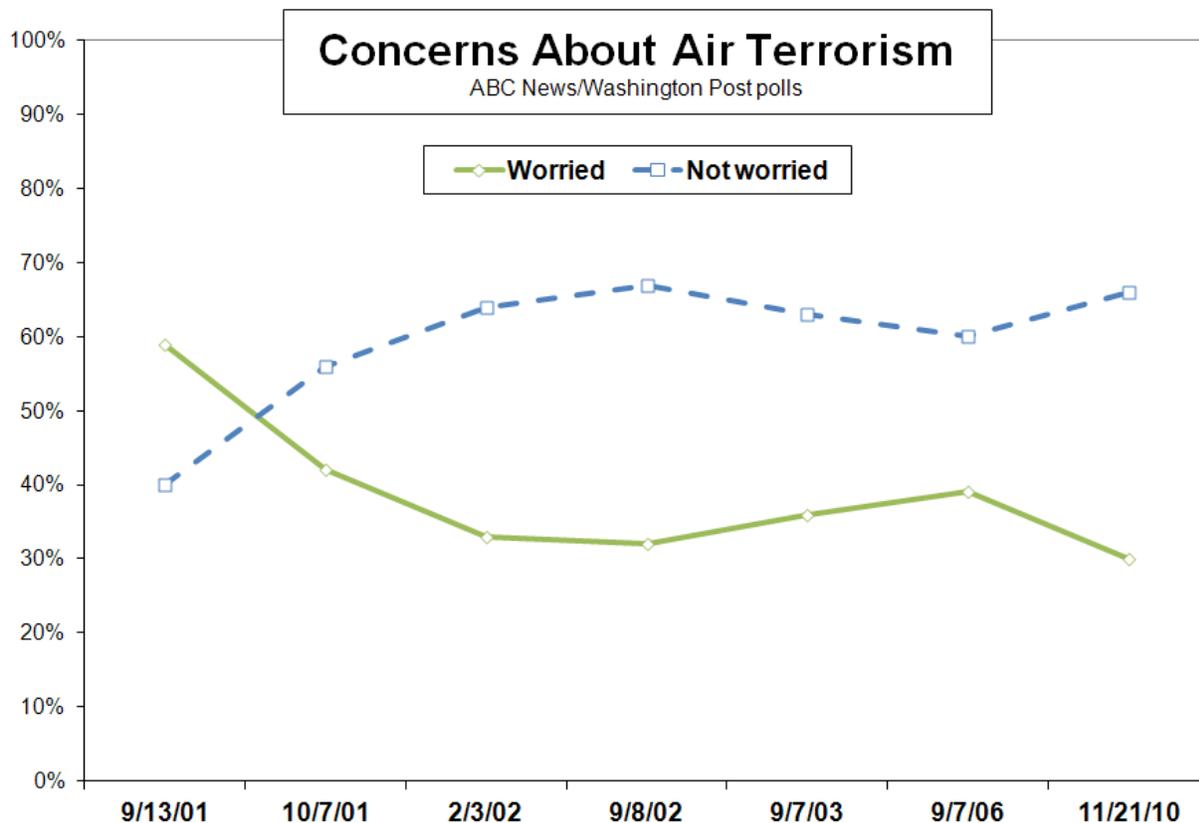


**HEALTH and RISK** – In addition to privacy, health impacts are a concern, or at least an open question, with a strong relationship to views on the new scanning machines. Fifty-two percent of Americans don't think the scanners raise a serious health concern – but that leaves 48 percent who either think they may pose a health risk (35 percent) or who are unsure (13 percent).

It matters: Support for using the scanners plummets by 32 points among those who suspect a possible health risk, to 45 percent, compared with 77 percent support among those who see no such concern. That suggests the TSA might mitigate opposition if it were able to persuade more of the public that the scanners, even if intrusive, are safe.

Risk perception is another factor: Support for the scanners is 15 points higher among people who are worried about the risk of terrorism in air travel, and support for the new pat-down approach is a slight 9 points higher in this group.

Support for both, then, could rise if security were more of a concern; as things stand, 30 percent say they're worried about the risk of terrorism in air travel – a new low in polling since two days after 9/11, when it peaked at nearly twice that number.



Interestingly, in these partisan times, there aren't substantial differences between Democrats and Republicans in support for the new scanning devices (69 and 65 percent, respectively), or in views on the new pat-down procedures. (Independents are somewhat less enamored of both.)

FLIERS – The results, as noted, differ among travel groups. People who fly at least annually are 12 points more apt to oppose the new screening machines and a slight eight points more apt to criticize the new pat-downs as an unjustified intrusion on personal privacy.

Among Americans who say they fly at least once or twice a year – just fewer than half the public – 58 percent support the screening machines, with 37 percent opposed; that compares to 70-27 percent among people who fly infrequently or not at all. Similarly, support for the new pat-downs, 52 percent among infrequent fliers, slips to 44 percent among those who fly at least annually.

|            | Scanners |        | Pat-downs |         |
|------------|----------|--------|-----------|---------|
|            | Support  | Oppose | Justified | Too far |
| All        | 64%      | 32     | 48%       | 50      |
| Fly >1x/yr | 58       | 37     | 44        | 54      |
| Fly <1x/yr | 70       | 27     | 52        | 47      |

Though the sample is small, the results indicate that opposition rises further among more-frequent fliers, those who fly at least every few months.

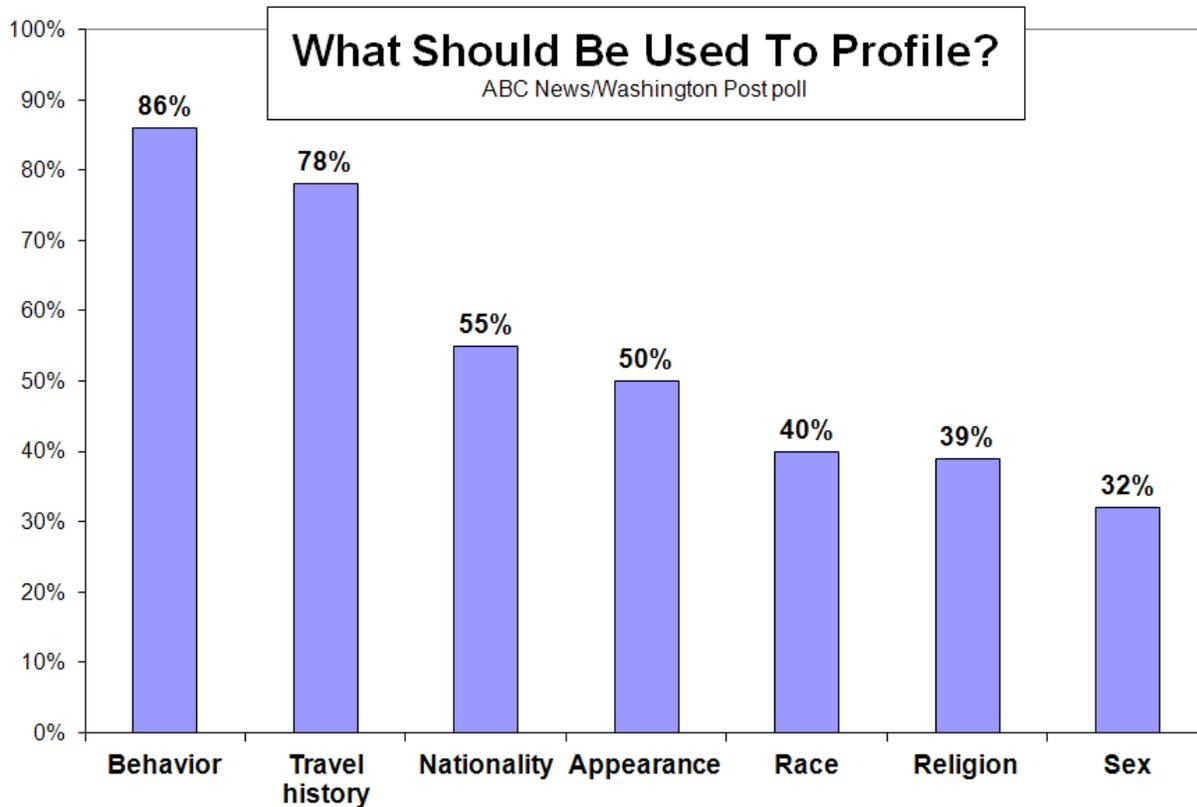
The poll, produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#), also indicates a potential negative impact on air travel, but not an overwhelming one. Twenty percent of adults say the new TSA procedures will make them less likely to fly, but 10 percent instead say it makes them more likely to travel by air. There’s no difference among occasional vs. infrequent fliers.

That potential net negative of 10 percent could be a problem for the airlines if it occurred. But seven in 10 say the rules won’t make a difference in their future travel – and actual effects on travel likely will depend on passenger experiences and possible TSA adjustments to the outcry over its approach.

PROFILE – As another tool in airport security efforts, this poll finds broad support for passenger profiling – but with that support heavily dependent on profile elements. Eighty-six percent say personal behavior should be a factor, and 78 percent say a passenger’s travel history should be included in his or her security profile. Fewer, but 55 percent, favor including a passenger’s nationality, and half would include his or her personal appearance.

Other potential elements, however, garner majority opposition as elements to include in a security profile. Fifty-nine percent oppose using a passenger’s race or religion, and 65 percent say sex should not be a factor.

There are differences among groups, with profiling generally winning more support from Republicans, conservatives, men and whites, as well as, naturally, among those who see security as a higher national priority than protecting privacy rights. But there are commonalities as well; racial profiling, for instance, is opposed by six in 10 whites and non-whites alike.



**SECURITY/PRIVACY** – This poll finds greater opposition to the x-ray scanners than has been measured in previous surveys. The intensifying controversy may play a role; so may the descriptions provided. This survey gave pro- and con- details, including the fact that the machines produce naked images of a passenger’s body. The question on pat-downs similarly gave details, noting that the new procedure involves a same-sex TSA officer placing his or her palms and fingers on the passenger’s body, including sensitive areas such as the groin and breast.

It’s notable that x-ray scanners get 64 percent support, and aggressive pat-downs get 48 percent support, despite their intrusiveness – a result that reflects broader views on the question of security vs. privacy. While the public prizes both, in an either/or choice, 68 percent say it’s more important for the government to investigate possible terrorist threats, even if that intrudes on privacy, than for it to avoid intruding on privacy, if that limits anti-terrorism efforts.

Those priorities hold through in views of the latest TSA procedures. The new scanners are supported by 74 percent of those who give priority to investigating terrorism, vs. 42 percent of those who say privacy concerns should trump. And among those more concerned with security, 59 percent see the pat-downs as justified – while among those more focused on privacy, 77 percent say hands off.

**METHODOLOGY** – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Nov. 21, 2010, among a random national sample of 514 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results have a margin of sampling error of 5 points. Click [here](#) for a detailed

description of sampling error. This survey was produced by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y, with sampling, data collection and tabulation by SSRS of Media, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>

Full results follow.

1. About how often do you fly on commercial airlines: at least every few months, once or twice a year, less often than that, or have you never flown?

|          | Every few<br>months | Once/twice<br>a year | Less | Never | No<br>opin. |
|----------|---------------------|----------------------|------|-------|-------------|
| 11/21/10 | 15                  | 32                   | 37   | 16    | -           |

2. Are you personally worried about traveling by commercial airplane because of the risk of terrorism, or do you think the risk is not that great? (IF WORRIED) Would you say you are very worried or only somewhat?

|          | -----Worried----- |      |          | Not<br>worried | No<br>opin. |
|----------|-------------------|------|----------|----------------|-------------|
|          | NET               | Very | Somewhat |                |             |
| 11/21/10 | 30                | 8    | 22       | 66             | 4           |
| 9/7/06   | 39                | 15   | 24       | 60             | 1           |
| 9/7/03   | 36                | 15   | 21       | 63             | 1           |
| 9/8/02   | 32                | 12   | 20       | 67             | 1           |
| 2/3/02   | 33                | 8    | 25       | 64             | 3           |
| 10/7/01  | 42                | 12   | 30       | 56             | 2           |
| 9/13/01  | 59                | 25   | 35       | 40             | 1           |

3. What do you think is more important right now - (for the federal government to investigate possible terrorist threats, even if that intrudes on personal privacy); or (for the federal government not to intrude on personal privacy, even if that limits its ability to investigate possible terrorist threats)?

|          | Investigate<br>threats | Don't intrude<br>on privacy | No opinion |
|----------|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 11/21/10 | 68                     | 26                          | 6          |
| 1/15/10  | 75                     | 23                          | 2          |
| 12/11/06 | 63                     | 34                          | 3          |
| 9/7/06   | 65                     | 32                          | 3          |
| 5/15/06  | 67                     | 30                          | 3          |
| 5/11/06  | 65                     | 31                          | 4          |
| 1/8/06   | 65                     | 32                          | 3          |
| 9/7/03*  | 73                     | 21                          | 5          |
| 9/8/02   | 78                     | 18                          | 4          |
| 6/9/02   | 79                     | 18                          | 3          |

\*9/7/03 and previous: "FBI" rather than "federal government"

4. The Transportation Security Administration is increasing its use of so-called 'full-body' digital x-ray machines to screen passengers in airport security lines. (Supporters say these machines improve the ability to spot hidden weapons and explosives, and reduce the need for physical searches.) (Opponents say these machines invade privacy by producing x-ray images of a passenger's naked body that security officials can see, and don't provide enough added security to justify this.) Which comes closer to your own view - do you support or oppose using these scanners in

airport security lines? (GET ANSWER THEN ASK: Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?)

|          | -----Support----- |          |          | -----Oppose----- |          |          | No    |
|----------|-------------------|----------|----------|------------------|----------|----------|-------|
|          | NET               | Strongly | Somewhat | NET              | Somewhat | Strongly | opin. |
| 11/21/10 | 64                | 37       | 27       | 32               | 14       | 18       | 4     |

5. As far as you're aware do you think these new scanning machines may pose a health risk, or do you think that's not a serious concern?

|          | Risk | Not a concern | No opin. |
|----------|------|---------------|----------|
| 11/21/10 | 35   | 52            | 13       |

6. The TSA says it will hand-search people who don't want to be screened electronically, as well as those whose electronic screening raises a question. A TSA screener of the same sex as the passenger checks for hidden objects by placing his or her palms and fingers on the passenger's body, including sensitive areas such as the groin and breast. This replaces earlier hand-screening in which sensitive areas were touched only with the back of the hand. Do you think these new hand pat-procedures (are justified to try to prevent terrorism), or do you think they (go too far in invading personal privacy)? (GET ANSWER THEN ASK: Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?)

|          | -----Justified----- |          |          | -----Goes too far----- |          |          | No    |
|----------|---------------------|----------|----------|------------------------|----------|----------|-------|
|          | NET                 | Strongly | Somewhat | NET                    | Somewhat | Strongly | opin. |
| 11/21/10 | 48                  | 29       | 19       | 50                     | 14       | 37       | 2     |

7. Do these rules make you more likely to fly on a commercial airplane, less likely to fly, or would they make no difference in your decision to travel by airplane?

|          | More likely | Less likely | No diff. | No opin. |
|----------|-------------|-------------|----------|----------|
| 11/21/10 | 10          | 20          | 71       | -        |

8. In another approach, would you support or oppose the TSA profiling people, using available information about passengers in order to determine who gets selected for extra security screening at airports?

|          | Support | Oppose | No opin. |
|----------|---------|--------|----------|
| 11/21/10 | 70      | 25     | 6        |

9. If profiling is done, for each item I name please tell me if you think it should or should not be included in a passenger's security profile. How about a passenger's (ITEM)? How about their (NEXT ITEM)?

Net table - 11/21/10

|                        | Should be included | Should not be included | No opin. |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|----------|
| a. Nationality         | 55                 | 43                     | 2        |
| b. Travel history      | 78                 | 21                     | 2        |
| c. Sex                 | 32                 | 65                     | 3        |
| d. Race                | 40                 | 59                     | 2        |
| e. Religion            | 39                 | 59                     | 1        |
| f. Personal appearance | 50                 | 48                     | 2        |
| g. Personal behavior   | 86                 | 12                     | 2        |

\*\*\*END\*\*\*