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Majority agree with the idea of a presidential public health emergency fund to respond to an epidemic

PHILADELPHIA –In a Washington Post [Op-ed](#) published on May 22, after the U.S. House and Senate passed differing funding bills to help fight Zika virus, former White House Ebola response coordinator, Ronald A. Klain, argued for the creation of a “public health emergency fund that the president can draw down in the face of a dangerous epidemic—without waiting for Congress to act.” More than 6 in 10 Americans agree with such a proposal a survey from the [Annenberg Public Policy Center](#) (APPC) of the University of Pennsylvania has found. However, agreement varies across party lines.

In the survey of U.S. adults, 63 percent of respondents agree strongly or somewhat with the statement: The president should be able to use a public health emergency fund to respond to an epidemic without having to wait for Congressional action. There are partisan differences in agreement. Most self-identified Democrats (82 percent) and Independents (63 percent) agreed with the idea, but only 39 percent of self-identified Republicans did.

The phone survey of 1,033 U.S. adults was conducted May 25-29 by the research firm [SSRS](#). It has a margin of error of +/-3.6. It is one in a weekly series of Annenberg Science Knowledge (ASK) surveys conducted since February by the Annenberg Public Policy Center on public knowledge about the Zika virus, changes in public behavior because of Zika, and support for public policies on Zika.

For more on the questions and data, see the Appendix.

The policy center’s ASK surveys [can be found here](#) and its recent news releases on Zika include:

[Few Report Taking Steps to Protect Themselves Against Zika](#) (May 26, 2016)

[A Majority of People Say They Would Get a Zika Vaccine If It Were Available](#) (May 12, 2016)

[How to Avoid Zika? Only 1 in 3 Says Protect Against Mosquito Bites](#) (May 6, 2016)

The [Annenberg Public Policy Center](#) was established in 1994 to educate the public and policy makers about the media’s role in advancing public understanding of political and health issues. APPC’s [FactCheck.org](#) is a nonpartisan consumer advocate for voters, and its [SciCheck](#) feature investigates false or misleading scientific claims made to influence public policy. Its latest post on Zika is [What Zika Means for Americans](#).