



Atheists. Agnostics. Humanists.  
**Americans.**

## **LIVING AS A NONTHEIST IN AMERICA**

According to a 2016 study published by the Public Religion Research Institute, one-quarter of all Americans, and 39% of adults under 30, are religiously unaffiliated. This means that the nonreligious, 62 million Americans, are the largest “religious group” in the United States. We account for more Americans than Buddhists, Jews, Muslims, and Hindus combined. We are also the fastest growing religious demographic. In the last eight years alone, the religiously unaffiliated have increased from just 17% to 25% of all U.S. adults.

Within the nonreligious are a complex diversity of views. The religiously unaffiliated includes roughly 17 million nontheists, self-described atheists and agnostics, totaling approximately 7% of the U.S. public. It also represents 47 million Americans who say religion is not personally important to them.

Openly identifying as nonreligious can be difficult, as polls continue to show that Americans harbor negative associations with nontheists. Most nontheists seek only the respect of their neighbors and their government, yet the nonreligious continue to face social stigma and the imposition of religious beliefs through attempts by religious organizations to codify sectarian, religious beliefs in government.

The Secular Coalition for America urges members of Congress to remember their nontheistic constituents and set a positive example of inclusiveness by:

- 1. Specifically including nontheists and those without religion when talking about or listing different groups of people. When leaders set an example, others listen and follow.**
- 2. Stopping the sponsorship and support of legislation and resolutions that are solely based on religious dogma and for religious supporters.**
- 3. Inviting nontheist groups to constituent meetings and town halls to ensure balanced representation.**