



The guidance gap

How donors are adapting their charitable giving in the One Big Beautiful Bill era

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Key takeaways

Lack of awareness and confusion about tax law changes is widespread.

- More than half (58%) of 1,000 donors surveyed are unaware that the One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBB) Act introduced tax law changes that could affect the tax benefits of their charitable giving.
- Among those aware of recent federal tax law changes, nearly 60% of all donors and nearly half of high-net-worth¹ donors have limited confidence in their understanding of the changes.
- Donors who had a conversation with an advisor about charitable giving in the last 12 months were more likely to be aware of the tax law changes (65% vs. 34%) and more likely to expect their charitable giving to increase (35% vs. 17%) than donors who had not had such a conversation.

Donors of all levels plan to sustain or increase current levels of generosity, but many may need to adjust their strategy.

- Eighty-eight percent of donors overall, and 98% of high-net-worth donors, said they expect to give the same amount or more following the tax law changes.
- Fifteen percent of donors overall and 42% of high-net-worth donors reported switching to itemizing from taking the standard deduction in 2025 following the passage of the OBBB. This change means that more donors may be able to increase both the amount they can potentially deduct and the range of charitable gifts eligible for deduction, including cash, appreciated securities, and other qualifying assets, in 2026.

Demand is high for guidance from financial advisors and tax professionals.

- Seventy-eight percent of all donors identify a financial advisor or tax professional/certified public accountant as a trusted source of guidance on charitable giving and tax law changes.
- Seventy-six percent of those who work occasionally or regularly with a financial advisor want that advisor to play a role in helping them navigate giving decisions in light of tax law changes.
- Top donor questions include how much of a donation can be deducted (39%), how tax law changes apply to their personal situation (39%), and which types of donations qualify for deduction (34%).



The implementation of the One Big Beautiful Bill (OB BB) Act in 2025 ushered in a new tax environment with important implications for charitable giving. The legislation increased the standard deduction but also increased the state and local tax (SALT) deduction, with the potential to prompt changes in itemization status for many charitable donors. Beginning in 2026, the OB BB will also reinstate a charitable deduction for non-itemizers, establish a new floor on deductions for itemizers and corporations, and introduce new limits on charitable deductions for itemizers in the highest tax bracket.

As donors and advisors began navigating these changes, Fidelity Charitable® sought to better understand not only whether the law is affecting charitable giving but how it is influencing charitable planning decisions. In partnership with two independent research firms, Fidelity Charitable® surveyed a cross-section of 1,000 donors and 421 financial advisors serving affluent and charitable households to identify the impact of the OB BB on charitable decision-making. The results reveal significant gaps in both awareness and understanding of the changes taking place this year, highlighting a critical opportunity for financial advisors and tax professionals to help donors make more informed charitable planning decisions.

The One Big Beautiful Bill: Charitable giving impact at a glance

- Non-itemizers can now claim a charitable deduction of up to \$1,000 (\$2,000 for married couples filing jointly).
- New charitable deduction limits for itemizers take effect in 2026, including a 0.5% AGI threshold and a 35% cap on the tax benefit of charitable deductions for taxpayers in the 37% tax bracket. This means some high-income donors may see a small reduction in the tax benefits of their charitable giving.

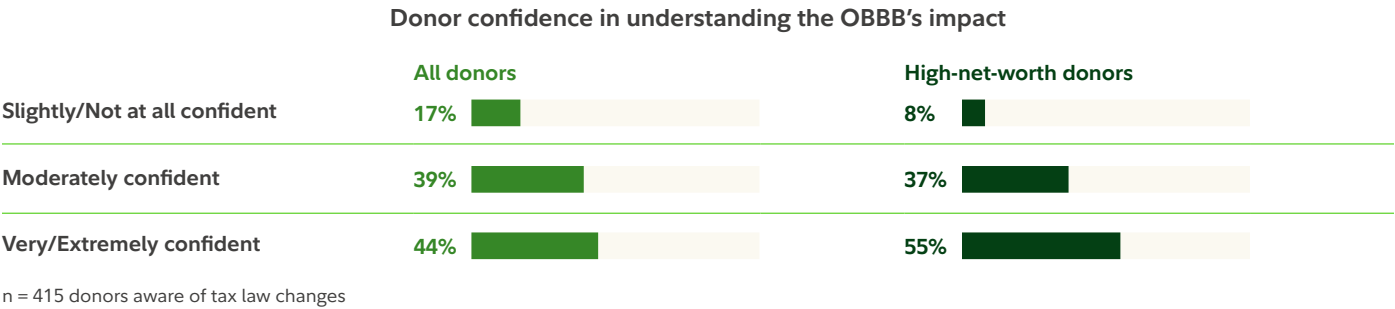
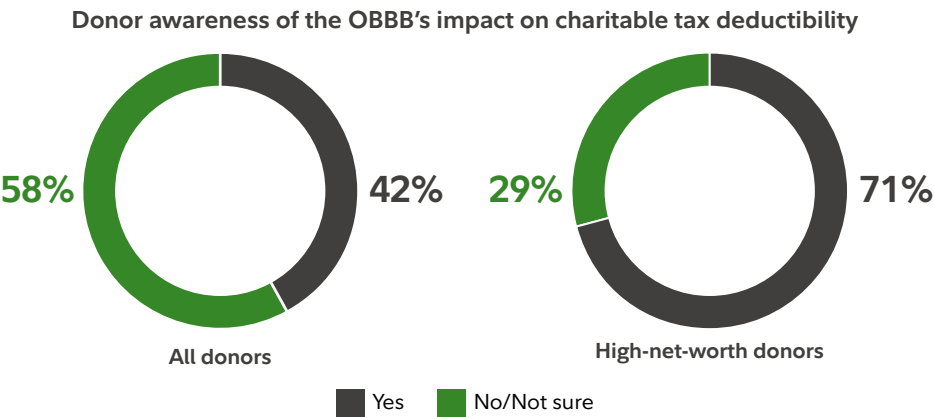
Learn more about the new tax law at FidelityCharitable.org

Many donors have limited awareness and understanding of the changes

Donors are largely unprepared for the changes in tax law that may impact their giving this year.

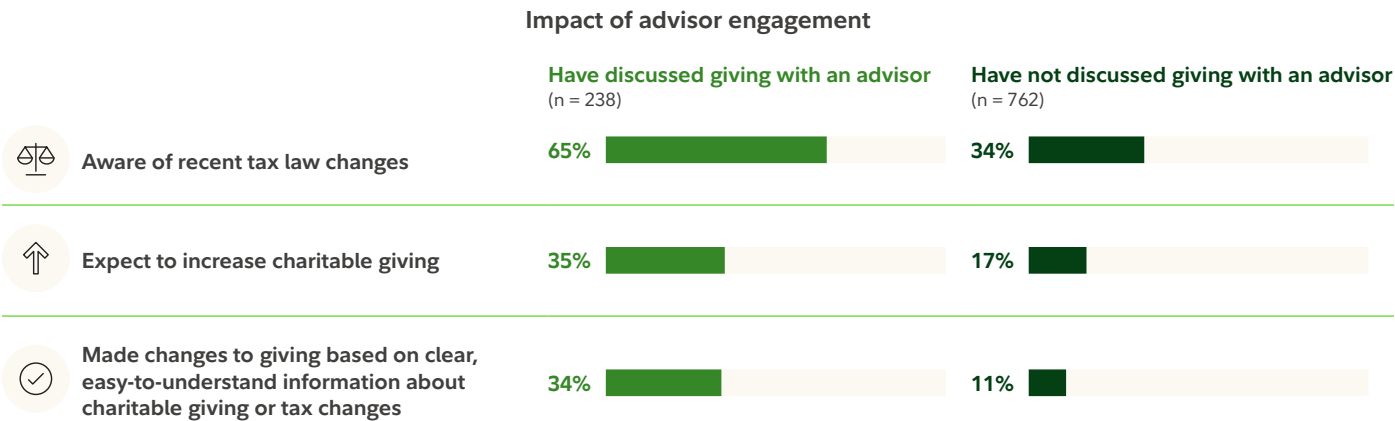
Nearly 3 in 5 surveyed were unaware of the OBBB’s charitable giving implications. While awareness was substantially higher among high-net-worth donors, confidence remains limited.

Among donors aware of the changes, nearly 60% of all donors and nearly half of high-net-worth donors have limited confidence in their understanding of how recent tax law changes affect charitable giving.



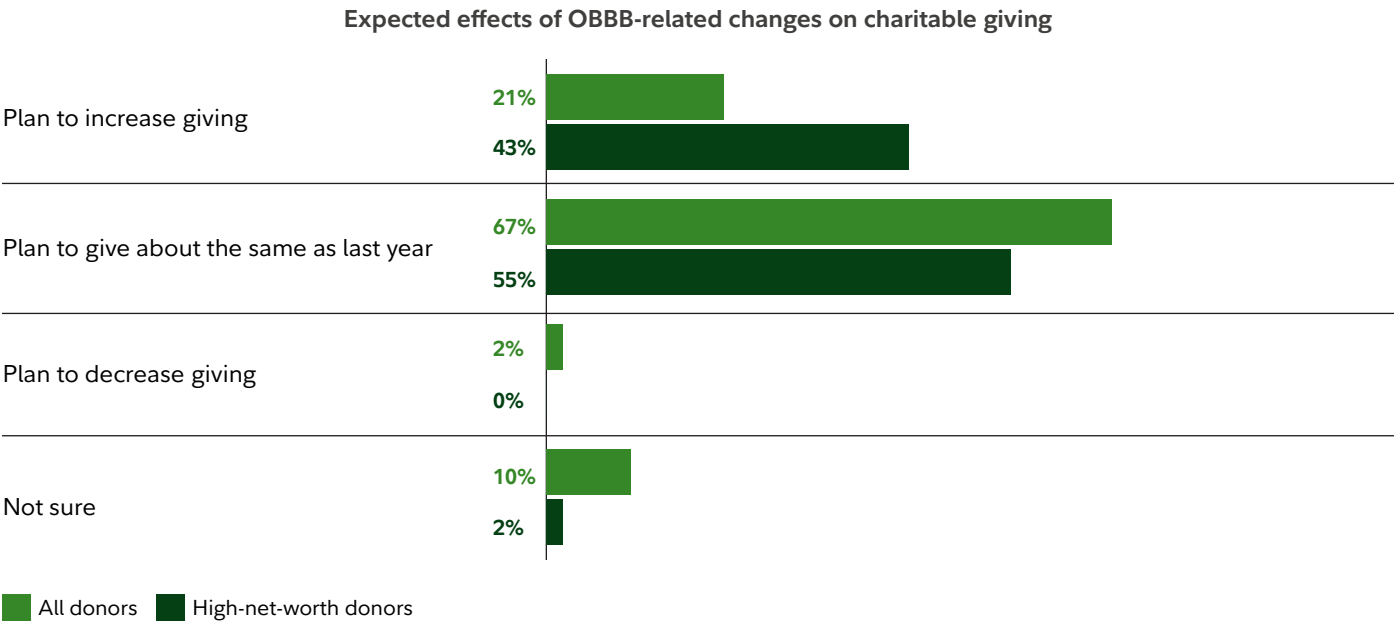
Engagement with an advisor strengthens donor confidence

Donors who discussed charitable giving with an advisor in the past 12 months were significantly more informed and more engaged in charitable giving decisions than those who had not. They were 31 percentage points more likely to be aware of recent tax law changes that could affect charitable giving (65% vs. 34%) and 18 points more likely to expect their charitable giving to increase over the next 12 months (35% vs. 17%).



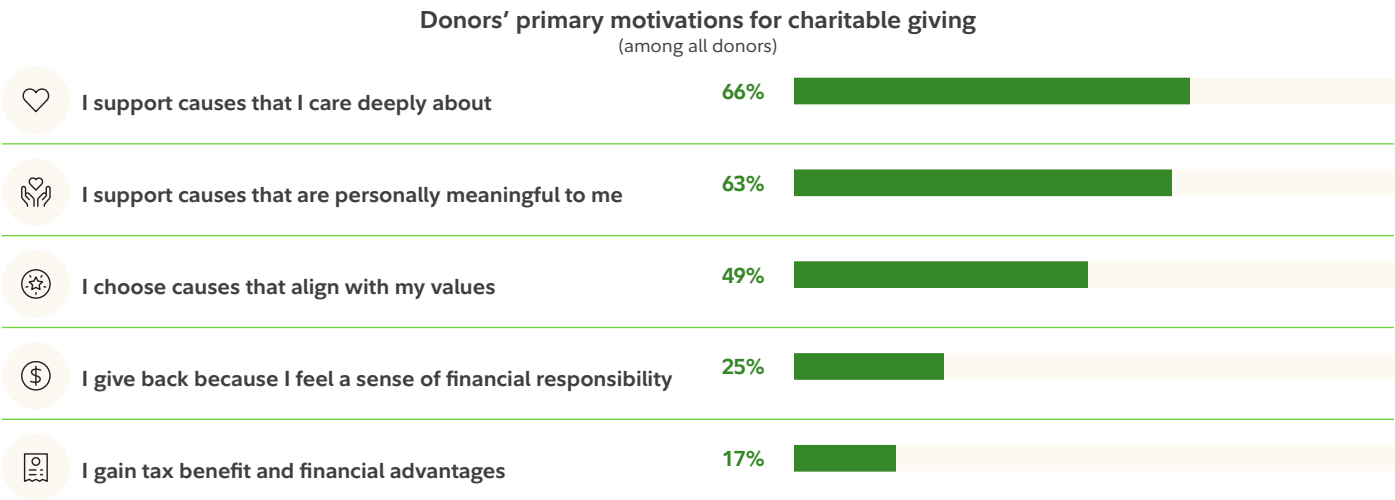
Planned giving levels are stable

After being exposed to an explanation of the OBBB-related changes, donors did not expect those changes to meaningfully alter how much they may give. In fact, about two-thirds (67%) said they plan to give the same amount as last year, while 21% expect to give more and only 2% expect to give less.



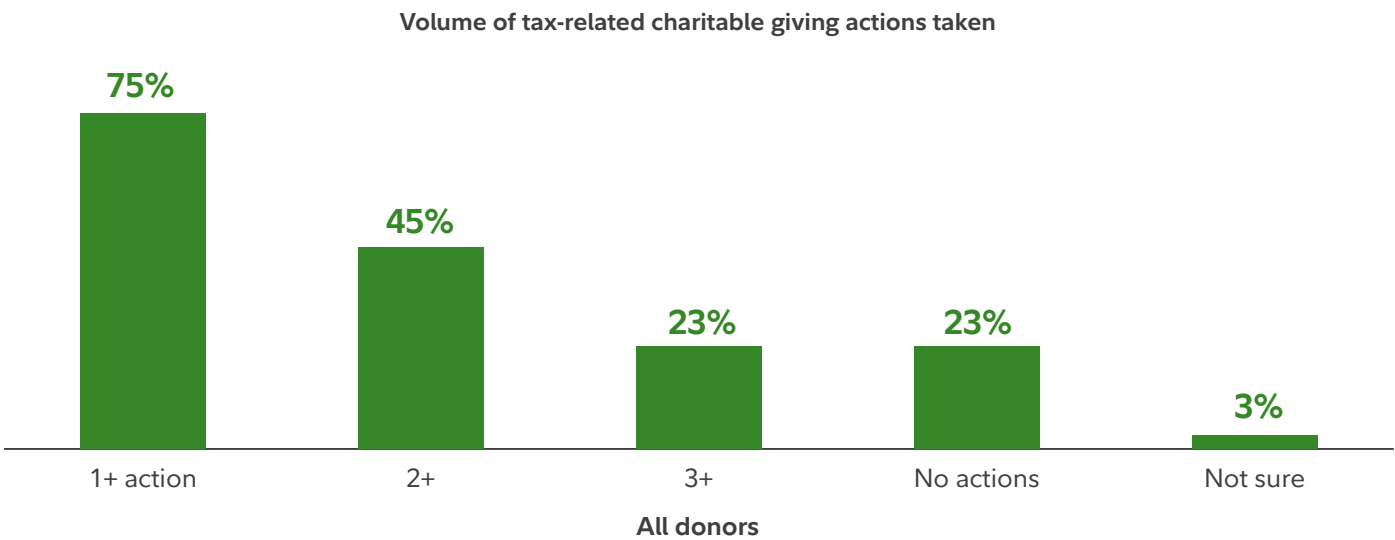
Donors primarily give with their hearts

The majority of donors said their giving approach is driven by their desire to support causes that resonate with them personally and align with their values rather than specific tax considerations.



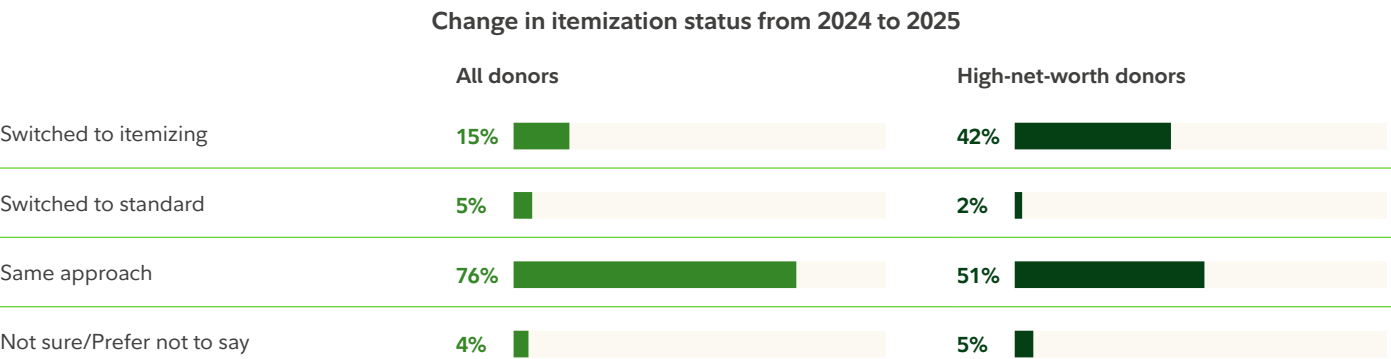
The tax aspects of charitable giving still matter

About 3 in 4 donors reported taking at least one tax-related action related to charitable giving during the past year. Actions included claiming an itemized deduction, increasing or decreasing the total amount of donations, discussing charitable giving strategies with an advisor, adjusting the timing of donations, contributing to a donor-advised fund or similar vehicle, making a qualified charitable distribution, or donating appreciated assets.



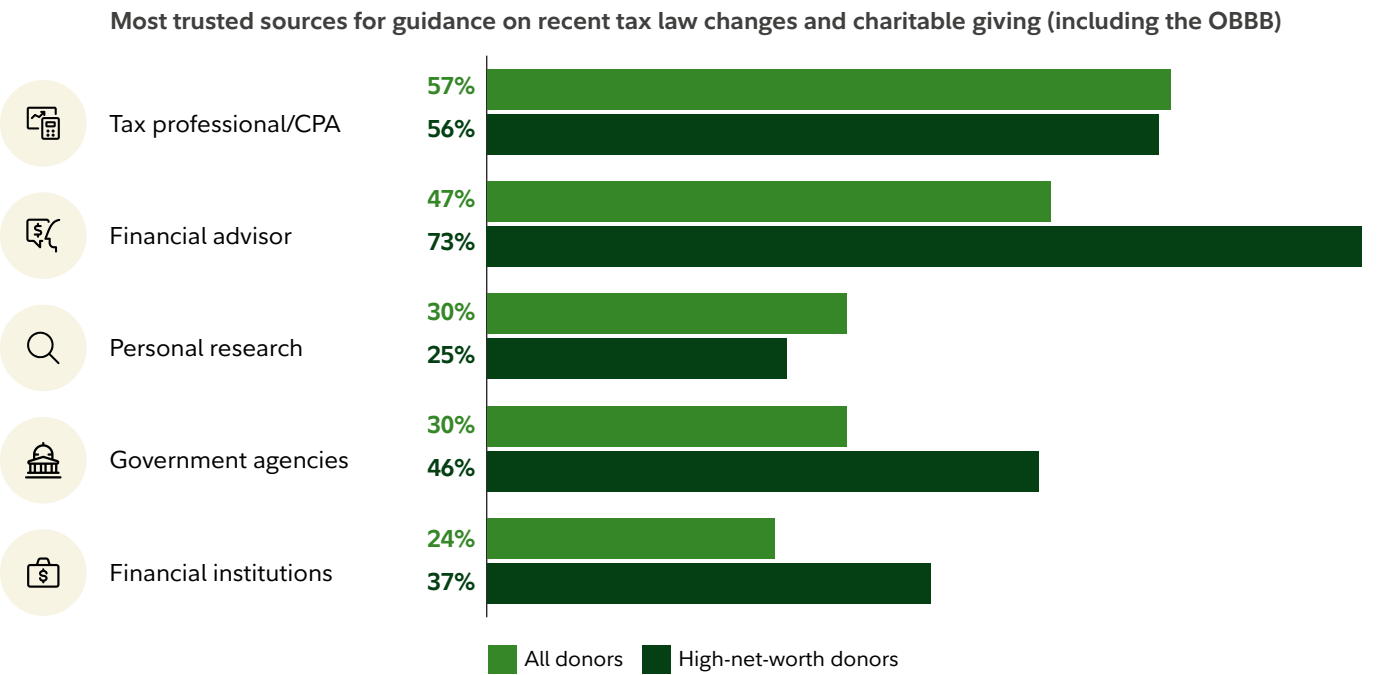
Shifts in itemization status following the OBBB may change the giving math

While official data on shifts in the number of itemizers as a result of the OBBB is not yet available, the early indication is that these shifts could be substantial, particularly among high-net-worth donors. In fact, 42% of high-net-worth donors have reported a change in itemization status since implementation of the OBBB, compared with 15% of donors overall. Such a change may create a new opportunity for donors to reconsider how they structure their charitable gifts, including which assets they give and when those gifts are made.



Demand is high for guidance from financial and tax professionals

Given the significant knowledge and confidence gap relating to the One Big Beautiful Bill, the need for trusted information is significant. The data suggests that donors have the highest trust in guidance from tax professionals and financial advisors, with 78% citing one or both as their most trusted source.

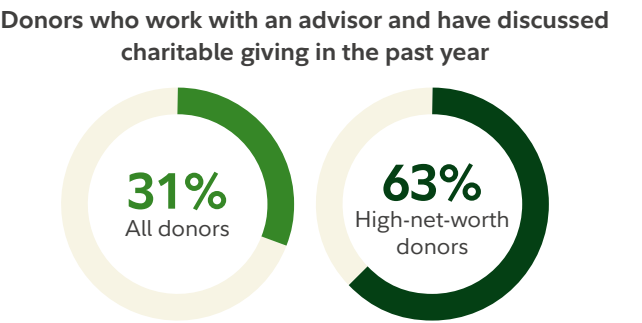
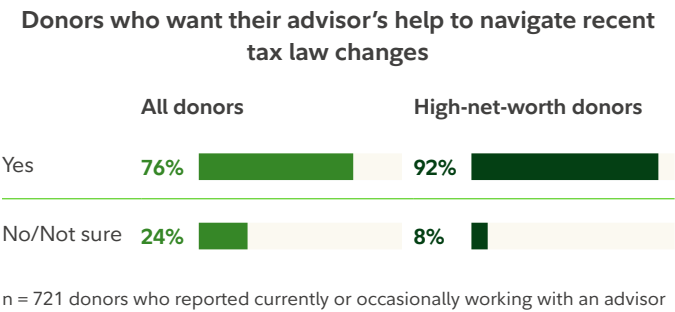


Donors’ top questions center around how the changes will apply to their individual circumstances, including how much they can deduct and the type of donations that are allowed. High-net-worth donors are focused on additional giving optimization questions, particularly donation timing, qualifying assets, and charitable vehicles.

Topics related to recent tax law changes that donors would like to understand better

	All donors	High-net-worth donors
How much of my donation I can deduct	39%	38%
How these tax changes apply to my personal situation	39%	27%
Which types of donations qualify (e.g., cash, stocks, property)	34%	47%
When I should make donations (timing for best tax benefit)	27%	49%
Whether giving through things like donor-advised funds, trusts, or foundations affects my taxes	18%	31%

Among those already working with an advisor, 76% of donors overall and 92% of high-net-worth donors said they want their advisor to play a role in helping them navigate charitable giving in light of recent tax law changes—and in many cases to reach out proactively to provide that advice. However, only 31% of donors working with an advisor have discussed charitable giving with an advisor during the past 12 months, creating a 45-percentage-point gap between desire and actual engagement.



| There is a 45-point gap between wanting advisor help and having the conversation.

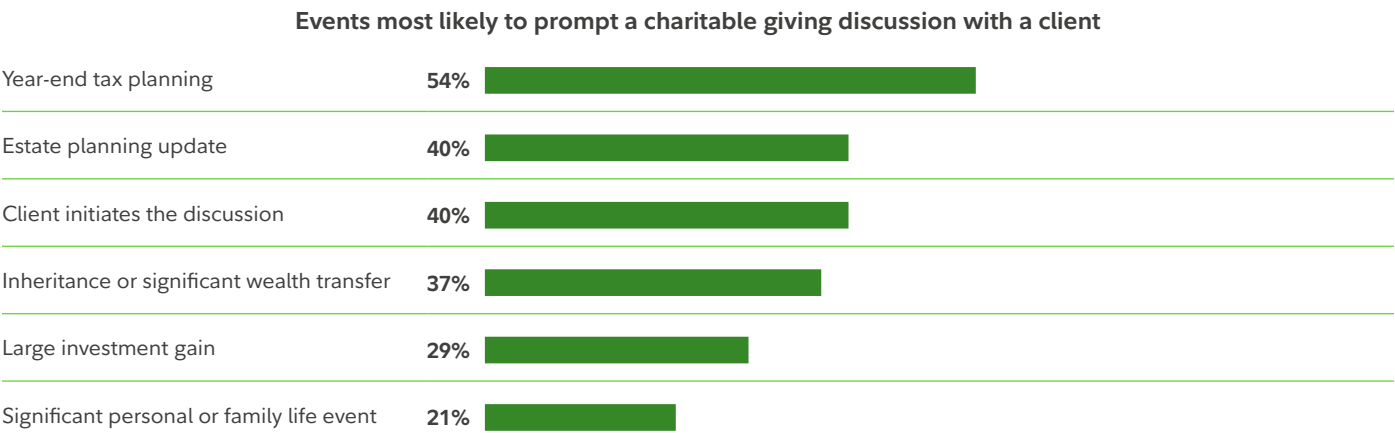


Many donors are currently not prepared for the tax changes that may impact their charitable giving in 2026. As donors adapt to this changing tax landscape, there is an opportunity to take a more intentional approach to charitable giving that could allow them to maximize their support for charities. The Fidelity Charitable research findings suggest that while generosity remains stable, many donors could benefit in 2026 from revisiting how and when they give, and from determining which strategies may help maximize both their impact and the potential tax benefits. When navigating OBBB-related changes, guidance from a trusted financial advisor or tax professional can help translate new rules into a more effective charitable giving strategy.

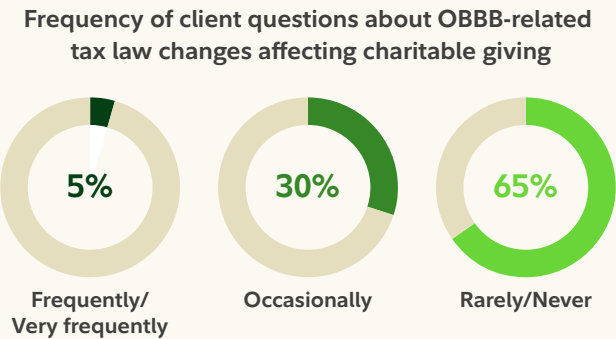
[Discuss your charitable giving plan with an advisor.](#)

Are advisors ready for year-end conversations?

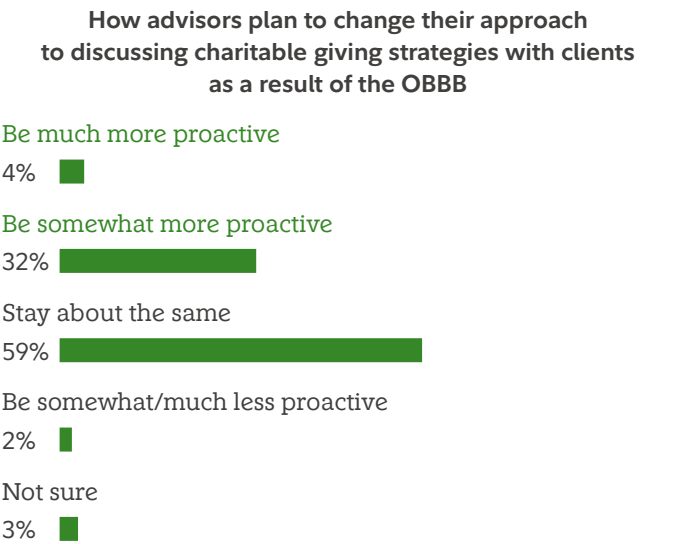
Financial advisors² are well-positioned to add value for their clients this year by providing proactive guidance on how tax law changes may affect giving—but advisors may not be initiating these conversations as often as needed. Advisors identify year-end planning as the most likely prompt to a charitable giving discussion with a client. Yet, many still rely on clients to initiate such a conversation, with 40% of advisors saying that they wait for the client to bring up the topic. Given the low awareness levels of the effects of the OBBB among clients with charitable intent, many are not likely to be asking specifically for guidance in this area.



Nearly two-thirds of advisors said they rarely or never field client inquiries about OBBB-related changes affecting giving, highlighting the need to be proactive.



Many advisors currently are not planning to be more proactive in discussing charitable giving strategies as a result of the OBBB, with about 60% planning no change. This could lead to a gap wherein clients who would benefit from additional information or guidance are not receiving it.



Methodology

This report combines findings from two online surveys commissioned to examine how recent tax law changes may influence charitable giving and charitable planning decisions.

Donor Survey. Logica Research conducted a 12-minute online survey among 1,000 U.S. adults ages 25 to 80 who had made a charitable donation within the previous 12 months and were the primary or shared decision-maker for household charitable giving decisions. The sample was designed to achieve a balanced gender distribution and included donors across a range of income and wealth levels:

- **Core:** \$50,000 to less than \$250,000 in household income or less than \$1 million in investable assets
- **Affluent:** \$250,000 to less than \$500,000 in household income or \$1 million to less than \$5 million in investable assets
- **High-Net-Worth (HNW):** \$500,000 or more in household income or \$5 million or more in investable assets

Advisor Survey. Bellomy conducted a 15-minute online survey among 421 financial advisors. Eligible advisors were required to serve a client base that included at least 10% of households with annual income of \$250,000 or more and at least 10% with \$1 million or more in investable assets.

Endnotes

- 1 For the purposes of this survey, “donors” refers to 1,000 U.S. adults ages 25 to 80 across a range of income and wealth levels, from \$50,000 to \$500,000 or more in household income and from less than \$1 million to more than \$5 million in investable assets; “high-net-worth donors” are defined as those with at least \$500,000 in household income or \$5 million in investable assets.
- 2 For the purposes of this survey, “advisors” refers to 421 financial advisors serving a client base including at least 10% of households with annual income of \$250,000 or more and at least 10% with \$1 million or more in investable assets.



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