



CBS NEWS/NEW YORK TIMES POLL
 For Release: April 6, 2009
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AMERICANS' VIEWS ON HEALTH CARE

April 1-5, 2009

Besides the economy, Americans cite health care as their top domestic concern. A majority is willing to pay higher taxes to provide health insurance for all, but many are worried that the nation's economy would suffer if the government were to guarantee health insurance for everybody.

When Americans are asked which domestic policy area, aside from the economy, the President and the Congress should concentrate on, 35% select health care, far outdistancing education (22%), Social Security (17%) and energy (15%).

BESIDES THE ECONOMY, MOST IMPORTANT DOMESTIC ISSUE

Health care	35%
Education	22
Social Security	17
Energy	15

57% are willing to pay higher taxes so that all Americans have health insurance they can't lose. But there are striking partisan differences on this question. About 3 in 4 Democrats are willing to pay higher taxes, but 66% of Republicans are not willing to do so.

WILLING TO PAY HIGHER TAXES SO THAT ALL AMERICANS HAVE HEALTH INSURANCE?

	Total	Dems	Reps	Inds
Yes	57%	73%	29%	58%
No	38	23	66	36

Despite the overall concern about health care and a willingness to do something about it, opinions are mixed about the effect of providing health insurance for all Americans on the nation's economy.

In fact, 37% think the national economy will be hurt if the government guaranteed health insurance for all Americans, but 34% think such an endeavor would improve the economy. Here too, there are differences by political party.

EFFECT ON ECONOMY IF GOV'T GUARANTEES HEALTH INSURANCE FOR ALL

	Total	Dems	Reps	Inds
Improve the economy	34%	46%	21%	29%
Hurt the economy	37	25	59	37
No effect	16	14	9	21
Don't know/Depends	13	15	11	13

A majority still believes providing health insurance for the uninsured is a more serious problem than keeping health care costs down for the average American. When asked to choose between the two, 54% say providing health insurance for the uninsured is the more serious problem. 40% say it is keeping costs down. But two years ago, even more Americans - 65% - said providing health insurance to those without it was more serious.

WHICH IS MORE SERIOUS?

	Now	2/2007
Providing health insurance for all	54%	65%
Keeping health care costs down	40	31

Health care costs matter on a personal level. 59% say the cost of their health care has gone up in recent years compared to other household expenses. And most Americans are concerned about the health costs their family will face in the coming years, including 57% who are very concerned. Those earning less than \$50K are more likely to be very concerned than those with higher incomes.

CONCERNED ABOUT FUTURE HEALTH CARE COSTS

Very	57%
Somewhat	32
Not at all	11

This poll was conducted among a random sample of 998 adults nationwide, interviewed by telephone April 1-5, 2009. Phone numbers were dialed from RDD samples of both standard land-lines and cell phones. The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus three percentage points. The error for subgroups is higher.

This poll release conforms to the Standards of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

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Americans' Views on Health Care
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q1-13 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q14 Beside the economy, which of these domestic policy areas do you want the President and Congress to concentrate on MOST right now -- health care, energy, education, or Social Security?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Health care	35	22	51	26
Energy	15	16	9	21
Education	22	26	17	23
Social Security	17	19	14	18
Something else/Combination	9	12	8	9
DK/NA	2	5	1	3

q15-67 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q68 If the government were to guarantee health insurance for all Americans, what effect would that have on the national economy? Would it improve the national economy, hurt the national economy, or wouldn't it affect the national economy?

Improve economy	34	21	46	29
Hurt economy	37	59	25	37
No effect	16	9	14	21
Depends (vol.)	2	1	2	4
DK/NA	11	10	13	9

q69 If you had to say, which do you think is a more serious problem right now -- keeping health care costs down for average Americans, OR providing health insurance for Americans who do not have any insurance?

	Feb07b				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	%
Keeping costs down	40	57	27	43	31
Providing for the uninsured	54	36	69	49	65
DK/NA	6	7	4	8	4

q70 How concerned are you about the health care costs you and your family might face in the coming years -- very concerned, somewhat concerned, or not at all concerned?

	Mar08c				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	%
Very	57	44	65	56	59
Somewhat	32	37	28	32	27
Not at all	11	19	7	12	14
DK/NA	0	0	0	0	0

q71 Would you be willing or not willing to pay higher taxes so that all Americans have health insurance they can't lose, no matter what?

	Feb07b				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	%
Willing	57	29	73	58	60
Not willing	38	66	23	36	34
DK/NA	5	5	4	6	6

q72 BLANK

q73-q74 FOR FUTURE RELEASE

q75 Compared to other household expenses in recent years, has the cost of your health care gone up, gone down, or been about the same compared to other household expenses?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **			
		*** Party ID ***		
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Gone up	59	53	60	62
Gone down	2	3	1	2
About same	33	39	31	31
DK/NA	6	5	8	5

	<u>Unweighted</u>	<u>Weighted</u>
Total Respondents	998	
Total Republicans	264	230
Total Democrats	349	391
Total Independents	385	377