



TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Lisa Grove and Ben Patinkin
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RE: Findings from a Survey of Registered Voters in the United States

DATE: December 10, 2008

This analysis is based on 840 interviews among registered voters in the United States. The survey was conducted December 4-7, 2008. The margin of error is plus or minus 3.4 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error for subgroups varies and is higher.

Voters Nationwide Are Opposed to Legislation That Mandates the Purchase of Private Health Insurance.

There is proposed federal legislation that would make it mandatory for every American to show proof that they have health insurance coverage or face tax penalties. If an individual does not receive full coverage through an employer, or if a person does not qualify for government assistance, then they would be required to pay for a policy. Do you favor or oppose this legislation or are you undecided?		
Favor, strongly	10%	15%
Favor, not strongly	5%	
Undecided	31%	
Oppose, not strongly	13%	53%
Oppose, strongly	40%	

A large number of voters express opposition to proposed legislation requiring Americans to purchase private health insurance. A majority (53%) say they oppose this proposal. Four in 10 (40%) say they are “strongly” opposed to it.

Less than one in five (15%) say they would support mandating that “every American show proof that they have health insurance

coverage or face tax penalties.” Another three in 10 (31%) are undecided.

Opposition to this proposal is quite pronounced. Indeed, there are large double-digit margins of opposition among self-identified Republicans, Independents and Democrats. Opposition is also strong among voters ages 35 to 44, those living in the West, voters living in non-metro regions of the country, households with incomes of \$35K to \$50K, college graduates and households with children under the age of 12.

Conversely, there is no base of support among any major demographic subgroup. Indeed, opposition is in the high double-digits in every major region of the country. It runs the highest in the West (61% oppose; 16% favor), but is also strong in the North Central states (54% oppose; 16% favor), the South (51% oppose; 13% favor) and in the Northeast (45% oppose; 18% favor).

Voters Favor Providing a Return on Taxpayers’ Investment for Any New Treatments or Prescription Drugs Developed By Taxpayer-Funded Research.

Half of all research and development of new health care treatments is currently funded by American taxpayers. Congress is considering increasing funding for stem cell research by tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars. There is proposed legislation that would give Americans a return on their investment in the form of lower costs for any of the new treatments or prescription drugs that are developed by taxpayer-funded research, including newly funded stem cell research. Do you favor or oppose this legislation or are you undecided?

Favor, strongly	28%	37%
Favor, not strongly	9%	
Undecided	42%	
Oppose, not strongly	5%	
Oppose, strongly	16%	21%
DK/NA	1%	

By just under a two-to-one margin Americans favor requiring a return on taxpayer-funded research that leads to new medical treatments or prescription drugs. Nearly four in 10 (37%) approve of this proposal, while only one in five (21%) are opposed. In addition, those who “strongly” favor the proposal outpace “strong” opposition by 12 points (28% strong favor; 16% strong oppose). Around four in 10 (42%) remain undecided.

Opposition is extremely weak across nearly every major subgroup. It exceeds one-quarter of the electorate only among voters with incomes between \$50K and \$75K. On the other hand, support passes the 40% mark among a number of critical subgroups including voters who earn over \$75K a year (48%), voters ages 55 to 64 (45%), voters in the West (44%), Northeasterners (42%) and college graduates (42%).