

Economy tops list of issues voters want candidates to discuss; health care drops to third behind Iraq

Health care has been the top domestic issue, following only Iraq as the issue that voters want to hear the presidential candidates discuss in our last several tracking polls.¹ In February, health care drops to third place, as the economy takes the lead among issues that voters want to hear about from candidates. This month, 45 percent of registered voters say they want to hear candidates talk about the economy, followed by 32 percent who mention Iraq, and 28 percent who mention health care (the fourth-ranked issue, immigration, is mentioned by 14 percent of voters). There are partisan differences, with health care ranking second for Democrats, third for independents, and fourth for Republicans.

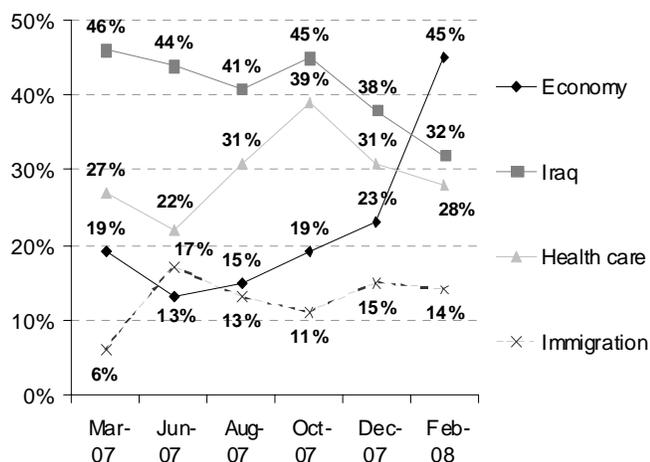
Thinking about the campaign for the presidential election in 2008, what two issues would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about? (open-ended, among registered voters)

Issue Rank	Total registered voters	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
1	Economy (45%)	Economy (42%)	Economy (47%)	Economy (48%)
2	Iraq (32)	Iraq (28)	Health care (40)	Iraq (32)
3	Health care (28)	Immigration (24)	Iraq (36)	Health care (20)
4	Immigration (14)	Health care (18)	Education (8)	Immigration (10)
5	Education (7)	Terrorism (14)	Immigration (7)	Education (8)
6	Terrorism (6)	Education (6)	Social Security (5)	Terrorism (7)
		Taxes (6)†		

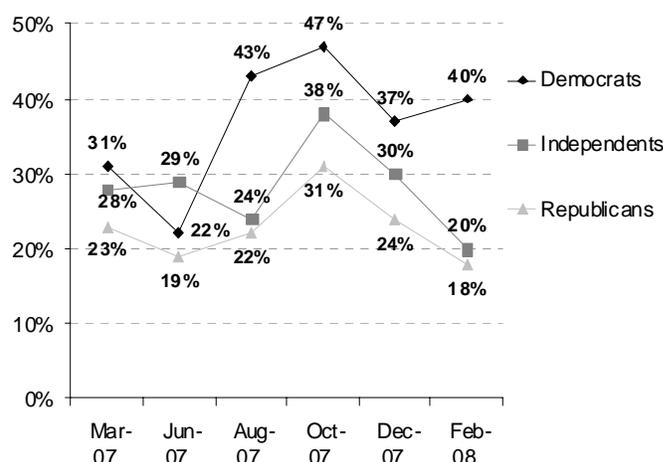
† indicates a tie with item directly above

Similar to other polls that have found increasing economic anxiety in recent months, we saw a doubling in the share of voters saying they want to hear candidates discuss the economy between December 2007 and February 2008 (from 23 percent to 45 percent). This increase was matched by smaller but significant decreases in the shares naming Iraq and health care. The decrease in the share naming health care is largely driven by Republican and independent voters. While the share of Democrats who name health care as a top issue for candidates to discuss has remained at or near four in ten since August 2007, the shares of Republicans and independents naming health care peaked in October 2007 and have declined considerably since.

Thinking about the campaign for the presidential election in 2008, what two issues would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about? (open-ended, top 4 responses shown among registered voters)



Percent naming HEALTH CARE as one of the top two issues they'd most like to hear presidential candidates talk about, by political party self-identification (among registered voters)



¹ Note that previous tracking poll reports were based on the general public. However, as the general election approaches, the trends in this February tracking poll (and all subsequent releases) will be based on registered voters.

Economy, Iraq, and health care are also the top voting issues...

When voters are asked instead about the issues that will affect their vote for president in 2008, the top three issues are the same as those that voters want to hear candidates discuss – the economy (43 percent), followed by Iraq (29 percent) and health care (21 percent). The economy is the top voting issue for Democrats, Republicans, and independents alike, and for both Democrats and independents, Iraq and health care rank number two and three, respectively. For Republicans, however, the list of issues behind the economy is more mixed, with terrorism and Iraq ranking number two and three, and health care falling to a much lower position on the list (ranking seventh among a tightly packed set of issues).

Thinking ahead to the November 2008 presidential election, what is the single most important issue in your choice for president? Is there one other issue that's nearly as important? (open-ended, among registered voters)

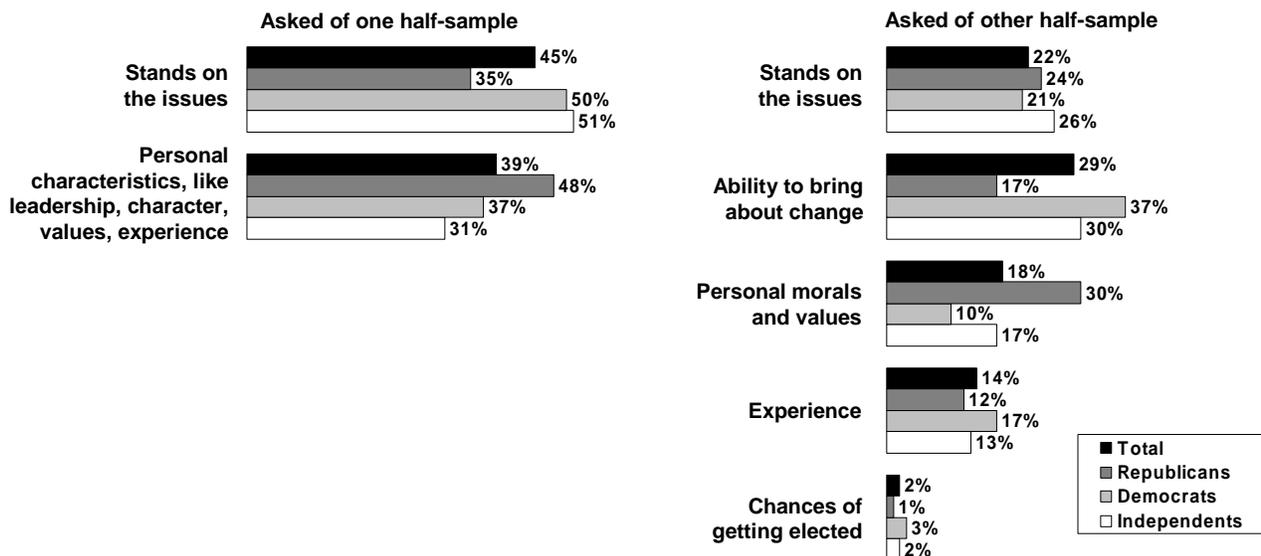
Issue Rank	Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
1	Economy (43%)	Economy (41%)	Economy (41%)	Economy (46%)
2	Iraq (29)	Terrorism (21)	Iraq (37)	Iraq (30)
3	Health care (21)	Iraq (18)	Health care (27)	Health care (19)
4	Frustration w/gov't (13)	Frustration w/gov't (13)	Frustration w/gov't (16)	Frustration w/gov't (11)
5	Terrorism (9)	Immigration (12)	Taxes (7)	Terrorism (11)†
6	Immigration (7)	Morality issues (12)†	Education (5)	Education (7)
7	Taxes (7)†	Health care (11)	Social Security (5)†	Immigration (6)

† indicates a tie with item directly above

...But issues are only part of what matters at the voting booth

When asked which will be more important in their voting decision, voters are nearly evenly split between the candidates' stands on the issues (45 percent) and their personal characteristics, including leadership abilities, character, values, and experience (39 percent). We also asked a separate half-sample a more detailed question about the relative importance of stands on the issues and four specific candidate characteristics that have often been discussed in this campaign (ability to bring about change, personal morals and values, experience, and chances of getting elected). In this question, the candidates' ability to bring about change ranks first (chosen by 29 percent), followed by the candidates' stands on the issues (22 percent), personal morals and values (18 percent), and experience (14 percent). Democrats (37 percent) and independents (30 percent) are most likely to choose the candidates' ability to bring about change as the most important factor in their vote, while Republicans are most likely to pick the candidates' personal morals and values (30 percent).

Overall, which of the following will be MOST important to you when you decide who to vote for? Will it be the candidates'... (Feb. 2008, registered voters)



VOTERS' VIEWS OF THE ECONOMY, AND THE ROLE OF HEALTH CARE

Given voters' large and increasing concern over the economy, it is helpful to look in more detail at people's economic concerns, and what, if any, role the cost of health care plays in voters' economic views. We asked the four in ten voters who named the economy as a top issue (either for candidates to discuss or in their vote for president), "When you say the economy is an important issue, can you tell me more specifically what you mean?"

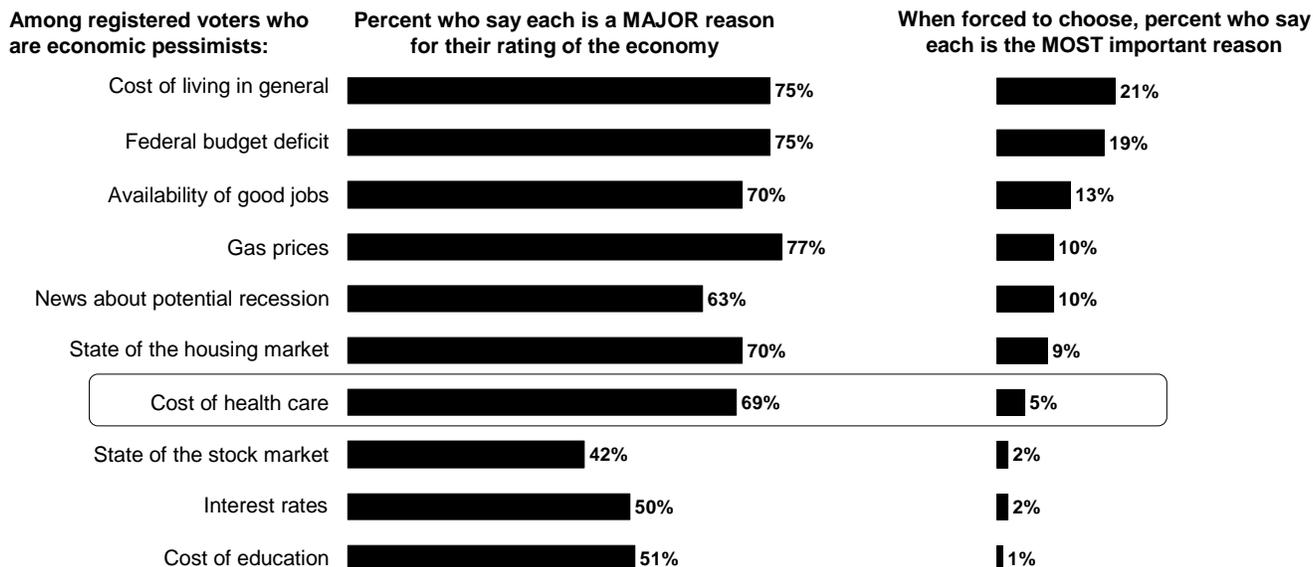
Jobs rise to the top of economy voters' specific economic concerns, with over three in ten citing unemployment or other job-related issues. Next on the list (behind generic mentions of the economy) are two issues that have recently received a lot of attention in the news: the mortgage crisis and concerns about the cost of housing (13 percent), and a possible economic recession (12 percent). Eight percent each mention the national debt and inflation, and five percent each name gas prices and taxes as the specific economic issues they think are most important. Health care plays a smaller role in overall mentions of the economy, with just three percent of economy voters mentioning the cost of health care and health insurance as the specific economic issue they're concerned about.

Total mentions among registered voters who name economy as top issue	
Jobs	31%
Economy, generic	18
Housing	13
Recession/fear of recession	12
National debt	8
Inflation/rising cost of living	8
Gas prices	5
Taxes	5
Stock market	3
Health care/insurance costs	3
Social Security/retirement	2
Devaluation of the dollar	2
Interest rates	2
Balance of trade	2

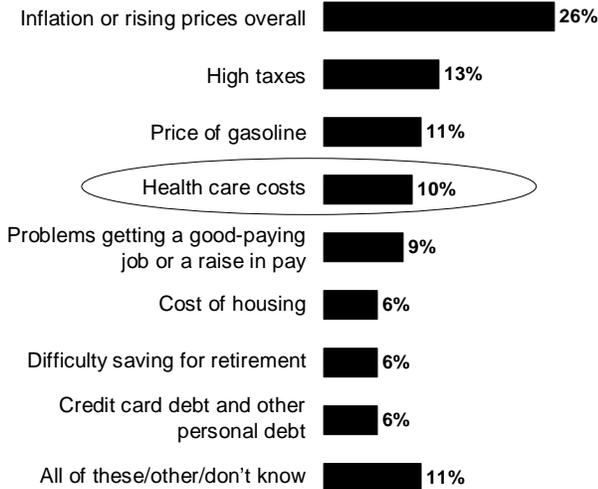
Note: adds up to more than 100% because multiple responses were accepted

Looking more broadly than the economy voters, a large majority of registered voters overall currently rates the economy as "not so good" (44 percent) or "poor" (34 percent). Democrats (89 percent) and independents (81 percent) are more likely than Republicans (61 percent) to give the economy poor ratings, and those who name the economy as a top issue (either to their vote or for candidates to discuss) are also more likely than others to say the economy is in bad shape (84 percent compared with 73 percent).

Among the 78 percent of voters who rate the economy as not so good or poor (hereafter referred to as "economic pessimists"), a variety of reasons emerge as important to their negative views of the economy. Given a list of ten possible reasons for their views, majorities say nine out of the ten are major reasons they rate the economy poorly. When asked to choose the *most* important reason, the cost of living in general and the federal budget deficit top the list, each chosen by about one in five economic pessimists. Job availability is next on the list (13 percent), followed by gas prices (10 percent), news of a potential economic recession (10 percent), and the state of the housing market (9 percent). Health care plays a smaller role in economic pessimists' negative views of the economy: while seven in ten say health care costs are a major reason they give the economy a poor rating, just 5 percent say health care costs are the main reason for their negative views.



Which of the following is the single most important economic issue facing you and your family? (Feb. 2008, registered voters)



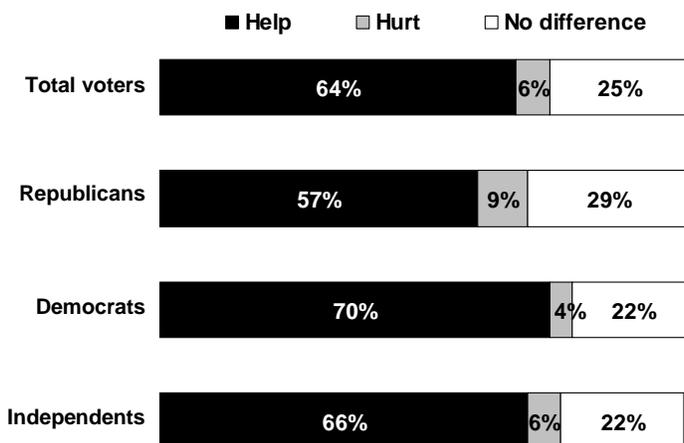
In a closer-to-home measure of voters' views of the economy, we also asked people about the single most important economic issue facing their family. Again, the cost of living in general rises to the top, with over a quarter of voters (26 percent) saying that inflation or rising prices overall is their family's biggest economic stressor. Behind this general measure of rising prices are various categories of specific elements of families' budgets. One in ten or more cite high taxes (13 percent), the price of gasoline (11 percent), and the cost of health care (10 percent) as the most important economic issue facing their family. Nearly as many (9 percent) choose problems getting a good-paying job or a raise in pay, while smaller shares cite other elements of the family budget, including the cost of housing (6 percent), retirement savings (6 percent), and credit card and other personal debt (6 percent).

The survey also finds that voters believe that lowering the cost of health care could have a direct effect on improving the economy. Nearly two-thirds (64 percent)

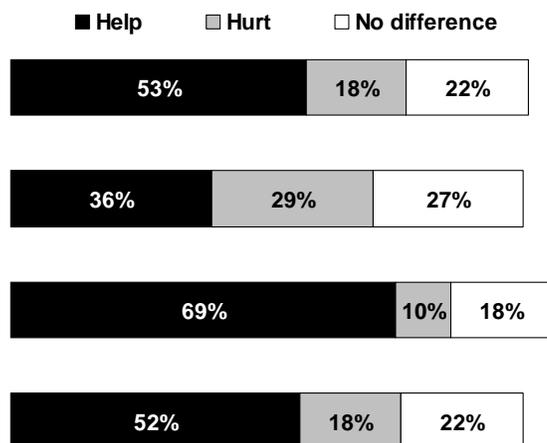
of registered voters say that if the cost of health care in the U.S. was significantly lowered, it would help the overall U.S. economic situation, including majorities of Democrats, Republicans, and independents.

On a separate question, a slim majority (53 percent) of voters think that if all Americans had health insurance coverage, it would help the overall economic situation in the U.S., while about one in five each think it would hurt the U.S. economic situation (18 percent) or make no difference (22 percent). Partisan differences emerge on this question. Nearly seven in ten Democrats and about half of independents think everyone being covered by insurance would be a help to the country's economic situation, while Republicans are more split (just over a third think it would help, three in ten say it would hurt, and just over a quarter say it would make no difference).

If THE COST OF HEALTH CARE IN THIS COUNTRY WAS SIGNIFICANTLY LOWERED do you think this would help or hurt the overall economic situation in the U.S., or wouldn't it make much difference? (Feb. 2008, registered voters)



If ALL AMERICANS HAD HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE, do you think this would help or hurt the overall economic situation in the U.S., or wouldn't it make much difference? (Feb. 2008, registered voters)



TWO GROUPS OF INTEREST: POLITICAL INDEPENDENTS AND HEALTH-FOCUSED VOTERS

As the primary season winds down and the general election approaches, the views of two groups of registered voters are particularly interesting in assessing the role of health care in the 2008 presidential race: political independents, and those voters who say that health care will be one of the top issues in their voting decision.

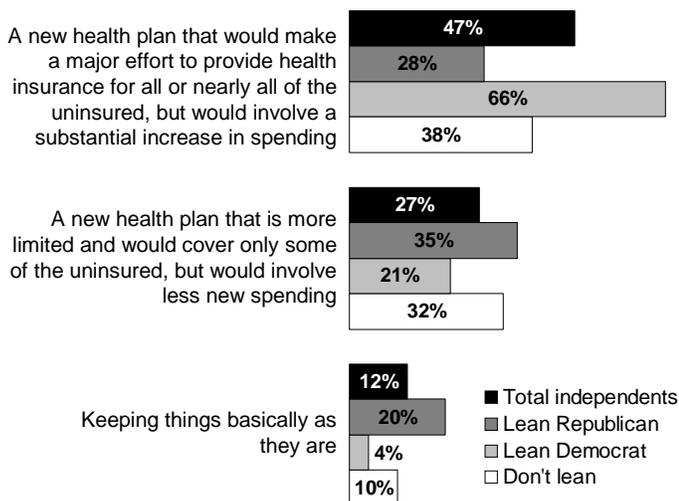
Political independents

Independents' views on health care tend to mirror those of voters at large. One in five independent voters (20 percent) name health care as one of the most important issues they want to hear candidates discuss, and a similar share (19 percent) say health care will be one of the most important issues in their vote choice. When it comes to the specific health care issues they want to hear candidates talk about, more than a third (37 percent) of independents say they most want to hear about reducing health care costs, while slightly fewer (32 percent) want to hear about expanding coverage for the uninsured. Nearly two in ten independents (18 percent) say they would most like to hear about improving the quality of care and reducing medical errors, a share that has been increasing in recent months.

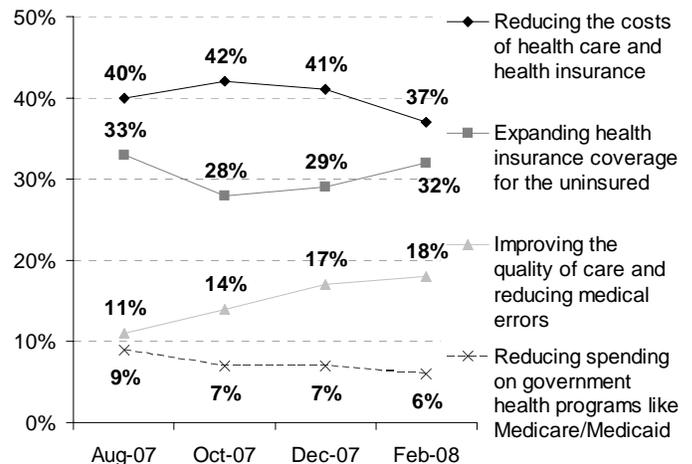
In addition to their interest in hearing candidates talk about lowering health care costs and increasing coverage for the uninsured, nearly half (47 percent) of independent voters say they would like a candidate for president to propose "a new health plan that would make a major effort to provide health insurance for all or nearly all of the uninsured, but would involve a substantial increase in spending." Just over a quarter (27 percent) would rather see a candidate propose a more limited plan that would only cover some of the uninsured but involve less new spending, while 12 percent would prefer a candidate to propose keeping things basically as they are.

While these data on independent voters overall are illuminating, our previous survey work has shown that independents are not a monolithic group, and there is often great variation in opinion among different groups of independent voters when it comes to health care.² Some evidence of that variation emerges in this survey when looking at independents who lean toward the Democratic party (38 percent of independent voters) compared with those who lean Republican (30 percent) and those who say they don't lean either way (25 percent). Independent voters who lean Democratic are more likely than those who lean Republican and those who don't lean to mention health care as one of the most important issues to their vote or for candidates to discuss in the campaign. In addition, Democratic-leaning independents are more than twice as likely as those who lean Republican to say they would like a candidate to propose a major, more costly plan to cover nearly all the uninsured.

Which ONE of the following three things would you like to see in a health care reform proposal from a presidential candidate? (Feb. 2008, Among registered voters who identify as independents)



Which ONE of the following health care issues would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about? (Among registered voters who identify as INDEPENDENTS)



Few independent voters can be expected to vote solely based on health; just ten percent of independents say they would only vote for a candidate who shares their views on health, while nearly three-quarters say they would consider a candidate's position on health as just one of many important factors. As mentioned above, issues are only part of what matters at the voting booth, and three in ten (30 percent) of independent voters say that ability to bring about change will be the most important of five different candidate attributes we asked about (including their stands on the issues).

² See the Kaiser Family Foundation's August 2007 analysis of Washington Post/Kaiser/Harvard survey data on political independents: "Political Independents and Health Care" at http://www.kff.org/kaiserpolls/h08_7680.cfm

Voters who are focused on health care

Another interesting group to watch as the general election unfolds is “health-focused voters,” defined here as the 21 percent of all voters who mentioned health care as one of the two most important issues in their vote for president

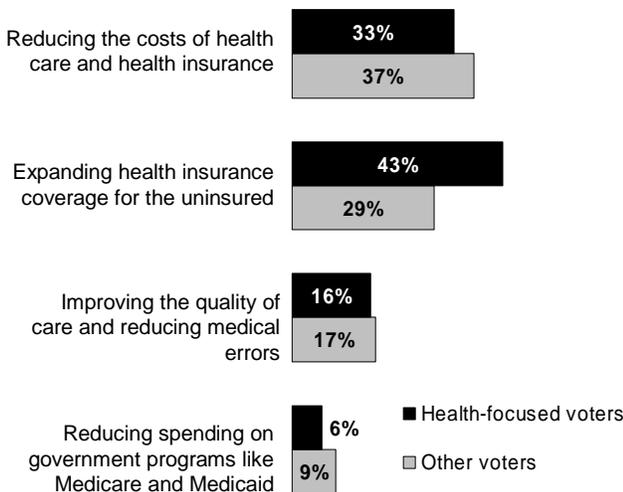
Looking at a profile of these voters, we find that they are more likely to identify as Democrats, less likely to be Republicans, and less likely to be politically conservative compared to other voters. Demographically, health-focused voters are younger, disproportionately lower-income, and more likely to be female. They are also more likely to be African American, to be uninsured, and to have children living in the home. Looking at data from previous elections shows that in the past, voters who focused on health care were more likely than other voters to be elderly. However at this point in the 2008 election, the opposite appears to be the case: health-focused voters are half as likely as their counterparts to be ages 65 and older. This may be due, at least in part, to the fact that, in past elections, Medicare was a more prominent issue in discussions and debates of health policy than it has been so far in the 2008 campaign.

In addition to their demographic differences, there are also differences between health-focused voters and their counterparts when it comes to their preferences for health reform and the specific aspects of health care they want to hear about from candidates. A 43 percent plurality of these voters say the health care issue they most want to hear presidential candidates discuss is expanding health insurance coverage for the uninsured, compared with a third (33 percent) who most want to hear about reducing health care costs, and one in six (16 percent) who want to hear about improving the quality of health care and reducing medical errors. Nearly six in ten of these health-focused voters (58 percent) say they would like a candidate to propose a major effort to cover all of the uninsured, even if it is more expensive, while three in ten would prefer a more limited, less expensive plan, and just three percent would like to keep things basically as they are.

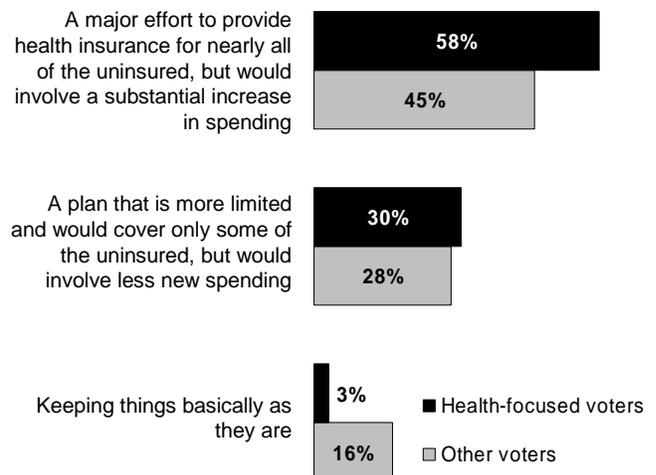
Among registered voters	Health-focused voters	Other voters
Political party identification		
Republican	14%	30%*
Democrat	47*	34
Independent	22	28
Something else	10*	4
Political ideology		
Liberal	27	20
Moderate	42	33
Conservative	28	43*
Gender		
Male	36	52*
Female	64*	48
Age (years)		
18-49	64*	51
50-64	25	28
65+	11	21*
Race/ethnicity		
White	68	80*
African American	19*	8
Hispanic/Latino	7	8
Other	6	4
Household income		
Less than \$30,000	34*	23
\$30,000-\$49,999	16	17
\$50,000-\$74,999	18	17
\$75,000 or more	27	26
Refused	6	16*
Health insurance status		
Insured	80	88*
Uninsured	20*	12
Any children at home		
Yes	46*	34
No	54	66*

* statistically significant difference between groups (p<.05)

Which ONE of the following health care issues would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about?
(Feb. 2008, registered voters)



Which ONE of the following three things would you like to see in a health care reform proposal from a presidential candidate? (Feb. 2008, registered voters)



Methodology

This *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: Election 2008*, the sixth in a series, was designed and analyzed by public opinion researchers at the Kaiser Family Foundation led by Mollyann Brodie, Ph.D., including Elizabeth Hamel and Carolina Gutiérrez. A nationally representative random sample of 1,770 registered voters was interviewed by telephone between February 7 and February 16, 2008. The margin of sampling error for the survey is plus or minus 3 percentage points; for results based on subgroups, the sampling error is higher.

December trends are from the fifth survey in the *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: Election 2008* series, and are based on a nationally representative random sample of 1,063 registered voters interviewed November 28-December 9, 2007³ (margin of sampling error plus or minus 4 percentage points).

October trends are from the fourth survey in the *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: Election 2008* series, and are based on a nationally representative random sample of 1,058 registered voters interviewed October 1-10, 2007 (margin of sampling error plus or minus 3 percentage points).

August trends are from the third survey in the *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: Election 2008* series, and are based on a nationally representative random sample of 1,303 registered voters interviewed August 2-8, 2007 (margin of sampling error plus or minus 3 percentage points).

June trends are from the second survey in the *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: Election 2008* series, and are based on a nationally representative random sample of 1,050 registered voters interviewed May 31-June 5, 2007 (margin of sampling error plus or minus 4 percentage points).

March trends are from the first survey in the *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: Election 2008* series, and are based on a nationally representative random sample of 1,013 registered voters interviewed March 8-13, 2007 (margin of sampling error plus or minus 3 percentage points).

Trends

1a. (Asked of half-sample) Thinking about the campaign for the presidential election in 2008, what two issues would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about? IF R GIVES ONE ISSUE PROBE FOR SECOND: Is there another issue you'd like to hear about? (OPEN-END)
(Note: mentions less than 5 percent not shown)

	AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
Economy				
Feb08	45	42	47	48
Dec07	23	19	25	26
Oct07	19	16	22	20
Aug07	15	15	13	16
Jun07	13	13	20	7
Mar07	19	18	20	20
Iraq				
Feb08	32	28	36	32
Dec07	38	31	39	42
Oct07	45	44	49	44
Aug07	41	32	45	46
Jun07	44	39	54	39
Mar07	46	44	54	43

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³ December data for question 1b comes from a parallel survey of a nationally representative random sample of 1,772 registered voters interviewed by telephone between November 28 and December 10, 2007, which has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points. This question was asked on a separate survey because of the desire to track opinions about the issues people most want to hear candidates discuss and the most important issue in their choice for president. In order to avoid biasing answers to these questions by asking them of the same group, and to preserve a large enough sample for subgroup analysis, the questions were asked of separate samples on separate surveys.

Health care				
Feb08	28	18	40	20
Dec07	31	24	37	30
Oct07	39	31	47	38
Aug07	31	22	43	24
Jun07	22	19	22	29
Mar07	27	23	31	28
Immigration				
Feb08	14	24	7	10
Dec07	15	25	9	16
Oct07	11	17	8	11
Aug07	13	17	8	15
Jun07	17	19	13	20
Mar07	6	8	4	9
Education				
Feb08	7	6	8	8
Dec07	6	7	7	4
Oct07	8	7	8	9
Aug07	6	3	8	7
Jun07	4	1	4	6
Mar07	6	6	6	3
Terrorism/nat'l security				
Feb08	6	14	1	7
Dec07	7	13	3	7
Oct07	7	13	1	9
Aug07	9	18	3	9
Jun07	8	17	3	6
Mar07	7	13	3	6
Taxes				
Feb08	5	6	4	6
Dec07	8	10	5	10
Oct07	6	10	4	7
Aug07	8	11	8	8
Jun07	4	5	2	3
Mar07	4	3	2	7

1b. (Asked of half-sample) Thinking ahead to the November 2008 presidential election, what is the single most important issue in your choice for president? IF R GIVES ONE ISSUE PROBE FOR SECOND: Is there another issue you'd like to hear about? (OPEN-END)
(Note: mentions less than 5 percent not shown)

	AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
Economy				
Feb08	43	41	41	46
Dec07	23	18	23	26
Iraq				
Feb08	29	18	37	30
Dec07	30	28	35	30
Health care				
Feb08	21	11	27	19
Dec07	21	15	30	19
Frustration w/gov't				
Feb08	13	13	16	11
Dec07	11	16	9	10
Terrorism/nat'l security				
Feb08	9	21	1	11
Dec07	9	14	4	11
Immigration				
Feb08	7	12	3	6
Dec07	11	12	10	13
Taxes				
Feb08	7	9	7	4
Dec07	6	6	3	11
Morality issues				
Feb08	5	12	2	3
Dec07	5	12	1	5

2. When you say the economy is an important issue, can you tell me more specifically what you mean? (OPEN-END)

(Note: mentions less than 2 percent not shown)

Based on those who gave economy-related responses to Q1a or Q1b (n=813).

Table will add to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS:	TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
Jobs				
Feb08	31	21	39	30
Economy				
Feb08	18	20	16	20
Housing				
Feb08	13	9	17	10
Possible recession/fear of recession				
Feb08	12	13	11	13
National debt				
Feb08	8	10	5	8
Inflation/rising cost of living				
Feb08	8	8	7	8
Gas prices				
Feb08	5	7	4	4
Taxes				
Feb08	5	8	5	5
Stock market				
Feb08	3	3	3	4
Health care/health insurance costs				
Feb08	3	1	4	2
Social Security/retirement				
Feb08	2	1	1	4
Devaluation of the dollar				
Feb08	2	*	2	3
Interest rates				
Feb08	2	2	2	2
Balance of trade				
Feb08	2	2	1	2

3. Now thinking specifically about HEALTH CARE, which ONE of the following health care issues would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about? (READ AND RANDOMIZE 1-4)⁴

AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS:	TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
Reducing the costs of health care and health insurance				
Feb08	37	45	31	37
Dec07	40	47	36	41
Oct07	41	43	40	42
Aug07	41	50	38	40
Expanding health insurance coverage for the uninsured				
Feb08	31	16	43	32
Dec07	29	19	39	29
Oct07	31	21	41	28
Aug07	31	16	38	33
Improving the quality of care And reducing medical errors				
Feb08	17	21	13	18
Dec07	16	15	14	17
Oct07	14	19	11	14
Aug07	12	16	12	11

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⁴ Question wording from August 2007 poll: Next, thinking about the campaign for the presidential election in 2008, which ONE of the following health care issues would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about and focus on in any health reform plan they may develop? (READ AND RANDOMIZE 1-4)

Reducing spending on gov't health programs like Medicare/Medicaid

Feb08	7	10	7	6
Dec07	8	10	7	7
Oct07	7	11	5	7
Aug07	8	10	6	9
None of these (VOL)				
Feb08	3	3	2	2
Dec07	3	5	*	3
Oct07	2	3	1	3
Aug07	3	4	1	3
Other issue (VOL)				
Feb08	2	3	1	2
Dec07	2	2	2	2
Oct07	3	3	1	4
Aug07	2	1	1	3
Don't know/Refused				
Feb08	2	2	1	2
Dec07	2	2	2	2
Oct07	2	1	1	1
Aug07	3	3	4	2

4a. (Asked of half-sample) Thinking about your choice for president... Overall, which of the following will be MOST important when you decide who to vote for. Will it be... the candidates' stands on the issues or the candidates' personal characteristics, including leadership abilities, character, values, and experience?

	AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
The candidates' stands on the issues				
Feb08	45	35	50	51
The candidates' personal characteristics, including leadership abilities, character, values and experience				
Feb08	39	48	37	31
Both (VOL)				
Feb08	12	14	10	13
Neither/something else (VOL)				
Feb08	2	1	1	3
Don't know/Refused				
Feb08	2	1	3	1

4b. (Asked of half-sample) Thinking about your choice for president... Overall, which of the following will be MOST important when you decide who to vote for. Will it be the candidates'... (READ AND RANDOMIZE)

	AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
Ability to bring about change				
Feb08	29	17	37	30
Stands on the issues				
Feb08	22	24	21	26
Personal morals and values				
Feb08	18	30	10	17
Experience				
Feb08	14	12	17	13
All/some combination of these (VOL)				
Feb08	9	9	9	9
Chances of getting elected				
Feb08	2	1	3	2
Neither/something else (VOL)				
Feb08	2	3	1	2
Don't know/Refused				
Feb08	3	3	2	2

5. Thinking about all of the candidates for president in 2008, regardless of political party or who you intend to vote for, which candidate BEST represents your own views on health care?
 (OPEN-END)

(Note: only remaining candidates shown)

	AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
Named any candidate (NET)				
Feb08	68	60	80	63
Dec07	48	42	63	41
Oct07	51	43	61	49
Aug07	43	33	59	40
Jun07	43	35	58	33
Mar07	36	29	48	31
Hillary Clinton				
Feb08	26	7	45	22
Dec07	22	8	39	20
Oct07	22	5	36	21
Aug07	19	4	36	16
Jun07	17	1	34	12
Mar07	16	6	27	11
Barack Obama				
Feb08	19	8	28	19
Dec07	6	2	12	3
Oct07	8	2	14	5
Aug07	6	3	9	7
Jun07	9	4	14	8
Mar07	6	3	9	5
John McCain				
Feb08	11	24	2	11
Dec07	1	2	1	1
Oct07	1	1	1	2
Aug07	1	2	*	1
Jun07	2	6	*	2
Mar07	3	4	2	3
Mike Huckabee				
Feb08	4	10	*	3
Dec07	2	4	*	1
Oct07	1	4	--	1
Aug07	*	*	--	--
Jun07	--	--	--	--
Mar07	--	--	--	--
Don't know/No candidate				
Feb08	32	40	20	37
Dec07	52	58	37	59
Oct07	49	57	39	51
Aug07	57	67	41	60
Jun07	57	65	42	67
Mar07	64	71	52	69

6. And still thinking about all of the candidates for president, regardless of political party and whether or not you agree with their views, which candidate do you think is placing the BIGGEST EMPHASIS on health care issues? (OPEN-END)
 (Note: only remaining candidates shown)

	AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
Named a candidate (NET)				
Feb08	73	67	82	72
Dec07	57	52	64	57
Oct07	59	52	66	62
Aug07	47	39	58	54
Jun07	43	36	58	43
Mar07	38	29	50	35
Hillary Clinton				
Feb08	52	46	58	51
Dec07	41	36	48	41
Oct07	45	38	49	49
Aug07	28	21	34	28
Jun07	23	17	32	22
Mar07	22	17	29	24
Barack Obama				
Feb08	15	11	19	14
Dec07	5	3	8	5
Oct07	6	2	9	6
Aug07	7	5	10	6
Jun07	10	8	13	8
Mar07	6	1	12	4
John McCain				
Feb08	2	5	*	2
Dec07	*	1	*	1
Oct07	1	*	1	*
Aug07	1	1	1	1
Jun07	1	2	*	1
Mar07	1	1	1	*
Mike Huckabee				
Feb08	1	1	*	1
Dec07	*	1	--	--
Oct07	*	1	*	--
Aug07	*	*	*	--
Don't know/No candidate				
Feb08	27	33	18	28
Dec07	43	48	36	43
Oct07	41	48	34	38
Aug07	53	61	42	56
Jun07	54	64	42	57
Mar07	62	71	50	65

7. Thinking about how the issue of health care might affect your vote for president, would you...?
 (CATEGORIES READ IN ORDER AND REVERSE ORDER)

	AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
Consider a candidate's position on health care as just one of many important factors				
Feb08	70	62	74	74
Dec07	73	73	73	74
Oct07	70	73	69	75
Aug07	76	76	77	75
Jun07	71	69	69	77
Mar07	74	78	72	74
Not see health care as a major issue in your vote				
Feb08	15	24	9	11
Dec07	11	12	9	12
Oct07	12	14	10	12
Aug07	10	12	7	13
Jun07	13	20	10	10
Mar07	10	10	7	12
ONLY vote for a candidate who shares your views on health care				
Feb08	11	9	14	10
Dec07	12	10	15	10
Oct07	13	9	18	7
Aug07	10	7	14	10
Jun07	12	8	15	10
Mar07	11	8	15	9
Don't know/Refused				
Feb08	5	4	3	6
Dec07	4	4	4	4
Oct07	4	4	3	5
Aug07	4	5	2	3
Jun07	4	3	6	3
Mar07	6	4	6	5

8. Which ONE of the following three things would you like to see in a health care reform proposal from a presidential candidate? Would you want your candidate to propose... (READ)?

	AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
A new health plan that would make a major effort to provide health insurance for all or nearly all of the uninsured BUT would involve a substantial increase in spending				
Feb08	47	26	65	47
Dec07	46	32	57	48
Oct07	51	31	68	45
Aug07	51	32	65	51
Jun07	51	34	69	48
Mar07	51	38	64	49
A new health plan that is more limited and would cover only some groups of the uninsured BUT would involve less new spending				
Feb08	28	35	24	27
Dec07	27	31	22	27
Oct07	25	34	19	26
Aug07	25	33	22	24
Jun07	23	30	15	24
Mar07	25	33	19	27

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A health plan that would keep things basically as they are

Feb08	15	28	6	12
Dec07	17	27	13	15
Oct07	15	26	7	17
Aug07	14	25	4	15
Jun07	16	26	9	18
Mar07	14	19	9	14
Don't know/Refused				
Feb08	10	10	5	14
Dec07	9	9	8	10
Oct07	9	9	6	12
Aug07	10	10	9	10
Jun07	9	10	8	10
Mar07	11	10	9	10

9. On another subject... Would you describe the state of the nation's economy these days as... (February 2008)

	AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
Excellent	1	3	*	1
Good	21	36	11	18
Not so good	44	45	44	42
Poor	34	16	45	39
Don't know/Refused	1	*	*	1

10. For each of the following, please tell me whether it is a major reason, a minor reason or not a reason why you rate the economy as not so good/poor. (February 2008)

Based on registered voters who describe the economy as "not so good" or "poor" (N=1,359)

	AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
a. Gas prices				
Major reason	77	72	81	73
Minor reason	19	23	17	22
Not a reason	3	4	2	5
Don't know/Refused	1	1	*	1
b. The federal budget deficit				
Major reason	75	66	80	76
Minor reason	16	22	13	15
Not a reason	6	8	5	6
Don't know/Refused	3	4	2	3
c. The cost of living in general				
Major reason	75	70	78	73
Minor reason	20	23	19	22
Not a reason	3	5	2	3
Don't know/Refused	1	2	1	2
d. The state of the housing market				
Major reason	70	69	75	66
Minor reason	21	22	17	26
Not a reason	6	6	5	7
Don't know/Refused	3	3	3	2
e. The availability of good jobs				
Major reason	70	60	76	68
Minor reason	22	28	18	24
Not a reason	6	9	5	6
Don't know/Refused	2	2	2	3

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f. The cost of health care and insurance				
Major reason	69	55	77	67
Minor reason	24	35	17	25
Not a reason	6	10	5	6
Don't know/Refused	1	1	1	1
g. News about a potential economic recession				
Major reason	63	61	68	58
Minor reason	27	31	22	31
Not a reason	8	7	8	8
Don't know/Refused	3	2	2	3
h. The cost of education				
Major reason	51	43	56	51
Minor reason	36	40	32	39
Not a reason	11	15	10	10
Don't know/Refused	2	2	1	1
i. Interest rates				
Major reason	50	44	59	42
Minor reason	35	38	30	40
Not a reason	12	16	8	15
Don't know/Refused	3	2	3	4
j. The state of the stock market				
Major reason	42	43	43	41
Minor reason	34	37	32	37
Not a reason	14	12	15	14
Don't know/Refused	10	8	10	7

11. If you had to choose, which of these would you say is the MAIN influence on your judgment of the economy? (February 2008)

Based on registered voters who describe the economy as "not so good" or "poor" (1,359)

Note: includes those who rated only one as a "major reason"

	AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
The cost of living in general	21	22	21	18
The federal budget deficit	19	14	21	19
The availability of good jobs	13	11	12	16
Gas prices	10	9	11	11
News about a potential economic recession	10	11	10	11
The state of the housing market	9	15	9	6
The cost of health reform	5	5	5	6
Interest rates	2	3	1	1
The state of the stock market	2	3	2	3
None of these/Other	3	3	3	2
Didn't name any a major reason	1	1	*	*
The cost of education	1	*	2	1
Don't know/Refused	4	3	3	4

12. Which of the following is the single most important economic issue facing you and your family? If it is a different issue than ones on the list, just tell me that. (READ AND RANDOMIZE) (February 2008)

	AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
Inflation or rising prices overall	26	23	27	25
High taxes	13	20	7	13
The price of gasoline	11	15	9	12
Health care costs	10	6	12	11
Problems getting a good-paying job or a raise in pay	9	7	12	9
Credit card debt and other personal debt	6	7	8	3
The cost of housing	6	4	7	7
Difficulty saving for retirement	6	7	6	7
All of these (VOL)	8	7	6	9
None of these (VOL)	2	1	3	1
Something else (VOL)	2	2	3	2
Don't know/Refused	1	1	1	1

13a. If all Americans had health insurance coverage, do you think this would help or hurt the overall economic situation in U.S., or wouldn't it make much difference? (February 2008)

	AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
Help	53	36	69	52
Hurt	18	29	10	18
Wouldn't make much difference	22	27	18	22
Don't know/Refused	7	8	4	8

13b. If the cost of health care in this country was significantly lowered, do you think this would help or hurt the overall economic situation in U.S., or wouldn't it make much difference? (February 2008)

	AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS: TOTAL	REP	DEM	IND
Help	64	57	70	66
Hurt	6	9	4	6
Wouldn't make much difference	25	29	22	22
Don't know/Refused	6	5	4	6

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