

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.

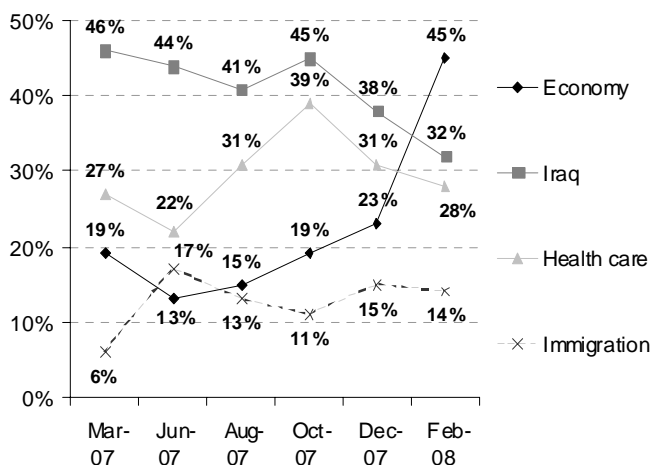
Thinking about the campaign for the presidential election in 2008, what two issues would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about? (open-ended, among registered voters)

| 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)† | | |

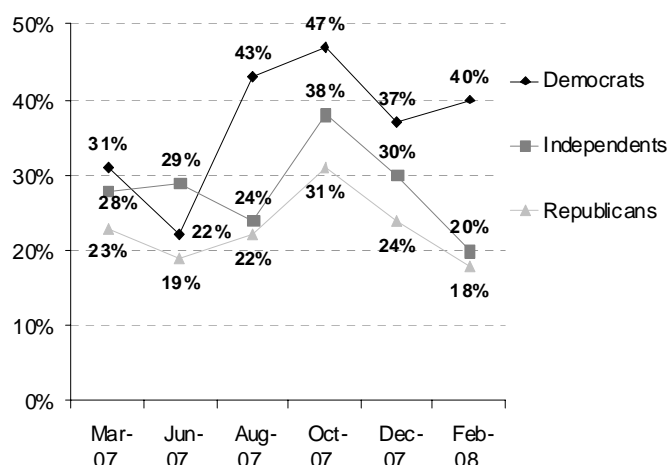
† indicates a tie with item directly above

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)

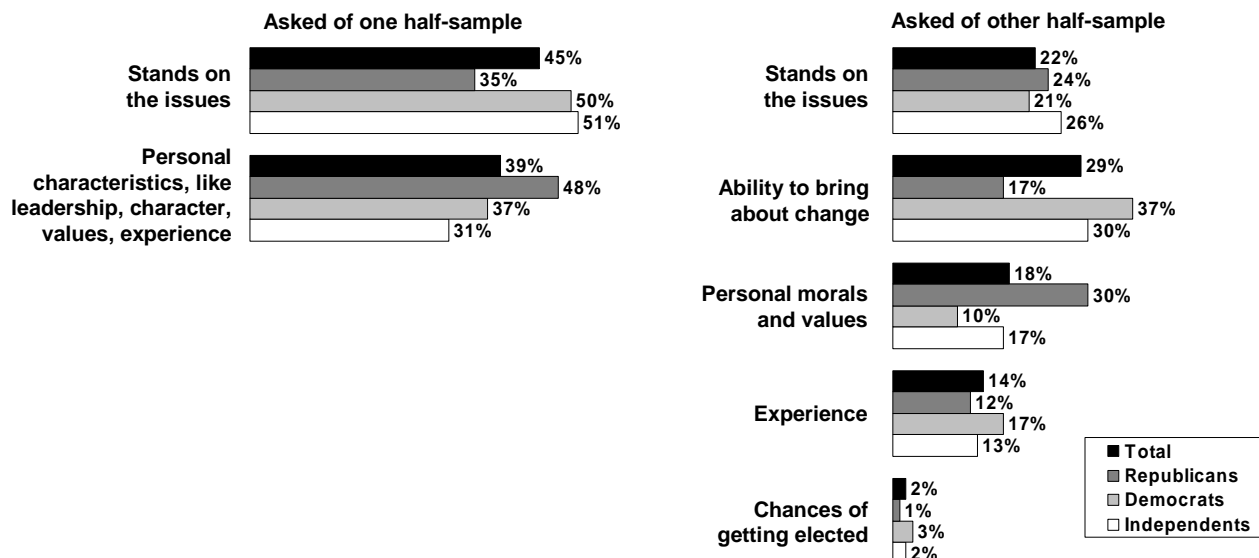
| Issue Rank | Total | Republicans | Democrats | Independents |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Economy (43%) | Economy (41%) | Economy (41%) | Economy (46%) |
| 2 | Iraq (29) | Terrorism (21) | Iraq (37) | 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.

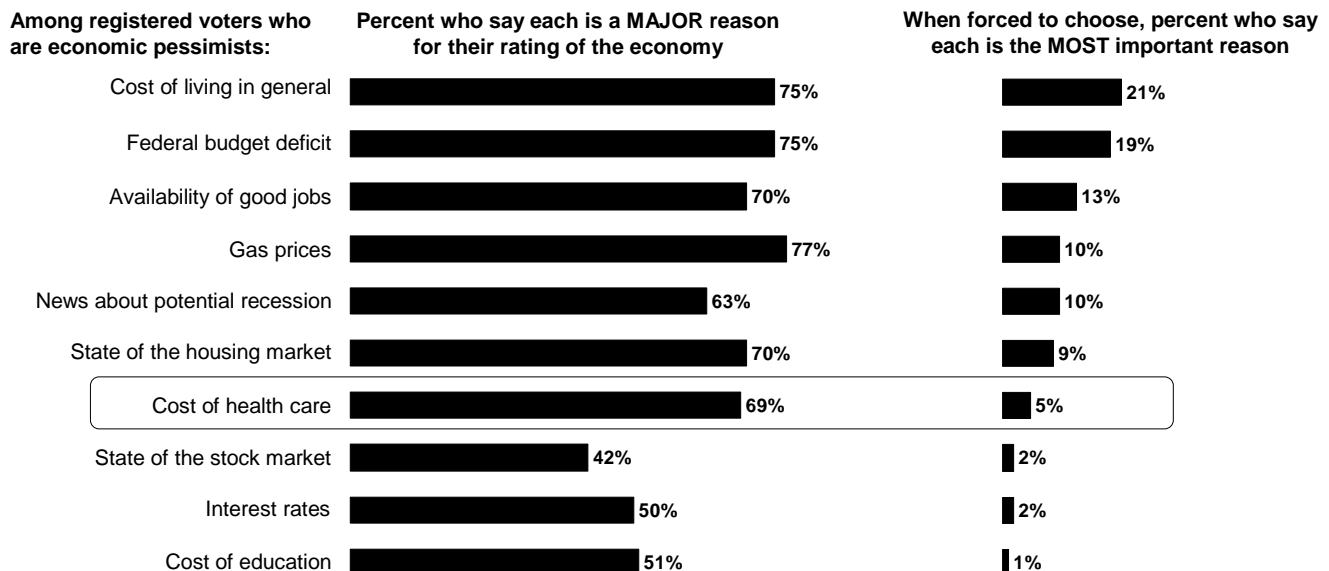
Total mentions among registered voters who name economy as top issue

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| 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)



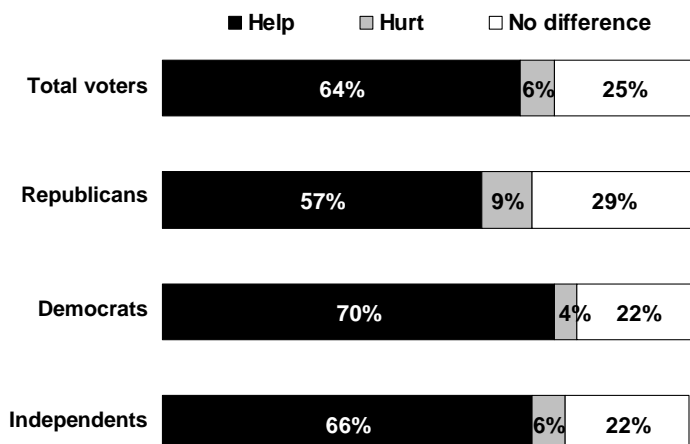
In a closer-to-home measure of voters' views of the economy, we also asked people about the single most important economic issue facing their family. Again, the cost of living in general rises to the top, with over a quarter of voters (26 percent) saying that inflation or rising prices overall is their 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)

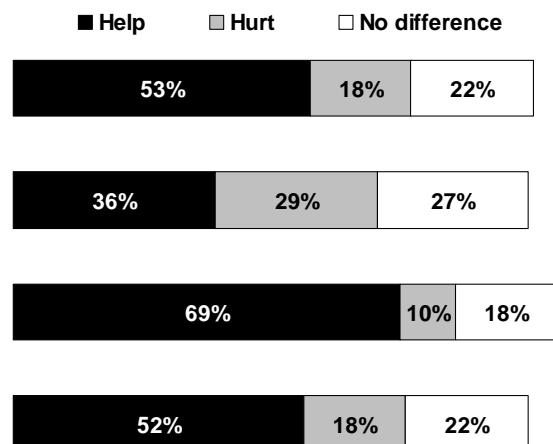
of registered voters say that if the cost of health care in the U.S. was significantly lowered, it would help the overall U.S. economic situation, including majorities of Democrats, Republicans, and independents.

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.

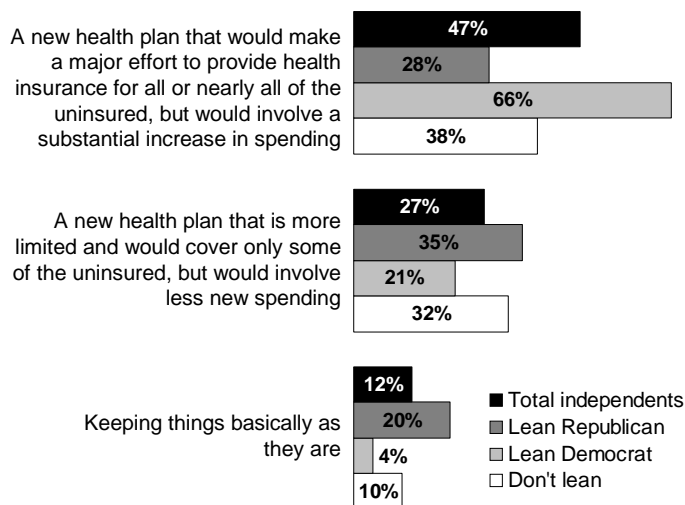
Political independents

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.

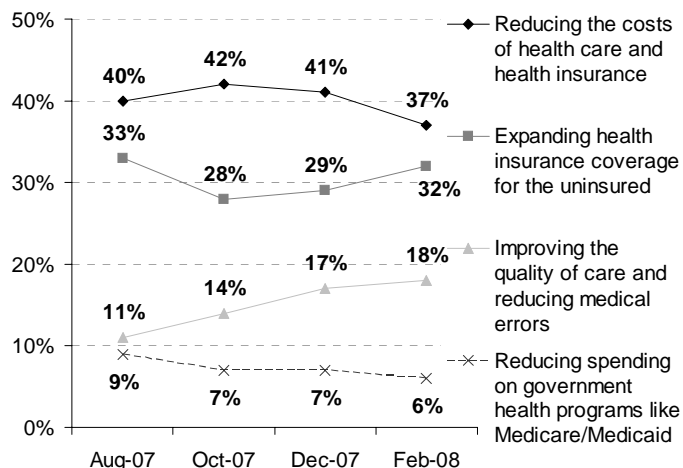
In addition to their interest in hearing candidates talk about lowering health care costs and increasing coverage for the uninsured, nearly half (47 percent) of independent voters say they would like a candidate for president to propose "a new health plan that would make a major effort to provide health 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

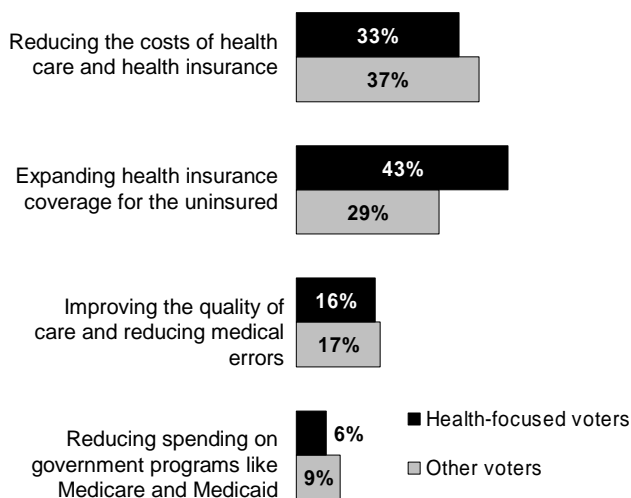
Looking at a profile of these voters, we find that they are more likely to identify as Democrats, less likely to be Republicans, and less likely to be politically conservative compared to other voters. Demographically, health-focused voters are younger, disproportionately lower-income, and more likely 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.

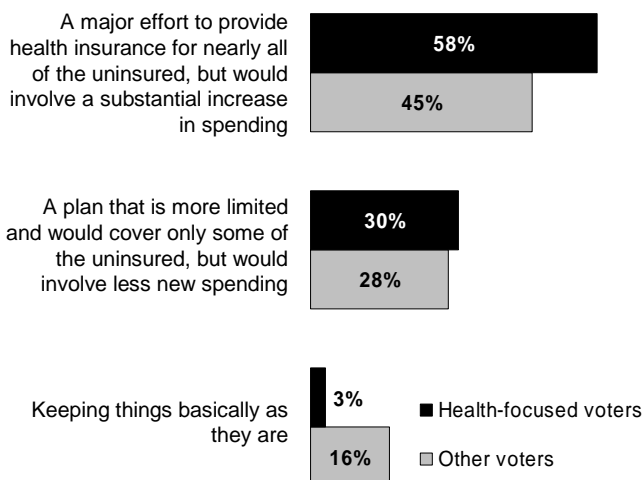
| Among registered voters | Health-focused voters | Other voters |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Political party identification | | |
| Republican | 14% | 30%* |
| Democrat | 47* | 34 |
| Independent | 22 | 28 |
| Something else | 10* | 4 |
| Political ideology | | |
| 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 |

(continued on next page)

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 |

(continued on next page)

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 |

(continued on next page)

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 |

(continued on next page)

| | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|----|
| 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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