Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: September 2011
Public Split On Idea Of Super Committee

As you may know, the legislation to raise the federal debt ceiling that was passed by Congress and signed by the president at the end of July calls for the creation of a bipartisan committee, sometimes referred to as the "super committee." The committee is made up of 12 members of Congress—6 Republicans and 6 Democrats—and must come up with a plan to cut at least $1.2 trillion from the federal budget deficit over the next 10 years. They must make their recommendations to Congress by November 23. If the committee doesn't reach consensus, or if Congress doesn't approve their recommendations by December 23, a series of automatic spending cuts would kick in. Do you think creating the bipartisan super committee was a good idea or a bad idea?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Good idea</th>
<th>Bad idea</th>
<th>Don't know/Refused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation/Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)

Majority Expresses Little or No Trust in Super Committee

How much do you trust each of the following to make the right recommendations about ways to reduce the federal budget deficit?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>A fair amount</th>
<th>Just a little</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President Obama</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats in Congress</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bipartisan super committee</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans in Congress</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Don’t know/Refused answers not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation/Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)
### Partisan Differences in Trust on Dealing With the Deficit

Percent who say they trust each of the following "a great deal" or "a fair amount" to make the right recommendations about ways to reduce the federal budget deficit:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Independents</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President Obama</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats in Congress</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bipartisan super committee</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans in Congress</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)

### Majority Not Confident Super Committee Will Deliver a Passable Proposal

How confident are you that the super committee will be able to come up with a proposal to cut $1.2 trillion from the federal deficit before the November deadline?

How likely do you think it is that the super committee will be able to come up with a proposal that will get enough support from both parties in Congress in order to pass?

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)
Lack Of Confidence In Super Committee

How confident are you that the super committee will be able to come up with a proposal to cut $1.2 trillion from the federal deficit before the November deadline?

- Very confident: 4%
- Somewhat confident: 32%
- Not too confident: 36%
- Not at all confident: 26%

Democrats:
- Very confident: 5%
- Somewhat confident: 41%
- Not too confident: 35%
- Not at all confident: 18%

Independents:
- Very confident: 4%
- Somewhat confident: 29%
- Not too confident: 35%
- Not at all confident: 29%

Republicans:
- Very confident: 4%
- Somewhat confident: 25%
- Not too confident: 39%
- Not at all confident: 32%

Note: Don’t know/Refused answers not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)

Majority Don’t Think Super Committee Will Come Up With Passable Plan

How likely do you think it is that the super committee will be able to come up with a proposal that will get enough support from both parties in Congress in order to pass?

- Very likely: 6%
- Somewhat likely: 36%
- Not too likely: 33%
- Not at all likely: 23%

Democrats:
- Very likely: 8%
- Somewhat likely: 38%
- Not too likely: 34%
- Not at all likely: 18%

Independents:
- Very likely: 6%
- Somewhat likely: 36%
- Not too likely: 29%
- Not at all likely: 27%

Republicans:
- Very likely: 4%
- Somewhat likely: 32%
- Not too likely: 38%
- Not at all likely: 25%

Note: Don’t know/Refused answers not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)
Majority Of Public Want No Reductions To Social Security Or Medicare

If the super committee recommends reducing the deficit by reducing federal spending, I’d like to know in which areas you would be willing to see spending reduced. For each area I name, please tell me if you would support major spending reductions, minor spending reductions or no reductions at all as a way to reduce the federal deficit.

- **Social security**
  - No reductions at all: 58%
  - Minor reductions: 27%
  - Major reductions: 12%

- **Medicare**
  - No reductions at all: 51%
  - Minor reductions: 35%
  - Major reductions: 13%

- **Medicaid**
  - No reductions at all: 46%
  - Minor reductions: 36%
  - Major reductions: 16%

- **Defense**
  - No reductions at all: 28%
  - Minor reductions: 39%
  - Major reductions: 28%

Note: Don’t know/Refused answers not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)

Even Among Republicans and Tea Party Supporters, Most Oppose Reductions to Social Security

If the super committee recommends reducing the deficit by reducing federal spending, I’d like to know in which areas you would be willing to see spending reduced. For each area I name, please tell me if you would support major spending reductions, minor spending reductions or no reductions at all as a way to reduce the federal deficit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Independents</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
<th>Tea Party Supporters (regardless of party affiliation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social security</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reductions</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor reductions</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major reductions</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medicare</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reductions</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor reductions</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major reductions</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medicaid</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reductions</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor reductions</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major reductions</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Defense</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reductions</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor reductions</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major reductions</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Don’t know/Refused answers not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)
**Most See Role For Tax Increases And Spending Reductions In Super Committee Plan**

Thinking about different approaches the super committee might recommend to reduce the federal budget deficit, I’d like to know how big a role you think each of the following should play in an overall deficit reduction strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Major role</th>
<th>Minor role</th>
<th>No role at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closing tax loopholes for wealthy Americans</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing tax loopholes for large businesses</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repealing the Bush tax cuts for wealthy Americans</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing taxes for wealthy Americans</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing spending on government programs and services</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repealing the Bush tax cuts for all Americans</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing taxes for all Americans</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Various items asked of half sample. Don’t know/Refused answers not shown. Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)

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**Partisan Disagreement On How Super Committee Should Reduce The Deficit**

Percent who say each of the following should play a “major role” in an overall deficit reduction strategy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Independents</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closing tax loopholes for wealthy Americans</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing tax loopholes for large businesses</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repealing the Bush tax cuts for wealthy Americans</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing taxes for wealthy Americans</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing spending on government programs and services</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repealing the Bush tax cuts for all Americans</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing taxes for all Americans</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)
Views On Health Reform Remain Divided

As you may know, a health reform bill was signed into law early last year. Given what you know about the health reform law, do you have a generally favorable or generally unfavorable opinion of it?

![Bar chart showing views on health reform](chart.png)

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation/Health Tracking Polls

Views On Health Reform Law Differ Sharply By Party Self-Identification

As you may know, a health reform bill was signed into law early last year. Given what you know about the health reform law, do you have a generally favorable or generally unfavorable opinion of it?

![Bar chart showing views on health reform by party](chart2.png)

Note: Don’t know/Refused answers not shown.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation/Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)
Partisan Disagreement Over ACA Continues

Percent who say they have a favorable opinion of the health reform law:

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation/Health Tracking Polls

Trend In Perception Of Personal Impact Of Law

Do you think you and your family will be better off or worse off under the health reform law, or don’t you think it will make much difference?

Note: Don’t know/Refused answers not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation/Health Tracking Polls
SLIDE 15

**No Agreement As To Whether Country Will Benefit**

Do you think the country as a whole will be better off or worse off under the health reform law, or don’t you think it will make much difference?

Note: Don’t know/Refused answers not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Polls

SLIDE 16

**People With Pre-Existing Health Conditions Viewed As Most Likely to Benefit Under ACA**

Do you think each of the following will be better off or worse off under the health reform law, or don’t you think it will make much difference?

Note: Various items asked of half sample.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)
Partisan Divisions As To ‘What Next’ For Health Reform

What would you like to see Congress do when it comes to the health care law?

- EXPAND law
- KEEP law as is
- REPEAL law and REPLACE with Republican-sponsored alternative
- REPEAL law and NOT REPLACE it

Total

- EXPAND law: 33%
- KEEP law as is: 19%
- REPEAL law and REPLACE with Republican-sponsored alternative: 16%
- REPEAL law and NOT REPLACE it: 21%

Democrats

- EXPAND law: 48%
- KEEP law as is: 26%
- REPEAL law and REPLACE with Republican-sponsored alternative: 11%

Independents

- EXPAND law: 30%
- KEEP law as is: 17%
- REPEAL law and REPLACE with Republican-sponsored alternative: 13%
- REPEAL law and NOT REPLACE it: 24%

Republicans

- EXPAND law: 12%
- KEEP law as is: 8%
- REPEAL law and REPLACE with Republican-sponsored alternative: 43%
- REPEAL law and NOT REPLACE it: 32%

Note: Don’t know/Refused answers not shown.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)

Half Want Health Care Law Kept As Is Or Expanded

What would you like to see Congress do when it comes to the health care law?

- EXPAND law or KEEP law as is
- REPEAL law and REPLACE with Republican-sponsored alternative or
- REPEAL law and NOT REPLACE it
- Don’t know/Refused


Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Polls
Half Of Americans Say Someone In Household Has Pre-Existing Condition

In general, the term “pre-existing condition” is used by insurance companies to describe an illness or medical condition that a person had before they began looking for insurance. For example, if you were looking to buy health insurance but had a history of asthma, diabetes or high blood pressure, those would be considered pre-existing conditions, along with illnesses such as cancer.

Given that definition, would you say that you or someone else in your household would be considered to have a “pre-existing condition” of some sort, or not?

Among the 52% who say they or someone in their household has a pre-existing health condition: Can you briefly describe what that condition is? (open-end)

Note: Only responses of 3 percent or more shown for follow-up question. Percentages may add to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)

One In Five With Pre-Existing Condition Report Problems Getting Coverage

AMONG THE 52% WHO SAY THEY OR SOMEONE IN THEIR HOUSEHOLD HAS A PRE-EXISTING HEALTH CONDITION

Have you or your family member ever had problems getting health insurance coverage because of a pre-existing condition, or not?

Asked of those who say they had a problem getting health insurance: Were you denied health insurance coverage because of this pre-existing condition, or not?

Note: Don’t know/Refused answers not shown.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)
People With Pre-Existing Conditions More Likely to Worry About Health Care

Percent who say they are “very worried” about each of the following:

Among those who say they or someone in their household has a pre-existing health condition

- Having to pay more for your health care or health insurance: 47%
- Not being able to afford the health care services you think you need: 39%
- Losing your health insurance coverage: 38%
- Not being able to afford the prescription drugs you need: 36%
- Having to stay in your current job instead of taking a new job for fear of losing health benefits: 9%

Among those who do not have anyone in their household with a pre-existing health condition

Note: 1Based on those with health insurance coverage. 2Based on those who are employed with health insurance.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)

Awareness Of Some Consumer Protection Provisions Of ACA

I’m going to read you a list of specific reform proposals. For each, please tell me whether you think it was included in the health reform law, or not.

- Prohibit insurance companies from denying coverage because of a person’s medical history or health condition: 61%
- Create an insurance option, or high-risk pool, for those people whose pre-existing health conditions currently make it difficult for them to find and buy affordable health insurance: 56%
- Prohibit insurance companies from setting lifetime limits on the total amount they will spend on a person’s health care: 48%

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)
Awareness Of ACA Consumer Protection Provisions Among Those With Pre-Existing Conditions

I’m going to read you a list of specific reform proposals. For each, please tell me whether you think it was included in the health reform law, or not.

**Among the 52% who say they or someone in their household has a pre-existing health condition**

- **Prohibit insurance companies from denying coverage because of a person’s medical history or health condition**
  - Yes, law will do this: 60%
  - No, law will not do this: 30%
  - Don’t know/Refused: 9%

- **Create an insurance option, or high-risk pool, for those people whose pre-existing health conditions currently make it difficult for them to find and buy affordable health insurance**
  - Yes, law will do this: 56%
  - No, law will not do this: 31%
  - Don’t know/Refused: 14%

- **Prohibit insurance companies from setting lifetime limits on the total amount they will spend on a person’s health care**
  - Yes, law will do this: 46%
  - No, law will not do this: 35%
  - Don’t know/Refused: 19%

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)

People With Pre-Existing Conditions Less Optimistic About Impact of Law

Do you think people with pre-existing health conditions will be better off or worse off under the health reform law, or don’t you think it will make much difference?

**Total**
- Better off: 52%
- Won’t make much difference: 16%
- Worse off: 21%
- Don’t know/Refused: 11%

**Among those who say they or someone in their household has a pre-existing health condition**
- Better off: 44%
- Won’t make much difference: 16%
- Worse off: 27%
- Don’t know/Refused: 13%

**Among those who do not have anyone in their household with a pre-existing health condition**
- Better off: 60%
- Won’t make much difference: 16%
- Worse off: 15%
- Don’t know/Refused: 9%

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 7-12, 2011)
Methodology

This Kaiser Health Tracking Poll was designed and analyzed by public opinion researchers at the Kaiser Family Foundation led by Mollyann Brodie, Ph.D., including Liz Hamel, Sarah Cho, and Theresa Boston. The survey was conducted September 7 through September 12, 2011, among a nationally representative random sample of 1,207 adults ages 18 and older. Telephone interviews conducted by landline (704) and cell phone (503, including 224 who had no landline telephone) were carried out in English and Spanish by Princeton Survey Research Associates.

The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percentage points. For results based subgroups, the margin of sampling error may be higher. Note that sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error in this or any other public opinion poll.

“VOL” indicates that a response was volunteered by respondent, not an explicitly offered choice.

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100.

For full question wording, please see the topline questionnaire: http://www.kff.org/kaiserpolls/8230.cfm