

Chartpack

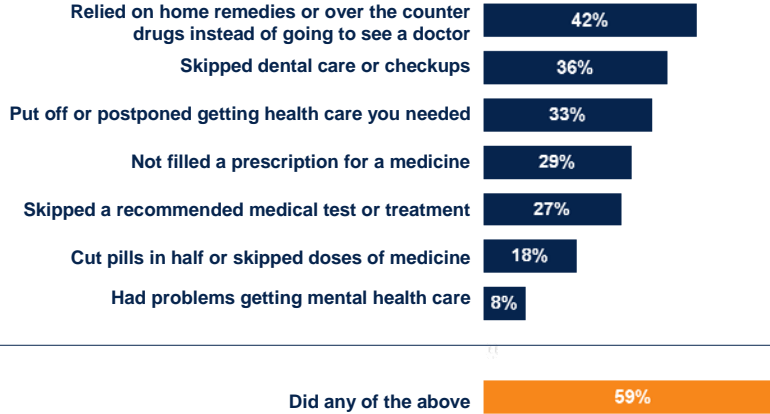
Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: April 2009

April 2009

CHART 1

Putting Off Care Because of Costs

In the past 12 months, have you or another family member living in your household done each of the following because of the cost, or not?



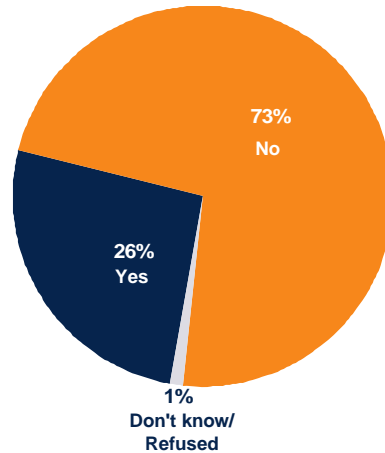
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 2

One in Four Report Problems Paying Medical Bills

In the past 12 months, did you or another family member in your household have any problems paying medical bills, or not?



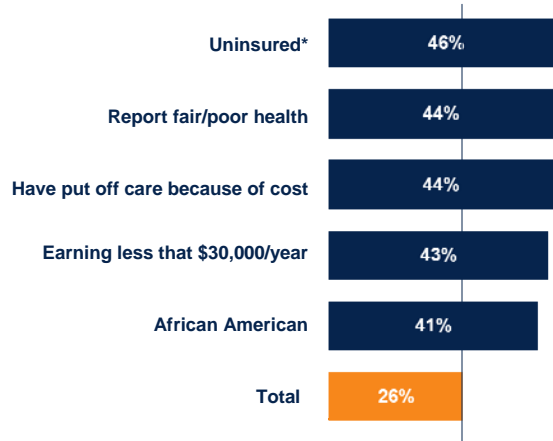
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 3

Problems Paying Higher in Some Subgroups

In the past 12 months, did you or another family member in your household have any problems paying medical bills, or not?



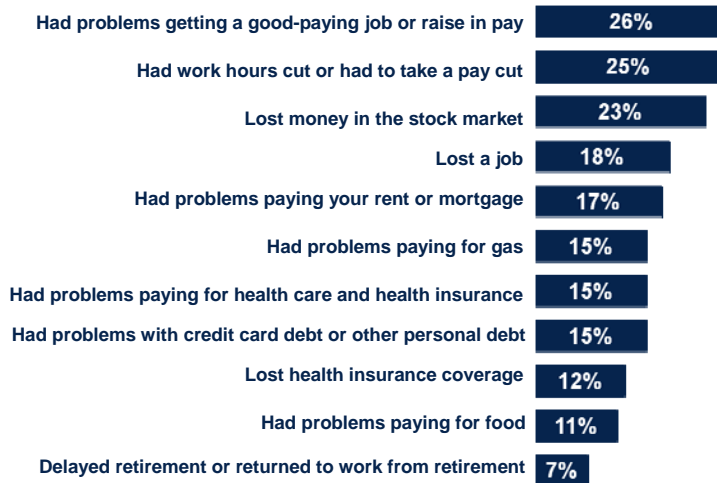
*Based on those who are uninsured and under 65 years old.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 4

Economic Problems Facing Americans

Percent saying each happened, and was a serious problem:



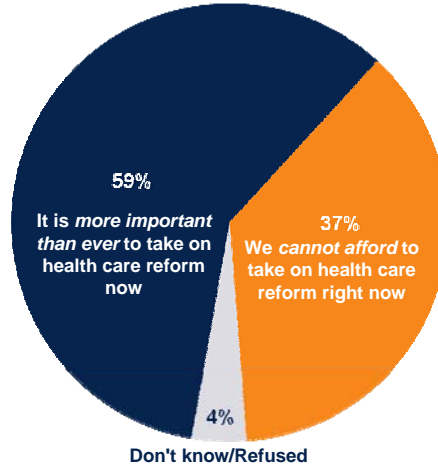
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 5

Health Care Reform in Economic Hard Times

Which comes closer to describing your own views? Given the serious economic problems facing the country...



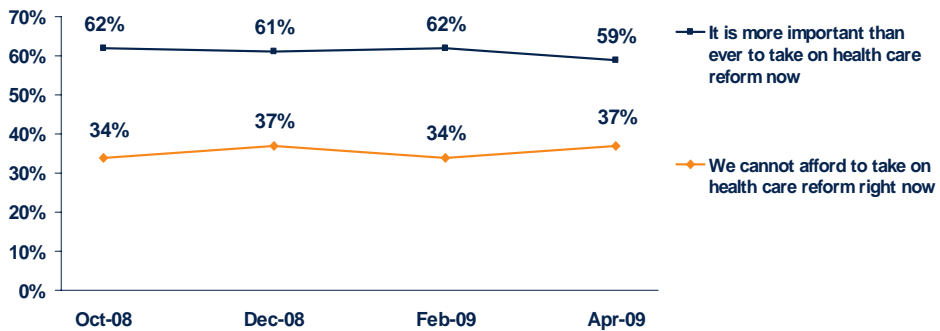
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 6

Support Remains Despite Bad News

Which comes closer to describing your own views? Given the serious economic problems facing the country...



Note: "Don't know/Refused" not shown

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009); Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Feb 3-12, 2009); Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard School of Public Health *Health Care Agenda for the New President and Congress* (conducted Dec 4-14); Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: Election 2008* (conducted Oct 8-13)

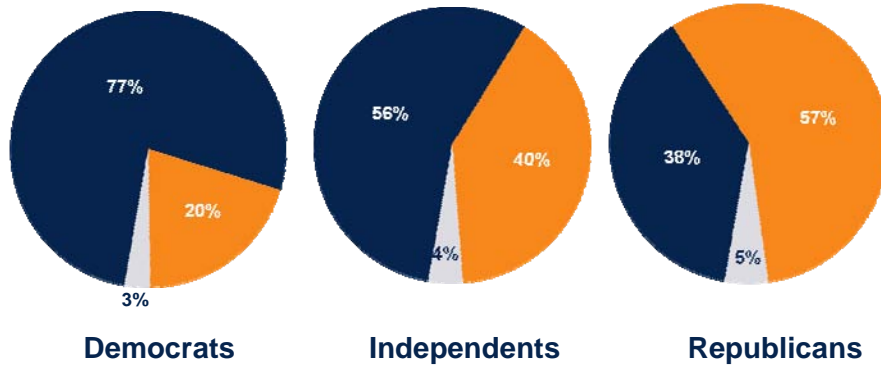


CHART 7

Democrats, Independents See Need for Reform Now

Which comes closer to describing your own views? Given the serious economic problems facing the country...

■ It is *more important than ever* to take on health care reform now ■ We *cannot afford* to take on health care reform right now ■ Don't know/Refused



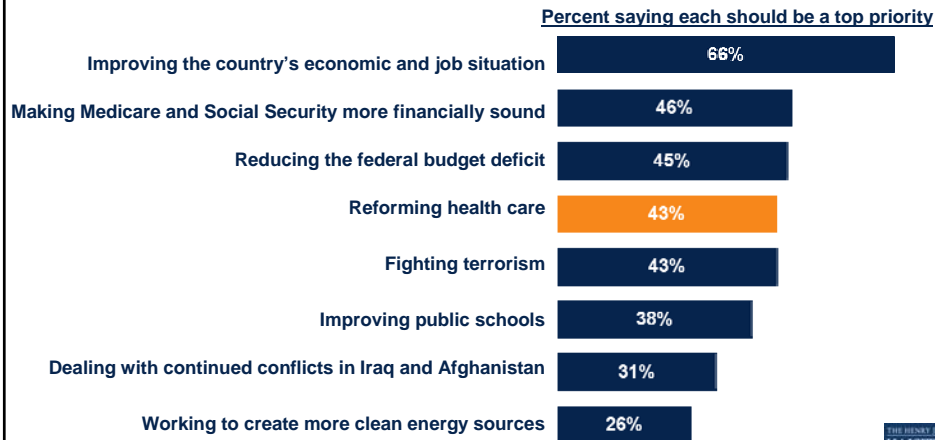
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 8

Priorities for the President and Congress

I'm going to read you a list of some different things the new president and Congress might try to act on this year. As I read each one, tell me if you think it should be one of their top priorities, very important but not a top priority, somewhat important, or not that important.



Note: Various items asked of separate half samples.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 9

Partisans Agree: It's the Economy - After That Priorities Diverge

Percent among each group saying each should be a top priority

Democrats

Independents

Republicans

Economy (76%)	Economy (65%)	Economy (57%)
Health care (57)	Terrorism (46)	Terrorism (52)
Medicare and Social Security (52)	Budget deficit (46)	Budget deficit (48)
Public schools (47)	Medicare and Social Security (42)	Medicare and Social Security (42)
Budget deficit (42)	Health care (40)	Iraq and Afghanistan (38)
Terrorism (34)	Public schools (30)	Public schools (35)
Iraq and Afghanistan (30)	Iraq and Afghanistan (27)	Health care (27)
Clean energy (29)	Clean energy (26)	Clean energy (16)

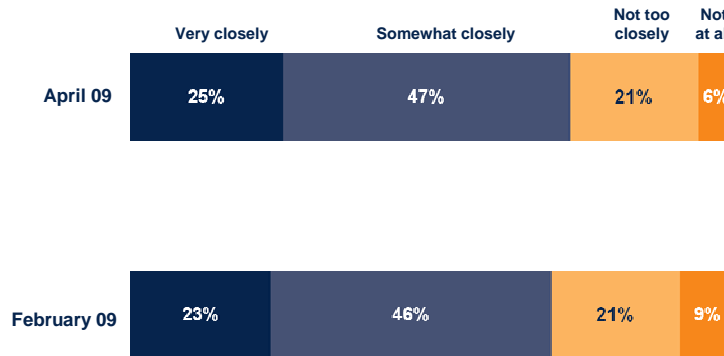
Note: Various items asked of separate half samples.
 Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 10

Public Attention to Health Care Reform

How closely have you been following discussions in Washington about health care reform?



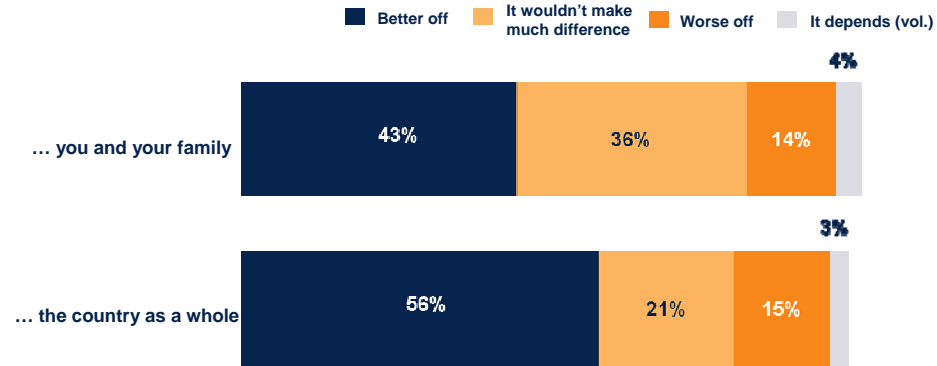
Note: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.
 Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009); Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Feb 3-12, 2009)



CHART 11

More Say Reform Would Help Country

Do you think (you and your family/the country as a whole) would be better off or worse off if the president and Congress passed health care reform, or don't you think it would make much difference?



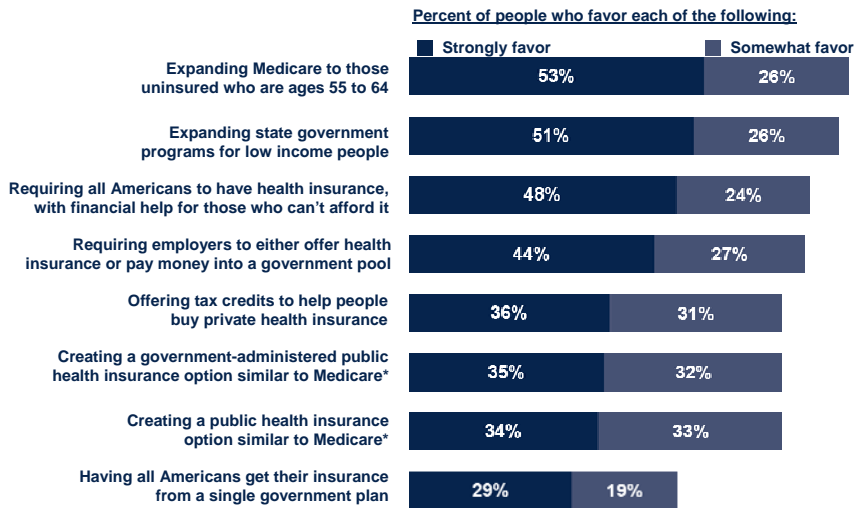
Note: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 12

Public Supports Many Ways of Expanding Coverage

Now I'm going to read you some different ways to increase the number of Americans covered by health insurance. Please tell me if you would favor or oppose each option.



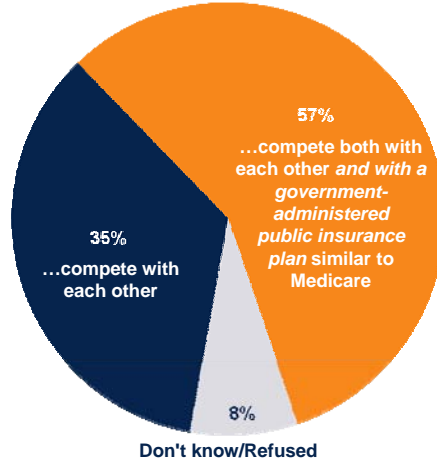
Note: Various items based on half samples. Asterisked items were asked of separate half samples.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 13

Belief in Public and Private Competition to Lower Prices

Which do you think is a better way to encourage health insurance companies to provide the best product for the lowest price? To have private insurance companies...



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)

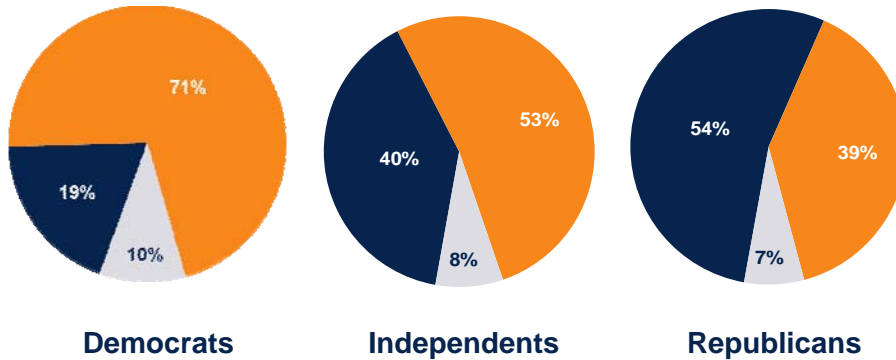


CHART 14

Partisan Divide on Form of Competition

Which do you think is a better way to encourage health insurance companies to provide the best product for the lowest price? To have private insurance companies...

■ ...compete with each other ■ ...compete both with each other and with a government-administered public insurance plan similar to Medicare ■ Don't know/Refused



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)

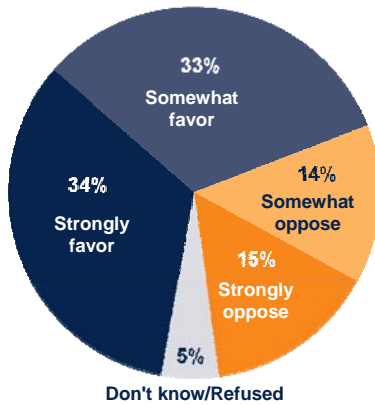


CHART 15

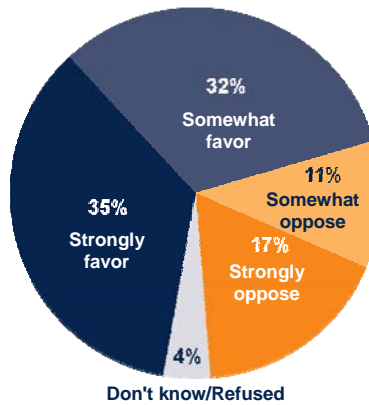
Public Insurance Option Favored by Two in Three, Whether Specifically Called “Government-Administered” or Not

Please tell me whether you would favor or oppose each of the following ways to increase the number of Americans covered by health insurance:

Creating a public health insurance option similar to Medicare to compete with private health insurance plans



Creating a *government-administered* public health insurance option similar to Medicare to compete with private health insurance plans



Note: Items were asked of separate half samples.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)

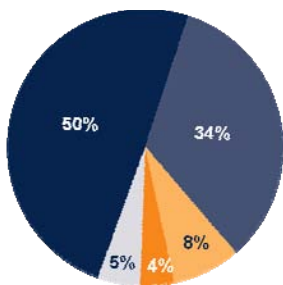


CHART 16

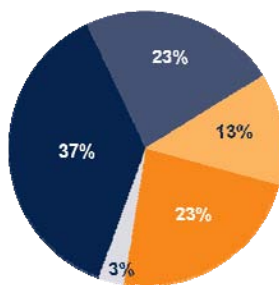
Dems and Independents Drive Support for Public Plan

Please tell me whether you would favor or oppose each way to increase the number of Americans covered by health insurance: Creating a government administered public health insurance option similar to Medicare to compete with private health insurance plans?

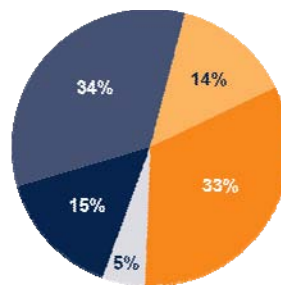
■ Strongly favor ■ Somewhat favor ■ Somewhat oppose ■ Strongly oppose ■ Don't know/Refused



Democrats



Independents



Republicans

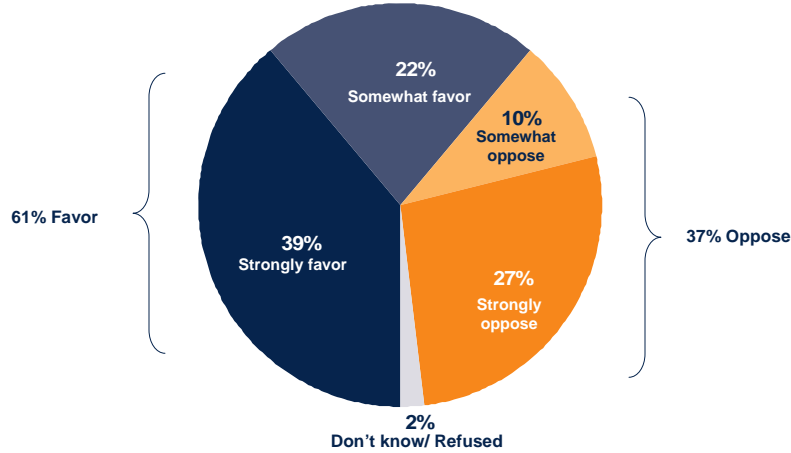
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 17

Public Response to Taxing Unhealthy Behaviors

In order to help pay for health care reform and provide coverage for more of the uninsured, would you favor or oppose increasing taxes on items that are thought to be unhealthy, such as soda, alcohol, junk food, and cigarettes? (Based on half sample)



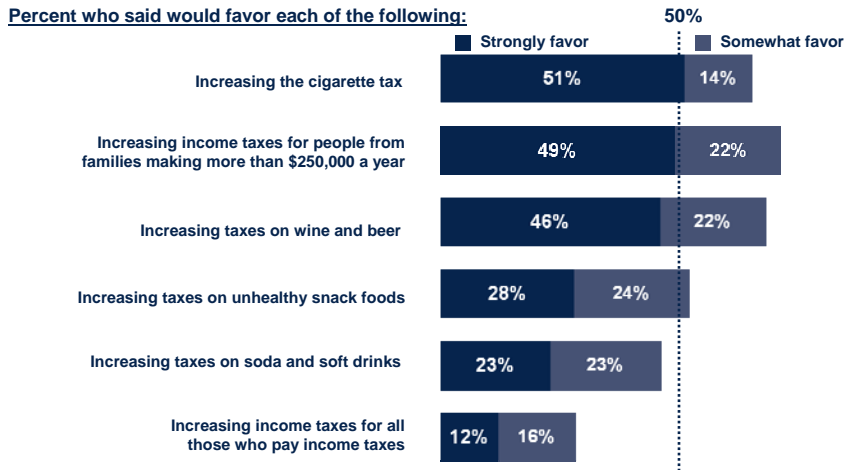
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 18

Paying for Reform Through Tax Increases?

Please tell me if you would favor or oppose each of the following to help pay for health care reform and provide coverage for more of the uninsured. (Based on half sample)



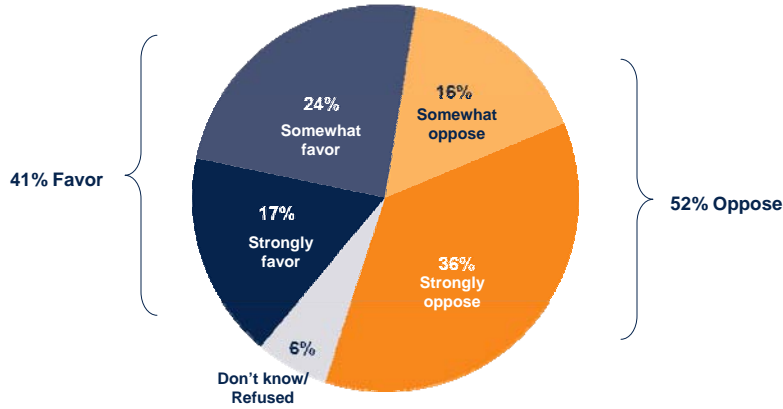
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 19

Changing Tax Treatment of Employer Health Benefits

Right now, workers do not pay taxes on the money that their employer puts into their health insurance benefits. Some policymakers are proposing that workers with the most generous health care benefits should pay taxes on a share of the money the employer puts into that health insurance, with those taxes helping to pay for health care reform, including covering more of the uninsured. Do you favor or oppose changing the law so that workers with the most generous health care benefits would pay taxes on the money their employer puts toward their coverage?



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)

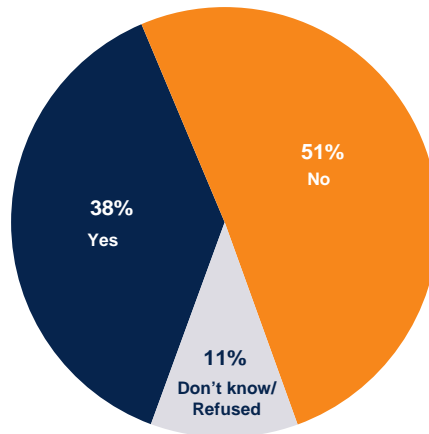


CHART 20

Percent Who Identify as Having Generous Benefits

AMONG THE 41% WITH EMPLOYER-SPONSORED HEALTH INSURANCE:

Do you think your health insurance plan would be considered among the most generous and be subject to the new tax, or not?



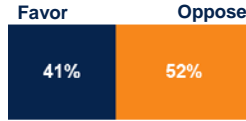
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 21

Changing Tax Treatment: Arguments for Supporters

Do you favor or oppose changing the law so that workers with the most generous health care benefits would pay taxes on the money their employer puts toward their coverage?



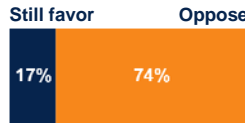
ASKED OF THOSE WHO FAVOR CHANGING THE LAW:

What if you heard that changing the tax treatment of workers' health benefits would ...

... mean fewer employers would offer health insurance?



... lead to less generous health insurance coverage for some workers?



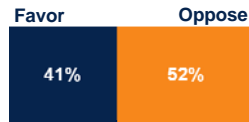
Note: Follow up questions asked of those who initially favored. Responses shown on bottom graphs are based on total, where "oppose" includes those who initially opposed and those who opposed after hearing the follow up. "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown. Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 22

Changing Tax Treatment: Arguments for Opponents

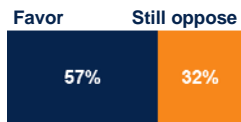
Do you favor or oppose changing the law so that workers with the most generous health care benefits would pay taxes on the money their employer puts toward their coverage?



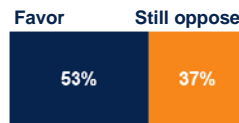
ASKED OF THOSE WHO OPPOSE CHANGING THE LAW:

What if you heard that the current policy...

... is unfair because, right now, those Americans who buy their own health insurance instead of getting it through an employer don't get a tax break?



... is unfair because higher-workers get a bigger tax break than lower-wage workers?



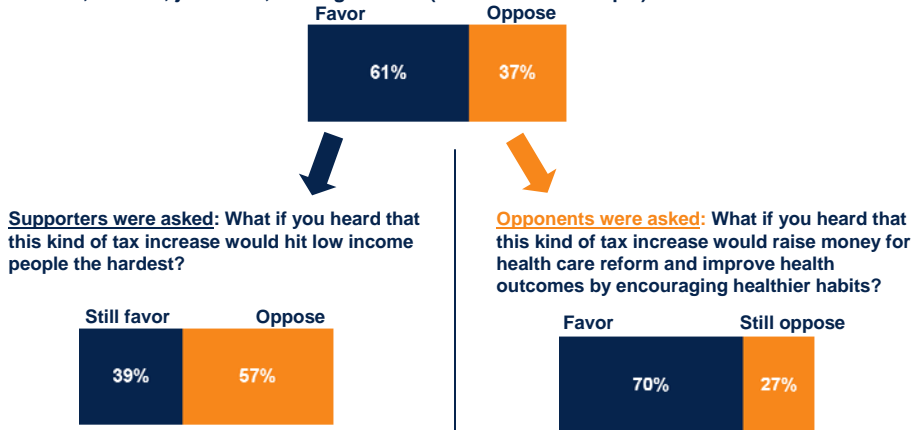
Note: Follow up questions asked of those who initially opposed. Responses shown on bottom graphs are based on total, where "favor" includes those who initially favored and those who favored after hearing the follow up. "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown. Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 23

Arguments on Taxing Unhealthy Behaviors

In order to help pay for health care reform and provide coverage for more of the uninsured, would you favor or oppose increasing taxes on items that are thought to be unhealthy, such as soda, alcohol, junk food, and cigarettes? (Based on half sample)



Note: Follow up question on left asked of those who initially favored. Graph below it based on total, where "oppose" includes those who initially opposed along with those who opposed after hearing the follow up. Follow up question on right asked of those who initially opposed. Graph below it based on total, where "favor" includes those who initially favored along with those who favored after hearing the follow up. "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.

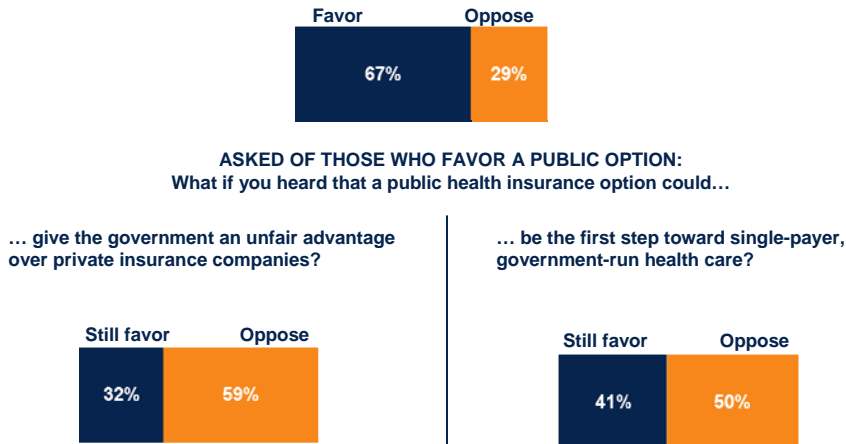
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 24

Public Plan: Arguments Posed to Supporters

Would you favor or oppose creating a (government-administered) public health insurance option similar to Medicare to compete with private health insurance plans?



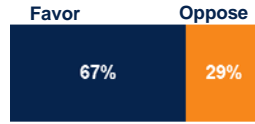
Note: Follow up questions asked of those who initially favored. Responses shown on bottom graphs are based on total, where "oppose" includes those who initially opposed and those who opposed after hearing the follow up. "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



Public Plan: Arguments Posed to Opponents

Would you favor or oppose creating a (government-administered) public health insurance option similar to Medicare to compete with private health insurance plans?



ASKED OF THOSE WHO OPPOSE A PUBLIC OPTION:
What if you heard that a public health insurance option could...

... give people more choice among health insurance plans?



... help drive down costs because private insurers would be competing with the public plan?

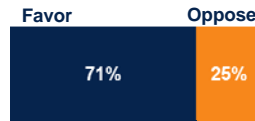


Note: Follow up questions asked of those who initially opposed. Responses shown on bottom graphs are based on total, where "favor" includes those who initially favored and those who favored after hearing the follow up. "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)

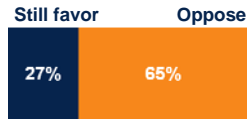


Mandates Popular but not Immune to Challenges

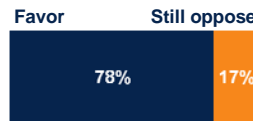
Would you favor or oppose requiring employers to offer health insurance to their workers or pay money into a government fund that will pay to cover those without insurance?



Supporters were asked: What if you heard that paying for this may cause some employers to lay off some workers?



Opponents were asked: What if you heard that this would be more fair because today some employers pay for health insurance and some do not?



Note: Follow up question on left asked of those who initially favored. Graph below it based on total, where "oppose" includes those who initially opposed along with those who opposed after hearing the follow up. Follow up question on right asked of those who initially opposed. Graph below it based on total, where "favor" includes those who initially favored along with those who favored after hearing the follow up. "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



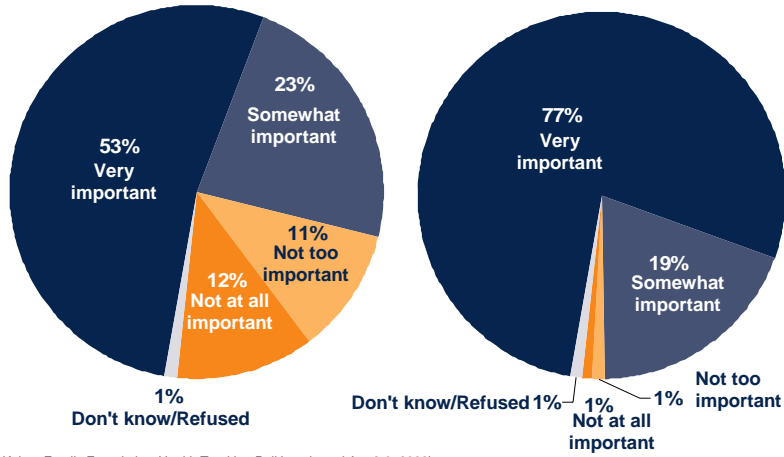
CHART 27

Value of Medicare Program

How important, if at all, is the Medicare program...

... for you and your family?

... for the country as a whole?



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



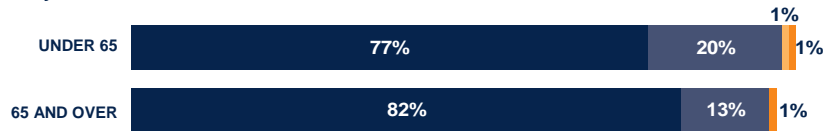
CHART 28

Value of Medicare – Non-seniors vs. Seniors

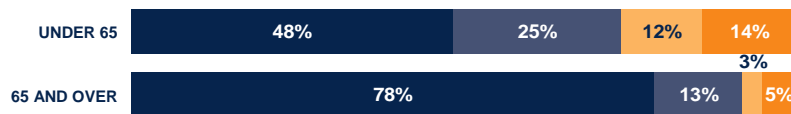
How important, if at all, is the Medicare program...

■ Very important ■ Somewhat important ■ Not too important ■ Not at all important

... for the country as a whole?



... for you and your family?



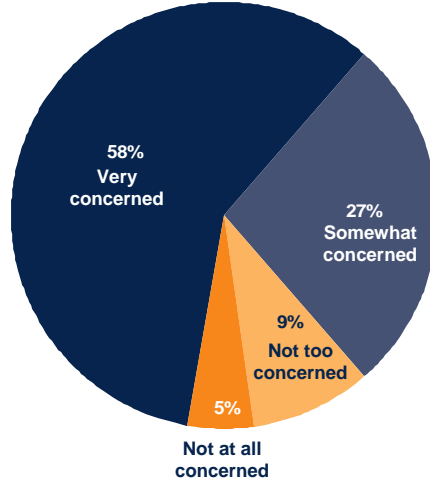
Note: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 29

Will Medicare Be Around for You?

How concerned are you that the Medicare benefits seniors have today will not be available for you when you retire? (Based on those under age 65)



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)

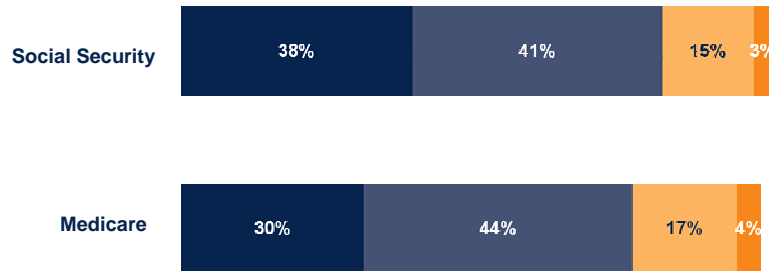


CHART 30

Programs in Financial Crisis?

Which of the following four statements comes closest to your own view of the each of the following programs?

- The program is in financial crisis
- The program has major problems, but is not in financial crisis
- The program has minor problems
- The program has no problems



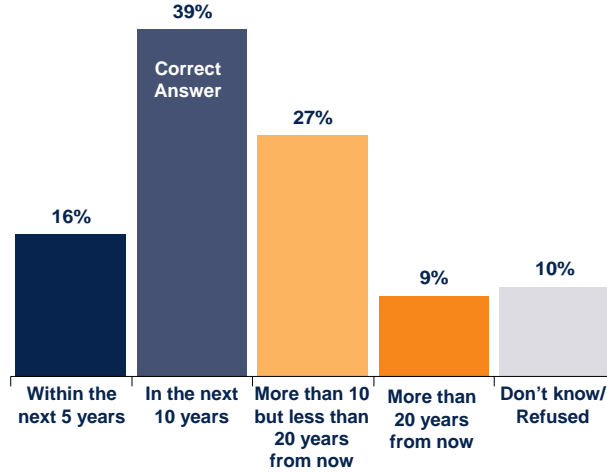
Note: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 31

How Long Until Part A Funds Depleted?

Government officials say that at some point Medicare won't have enough money to fully cover its share of seniors' hospital bills. As far as you know, will this happen...?



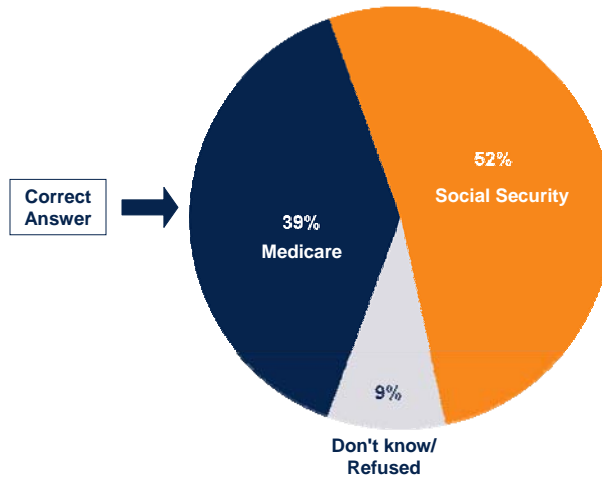
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 32

More Say Social Security First in Financial Jeopardy

To the extent that these two programs are facing challenges, which do you will be the first to run into a serious financial crisis, Medicare or Social Security?



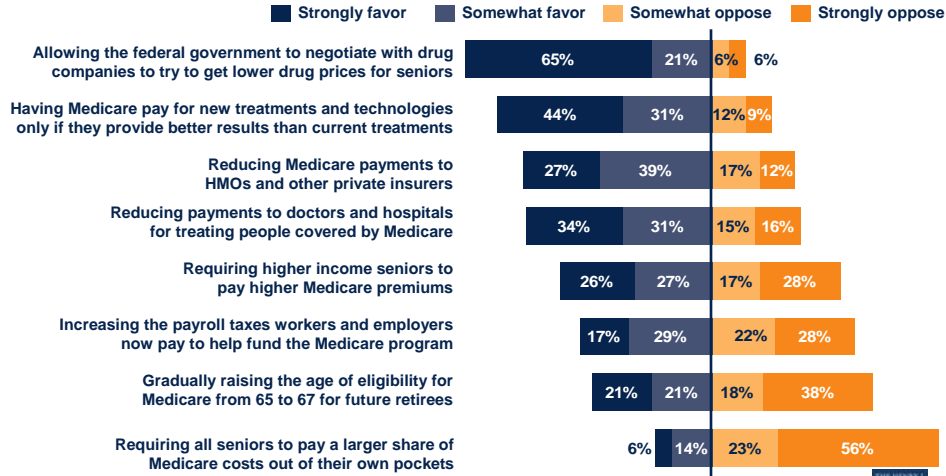
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 33

Ways to Keep Medicare Financially Sound

I'm going to read you some proposals that could keep Medicare financially sound in the future. Please tell me whether you would generally favor or oppose each one.



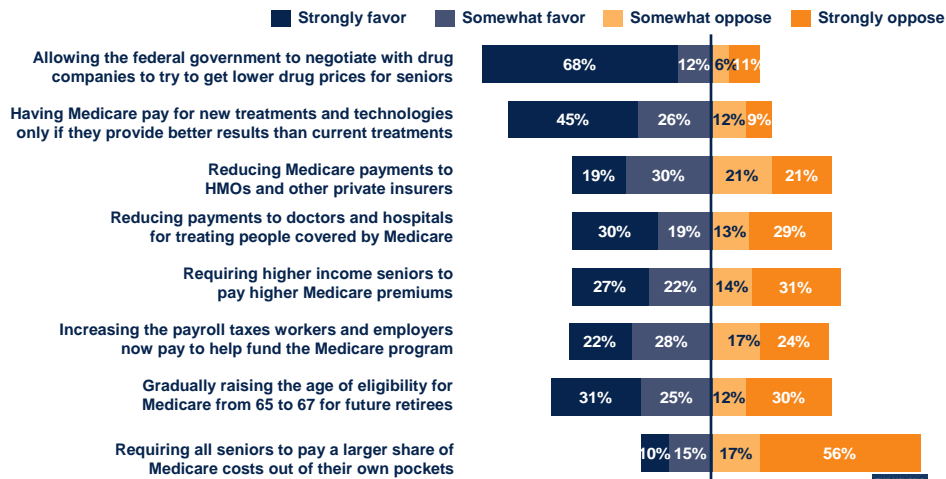
Note: Various items asked of separate half samples. "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



CHART 34

Seniors' Views on Keeping Medicare Financially Sound

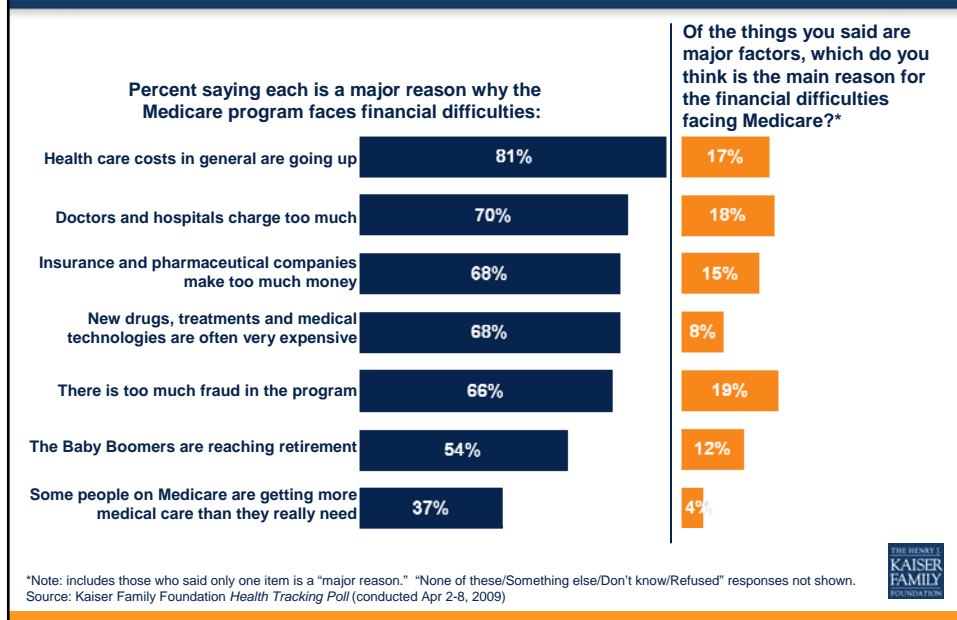
Seniors' opinions on proposals to keep Medicare financially sound (based on those aged 65+)



Note: Various items asked of separate half samples. "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted Apr 2-8, 2009)



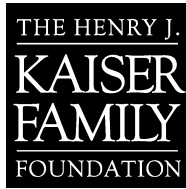
Perceived Causes of Medicare's Fiscal Problems



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 Claudia Deane and Carolina Gutiérrez. The survey was conducted April 2 through April 8, 2009, among a nationally representative random sample of 1,203 adults ages 18 and older. Telephone interviews conducted by landline (902) and cell phone (301, including 98 who had no landline telephone) were carried out in English and Spanish by Princeton Survey Research Associates.

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



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Kaiser Family Foundation website at www.kff.org.

The Kaiser Family Foundation is a non-profit private operating foundation, based in Menlo Park, California, dedicated to producing and communicating the best possible information, research and analysis on health issues.