



**Chartpack**

***Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: September 2009***

**September 2009**

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## **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 September 11 through September 18, 2009, among a nationally representative random sample of 1,203 adults ages 18 and older. Telephone interviews conducted by landline (801) and cell phone (402, including 147 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.

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

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100.

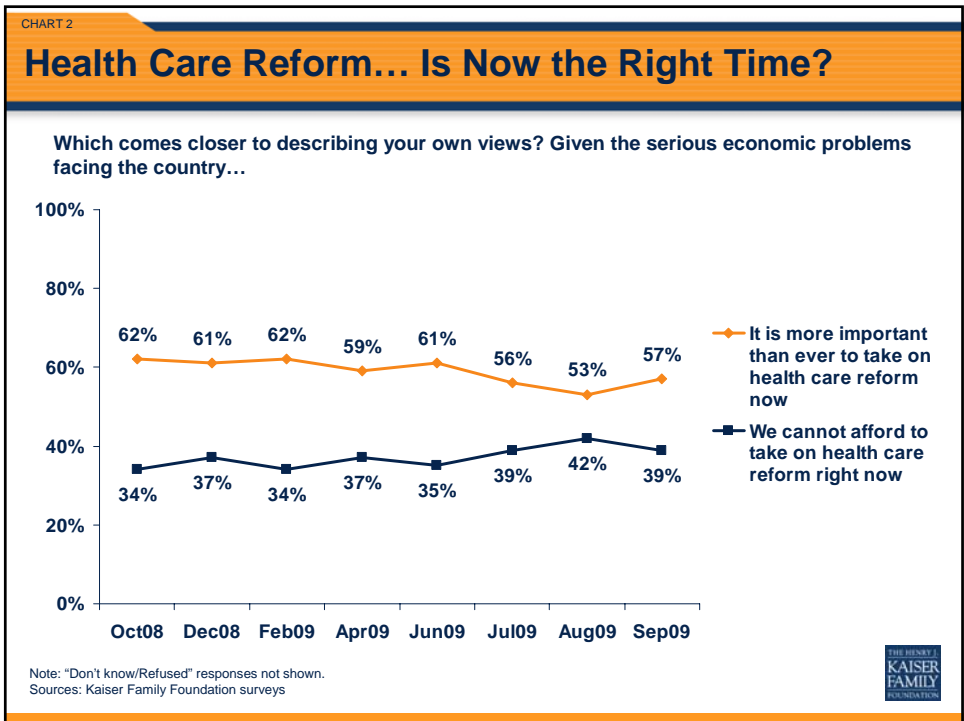
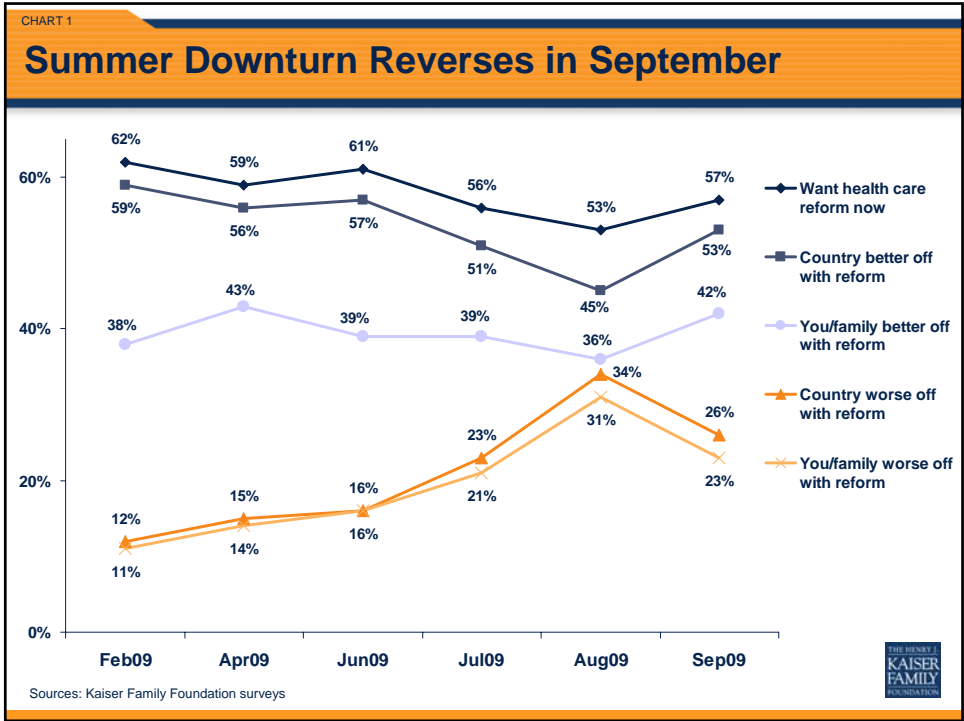
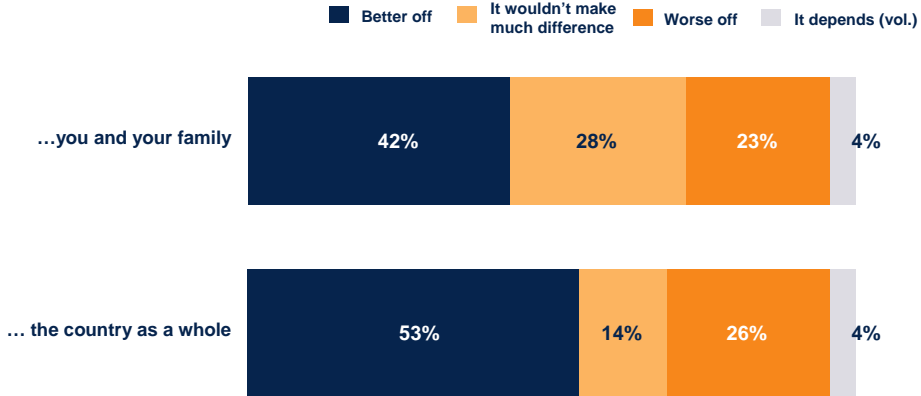


CHART 3

## Reform's Impact on Own Family, 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?



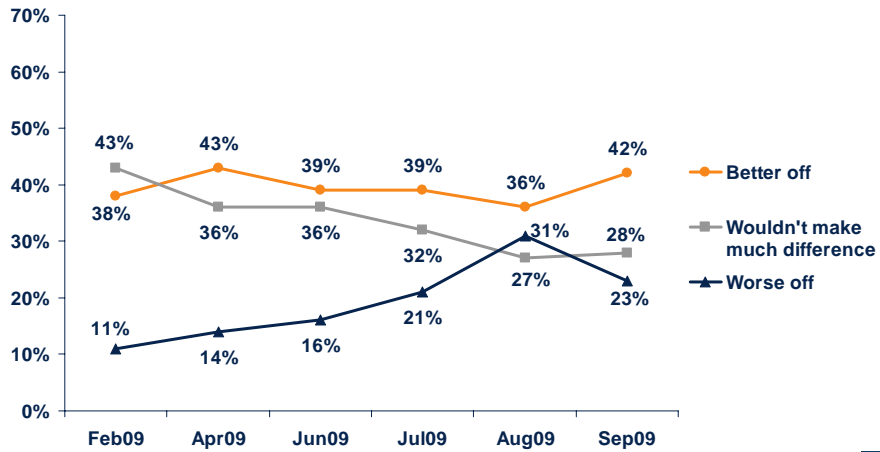
Note: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 4

## Impact on Own Family: Time Trend

Do you think you and your family 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?



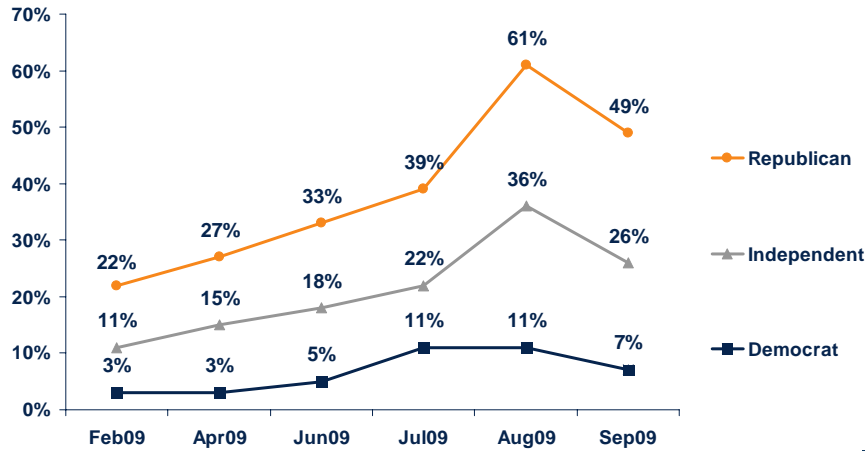
Note: "Don't know/Refused" and "It depends (vol.)" responses not shown.  
Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation surveys



CHART 5

## Family Worse Off: By Party ID

% who responded “you and your family would be WORSE off if the president and Congress passed health care reform”



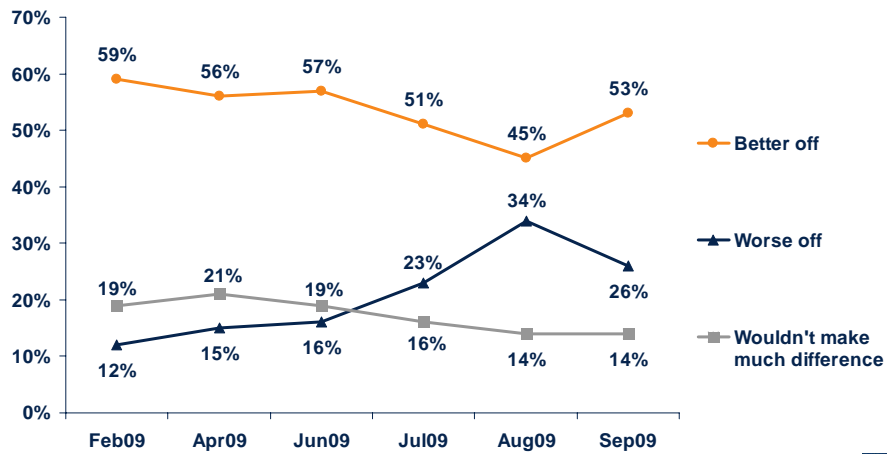
Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation surveys



CHART 6

## Impact on Country: Time Trend

Do you think 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?



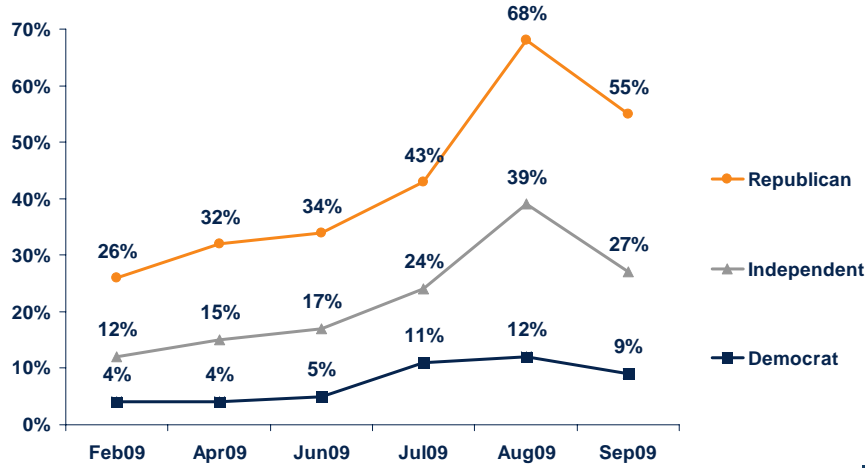
Note: "Don't know/Refused" and "It depends (vol.," responses not shown.  
Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation surveys



CHART 7

## Country Worse Off: By Party ID

% who responded "the country as a whole would be WORSE off if the president and Congress passed health care reform"



Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation surveys

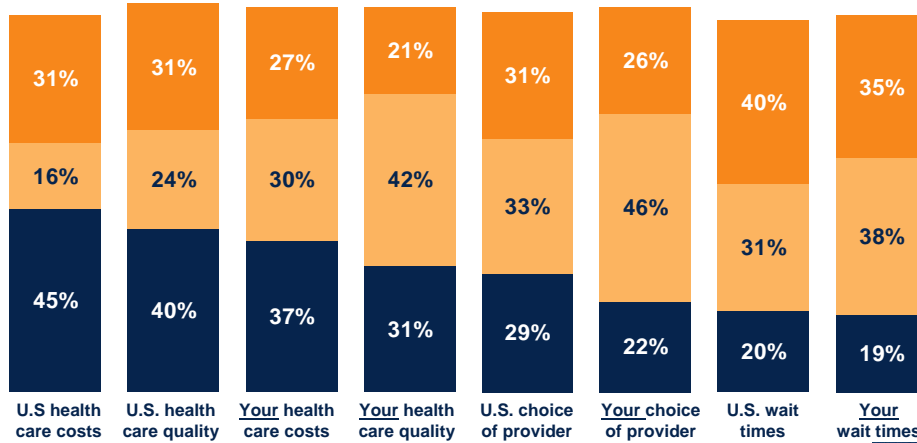


CHART 8

## More Detailed Look: Impact of Reform

If the president and Congress do pass health care reform, do you think that would make each of the following better, worse or would it stay about the same?

■ Better ■ Stay about same ■ Worse



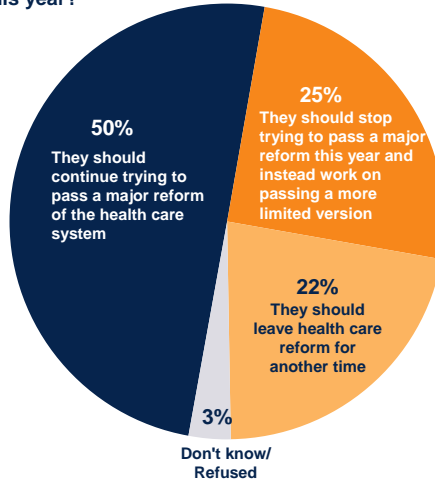
Note: National and personal items asked of separate half samples. Response wording shortened. "Don't know/Refused" and "It depends (vol.)" responses not shown. Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 9

## What Needs to Happen Now?

Which comes closer to your opinion about what Congress and the president should do regarding health care reform this year?



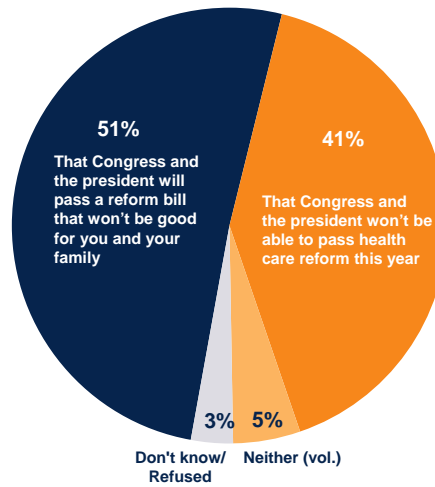
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 10

## More Worry About Negative Effects Than About Passage

Which worries you more?



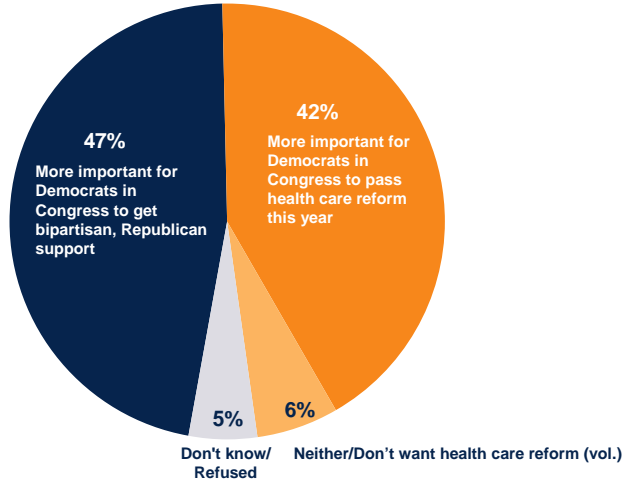
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 11

## Divided on Need for Bipartisan Buy-in

Would you say it is more important for the Democrats in Congress to pass health care reform this year, even if they can't get much Republican support, or more important to get bipartisan, Republican support, even if that delays or stops the health care reform process for this year?

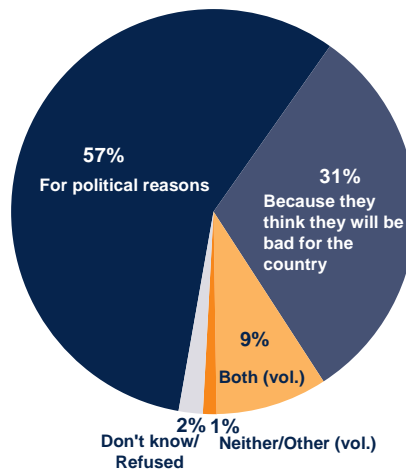


Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)

CHART 12

## GOP Opposition: Principles or Politics?

Many Republican members of Congress are opposing the health care reform proposals being discussed in Washington. Do you think they are opposed to these plans mainly because they think they will be bad for the country or mainly for political reasons?



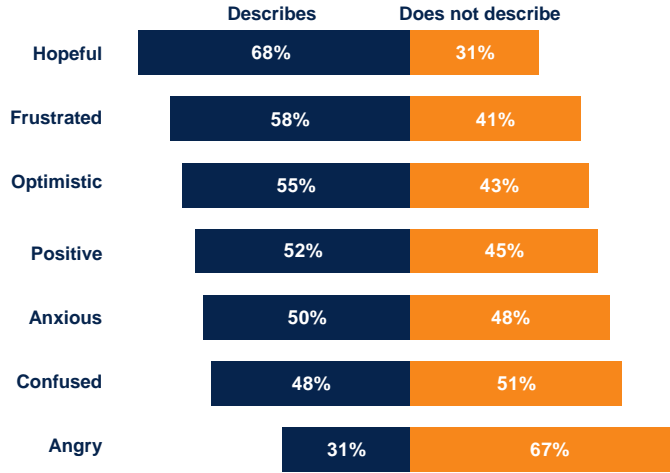
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 13

## Hope Tops List of Emotions

Please tell me if each of the following does or does not describe your own feelings about the health care reform plans being discussed in Washington.



Note: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 14

## Feelings Differ Based on Perceived Urgency of Reform

Please tell me if each of the following does or does not describe your own feelings about the health care reform plans being discussed in Washington.

Yes, describes feelings...

...among those who want reform now	...among those who are opposed to reform now
Hopeful (88%)	Frustrated (73%)
Optimistic (72)	Confused (53)
Positive (71)	Angry (51)
Anxious (51)	Anxious (51)
Frustrated (48)	Hopeful (38)
Confused (45)	Optimistic (31)
Angry (19)	Positive (27)

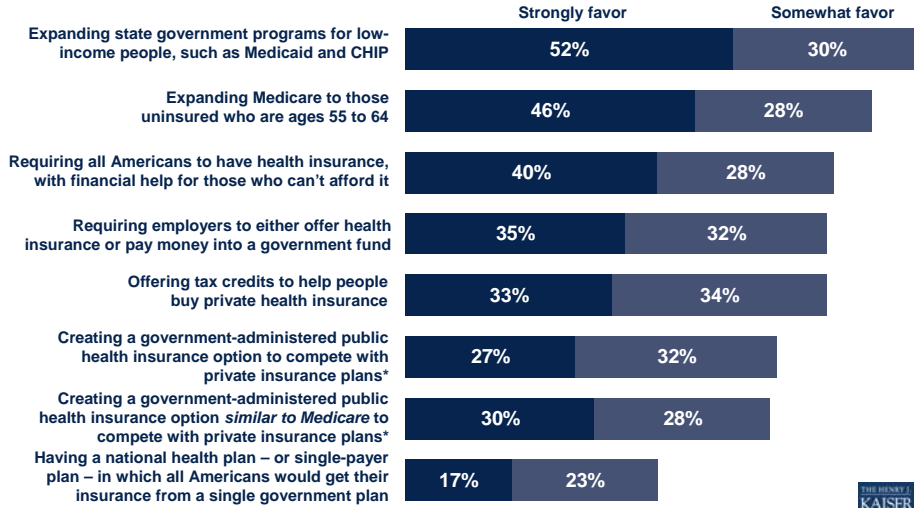
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 15

## Support Remains for 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 whether you would favor or oppose it.



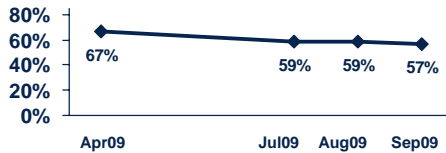
Note: Various items based on half samples. Items marked with an asterisk (\*) asked of separate half samples as a wording experiment.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



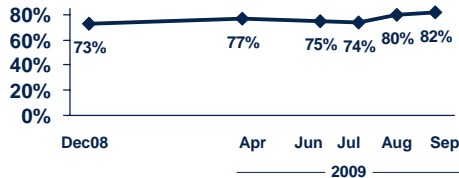
CHART 16

## Examples of Continuing Support

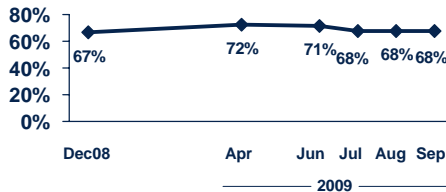
Percent who favor a public option:



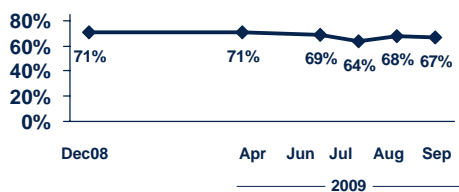
Percent who favor expansion of state programs:



Percent who favor an individual mandate:



Percent who favor an employer mandate:



Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation surveys



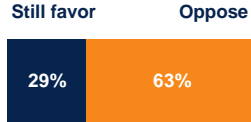
CHART 17

## Individual Mandate

Would you favor requiring all Americans to have health insurance, either from their employer or from another source, with financial help for those who can't afford it?



**Supporters were asked:** What if you heard that this could mean that some people would be required to buy health insurance that they find too expensive or did not want?



**Opponents were asked:** What if you heard that without such a requirement, insurance companies would still be allowed to deny coverage to people who are sick?



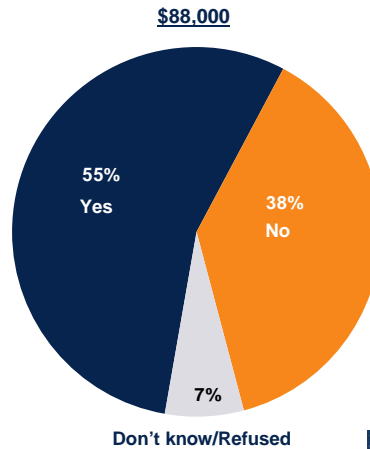
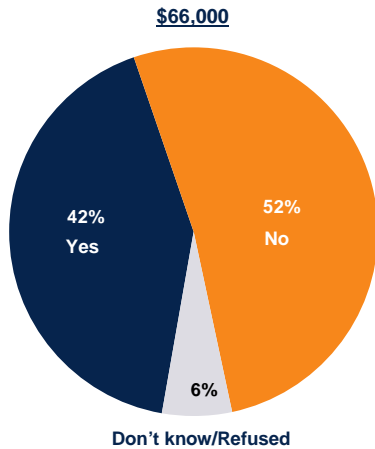
Note: Follow up question on left asked of those who initially favored. Graph below it based on total, where "oppose" includes those who initially opposed along with those who opposed after hearing the follow up. Follow up question on right asked of those who initially opposed. Graph below it based on 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 September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 18

## Public Reaction to Subsidy Levels

Do you think a family of four making (AMOUNT) per year that doesn't get health insurance through an employer can afford to buy their family health insurance coverage ON THEIR OWN, or don't you think they could afford to do that?



Note: Items asked of separate half samples.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



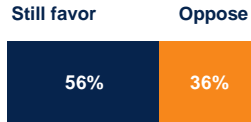
CHART 19

## Covering Those With Prior Illnesses

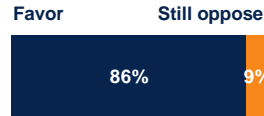
Do you favor or oppose the federal government requiring health insurance companies to cover anyone who applies, even if they have a prior illness?



**Supporters were asked:** What if you heard this requirement might mean that healthier people would end up paying somewhat more for their health insurance than they do now, while sicker people would pay somewhat less?



**Opponents were asked:** What if you heard that some people with very expensive illnesses like cancer would have no way of getting insurance otherwise?



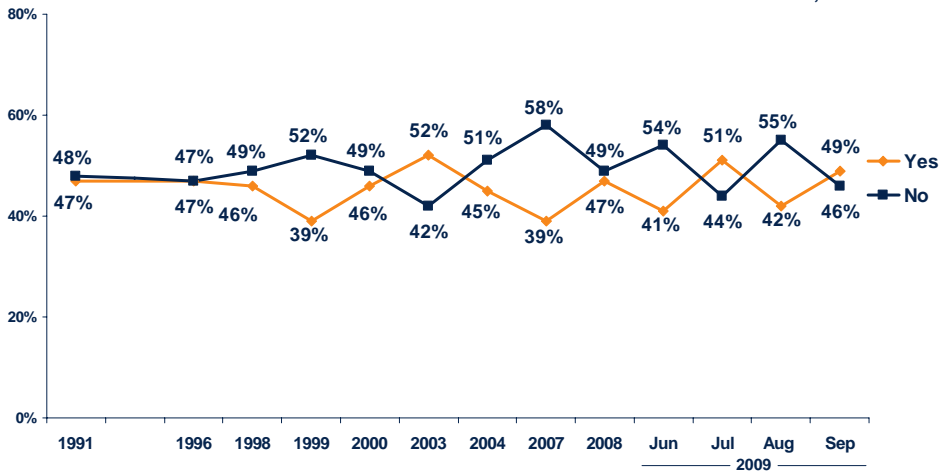
Note: Follow up question on left asked of those who initially favored. Graph below it based on total, where "oppose" includes those who initially opposed along with those who opposed after hearing the follow up. Follow up question on right asked of those who initially opposed. Graph below it based on 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 September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 20

## Willing to Pay More

Would you be willing to pay more -- either in higher health insurance premiums or higher taxes -- in order to increase the number of Americans who have health insurance, or not?



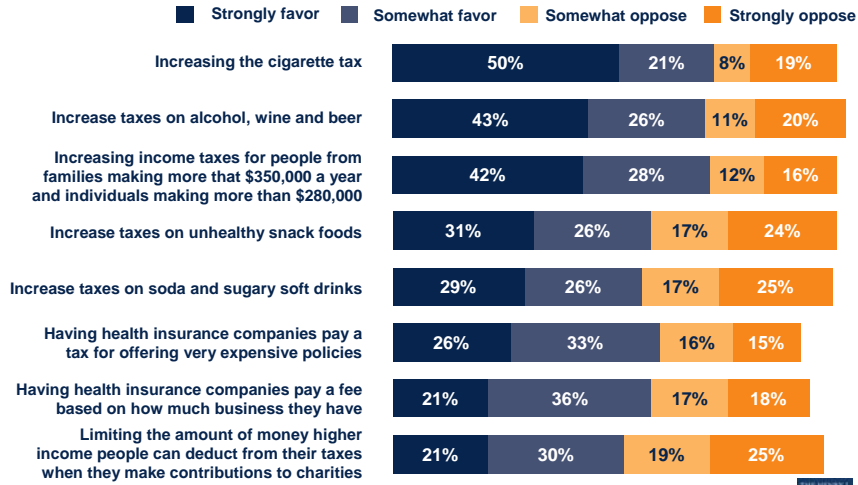
Note: Asked of half sample in July, August, and September 2009. "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.  
Sources: NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll (Jun. 1991), KFF/HSPH Polls (Nov. 1996; Nov. 1998; Oct. 1999; Nov. 2000; Feb. 2003; and Nov. 2004), Washington Post/KFF/HSPH Survey (May 2007), KFF/HSPH *The Public's Health Care Agenda for the New President and Congress* (Dec. 2008); Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (Jun, Jul, Aug, and Sep 2009)



CHART 21

## Other Tax Options

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.

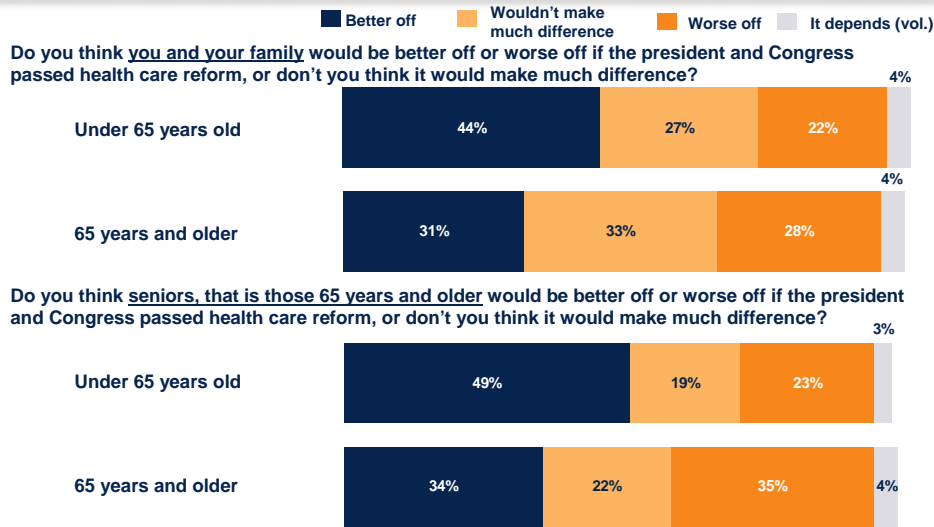


Note: Asked of half sample. "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 22

## Seniors Less Convinced Reform Will Benefit Them



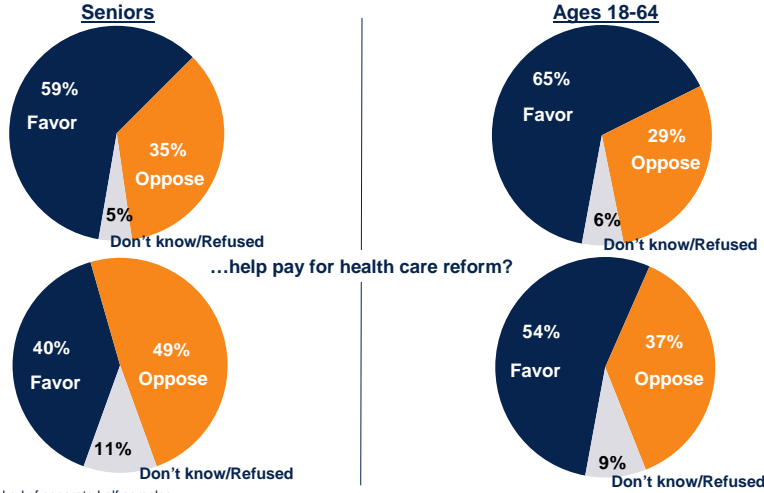
Note: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 23

## Seniors More Likely to Back Provider Payment Limits if Framed as Way to Save Medicare

Currently, the government determines how much doctors and hospitals get paid to treat people on Medicare. Would you favor or oppose limiting future increases in these payments as a way to...  
...help keep Medicare financially sound in the future?



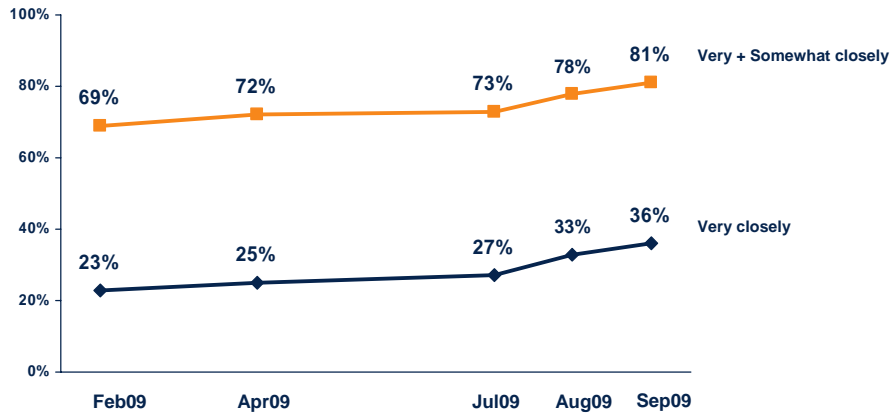
Note: Items asked of separate half samples.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 24

## Public Attention Ticks Up

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



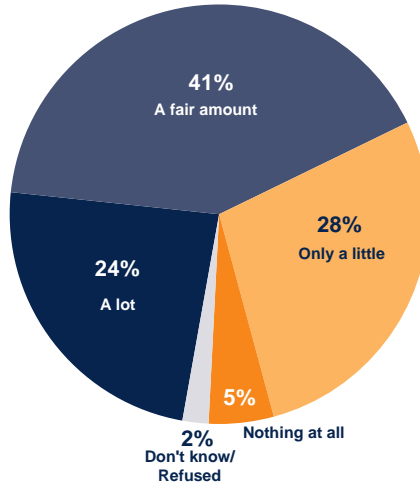
Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation surveys



CHART 25

## Self-Reported Knowledge about Impact of Reform

How much would you say you know about how the health care reform proposals being discussed in Congress would affect you and your family personally?



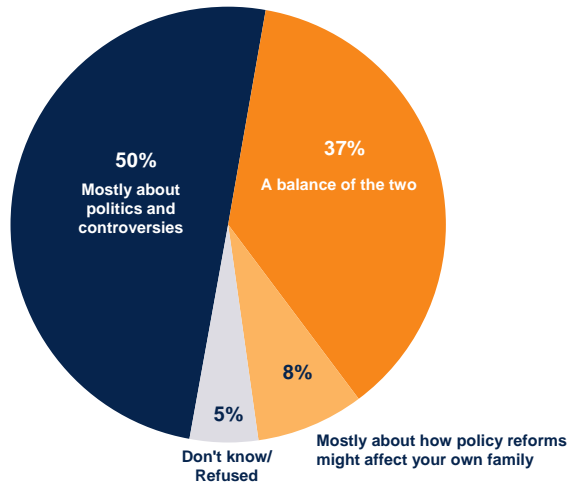
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 26

## Media Coverage of Reform

Thinking of the news media's coverage of health care reform, would you say the mix of coverage has been mostly about politics and controversies, mostly about how policy reforms might affect your own family, or has been a balance of the two?



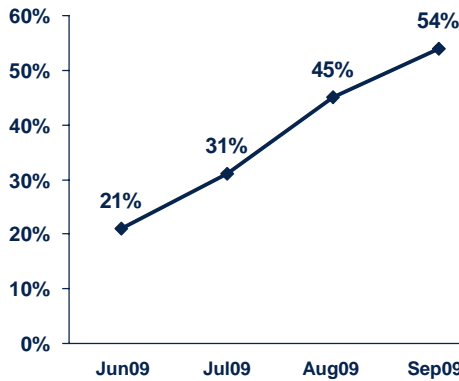
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



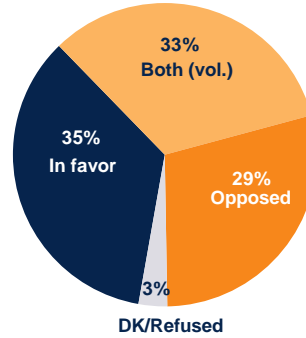
CHART 27

## More Than Half Have Seen an Ad

Percent who say during the past seven days, they have seen, heard or read any advertisements having to do with proposed changes in the health care system:



AMONG THOSE WHO SAY THEY HAVE SEEN, HEARD, OR READ ANY HEALTH REFORM ADS: As far as you could tell, were those ads in favor of or opposed to passing some sort of health care reform this year? (September 09)



Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation surveys



CHART 28

## Most Persuasive Arguments For Reform

If you heard that a new health care reform proposal ... would that make you more likely to support it, less likely to support it, or wouldn't it make a difference?

TOTAL More likely	Much more likely	Somewhat more likely	
77%	55%	22%	Would improve the health care situation for our children and grandchildren
74	37	37	Would provide financial help to buy health insurance to those who need it
69	37	32	Would help ensure the long-term financial health of Medicare
68	39	29	Would fulfill a moral obligation by making sure people don't have to go without needed health care just because they can't afford it
65	41	24	Would mean that people with a history of illness would not be denied coverage and could get it at the same price as healthier people
65	37	28	Would help close the Medicare "donut hole" or "coverage gap" so that seniors would no longer have a period where they are responsible for paying the full cost of their medicines
64	37	27	Would save the country money over time
63	42	21	Would be paid for in a way that would not increase the federal budget deficit
59	40	19	Would mean that health insurance companies could no longer charge women more than men for the same policy

Note: Various items asked of half samples.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)





CHART 29

## Most Persuasive Arguments Against Reform

If you heard that a new health care reform proposal ... would that make you more likely to support it, less likely to support it, or wouldn't it make a difference?

TOTAL Less likely	Much less likely	Somewhat less likely	
65%	40%	25%	Limited your own choice of doctors
63	40	23	Would reduce the quality of care provided to seniors under Medicare
62	36	26	Would result in cuts in Medicare payments that might make doctors less willing to take Medicare patients
59	38	21	Would get the government too involved in your personal health care decisions
57	31	26	Was going to increase people's insurance premiums or other out-of-pocket costs
56	33	23	Was going to increase taxes

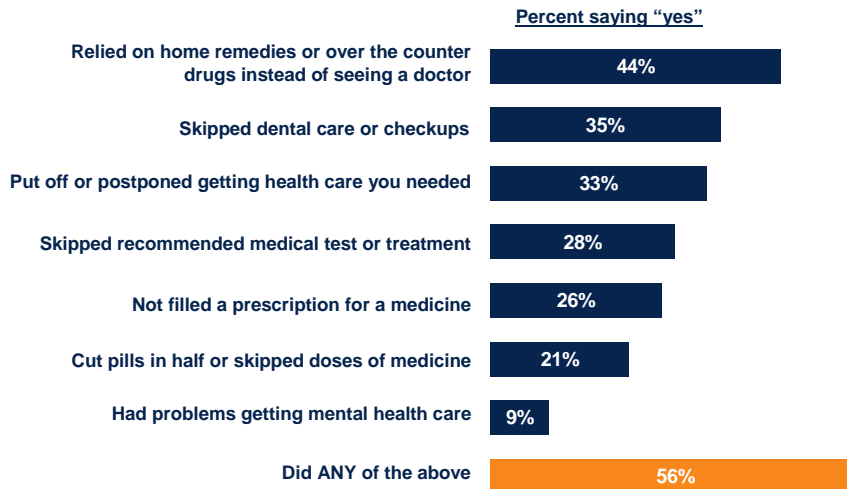
Note: Various items asked of half samples.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 30

## Putting Off Care Because of Cost

In the past 12 months, have you or another family member living in your household... because of the COST, or not?



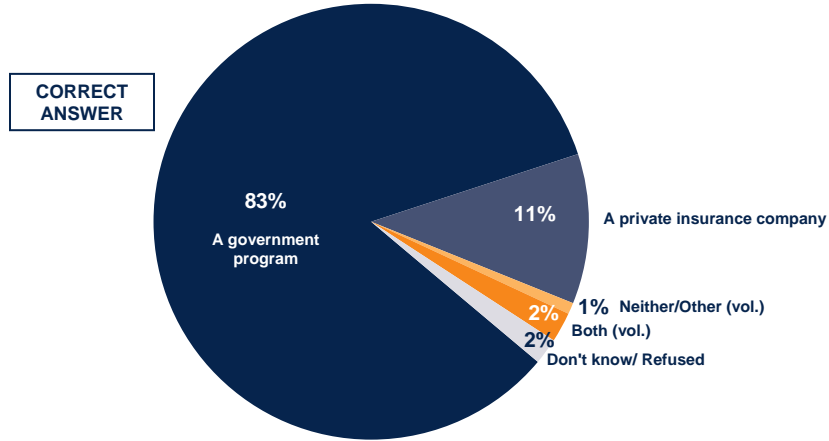
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 31

## Is Medicare a Government Program?

When you think of the Medicare program, do you think of it more as a government program or more as a private insurance program?



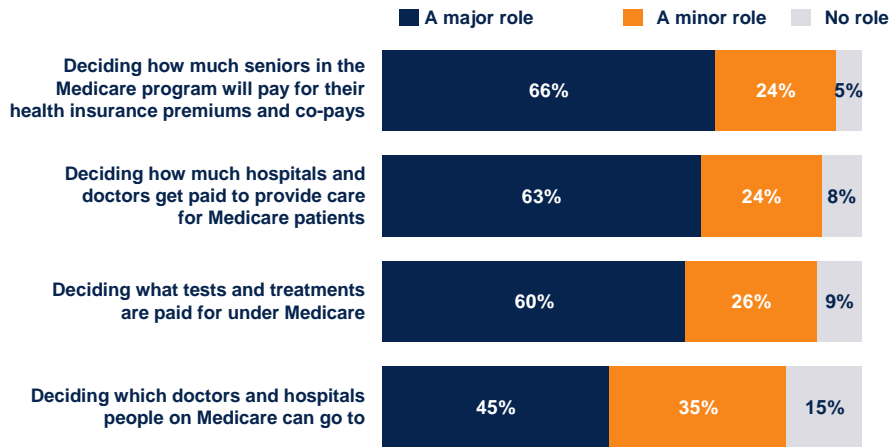
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)



CHART 32

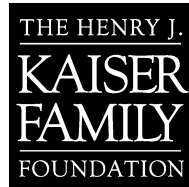
## Government's Role in Medicare?

How much of a role would you say the government plays in each of the following – a major role, a minor role, or no role?



Note: "Don't know/Refused" answers not shown.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted September 11-18, 2009)





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