



Toplines

Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: February 2011

February 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 Claudia Deane, Sarah Cho, and Theresa Boston. The survey was conducted February 8 through February 13, 2011, among a nationally representative random sample of 1,202 adults ages 18 and older. Telephone interviews conducted by landline (801) and cell phone (401, including 205 who had no landline telephone) were carried out in English and Spanish by Princeton Survey Research Associates.

Two additional items (as noted on the final page of the topline) were fielded on a separate survey. The survey was conducted by landline and cell phone February 3 through 6, 2011 among a nationally representative random sample of 1,001 adults ages 18 and older. The survey was carried out in English by Princeton Survey Research Associates.

The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percentage points for the main survey and plus or minus 4 percentage points for the smaller survey. For results based on other 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.

Trends in this document come from surveys listed on the last page.

Values less than 0.5% are indicated by an asterisk (*).

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

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100.

1. As I read you some different issues, please tell me if you think the new Congress is paying (too much attention), (too little attention), or about the right amount of attention to each one. (First,) what about... (INSERT AND RANDOMIZE) READ FOR FIRST ITEM, THEN REPEAT AS NECESSARY: Does Congress seem to be paying (too much attention), (too little attention) or about the right amount of attention to this issue? (ROTATE OPTIONS IN PARENTHESES ACROSS INTERVIEWS, BUT NOT WITHIN SAME INTERVIEW)

	Too much attention	Too little attention	About the right amount	Don't know/Refused
a. The economy and jobs	4	71	22	2
b. The war in Afghanistan	23	37	34	6
c. The health care reform law passed last year	28	39	27	5
d. The budget deficit	12	63	20	5
e. Energy policy	10	52	30	8
f. Immigration	19	57	19	5
g. Taxes	20	47	29	5

2. 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? [ROTATE TERMS IN PARENTHESES] [GET ANSWER THEN ASK: Is that a very (favorable/unfavorable) or somewhat (favorable/unfavorable) opinion?]

	Very favorable	Somewhat favorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable	Don't know/Refused
02/11	16	27	19	29	8
01/11	19	22	16	34	9
12/10 ¹	22	20	14	27	18
11/10	19	23	12	28	18
10/10	18	24	15	29	15
09/10	19	30	15	25	11
08/10	19	24	13	32	12
07/10	21	29	10	25	14
06/10	20	28	16	25	10
05/10	14	27	12	32	14
04/10 ²	23	23	10	30	14

¹ May through December 2010 trend wording was "As you may know, a new health reform bill was signed into law earlier this year. Given what you know about the new health reform law, do you have a generally (favorable) or generally (unfavorable) opinion of it? [ROTATE TERMS IN PARENTHESES] [GET ANSWER THEN ASK: Is that a very (favorable/unfavorable) or somewhat (favorable/unfavorable) opinion?]"

² April 2010 trend wording was "[President Obama did sign a health reform bill into law last month...] Given what you know about the new health reform law, do you have a generally (favorable) or generally (unfavorable) opinion of it? (Is that a very favorable/unfavorable or somewhat favorable/unfavorable opinion?)"

3. Do you think (INSERT AND RANDOMIZE) will be (better off) or (worse off) under the health reform law, or don't you think it will make much difference? (ROTATE OPTIONS IN PARENTHESES ACROSS INTERVIEWS, BUT NOT WITHIN SAME INTERVIEW) [READ IF NECESSARY: "Will (INSERT ITEM) be (better off) or (worse off) under the health reform law, or don't you think it will make much difference?"]

		Better off	Worse off	Not much difference	(VOL.) Depends	Don't know/ Refused
a.	You and your family					
	02/11	28	31	38	-	3
	01/11	20	32	44	-	4
	12/10 ³	32	33	28	-	7
	11/10	25	31	34	-	9
	10/10	31	29	32	-	7
	09/10	32	28	33	-	7
	08/10	29	30	36	-	5
	07/10	32	29	33	-	6
	06/10	28	28	39	-	5
	05/10	29	30	32	-	9
	04/10	31	32	30	-	8
	03/10 ⁴	35	32	28	2	3
	02/10	34	32	26	3	5
	01/10	32	33	29	3	4
	12/09	35	27	32	3	3
	11/09	42	24	27	3	4
	10/09	41	27	28	2	3
	09/09	42	23	28	4	3
	08/09	36	31	27	2	4
	07/09	39	21	32	4	3
	06/09	39	16	36	3	5
	04/09	43	14	36	4	4
	02/09	38	11	43	4	3
b.	The country as a whole					
	02/11	37	39	19	-	5
	01/11	34	38	22	-	5
	12/10	40	37	15	-	8
	11/10	38	36	16	-	10
	10/10	39	34	18	-	9
	09/10	42	34	15	-	9
	08/10	39	37	18	-	6
	07/10	43	35	15	-	7
	06/10	42	32	19	-	6
	05/10	43	35	13	-	9
	04/10	45	35	11	-	9
	03/10	45	34	14	3	4
	02/10	45	34	12	4	5
	01/10	42	37	12	3	5
	12/09	45	31	17	4	3
	11/09	54	27	11	3	5
	10/09	53	28	12	2	4
	09/09	53	26	14	4	4
	08/09	45	34	14	3	4
	07/09	51	23	16	4	6
	06/09	57	16	19	3	5
	04/09	56	15	21	3	5
	02/09	59	12	19	5	5

Q3. continued on next page

³ April through December 2010 trend wording was "Do you think (INSERT AND RANDOMIZE) will be (better off) or (worse off) under the new health reform law, or don't you think it will make much difference?"

⁴ February 2009 through March 2010 trend wording was "Do you think (INSERT) 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?"

Q3. continued

		Better off	Worse off	Not much difference	(VOL.) Depends	Don't know/ Refused
c.	The Medicare Program					
	02/11	24	35	29	-	12
	01/11	24	36	25	-	15
	12/10	28	34	19	-	19
	10/10	31	32	19	-	18
	09/10	31	33	22	-	14
	07/10	33	30	22	-	15
	08/09	38	30	19	3	10
d.	Seniors, that is those ages 65 and older					
	02/11	31	42	22	-	5
	01/11	32	39	21	-	8
	07/10	36	36	18	-	10
	04/10	36	33	20	-	12
	12/09	40	31	21	4	4
	11/09	43	29	19	4	6
	10/09	44	29	20	2	6
	09/09	46	25	20	3	6
e.	Middle class Americans					
	02/11	32	40	24	-	5
	01/11	27	42	27	-	4
	09/10	38	38	18	-	7
	04/10	34	36	21	-	8
f.	Lower income Americans					
	02/11	51	29	18	-	3
	01/11	48	27	21	-	4
	09/10	60	21	14	-	5
	04/10	64	19	9	-	8
f.	The nation's economy					
	02/11	28	45	21	-	5
	01/11	23	46	25	-	6

4. What would you like to see Congress do when it comes to the health care law? (READ LIST. ROTATE 1-4, 4-1. ENTER ONE ONLY)

	02/11	01/11
They should expand the law	30	28
They should keep the law as is	20	19
They should repeal the law and replace it with a Republican-sponsored alternative	19	23
They should repeal the law and not replace it	20	20
Don't know/Refused	10	10

5. As far as you know, how much of the health reform law has been put into place thus far: (READ LIST. ROTATE 1-4, 4-1)

	02/11
None	17
Some provisions	62
Most provisions	7
All of its provisions	3
Don't know/Refused	11

6. I'm going to read you several elements of the health reform law. For each, please tell me if you think lawmakers should keep it or repeal it. First/Next, (INSERT AND RANDOMIZE). READ FOR FIRST ITEM THEN REPEAT AS NECESSARY: Should lawmakers keep or repeal this part of the law?

		Keep	Repeal	(VOL.) Keep but make changes	Don't know/ Refused
a. The law will prohibit insurance companies from denying coverage because of a person's medical history or health condition	02/11	72	25	1	2
	11/10	71	26	1	3
b. The law will require nearly all Americans to have health insurance or else pay a fine	02/11	28	67	3	3
	11/10	27	68	2	3
c. The law gradually closes the Medicare prescription drug "doughnut hole" or coverage gap so seniors will no longer be required to pay the full cost of their medications when they reach the gap	02/11	75	20	2	3
	11/10	72	22	1	5
d. The law will increase the Medicare payroll tax on earnings for upper income Americans	02/11	60	34	2	4
	11/10	54	39	1	6
e. The law provides tax credits to small businesses that offer coverage to their employees	02/11	83	14	1	2
	11/10	78	18	1	3
f. The law will provide financial help to low and moderate income Americans who don't get insurance through their jobs to help them purchase coverage	02/11	74	22	2	3
	11/10	71	24	1	4
g. The law establishes a national, voluntary insurance program in which working adults can purchase insurance to help pay for long-term care services they might need in the future	02/11	74	20	2	4

7. Some lawmakers who oppose the health reform law say that if Congress isn't able to repeal the law, they should try to stop it from being put into place by cutting off funding to implement it. Whether or not you like the health reform law, would you say you approve or disapprove of cutting off funding as a way to stop some or all of health reform from being put into place?

	02/11	01/11
Approve of cutting off funding	34	33
Disapprove of cutting off funding	61	62
Don't know/Refused	5	5

8. I'm going to read some reasons people give for disapproving of cutting off the funding for health care reform. After I read each one, please tell me if it is a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason why you yourself disapprove of using the budget process to stop health reform from being implemented. First/Next, (READ AND RANDOMIZE ITEMS). READ IF NECESSARY: Is this a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason why you disapprove of using the budget process to stop health reform from being implemented?

Based on those who disapprove of cutting off funding (n=723)

	Major reason	Minor reason	Not a reason	Don't know/Refused
a. The appropriate way to stop a law is by voting to repeal it. Using the budget process to stop a law is just not the way our government should work	59	20	19	2
b. The health reform law will be a good thing for the country and should be implemented as written	47	28	22	3
c. Without full funding the law will be crippled and won't work as planned, which is not good for its supporters or opponents	51	25	22	3
d. We've heard enough about health reform and it's time to move on to something else	28	30	40	2

9. Please tell me if each of the following does or does not describe your own feelings about the health reform law. The first is (INSERT & RANDOMIZE, ALWAYS ASK ITEM B “ANGRY” LAST). Does this describe your own feelings about the health reform law, or not? How about (INSERT NEXT ITEM)?

		Describes	Does not describe	Don't know/ Refused
a.	Confused			
	02/11	50	49	1
	12/10	43	55	2
	11/10	52	46	2
	10/10	47	50	4
	09/10	53	45	2
	08/10	45	55	1
	07/10	43	55	2
	06/10	42	57	1
	05/10	44	54	2
	04/10	55	45	1
	12/09 ⁵	48	52	*
	10/09	49	50	1
	09/09	48	51	1
	08/09	46	53	2
b.	Angry			
	02/11	34	65	1
	12/10	30	68	2
	11/10	32	67	1
	10/10	28	68	4
	09/10	32	66	2
	08/10	31	67	1
	07/10	28	70	2
	06/10	31	67	2
	05/10	30	69	2
	04/10	30	69	1
	12/09	35	64	1
	10/09	40	59	1
	09/09	31	67	1
c.	Enthusiastic			
	02/11	31	67	2
	12/10	33	64	3
	11/10	35	62	4
	10/10	30	66	3
	09/10	30	67	3
	08/10	30	69	1

⁵ August through December 2009 trend wording was “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.”

10. Which comes closer to the way you feel: Would you say you are angry about (health reform in particular), or would you say that you are angry about (the general direction in Washington and health reform is one of many things upsetting you)? (ROTATE OPTIONS IN PARENTHESES)

Based on those who feel 'angry' about health reform law

	02/11	12/10	11/10	10/10	09/10	08/10
Angry about health reform in particular	23	18	22	21	20	13
Angry about the general direction in Washington and health reform is one of many things upsetting you	72	81	76	75	77	84
Don't know/Refused	4 (n=414)	1 (n=390)	2 (n=500)	4 (n=374)	3 (n=404)	3 (n=419)

Based on Total respondents

	02/11	12/10	11/10	10/10	09/10	08/10
(NET) Angry	34	30	32	27	32	31
Angry about health reform in particular	8	5	7	6	6	4
Angry about the general direction in Washington and health reform is one of many things upsetting you	25	24	24	21	25	26
Don't know/Refused	1	*	1	1	1	1
Do not feel angry about health reform/Undetermined view	66	70	68	72	68	69

ROTATE 11/11b WITH 12/12b

11. So far, would you say you and your family have personally benefited from the health reform law, or not?

	02/11	12/10
Yes, have benefited	14	15
No, have not benefited	84	81
Don't know/Refused	3	4

- 11b. In what ways would you say you have benefited from the health reform law? (OPEN-END.)

Based on those who have benefited from the health reform law

	02/11	12/10
Access to health care/expansion of health insurance	34	36
Extension of dependent coverage	21	14
Lower health care costs	20	19
Help for seniors/Medicare/Closing the doughnut hole	7	-
Help dealing with pre-existing conditions	6	5
Health reform will help - general	5	7
Other insurance reforms	5	6
Other	7	6
Don't know/Refused	15 (n=155)	17 (n=157)

Percentages will add to more than 100 due to multiple responses.

12. So far, would you say you and your family have been negatively affected by the health reform law, or not?

	02/11	12/10
Yes, negatively affected	17	20
No, not negatively affected	82	76
Don't know/Refused	2	4

12b. In what ways would you say you have been negatively affected by the health reform law? (OPEN-END.)

Based on those who have been negatively affected by health reform law

	02/11	12/10
Cost (NET)	48	45
The cost of my own health care has increased/can't afford cost of insurance	32	29
Cost concerns – general	10	11
Cost concerns – taxes	7	7
Cut to benefits/less options/choices (general)	16	15
Don't have/Unable to get/Dropped by insurance	11	8
Harm to Medicare/seniors	7	3
Angry at process/Congress/government involvement	5	-
Don't want to pay for freeloaders	3	-
Opposed to individual mandate	3	-
Bad for businesses/jobs	2	7
Declining quality of care	2	3
Bad for providers/Providers have quit	1	1
Other	14	14
Don't know/Refused	10	18
	(n=205)	(n=255)

Percentages will add to more than 100 due to multiple responses.

13. Overall, which party, the (Democrats) or the (Republicans), do you trust to do a better job handling (INSERT AND RANDOMIZE) going forward? (ROTATE OPTIONS IN PARENTHESES ACROSS INTERVIEWS, BUT NOT WITHIN SAME INTERVIEW) [READ IF NECESSARY: "Which party, the (Democrats) or (Republicans), do you trust to do a better job handling (INSERT ITEM) going forward?"]

		Democrats	Republicans	(VOL.) Both	(VOL.) Neither	Don't know/ Refused
a. Health care reform	02/11	44	31	5	16	4
	10/10	46	31	2	13	8
	09/10	49	32	2	11	5
b. Medicare	02/11	44	30	5	16	5
	10/10	44	31	2	14	9
	09/10	48	32	2	13	5

DEMOGRAPHICS

Finally, I have just a few questions we will use to describe the people who took part in our survey...

D1.	Record respondent's sex	
	Male	49
	Female	51
D2.	In general, would you say your health is excellent, very good, good, only fair, or poor?	
	Excellent	20
	Very good	28
	Good	33
	Only fair	13
	Poor	5
	Don't know/Refused	*
D3.	Are you NOW self-employed, working full-time for an employer, working part-time for an employer, are you retired, or are you not employed for pay?	
	Self-employed	10
	Full-time for an employer	41
	Part-time for an employer	10
	Retired	19
	Not employed	13
	Homemaker (VOL.)	1
	Student (VOL.)	2
	Disabled (VOL.)	3
	Don't know/Refused	1
D4.	Are you, yourself, now covered by any form of health insurance or health plan or do you not have health insurance at this time? (READ IF NECESSARY: A health plan would include any private insurance plan through your employer or a plan that you purchased yourself, as well as a government program like Medicare or [Medicaid/Medi-CAL])?	
	Covered by health insurance	84
	Not covered by health insurance	16
	Don't know/Refused	*
D4a.	Which of the following is your MAIN source of health insurance coverage? Is it a plan through your or your spouse's employer, a plan you purchased yourself, are you covered by Medicare or (Medicaid/Medi-CAL), some other government program, or do you get your health insurance from somewhere else? (ENTER ONE ONLY)	
	<i>Based on those who have health insurance (n=1,044)</i>	
	Plan through your/your spouse's employer	56
	Plan you purchased yourself	10
	Medicare	19
	Medicaid/Medi-CAL	6
	Some other government program	4
	Somewhere else (SPECIFY)	2
	Don't know/Refused	1

D5. What is your age? (RECORD EXACT AGE AS TWO-DIGIT CODE.)

D6. Could you please tell me if you are between the ages of (READ LIST)...

18-29	19
30-49	36
50-64	26
65 and older	18
Don't know/Refused	1

D8. In politics today, do you consider yourself a [ROTATE: Republican, Democrat/Democrat, Republican], an Independent, or what?

Republican	24
Democrat	36
Independent	31
Or what (<i>Other</i> and <i>None</i> included here)	5
Don't know/Refused	4

D8a. Do you LEAN more towards the [ROTATE: Republican Party or the Democratic Party/Democratic Party or the Republican Party]?

D8/D8a. Combo Table based on total

Republican/Lean Republican	37
Democrat/Lean Democratic	50
Other/Don't lean/Don't know	14

Five-Point Party ID

Democrat	36
Independent Lean Democratic	13
Independent/Don't lean	13
Independent Lean Republican	12
Republican	24
Undesignated	1

D9. Would you say your views in most political matters are liberal, moderate or conservative?

Liberal	23
Moderate	38
Conservative	35
Don't know/Refused	5

D11. What is the LAST grade or class that you COMPLETED in school? (DO NOT READ)

None, or grade 1-8	3
High school incomplete (grades 9-11)	10
High school graduate (grade 12 or GED certificate)	29
Technical, trade or vocational school AFTER high school	5
Some college, no four-year degree (includes associate degree)	24
College graduate (B.S., B.A., or other four-year degree)	18
Post-graduate or professional schooling after college (e.g., toward a Master's degree or Ph.D; law or medical school)	10
Don't know/Refused	1

- D12. Are you, yourself, of Hispanic or Latino background, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or some other Spanish background?
- D13. What is your race? Are you white, black, Asian or some other race? (IF RESPONDENT SAYS HISPANIC ASK: Do you consider yourself a white Hispanic or a black Hispanic?)

White, non-Hispanic	68	
Total non-White	30	
Black or African-American, non-Hispanic		11
Hispanic		14
Asian, non-Hispanic		3
Other/Mixed race, non-Hispanic		1
Undesignated	2	

- D14. Last year – that is, in 2010 – what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes? Just stop me when I get to the right category. (READ)

Less than \$20,000	18
\$20,000 to less than \$30,000	13
\$30,000 to less than \$40,000	12
\$40,000 to less than \$50,000	12
\$50,000 to less than \$75,000	13
\$75,000 to less than \$90,000	7
\$90,000 to less than \$100,000	4
\$100,000 or more	12
Don't know/Refused	11

END OF INTERVIEW: That's all the questions I have. Thanks for your time.

TREND INFORMATION:

- 01/11: Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard School of Public Health *The Public's Health Care Agenda for the 112th Congress* (January 4-14, 2011)
- 12/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (December 1-6, 2010)
- 11/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (November 3-6, 2010)
- 10/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (October 5-10, 2010)
- 09/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (September 14-19, 2010)
- 08/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (August 16-22, 2010)
- 07/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (July 8-13, 2010)
- 06/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (June 17-22, 2010)
- 05/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (May 11-16, 2010)
- 04/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (April 9-14, 2010)
- 03/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (March 10-15, 2010)
- 02/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (February 11-15, 2010)
- 01/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (January 7-12, 2010)
- 12/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (December 7-13, 2009)
- 11/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (November 5-12, 2009)
- 10/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (October 8-15, 2009)
- 09/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (September 11-18, 2009)
- 08/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (August 4-11, 2009)
- 07/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (July 7-14, 2009)
- 06/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (June 1-8, 2009)
- 04/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (April 2-8, 2009)
- 02/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (February 3-12, 2009)

Kaiser Family Foundation: Additional Survey Results⁶
Survey Fielded February 3-6, 2011

1. As far as you know, which comes closest to describing the current status of the health reform law that was passed last year? [ROTATE OPTIONS]

It is still the law of the land (or)	52
It has been repealed and is no longer law	22
Don't know/Refused	26

2. How much have you heard about Republican attempts to repeal the health reform law? A lot, some, only a little, or nothing at all?

A lot	36
Some	26
Only a little	23
Nothing at all	14
Don't know/Refused	1

⁶ See methodology box at front of topline for more information.



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