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# Defined by Health Care: Election 2018

*“The Democrats’ most potent national policy issue  
in the 2018 midterms is health care.”*

*— Karl Rove*

*“Trump’s op-ed confirms it:  
The central issue of 2018 is health care”  
— Philip Bump for The Washington Post*

*“Expect to hear about almost nothing except  
health care as we inch closer to Election Day.”  
— POLITICO*

## Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Fifty Percent Of Democratic Ad Spending Is On Health Care</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Health Care Is A Top Search In 75 Percent Of Congressional Districts</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>A Closer Look: How Health Care Has Defined Three House Races</b>	<b>4</b>
IA-1: Abby Finkenauer Challenges Rod Blum	4
NY-19: Antonio Delgado Challenges John Faso	5
NJ-3: Andy Kim Challenges Tom MacArthur	6
<b>Democratic Leaders Say Health Care Is The Top Issue Heading Into November</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>National Polling Confirms: Health Care Is The Top Issue</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Public Opinion Is Decidedly Against The Republican Health Agenda</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Republicans Try To Rewrite Their Records</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>A Deeper Dive: Health Care In Key Races</b>	<b>13</b>
Arizona - U.S. Senate	13
Florida - U.S. Senate	13
Indiana - U.S. Senate	14
Iowa - Governor	14
Minnesota - MN-02 & MN-03	15
Missouri - U.S. Senate	16
Montana - U.S. Senate	16
North Dakota - U.S. Senate	17
Ohio - OH-12 & OH-14	17
Pennsylvania - PA-10, PA-16, & PA-17	18
Tennessee - U.S. Senate	19
Texas - U.S. Senate, TX-07 & TX-32	20
Virginia - VA-07	21
<b>Conclusion: November Is A Health Care Election</b>	<b>21</b>

## Executive Summary

As we enter the closing stretch leading up to the 2018 midterms, the contours of the election are becoming even clearer — the one issue that poll after poll has consistently shown to top the list of voters' concerns is health care. And these voters are predominantly choosing Democrats over Republicans.

Republicans' war on health care has turned into a political liability for them. And for good reason. Voters remember how since day one of the Trump presidency, Republicans in Washington have been trying to do everything they can to repeal our health care. Most of last year they spent trying to ram a partisan bill through Congress that would have ripped coverage away from tens of millions of people, raised costs, gutted protections for pre-existing conditions, imposed an age tax on people over 50, and decimated Medicaid. Voters remember how Republicans are trying to get the courts to overturn protections for people with pre-existing conditions.

Democratic and Republican candidates alike recognize that health care is the driving issue of the 2018 elections:

- Fifty percent of Democratic ad spending is on health care. In September alone, Democrats ran more than 130,000 ads on health care;
- Health care is a top Google search in more than three-quarters of congressional districts;
- Polling confirms that health care is the top issue to voters and that Democrats have an advantage on the issue;
- Polling also confirms that voters reject the Republican health care agenda; and
- A deep dive into key Senate and House races shows that health care is the defining issue in the race, is putting Republican incumbents and challengers firmly on the defensive and is the closing argument for Democrats,

This report is intended to synthesize the polling and media around key races showing how health care is driving the election. The evidence is clear and mounting — 2018 is a health care election.

## Fifty Percent Of Democratic Ad Spending Is On Health Care

A survey of 2018 advertising reveals just how potent an issue health care has become. It is by far the dominant issue heading into the polls. The [Wesleyan Media Project's](#) survey of issue mentions in federal election advertising found health care to be the number one issue mentioned in advertisements for federal races, making up 50 percent of Democratic advertising and 41 percent of ad mentions total in September, up from 37 percent in August.

In September alone, more than 130,000 pro-Democrat ads mentioned health care, on top of [69,000](#) pro-Democrat ads that mentioned health care in August.

Similarly, a [Wall Street Journal analysis](#) of Kantar Media/CMAG advertising data finds that health care messaging has changed significantly since 2010. In 2010, WSJ analysis found that 29 percent of Republican political ads targeted the Affordable Care Act (ACA) while fewer than 6 percent of Democratic ads did. In 2018, half of Democratic ads mentioned health care while just 21 percent of Republican advertisements did.

In key states, such as Nevada, Maine and Alaska, health care is even more salient. In Nevada, 67 percent of airings tracked by Wesleyan focus on health care, as do 73 percent of airings in Maine and 95 percent of airings in Alaska. Take a look at some of the most powerful ads below:

["Promise"](#) -- Antonio Delgado -- NY-19: This ad exemplifies Democratic tactics in swing districts focusing on Faso's vote for American Health Care Act (AHCA), the Republican repeal bill which would have repealed the ACA, and on his broken promises to preserve the ACA's protections for people with preexisting conditions.

["Denise"](#) -- Sen. Heidi Heitkamp -- ND-Sen: This ad features Denise, a North Dakotan with a heart condition as well as Heidi Heitkamp's own experience with a pre-existing condition as a breast cancer survivor while contrasting with Kevin Cramer's support for repealing the Affordable Care Act and its protections for people with preexisting conditions.

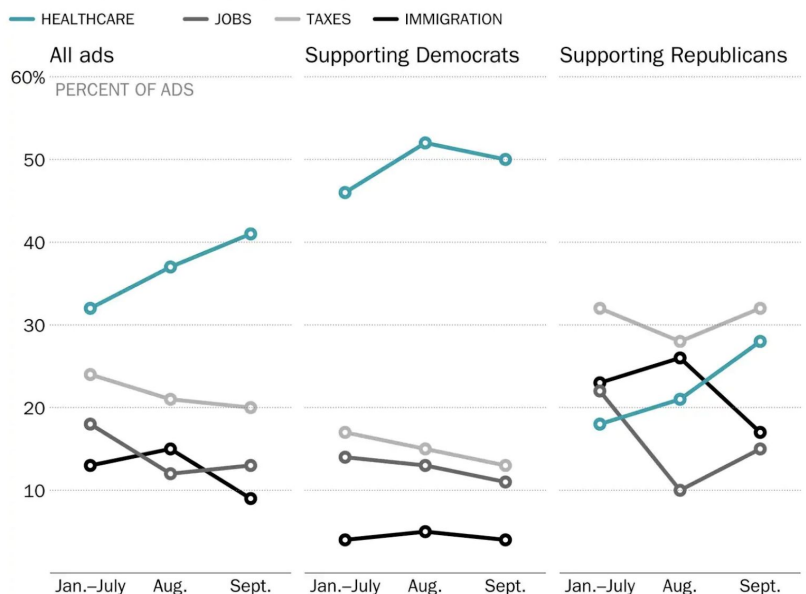
["Dead Wrong"](#) -- Sen. Joe Manchin -- WV-Sen: Playing off Manchin's iconic 2010 ad in which he shot the cap and trade bill, this ad features the senator shooting a lawsuit filed by his opponent, Patrick Morrisey, in an attempt to overturn the Affordable Care Act and its protections for pre-existing conditions.

["Farm"](#) -- Elissa Slotkin -- MI-08: In this ad Slotkin describes her mother's breast cancer, a later loss of a job and of health insurance, and then her ovarian cancer, in pre-ACA times while also criticizing Mike Bishop's vote for the AHCA.

["Two Years Ago"](#) -- Sen. Claire McCaskill -- MO-Sen: In this ad Senator McCaskill describes her own fight against breast cancer and links it to Josh Hawley's suit attempting to overturn the Affordable Care Act and its protections for pre-existing conditions.

### Political ad subjects in federal races

Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project



(Philip Bump/The Washington Post)

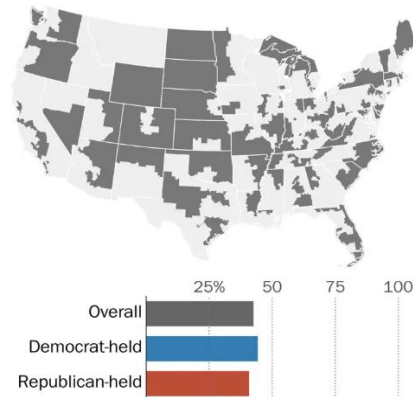
## Health Care Is A Top Search In 75 Percent Of Congressional Districts

Google Trends reveal that health care is among the most searched political issues in more than three quarters of congressional districts:

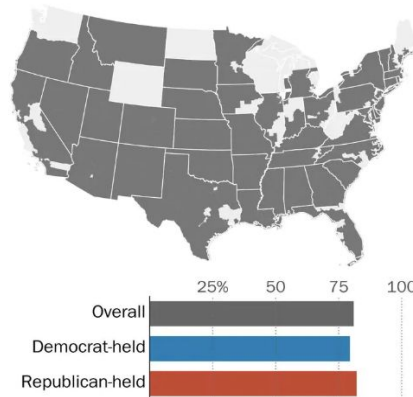
### Health care is top issue

Washington Post analysis of Google search data

#### 2017 baseline



#### Mid-September 2018



(Philip Bump/The Washington Post)

Analysis of Google search patterns reveals health care to be a top search in more than three-quarters of congressional districts. For comparison, last year, health care was a top search in less than half of the districts. Similarly, Medicare and Medicaid are also among the top three most searched subjects in half of districts.

Significantly, health care is the top issue in more than three-quarters of Republican races considered in play by the Cook Political Report. As the [Washington Post](#) notes, “About 44 percent of the Republican districts considered in-play had health care among their most searched issues last year. Now, more than three-quarters do.” Similarly, Medicaid and Medicare continue to be among the three most searched in half of congressional districts.

## A Closer Look: How Health Care Has Defined Three House Races

### IA-1: Abby Finkenauer Challenges Rod Blum

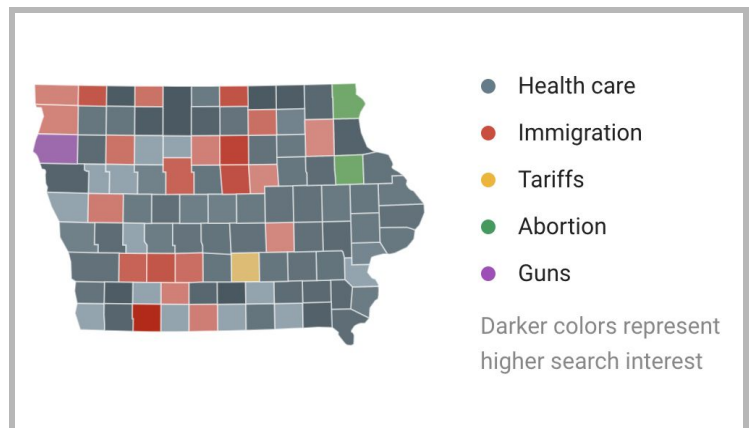
**In Iowa's First District, Where Democratic Challenger Abby Finkenauer Campaigned On Health Care, Her Advantage Has Increased Over The Course Of The Election.** In 2016, Donald Trump won Iowa's first district by [four points](#). When [Public Policy Polling](#) (PPP) surveyed IA-1 in February, Finkenauer led Blum by one point (43-42). Since then, Finkenauer's margin has grown to a [15 point advantage](#) in the most recent poll conducted by Siena College and New York Times.

**Finkenauer Has Run On Health Care.** In her [first television ad](#) of the general election, Finkenauer concluded by promising to lower health care costs. In a subsequent ad, she attacked Rod Blum over his vote for the Republican repeal bill last summer, which would have imposed an [age tax](#) on older Iowans. In August, she wrote on [Facebook](#): "Health care is on the ballot this November. Protections for pre-existing conditions are on the ballot. Affordability for our seniors is on the ballot." She declares on her website, "Healthcare is a human right, and extending access to quality and affordable care to every American must be a top priority in Congress."

**Finkenauer's Health Care Message Stands In Stark Contrast To That of Rod Blum, Who Voted For The Republican Repeal Bill Last Summer.** Since taking office in 2015, Rod Blum has voted 7 times to fully repeal or substantially alter the Affordable Care Act, including a [vote for the AHCA](#) in 2017. Blum's vote for AHCA would have cut coverage, increased costs, and eliminated protections for tens of thousands of Iowans while granting the wealthy and insurance and drug companies get \$600 billion in new tax breaks.

#### Google Trends Show That Health Care Is Most Searched Issue In IA-1:

- Health care is the [most searched](#) political topic in 16 out of the 19 counties in IA-1, and has been the most searched political topic statewide since July.
- Health care has consistently been the most highly searched political topic in Iowa for the vast majority of weeks since 2017.



#### September 2018 - Des Moines Register/Mediacom Iowa Poll Finds 51 Percent Of Voters Say Health

**Care Is Most Important Issue.** "When asked to identify one or two top issues, 51 percent of Iowans say health care, including Medicaid and mental health, is most important. Forty-seven percent cite education, including quality and funding for K-12 programs and the state's public universities...Health care has been a big issue for Iowans because of controversy over the state's privatization of Medicaid for low-income and disabled people, efforts to improve the state's mental health system and legislation to approve the sale of non-Obamacare health coverage in the state." [Des Moines Register, [9/30/18](#)]

**Health Care Is By Far The Most Mentioned Issue In Iowa Political Advertisements.** According to the [Wesleyan Media Project](#), 47 percent of Iowa's more than 8,500 political advertisements in September were on the topic of health care. Health care had a 17 percentage point lead on the next most mentioned topic — taxes, which were mentioned in 30 percent of advertisements.



## NY-19: Antonio Delgado Challenges John Faso

**In New York's Nineteenth District, Where Democratic Challenger Antonio Delgado Has Run On Health Care, John Faso's Lead Has Started To Slip In Recent Polls.** In 2016, John Faso beat his democratic challenger by [eight points](#). This year, the race is much closer. Though Faso held on to a five point lead in polls conducted in [July](#) and [August](#), a September [Monmouth University poll](#) shows that Delgado now with a five point advantage over Faso (49-44).

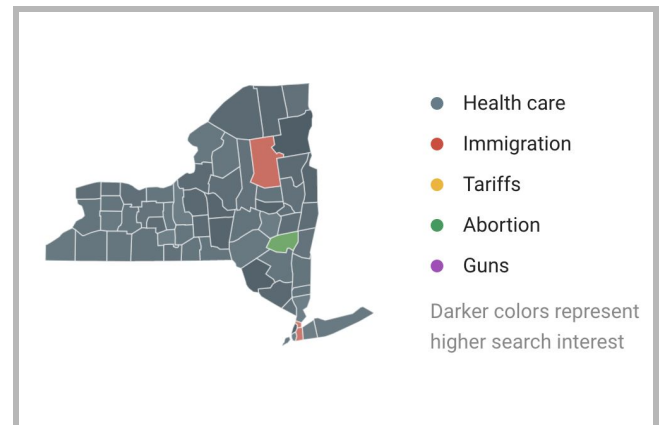


**Antonio Delgado And John Faso Have Faced Off On Health Care.** Delgado has run on protecting health care, while Faso [voted to repeal](#) the Affordable Care Act last spring. In a September ad titled "[Care](#)," Delgado criticized Faso for his vote on the AHCA, which Delgado says "paved the way for an age tax on seniors" and gutted protections for people with pre-existing conditions. Another of Delgado's ads, titled "[Promise](#)," features Andrea Mitchell, a woman with health problems whom John Faso had promised on camera not to take away care from. Months later, Faso voted to repeal the ACA. In an October debate, Faso and Delgado faced off on the issue — leading the [Poughkeepsie Journal](#) to conclude,

"Perhaps one of the most contentious issues in New York's 19th has been health care, and Faso's vote in favor of the failed American Health Care Act of 2017 was controversial."

### Google Trends Show That Health Care Is Most Searched Issue In NY-19:

- Health care is the [most searched](#) political topic in 10 out of the 11 counties in NY-19, and has been the most searched political topic statewide since July, accounting for between 33 and 71 percent of searches in each county.
- Health care has consistently been the most highly searched political topic in New York for the vast majority of weeks since 2017.



### September 2018 - Monmouth University Poll Finds Health Care To Be Top Issue In NY-19.

When asked to select the top issue in their vote for Congress, the [poll](#) of NY-19 voters revealed "29% pick health care, which is followed by immigration (20%), gun control (15%), tax policy (11%), job creation policy (10%), and abortion (4%). Health care is the most important issue for Delgado voters (44%), while immigration is the top pick for Faso voters (31%)."

## NJ-3: Andy Kim Challenges Tom MacArthur



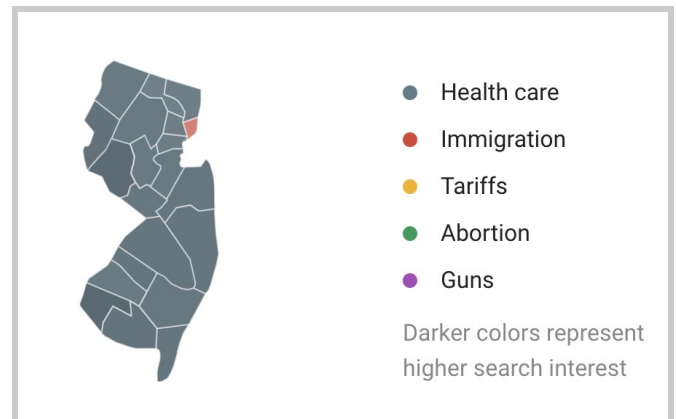
**In New Jersey's Third District, Democratic Challenger Andy Kim, Who Ran On Health Care, Has Narrowed The Gap With Republican Incumbent Tom MacArthur.** New Jersey's third district voted for Trump by [six points](#) in 2016, elected Tom MacArthur with nearly [sixty percent](#) of the vote in 2016, and supported MacArthur over Kim by [four points](#) as of February 2018. In [polls](#) from February 2018 through early June 2018, MacArthur maintained his advantage. That advantage faded in June, and polls from [September and August](#) showed Kim taking the lead.

### Kim Is Running On Health Care As He Faces

**MacArthur, Chief Architect Of The Republican Repeal Bill.** Kim is running on health care. In September he launched an ad titled "[August](#)," named after his son who was born underweight, that emphasized that Kim will work hard to make health care more affordable. Kim has [promised](#) to defend the Affordable Care Act against sabotage by the Trump Administration. MacArthur, on the other hand, was one of the [chief architects](#) of the Republican repeal bill last summer that would have allowed insurance companies to charge people with pre-existing conditions more, and that drew [criticism from his constituents](#).

### Google Trends Show That Health Care Is Most Searched Issue In NJ-3:

- Health care is the [most searched](#) political topic in NJ-3, accounting for 49 percent of Google searches. The next-most searched topic, immigration, trails by at least twenty points.
- Health care has consistently been the most highly searched political topic statewide since July 8.



### June 2018 - Global Strategy Group Poll Finds That 53 Percent Of Voters In NJ-3 Oppose The Republican Repeal Bill That MacArthur Helped Construct.

53 percent of NJ-3 voters [oppose](#) the Republican repeal bill from last summer, while only 34 percent of voters said they supported the bill. The bill, which MacArthur helped construct, is opposed by a 19 point margin.



## Democratic Leaders Say Health Care Is The Top Issue Heading Into November

Democrats, Republicans, and the media are quick to declare that health care is the top issue in races across the country.

**Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi: “Everything We See In This Election Is About Affordability Of Health Care.”** “Because everything that we see in this election – and not to make this political – but everything that we see in this election is about affordability of health care. Is the key issue. It’s about your health.” [Democratic Leader’s Office, [7/21/18](#)]

**Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer: “We’re Going To Focus On All That Our Republican Friends Have Done To Drive Up The Costs Of Health Care.”** “We Democrats are going to spend the next few months, including the August work period, focusing on the nation’s health care system...We’re going to focus on all that our Republican friends have done to drive up the costs of health care to average Americans and what we should be doing to reverse that awful trend.” [NPR, [6/13/18](#)]

**David Bergstein, Spokesman For The Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee: Health Care Is “The Defining Issue Of This Election.”** “Democratic campaigns in these states — and across the Senate map — are talking about health care because it’s the defining issue of this election...For voters it’s an issue deeply tied to their personal economy, it’s driving their electoral decision making, and they’re going to punish every GOP Senate candidate for their party’s agenda that spikes health care costs and cuts coverage for pre-existing conditions.” [Washington Post, [9/20/18](#)]

**Sen. Chris Van Hollen, Chair Of Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee: “Health Care Costs Remain One Of The Top Issues In Every State In The Country.”** “‘Health-care costs remain one of the top issues in every state in the country,’ Maryland Sen. Chris Van Hollen, who heads the Senate Democrats’ campaign committee, recently told reporters. ‘And when you look at that issue, the most recent polling I’ve seen on that...shows a 20-point advantage for Democrats.’” [NPR, [6/14/18](#)]

**Guy Cecil, Chairman Of Priorities USA: “Health Care Is Continuously A Top-Three Issue For Voters, Even When The Campaign Is Not About Health Care.”** “Cecil, who now runs Democratic super PAC Priorities USA, agreed. ‘Really, from that point forward we’ve seen in almost every special election so far this year and last year, and the Virginia governor’s race, that health care continuously is a top-three issue for voters, even when the campaign is not about health care.’” [NPR, [6/14/18](#)]

*Republican leaders agree:*

**Karl Rove, Former Senior Advisor To President George W. Bush: “The Democrats’ Most Potent National Policy Issue In The 2018 Midterms Is Health Care.”** [Wall Street Journal, [9/20/19](#)]

*News outlets have also noticed the trend and made the case in hundreds of articles over the past few months. Some highlights are below:*

**Washington Post: Trump’s Op-ed Confirms It: The Central Issue Of 2018 Is Health Care.** “Trump’s essay is nonetheless centered not on crime or Kavanaugh but on health care. Of course it is. Health care has consistently been at the center of the 2018 campaign. Analysis of ads run by federal candidates shows that more than 40 percent of spots mentioned the subject last month, up from less than a third in the first half of the year.” [Washington Post, Bump, [10/10/18](#)]

**Roll Call: It’s Baaacck! Health Care Law Again Front And Center In Midterms.** “Democrats are now touting the same thing that, in recent election years, Republicans had used as a cudgel against them. The shift marks a turnaround in the electoral dynamics of the past eight years, when many Democrats, particularly in moderate areas, shied away from health care topics while Republicans reliably shouted for repeal.” [Roll Call, [10/3/18](#)]

**CNN: Health Care Takes Center Stage In Midterms Fight — And Republicans Are On The Defensive.**

"Seizing on the political opening, Democrats have spent nearly \$125 million on TV ads focused on health care this year, compared to just \$50 million in health care-focused ads from Republicans, according to the political ad tracking firm Kantar Media/CMAG. The pressure has left some GOP candidates spinning -- insisting that they would defend pre-existing conditions protections and lower health care costs without detailing exactly how they'd do that. Even Republicans who haven't voted to repeal Obamacare or sued to block portions of it are under fire over health care." [CNN, [9/26/18](#)]

**ABC News: ACA Once Cost Democrats Control Of A Chamber Of Congress, Eight Years Later It Might Give Them A Chance At Taking Another Chamber Back.**

"Obamacare once sparked a political backlash that cost Democrats control of a chamber of Congress. Eight years later, it just might be what gives them a fighting chance at taking another chamber back. The political potency of health care will be on fresh display in West Virginia on Tuesday. President Donald Trump is making his sixth visit to the state as president, as he seeks to oust an incumbent Democrat who wants his campaign to be about saving Obamacare." [ABC News, [8/21/18](#)]

**Bloomberg: Democrats Are Embracing Affordable Care Act, Even In Republican Strongholds.**

"Democratic candidates are running ads and campaigning on shoring up the Affordable Care Act, not just in reliably blue states, but in traditionally Republican strongholds. Though they might not use the word 'Obamacare' itself, Democrats warn against GOP legislation and lawsuits that seek repeal or would block the law's most popular elements." [Bloomberg, [9/20/18](#)]

**Washington Post: Democrats' Focus On Health Care "Has Helped Crack Open Opportunities In States They Wouldn't Have Dreamed Of Winning Two Years Ago."**

"The Democrats' strategy to focus on health care in the midterm elections has helped crack open opportunities in states they wouldn't have dreamed of winning two years ago, bolstering their chances of retaking the Senate majority." [Washington Post, [9/20/18](#)]

**Washington Post: "Voters Who Care About Health Care Are Overwhelmingly Supporting The Democratic Candidate."**

"Now, voters who care about health care are overwhelmingly supporting the Democratic candidate in polls leading up to November's midterms, where the House and Senate majorities are at stake. Consistent with other polls from battleground states, one third of Missouri voters name health care their most important issue and of that group 69 percent back McCaskill while 27 percent support Hawley." [Washington Post, [10/2/18](#)]

## National Polling Confirms: Health Care Is The Top Issue

A survey of national polling and Google search trends illustrates a clear pattern — that health care is consistently ranked as the top issue to voters. Polling also confirms that Democrats have an edge over Republicans on the issue.

*Polling shows health care to be top issue...*

**October 2018** - POLITICO/Harvard Poll Finds More Than Half Of Democrats Likely To Vote In House Races Rank Health Care As 'Extremely Important' In Determining Their Vote. "More than half of Democrats likely to vote in House races rank health care as "extremely important" in determining their vote, the new survey found. That's more than any other factor in an election cycle that Democratic candidates have cast as a referendum on Republican attempts to dismantle the Affordable Care Act.

**October 2018** - Washington Post And Schar School Survey Show Health Care To Be A Top Issue In Battleground Districts. "A 57 percent majority rated health care as extremely important, with 55 percent rating the economy as extremely important and 52 percent saying the same for immigration."

**September 2018** - CBS News Poll: 70 Percent Of Voters In Battle Ground Districts Say Health Care Is "Very Important" Issue In Their Vote. "Seventy percent of voters in these battleground districts say health care will be a very important issue in their vote, just ahead of Supreme Court appointments (66 percent), immigration (63 percent), and gun policy (60 percent). Crime and trade policy trailed the other issues, with less than half of voters saying they were very important."

**June 2018** - Kaiser Tracking Poll Finds That Health Care Is Top Issue For Voters. 25 percent of voters cited health care as the most important issue to them, compared to the next highest earner, the economy and jobs, which 23 percent of voters said was the most important issue. In total, 79 percent of voters considered health care to be the most important or a very important issue.

**June 2018** - Suffolk University/Cincinnati Enquirer Poll Finds Health Care Is A Top Issue. Health care was the second most-cited issue when voters were asked what the most important issue in the state's Senate race was. 21 percent of respondents said Donald Trump, followed by health care at 20.6 percent and the economy at 17.6 percent. Health care was also ranked as the second most cited issue when asked what the most important issue in the governor's race was.

**June 2018** - NBC News Poll Finds Health Care To Be Top Midterm Issue. "Asked about their top issues for November, 22 percent of voters said health care was their first choice — followed by the economy and jobs at 19 percent, guns at 13 percent, taxes and spending at 11 percent and immigration at 10 percent."

**May 2018** - CBS News Poll: Voters Say Health Care Is The Most Important Issue In Deciding Vote For Congress In November. In a May CBS poll, when asked which issue would be the most important in deciding a vote for Congress in November, more voters selected health care than any other issue. 27 percent of those polled responded health care, compared to 23 percent who said the economy, and 21 percent who responded gun policy.

**May 2018** - Kaiser Family Foundation Tracking Poll Finds That Health Care Remains A Top Issue Among Voters, Including Independents, And That One In Four Are "Health Care Voters," Whose Votes Will Be Determined By Candidates' Health Care Positions. 77 percent of those surveyed said health care was an important issue, with 30 percent of these voters listing health care costs as the reason why — just as premiums are rising due to GOP sabotage.

**April 2018** - HuffPost/YouGov Poll Finds Health Care Is Top Issue To Voters. Voters cited health care, more than any other issue, when asked to select two most important issues in 2018 midterms. 28 percent of respondents cited health care, compared to runners up the economy and gun policies at 22 percent.  
[HuffPost/YouGov, [4/6/18](#)]

*...and for their leadership on health care, Democrats have a strong lead:*

**[October 2018](#) - CNN Poll Finds Democrats Have 18 Point Advantage On Health Care.** Asked whether Republicans or Democrats in Congress would do a better job of dealing with health care, 54 percent of those polled responded that Democrats would do a better job, while only 36 percent responded that Republicans would.

**[September 2018](#) - Fox News Poll Finds Health Care Boosts Democrats In Midterms.** "The poll, released Sunday, shows how much Americans have warmed to Obamacare. Four years ago, 48 percent thought the law 'went too far' (September 2014). That's down to 36 percent today. And a majority believes Obamacare is 'about right' (21 percent) or 'didn't go far enough' (30 percent). Plus, 64 percent want more people insured, even if it costs the government more money."

**[June 2018](#) - Fox News Poll Found Democrats To Have 17 Point Advantage On Health Care.** A June Fox News Poll found that 50 percent of voters said Democrats would do a better job dealing with health care, while only 33 percent of voters said Republicans would.

**[June 2018](#) - Pew Research Center Finds Democrats To Have 16 Point Advantage On Health Care.** Asked who would do a better job dealing with health care, 48 percent of voters say Democrats would do a better job while only 32 percent of voters said Republicans would.

*We have seen anecdotal evidence that the GOP war on health care is backfiring on Republicans:*

In September, [CNN](#) chronicled the story of David Hansen, a retired Navy veteran who had voted for Trump in 2016, but whose experience losing his health care after having a stroke in 2017 turned him into a Democratic voter.

Hansen is not alone. In April, [Reuters](#) found that though college educated whites over the age of 60 who had a college degree had favored Republicans for Congress by 10 percentage points in 2016, they now favor Democrats by two points. Among the issues Reuters identified as contributing to that 12-point shift was health care. One such voter, John Camm has been a Republican since the Nixon administration. He is now splitting with his party over access to health care.

## Public Opinion Is Decidedly Against The Republican Health Agenda

Central to the Republican health care agenda is the effort to make it as difficult as possible to sign up for comprehensive coverage. Since President Trump assumed office, Republicans have relentlessly attacked the Affordable Care Act and taken steps to restrict access to care. In the past two years, they have:

- Gone to court and asked that protections for people with pre-existing conditions be overturned;
- Passed legislation in the House of Representatives to repeal the Affordable Care Act, and introduced legislation to do the same in the Senate;
- Pushed junk insurance plans that can discriminate against people with pre-existing conditions and refuse coverage of essential health benefits, such as mental health care, emergency care and maternity care;
- Slashed funding for in-person assistance to help people sign up for health coverage;
- Unnecessarily put on hold the risk adjustment transfers that spread risk across insurers, which incentivizes insurance companies to offer affordable options for everyone, in particular to people with pre-existing conditions;
- Approved onerous restrictions on Medicaid; and
- Appointed a justice for the Supreme Court who was hand-picked to tip the balance of the Court and potentially rubber stamp the president's sabotage agenda.

### Polling Confirms That The Republican Health Care Agenda Is Deeply Unpopular

When polled, voters reject main components of the GOP health care agenda and conversely, support policies that ensure greater access to coverage.

#### *Health Care Repeal:*

**July 2018 - Public Policy Polling Poll Shows Voters Oppose Repeal Of The Affordable Care Act And The Lawsuit That Would Overturn It.** By an overwhelming 25 points (59/34), people want Congress to "keep what works and fix what doesn't" in the ACA, not repeal it. That margin grows to 32 points (62/30) with independents. 64% of voters oppose the Trump administration joining the lawsuit (Texas V. U.S.) which would strike down ACA's protections of health care for people with pre-existing conditions. Only 19% of voters support joining the lawsuit.

#### *Gutting Protections for Pre-existing Conditions:*

**August 2018 - Urban Institute Poll Finds Vast Majority Of Public Does Not Support Allowing Insurance Companies To Exclude People With Pre-existing Conditions.** The poll found that 81.5 percent of those surveyed did not support letting insurance companies exclude people with pre-existing conditions, such as diabetes or cancer, from coverage.

**July 2018 - Kaiser Health Tracking Poll Finds Candidate's Position On Pre-existing Conditions Is Single Most Important Health Care Campaign Issue For Voters.** "The July Kaiser Health Tracking Poll finds a candidate's position on continuing protections for people with pre-existing health conditions is the top health care campaign issue for voters, among a list of issues provided. This issue cuts across voter demographics with most Democratic voters (74 percent), independent voters (64 percent), and voters living in battleground areas (61 percent), as well as half of Republican voters (49 percent) saying a candidate's position on continued protections for pre-existing health conditions is either the single most important factor or a very important factor in their 2018 vote."

#### *Junk Plans:*

**October 2018 - POLITICO/Harvard Poll Finds Junk Plans To Be Opposed By Majority Of Voters, Not Even Backed By Majority Of Republicans.** According to the poll, 62 percent of voters oppose short-term plans, including 39 percent of Republicans. Plus, they are not even supported by a majority of Republicans.

**[August 2018](#) - Urban Institute Poll Finds Junk Plans To Be Opposed By Vast Majority Of Americans.** The survey found that 67.3 percent of those polled did not support shifting healthy people to less comprehensive plans with lower premiums while leaving sick people in more comprehensive plans with higher premiums.

*Cutting Medicaid:*

**[March 2018](#) - Kaiser Health Tracking Poll Finds Majority Of Americans View Medicaid Favorably And Say The Program Is Working Well.** “Medicaid continues to be seen favorably by a majority of the public (74 percent) and about half (52 percent) believe the Medicaid program is working well for most low-income people covered by the program.”

**[March 2018](#) - Kaiser Health Tracking Poll Confirms That Lifetime Limits On Medicaid Coverage Are Extremely Unpopular.** Asked whether Medicaid should be available without a time limit, two-thirds said that Medicaid should be available without a time limit, compared to only 33 percent who said that Medicaid should only be available for a limited amount of time.



## Republicans Try To Rewrite Their Records

As Republicans have learned just how unpopular their health care positions are, many have tried to reverse course. Republicans up and down the ticket have taken to blatantly lying about their positions, arguing their vote to repeal the ACA was instead to uphold protections for pre-existing conditions, and at least 20 Republican incumbents have scrubbed their websites to soften their language about or remove references to the ACA. Others have introduced sham legislation in publicity stunts to distract from the very real actions they are taking to sabotage Americans' health care.

But make no mistake, Republicans are trying to rewrite the truth, that they are coming after your health care.

### Republicans Are Blatantly Lying About Their Positions On Pre-existing Conditions...

Faced with polling showing that as many as 80 percent of Americans support provisions that prevent insurance companies from denying coverage to or charging more for people with pre-existing conditions, Republicans have taken to lying. At a campaign rally in October, President Trump earned a [“pants on fire”](#) fact check from PolitiFact for asserting that Republicans were going to protect pre-existing conditions, and that Democrats are the ones trying to get rid of such protections. He said this despite the fact that his own administration has joined a lawsuit that would overturn pre-existing condition protections.

Republicans across the U.S. are doing the same. In Missouri, Josh Hawley has claimed that he wants to protect pre-existing conditions even as he is one of 20 state officials who have filed a lawsuit that would overturn pre-existing condition protections. Hawley's statements have drawn criticism from editorial boards and columnists alike, with one magazine [writing](#), “Hawley has chosen to lie straight through his teeth.”

Like Hawley, Republican candidates [Mike Braun \(R-IN\)](#), [Patrick Morrisey \(R-WV\)](#), [Rick Scott \(R-FL\)](#), [Kevin Cramer \(R-ND\)](#), [Lou Barletta \(R-PA\)](#), [Matt Rosendale \(R-MT\)](#), [Martha McSally \(R-AZ\)](#), and [Leah Vukmir \(R-WI\)](#) have also claimed to support people with pre-existing conditions while simultaneously supporting policies that would make it harder for those who are sick to access affordable, comprehensive care.

In light of Republicans' mounting health care lies, [Washington Post](#) columnist Paul Waldman noted how astonishing this all is, “you don't usually see them claiming to be the savior of the very thing they're trying to destroy,” he wrote.

### They Are Rewriting Their Websites To Soften Or Scrub Repeal Language

A [Daily Beast analysis](#) of candidates' websites found that at least 20 Republican incumbents have softened or removed pro-repeal rhetoric from their websites.

For instance, as the Affordable Care Act has become more popular, Carlos Curbelo has removed critiques of the law from his website. In 2016, his website [read](#) “The President's Affordable Care Act, better known as Obamacare, has increased the cost of healthcare for millions of Americans and is threatening our economic recovery.” Its language is [now](#) softened. It reads, “Health care costs have not gone down under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), better known as Obamacare, as promised,” and emphasizes the need to preserve the ACA's protections for people with pre-existing conditions.

Similarly, though in 2016 Dave Joyce's website [read](#), “Dave Joyce has fought to repeal and defund ‘Obamacare’ every chance he's had. Dave Joyce has voted to defund, repeal or delay Obamacare every chance he's had, 30+ times,” it has since been updated to [eliminate mentions](#) of repeal.

John Culberson's website has also been scrubbed. In 2017, it [read](#), “We also support repealing Obamacare.” It has since been scrubbed to [eliminate mentions](#) of repeal.

## **Some Are Even Introducing Sham Legislation To Try To Cover Their Backs**

Republicans in both chambers of Congress are trying to hide behind figleaves — a Senate bill, a House bill (H.R. 1121), a House resolution (H. Res. 1066), and another resolution (H.Res. 1089) — that they falsely claim are evidence that they are on the right side of this issue. These pieces of legislation are nothing more than hollow promises that may read well but in reality fail to protect people with pre-existing conditions from attacks by the Trump administration and their own earlier votes.

The Senate Republican [bill](#) sponsored by Sen. Thom Tillis (R-NC) would actually [allow](#) insurance companies to refuse to cover services related to a pre-existing condition. For instance, an insurance company could sell insurance to someone with cancer health care, but [refuse to cover](#) any services related to cancer treatment. Larry Levitt, vice president of the Kaiser Family Foundation, warns that this policy change would make guaranteed access to insurance “[something of a mirage](#).”

None of the House efforts actually protect people with pre-existing conditions either. The language of Rep. David Young’s (R-IA) [resolution](#) and of Rep. Pete Sessions’ (R-TX) [resolution](#), both intentionally vague, includes no specifics on exactly which protections should be preserved. Though Rep. Greg Walden’s (R-OR) bill, [H.R. 1121](#), prevents insurance companies from denying coverage to people with pre-existing conditions, it does nothing to prevent insurance companies from charging people with pre-existing conditions more for coverage or reinstating annual and lifetime limits that insurers use to restrict the amount of coverage someone can use, and it does not preserve the Affordable Care Act’s essential health benefits, essentially allowing insurers to sell plans exempt from covering basic services like maternity care, hospitalization, and prescription drugs. Absent such protections, an insurance company could sell coverage to a cancer patient, but charge them more and drop their coverage once they reach their lifetime limit.

If Republicans really wanted to take action to protect people with pre-existing conditions, they could. Democrats in both the [Senate](#) and the [House of Representatives](#) have introduced a resolution that would enable each house’s respective Office of Legal Counsel to intervene to defend protections for people with pre-existing conditions. Not a single Republican has signed on. Democrats have also introduced legislation both the [House](#) and [Senate](#) that would overturn the Trump Administration’s junk plan rule that lets insurance companies deny coverage for pre-existing conditions, but Republicans have refused to sign on, and even blocked the legislation in the Senate.

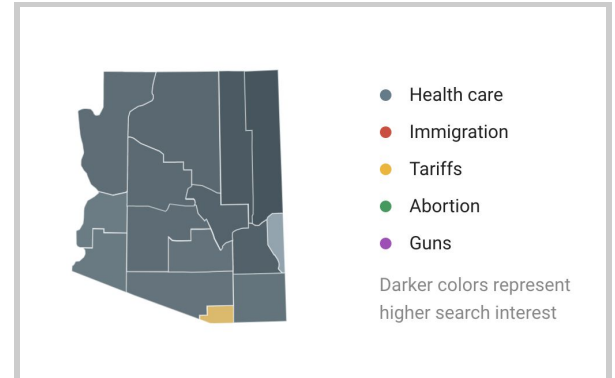
## A Deeper Dive: Health Care In Key Races

### Arizona - U.S. Senate

**37 Percent Of Political Advertisements Are On Health Care.** According to the [Wesleyan Media Project](#), 37 percent of Arizona's 1,601 political advertisements in September focused on health care.

**Google Trends Show That Health Care Is Most Searched Issue In Arizona<sup>1</sup>:**

- Health care is the most searched political topic in [Arizona](#) and has been every week since July.
- It has also been the most highly searched political topic in Arizona for the vast majority of weeks since 2017.



**Recent Polls Show Health Care To Be Top Issue In Race For Senate.**

A September [CNN poll](#) found that "In Arizona, Sinema tops Republican Rep. Martha McSally by 7 points, 50% to 43% among likely voters...Health care tops the list of voters' most important issues in both states, with 29% calling it tops in their Senate vote in Tennessee...Voters who say health care is their top issue are broadly supportive of the Democrat in both contests, breaking for...Sinema over McSally by 75% to 14%." An October YouGov poll shows Sinema with a three point lead, and reveals that she has a 12 point lead (43-31) on health care.

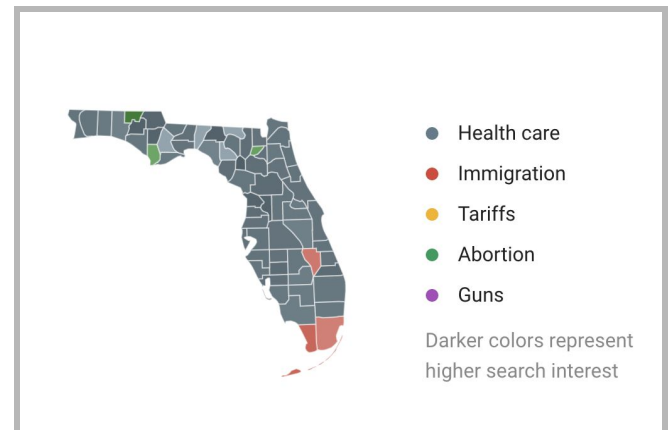
### Florida - U.S. Senate

**Health Care Was The Most-Mentioned Issue In Florida**

**Political Ads.** According to the [Wesleyan Media Project](#), twenty-three percent of Florida's nearly 37,000 political advertisements in September were on the topic of health care. Taxes received the next most mentions, appearing in 22 percent of advertisements.

**Google Trends Show That Health Care Is Most Searched Issue In Florida:**

- Health care is the most searched political topic in [Florida](#) and has been every week since July.
- Health care is the most searched political topic almost all Florida counties.
- It has also been the most highly searched political topic in Florida for the vast majority of weeks since 2017.



**October 2018 - A Public Policy Polling (PPP) Survey Commissioned By Protect Our Care Finds That 60 Percent Of Registered Voters In Florida Say Health Care Will Be One Of The Most Important Issues They Consider When Casting Their Vote In November.** What's more, 65 percent are deeply concerned about Rick Scott's support of health care repeal and the same proportion oppose the Trump Administration's lawsuit to end protections for those with pre-existing conditions, which Scott has refused to oppose and Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi has joined. The poll shows that for Scott, who has opposed Medicaid expansion, whose company was fined \$1.7 billion for Medicare fraud, and who has been one of the [architects](#) of the GOP's repeal of America's health care, the issue of health care is a drag on his prospects for election to the Senate. In the poll, Scott trails Senator Bill Nelson 44 (Scott) to 48 (Nelson). [Public Policy Polling, [10/1/18](#)]

<sup>1</sup> Google Trends data is accurate as of 10/10/18.

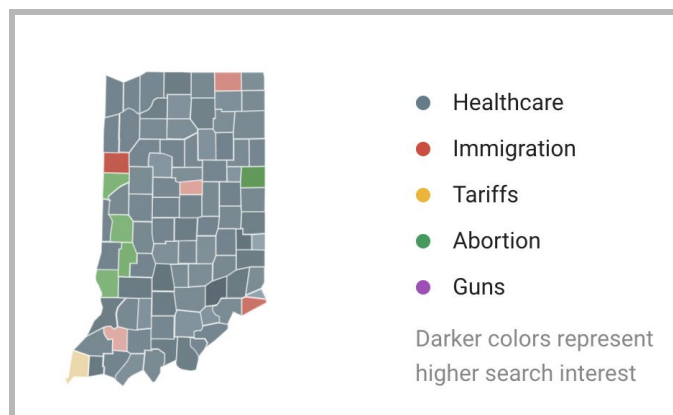
**September 2018 - NBC/Marist Poll: Health Care Top Issue Among Likely Voters In Florida.** "Finally, the top issues in Florida are health care and the economy, according to the poll. Twenty-four percent of likely voters list health care as the No. 1 issue that might decide their vote for Congress in November — followed by the economy and jobs at 23 percent, immigration at 17 percent and guns at 10 percent." [NBC News, [9/25/18](#)]

## Indiana - U.S. Senate

**Health Care Is By Far The Most Mentioned Issue In Indiana Political Advertisements.** According to the [Wesleyan Media Project](#), 48 percent of Indiana's more than 25,000 political advertisements in September were on the topic of health care. Health care had a 27 percentage point lead on the next most mentioned topic — immigration, which was mentioned in 21 percent of advertisements.

### Google Trends Show That Health Care Is Most Searched Issue In Indiana:

- Health care is the most searched political topic in [Indiana](#) and has been every week since July. Health care is also the most searched political topic in almost all Indiana counties.
- Health care has consistently been the most highly searched political topic in Indiana for the vast majority of weeks since 2017.



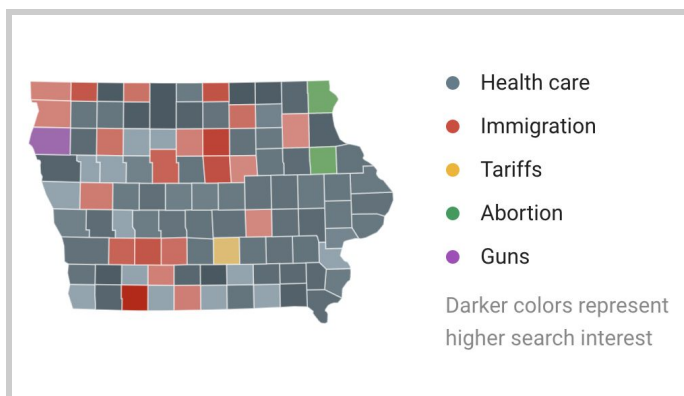
**October 2018 - Change Research Poll Commissioned By Protect Our Care Finds Vast Majority Of Voters Say Health Care Is Very Important When Deciding Who To Vote For In US Senate Election.** The poll found that 90 percent of voters say health care is very important when deciding who to vote for in the US Senate election, and 60 percent of voters have a major concern with Mike Braun's efforts to fully repeal the Affordable Care Act. Plus, 53 percent of voters strongly oppose Mike Braun's decision to support the GOP lawsuit to eliminate pre-existing conditions protections. By a 20 point margin, voters want Congress to keep what works about the ACA and fix the rest, rather than repeal it and start over. [Change Research, [10/8/18](#)]

## Iowa - Governor

**Health Care Is By Far The Most Mentioned Issue In Iowa Political Advertisements.** According to the [Wesleyan Media Project](#), 47 percent of Iowa's more than 8,500 political advertisements in September were on the topic of health care. Health care had a 17 percentage point lead on the next most mentioned topic — taxes, which were mentioned in 30 percent of advertisements.

### Google Trends Show That Health Care Is Most Searched Issue In Iowa:

- Health care is the most searched political topic in [Iowa](#) and has been every week since July.
- Health care has consistently been the most highly searched political topic in Iowa for the vast majority of weeks since 2017.



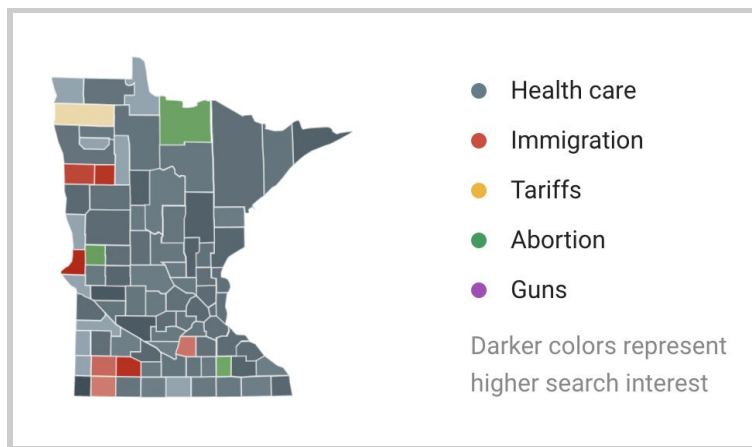
**September 2018 - Des Moines Register/Mediacom Iowa Poll Finds 51 Percent Of Voters Say Health Care Is Most Important Issue.** "When asked to identify one or two top issues, 51 percent of Iowans say health care, including Medicaid and mental health, is most important. Forty-seven percent cite education, including quality and funding for K-12 programs and the state's public universities...Health care has been a big issue for Iowans because of controversy over the state's privatization of Medicaid for low-income and disabled people, efforts to improve the state's mental health system and legislation to approve the sale of non-Obamacare health coverage in the state." [Des Moines Register, [9/30/18](#)]

## Minnesota - MN-02 & MN-03

**Health Care Is By Far The Most Mentioned Issue In Minnesota Political Advertisements.** According to the [Wesleyan Media Project](#), 58 percent of Minnesota's more than 17,000 political advertisements in September were on the topic of health care. Health care had a 42 percentage point lead on the next most mentioned topic — taxes, which were mentioned in 16 percent of advertisements.

### Google Trends Show that Searches for Health Care Dominate Across Minnesota — Including in MN-02 and MN-03

- Health care is the most searched election related issue in Minnesota.
- In MN-03 roughly [63 percent](#) of all issue searches were on health care; the next highest issue was immigration at 17 percent.
- In MN-02 health care was the top researched issue in every county.



### September 2018 - PPP-Protect Our Care Poll in MN-02 Finds Health Care To Be Important Issue In Race

- Health care is a very important issue to voters when deciding who to vote for. In September, [62 percent](#) of voters said it is either the most important issue or a very important issue when deciding who to vote for.
- Minnesotans are very concerned about the possible consequences of repealing the ACA. 62 percent of voters think charging people 50+ years old, five times more than younger people for health insurance is a major concern. Eliminating protections for people with pre-existing conditions is a major concern for 63 percent of voters.
- In a preview of the November election, Democrat Angie Craig holds a lead over Republican Jason Lewis, 48-45.

### September 2018 - PPP-Protect Our Care Poll in MN-03 Finds Health Care To Be Important Issue In Race

- Health care is a very important issue to voters when deciding who to vote for. [65 percent](#) say it is either the most important issue or a very important issue when deciding who to vote for.
- Minnesotans are very concerned about the possible consequences of repealing the ACA. Two-thirds (66 percent) of voters think charging people over 50 years old, five times more than younger people for health insurance is a major concern. Eliminating protections for people with pre-existing conditions is a major concern for 67 percent of voters.
- In a preview of the November election, Democrat Dean Phillips holds a lead over Republican Erik Paulsen, 52-39.

## Missouri - U.S. Senate

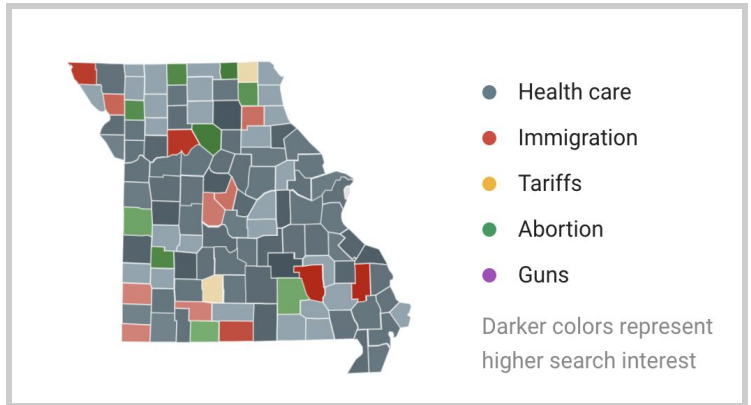
**Health Care Is By Far The Most Mentioned Issue In Missouri Political Advertisements.** According to the [Wesleyan Media Project](#), 48 percent of Missouri's nearly 20,000 political advertisements in September were on the topic of health care. Health care had a 32 percentage point lead on the next most mentioned topic — immigration, which was mentioned in 16 percent of advertisements.

### Google Trends Show That Health Care Is Most Searched Issue In Missouri:

- Health care is the most searched political topic in [Missouri](#) and has been every week since July.
- Health care has consistently been the most highly searched political topic in Missouri for the vast majority of weeks since 2017.

### October 2018 - Poll Shows McCaskill Holding Strong Lead "With An Almost Singular Focus On Health Care."

"A new poll shows Sen. Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.) is holding strong, and maybe even edging ahead, in one of the toughest reelection fights in the country. And she's doing it with an almost singular focus on health care. For the first time since May, public polling found McCaskill leading her Republican challenger, state Attorney General Josh Hawley, 47 percent to 44 percent...McCaskill appears to have benefited from her opponent's involvement in a federal lawsuit brought by 20 states aimed at having the Affordable Care Act ruled unconstitutional." [Washington Post, [10/2/18](#)]

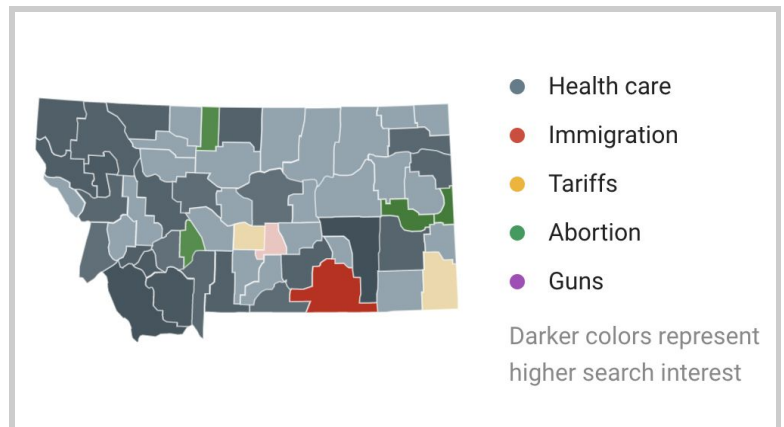


## Montana - U.S. Senate

**Health Care Is By Far The Most Mentioned Issue In Montana Political Advertisements.** According to the [Wesleyan Media Project](#), 28 percent of Montana's 26,000 political advertisements in September were on the topic of health care. Health care had a 17 percentage point lead on the next most mentioned topic — immigration, which was mentioned in 11 percent of advertisements.

### Google Trends Show That Health Care Is Most Searched Issue In Montana:

- Health care is the most searched political topic in [Montana](#) and has been every week since June 24.
- Health care has consistently been the most highly searched political topic in Montana for the vast majority of weeks since 2017.



### September 2018 - Public Policy Polling-POC Survey Shows Health Care To Be Significant Issue In Montana Senate Race. Among the poll's key findings:

- [Fifty-six percent](#) of voters say health care is the most important or a very important issue for them this election.
- By a 20 point margin, 56-36, Montana voters oppose Republican efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act and instead want to keep what works and fix what doesn't.
- Fifty-one percent of voters say the elimination of protections for people with pre-existing conditions, supported by Matt Rosendale, is "a major concern."



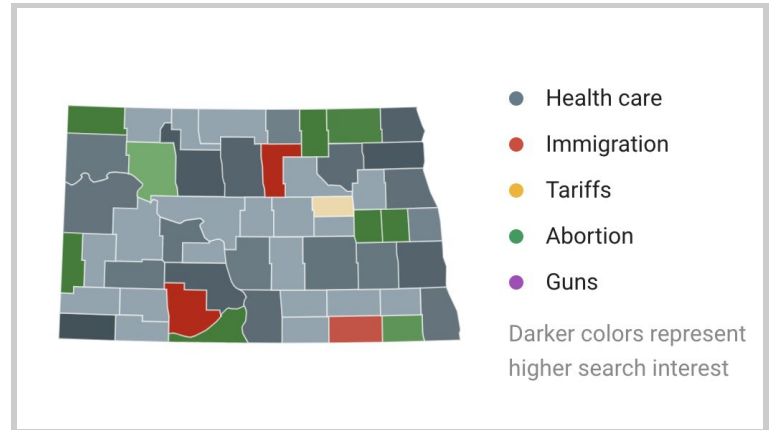
- Montana voters oppose the Trump administration's lawsuit to eliminate protections for people with pre-existing conditions by a 49 point margin, 65 percent to 16 percent. A majority of Republicans (51 percent) oppose the administration's lawsuit.
- The survey finds Tester with a strong four point lead over Rosendale (49-45) similar to other surveys which have consistently shown Tester ahead. Six percent of respondents were undecided.

## North Dakota - U.S. Senate

**Health Care Is By Far The Most Mentioned Issue In North Dakota Political Advertisements.** According to the [Wesleyan Media Project](#), 31 percent of North Dakota's more than 10,000 political advertisements in September were on the topic of health care. Health care had a 22 percentage point lead on the next most mentioned topic — immigration, which was mentioned in 9 percent of advertisements.

### Google Trends Show That Health Care Is Most Searched Issue In North Dakota:

- Health care is the most searched political topic in [North Dakota](#) and has been every week since June 24.
- Health care has consistently been the most highly searched political topic in North Dakota for the vast majority of weeks since 2017.



### October 2018 - Change Research-POC Poll Shows North Dakotans Concerned About Health Care In Senate Race.

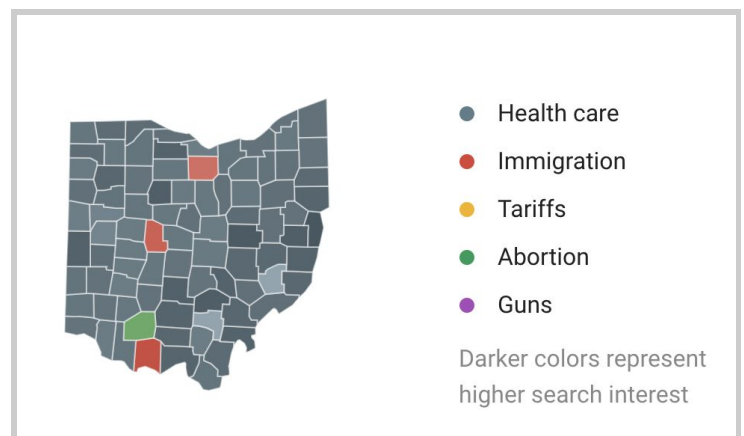
A poll conducted by Change Research for Protect Our Care shows sixty percent of voters strongly oppose the Trump-GOP lawsuit to eliminate protections for pre-existing conditions and fifty-two percent say health care is very important to them in the midterms. Kevin Cramer's health care record worries voters: sixty-one percent of voters have a major concern with Cramer's vote to repeal the ACA and allow insurance companies to charge an age tax for people 50 and older, and fifty-three percent of voters have a major concern with Cramer's vote to repeal the ACA and undermine protections for people with pre-existing condition. [Change Research, [10/8/18](#)]

## Ohio - OH-12 & OH-14

**Health Care Is By Far The Most Mentioned Issue In Ohio Political Advertisements.** According to the [Wesleyan Media Project](#), 47 percent of Ohio's more than 11,000 political advertisements in September were on the topic of health care. Health care had a 26 percentage point lead on the next most mentioned topic — taxes, which were mentioned in 21 percent of advertisements.

### Google Trends Show that Searches for Health Care Dominate Across Ohio— Including in OH-12 and OH-14

- Data from [Google Analytics](#) show that health care is the most searched election-related issue in Ohio.
- In OH-12, health care is far and away the top issue in searches, with the next most popular issue, immigration, trailing by 17-30 percentage points in Delaware, Monroe and Licking counties.



- In OH-14, health care is also the top issue by a 23-34 percentage point spread in Ashtabula, Lake and Geauga counties.

#### September 2018 - PPP-Protect Our Care Poll OH-12 Finds Health Care To Be Important Issue In Race

- Health care is an important issue to voters when deciding who to vote for. [61 percent](#) say it is either the most important issue or a very important issue when deciding who to vote for.
- Ohioans are very concerned about the possible consequences of repealing the ACA. 59 percent of voters think charging people over 50 years old, five times more than younger people for health insurance is a major concern. Eliminating protections for people with pre-existing conditions is a major concern for 64 percent of voters.
- 64 percent oppose the Trump administration lawsuit to eliminate the health care law's protections for people with pre-existing conditions, including a 46 percent plurality of Republicans.

#### September 2018 - PPP-Protect Our Care Poll OH-14 Finds Health Care To Be Important Issue In Race

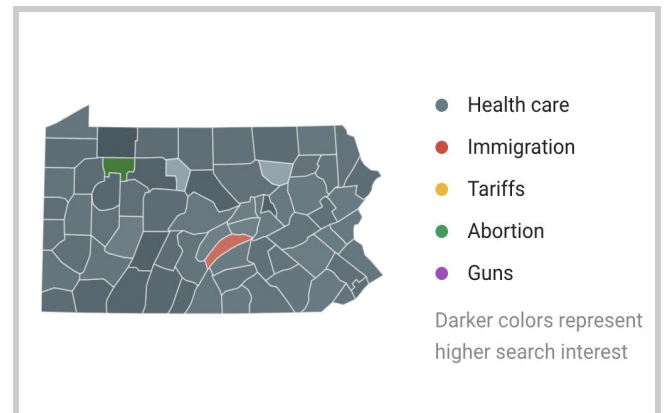
- Health care is an important issue to voters when deciding who to vote for. [64 percent](#) say it is either the most important issue or a very important issue when deciding who to vote for.
- Ohioans are very concerned about the possible consequences of repealing the ACA. 65 percent of voters think charging people over 50 years old, five times more than younger people for health insurance is a major concern. Eliminating protections for people with pre-existing conditions is a major concern for 60 percent of voters.
- 63 percent oppose the Trump administration lawsuit to eliminate the health care law's protections for people with pre-existing conditions, including a 51 percent majority of Republicans.

## Pennsylvania - PA-10, PA-16, & PA-17

**Health Care Is Mentioned In 33 Percent Of Pennsylvania Political Advertisements.** According to the [Wesleyan Media Project](#), 33 percent of Pennsylvania's more than 14,000 political advertisements in September were on the topic of health care. Health care and taxes were tied for being mentioned in the most advertisements.

#### Google Trends Show that Searches for Health Care Dominate Across Pennsylvania — Including in PA-10, PA-16 and PA-17

- Across the state, health care is the [most highly searched](#) election related issue.
- In almost every Pennsylvania county, health care is the top issue search by double digits.
- Health care has been the most highly searched political topic in Pennsylvania for almost every week since January, 2017.



#### September 2018 - PPP-Protect Our Care Poll PA-10 Finds Health Care To Be Important Issue In Race

- Health care is an important issue to voters when deciding who to vote for. [56 percent](#) say it is either the most important issue or a very important issue when deciding who to vote for.
- Pennsylvanians are very concerned about the possible consequences of repealing the ACA. 62 percent of voters think charging people over 50 years old, five times more than younger people for health insurance is a major concern. Eliminating protections for people with pre-existing conditions is a major concern for 57 percent of voters.

- 57 percent oppose the Trump administration lawsuit to eliminate the health care law's protections for people with pre-existing conditions, including a 42 percent plurality of Republicans. Pennsylvanians are also less likely to vote for Republicans who stayed silent on this lawsuit. A plurality of voters (42 percent) say they are less likely to vote for Congressman Perry because of his silence on the lawsuit.

#### September 2018 - PPP-Protect Our Care Poll PA-16 Finds Health Care To Be Important Issue In Race

- Health care is a very important issue to voters when deciding who to vote for. [58 percent](#) say it is either the most important issue or a very important issue when deciding who to vote for.
- Pennsylvanians are very concerned about the possible consequences of repealing the ACA. 60 percent of voters think charging people over 50 years old, five times more than younger people for health insurance is a major concern. Eliminating protections for people with pre-existing conditions is a major concern for 62 percent of voters.
- 57 percent oppose the Trump administration lawsuit to eliminate the health care law's protections for people with pre-existing conditions, including a 41 percent plurality of Republicans. Pennsylvanians are also less likely to vote for Republicans who stayed silent on this lawsuit. A plurality of voters (42 percent) say they are less likely to vote for Congressman Kelly because of his silence on the lawsuit.

#### September 2018 - PPP-Protect Our Care Poll PA-17 Finds Health Care To Be Important Issue In Race

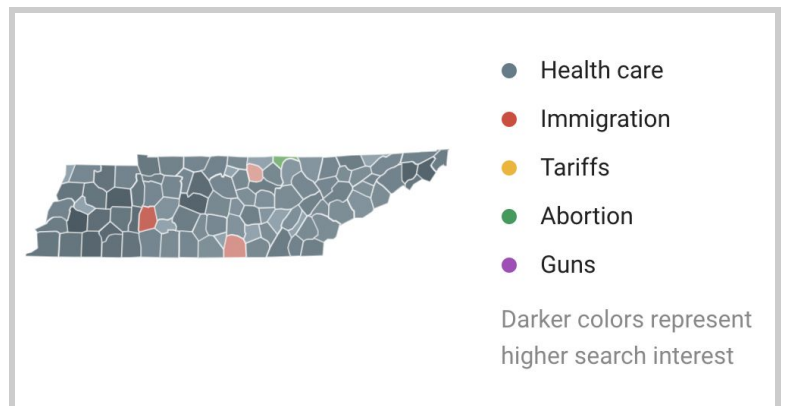
- Health care is a very important issue to voters when deciding who to vote for. [60 percent](#) say it is either the most important issue or a very important issue when deciding who to vote for.
- Pennsylvanians are very concerned about the possible consequences of repealing the ACA. 62 percent of voters think charging people over 50 years old, five times more than younger people for health insurance is a major concern. Eliminating protections for people with pre-existing conditions is a major concern for 63 percent of voters.
- 68 percent oppose the Trump administration lawsuit to eliminate the health care law's protections for people with pre-existing conditions, including a 54 percent majority of Republicans. Pennsylvanians are also less likely to vote for Republicans who stayed silent on this lawsuit. A plurality of voters (47 percent) say they are less likely to vote for Congressman Rothfus because of his silence on the lawsuit.

## Tennessee - U.S. Senate

**Health Care Is Mentioned In 26 Percent Of Tennessee Political Advertisements.** According to the [Wesleyan Media Project](#), 26 percent of Tennessee's more than 21,000 political advertisements in September were on the topic of health care.

#### Google Trends Show that Searches for Health Care Dominate Across Tennessee

- Data from [Google Analytics](#) reveals health care to be the topic most searched in relation to the midterms.
- In almost all Tennessee counties, health care is the top political issue search.
- Health care has consistently been the most highly searched political topic in Tennessee for almost every week since July 2018.



**September 2018: CNN Poll Shows Health Care To Be Top Issue In Tennessee.** "Health care tops the list of voters' most important issues in both states, with 29% calling it

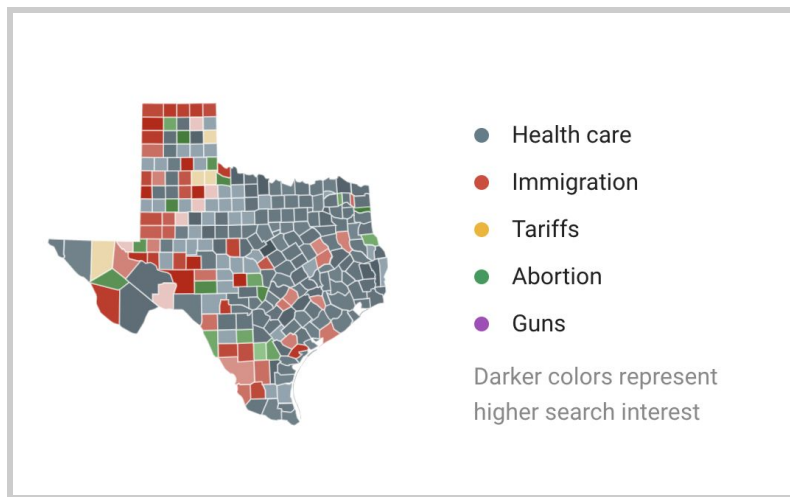
tops in their Senate vote in Tennessee and 25% saying the same in Arizona. The economy follows in Tennessee at 22%, immigration lands third at 16%...Voters who say health care is their top issue are broadly supportive of the Democrat in both contests, breaking for Bredesen over Blackburn by 71% to 21%." [CNN, [9/17/18](#)]

## Texas - U.S. Senate, TX-07 & TX-32

**Health Care Is The Most Mentioned Issue In Texas Political Advertisements.** According to the [Wesleyan Media Project](#), 20 percent of Texas's more than 24,000 political advertisements in September were on the topic of health care. Health care had a four percentage point lead over the next most mentioned topic — immigration, which was mentioned in 16 percent of advertisements.

### Google Trends Show that Searches for Health Care Dominate Across Texas — Including in TX-07 and TX-32

- Since July, health care has been the [dominant](#) issue in election related searches in Texas.
- In Dallas County (TX-32), 50 percent of all issue searches were on health care; the next highest immigration (29 percent).
- In Harris County (TX-07), 43 percent of all issue searches were on health care; the next highest was immigration (34 percent).



### September 2018 - PPP-Protect Our Care Texas Senate Poll Finds Health Care To Be Important Issue In Race

- [Sixty-two percent](#) of voters say health care is the most important or a very important issue for them this election.
- Sixty-two percent of voters say the elimination of protections for people with pre-existing conditions, supported by Ted Cruz, is “a major concern.”
- Texas voters oppose the Texas attorney general and Trump administration’s lawsuit to eliminate protections for people with pre-existing conditions by a 40 point margin, 59 percent to 19 percent.
- Sixty percent of voters say the “Age Tax” supported by Ted Cruz is “a major concern.”
- Nearly half (49 percent) of Texas voters oppose repealing the Affordable Care Act and instead want to keep what works and fix what doesn’t.
- The survey finds Cruz and O’Rourke in a dead heat, with 48 percent of voters supporting Cruz, 45 percent supporting O’Rourke and eight percent undecided.

### September 2018 - PPP-Protect Our Care Poll in TX-07 Finds Health Care To Be Important Issue In Race

- Health care is a very important issue to voters when deciding who to vote for. [65 percent](#) say it is either the most important issue or a very important issue when deciding who to vote for.
- Texans are very concerned about the possible consequences of repealing the ACA. 58 percent of voters think charging people over 50 years old, five times more than younger people for health insurance is a major concern. Eliminating protections for people with pre-existing conditions is a major concern for 61 percent of voters.
- In a preview of the November election, Democrat Lizzie Pannill Fletcher holds a slight lead over Republican John Culberson, 47-45.

## September 2018 - PPP-Protect Our Care Poll in TX-32 Finds Health Care To Be Important Issue In Race

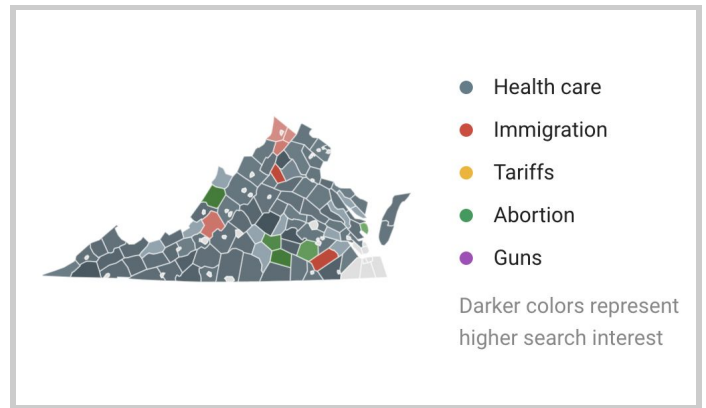
- Health care is a very important issue to voters when deciding who to vote for. [66 percent](#) say it is either the most important issue or a very important issue when deciding who to vote for.
- Texans are very concerned about the possible consequences of repealing the ACA. 58 percent of voters think charging people over 50 years old, five times more than younger people for health insurance is a major concern. Eliminating protections for people with pre-existing conditions is a major concern for 61 percent of voters.
- In a preview of the November election, Democrat Colin Allred has a lead over Republican Pete Sessions, 47-42.

## Virginia - VA-07

**Health Care Is Mentioned In 28 Percent Of Virginia Political Advertisements.** According to the [Wesleyan Media Project](#), 28 percent of Virginia's more than 18,000 political advertisements in September were on the topic of health care.

### Google Trends Show that Searches for Health Care Dominate Across Virginia — Including in VA-07

- Data from [Google Analytics](#) reveals health care to be the topic most searched in relation to the midterms.
- In the vast majority of Virginia counties, health care is the top issue search.
- Health care has consistently been the most highly searched political topic in Virginia for almost every week since July 8, 2018.



## September 2018 - PPP-Protect Our Care Poll in VA-07 Finds Health Care To Be Important Issue In Race

- Health care is a very important issue to voters when deciding who to vote for. [60 percent](#) say it is either the most important issue or a very important issue when deciding who to vote for.
- Virginians are very concerned about the possible consequences of repealing the ACA. 62 percent of voters think charging people over 50 years old, five times more than younger people for health insurance is a major concern. Eliminating protections for people with pre-existing conditions is a major concern for 63 percent of voters.
- 59 percent oppose the Trump administration's lawsuit to overturn protections for people with pre-existing conditions, including nearly half (49 percent) of Republicans. Virginians are also less likely to vote for Republicans who stayed silent on this lawsuit. A plurality of voters (42 percent) say they are less likely to vote for Congressman Brat because of his silence on the lawsuit.

## Conclusion: November Is A Health Care Election

Public polls, Google Trends, and analysis of advertising has painted a clear picture: health care is *the* issue of this year's midterm elections. Voters overwhelmingly trust Democrats over Republicans on the issue, and advertising shows that this trend has not gone unnoticed — 50 percent of Democratic advertising is on health care, and Republican incumbents have taken to scrubbing their websites to soften their language about the Affordable Care Act.

Though other issues of interest come and go, health care is the single issue that has remained a constant in voters' mind. Mounting evidence suggests that when voters head to the polls this November, they will be voting on health care.