Winning on Healthcare in 2019:
How Democrats can build on their success in last year’s Healthcare Election

Key findings from a survey among 1,002 voters nationwide
Conducted January 8 to 11, 2019
Healthcare was by far the top voting issue in 2018.

Which two of the following issues were the most important to you in deciding how to vote for Congress this past November?

Healthcare voters (Party ID: +35 D) supported Democrats for Congress by 70% to 28% (+42 D).
Majorities of voters across party lines said healthcare was a top consideration in their vote.

In deciding who to vote for in the elections for Congress this past November, how important to you were the candidates’ stances on healthcare, compared with other issues?
The salience of healthcare has not receded post-election.

Of all the issues Congress might address this year, how big a priority do you think Congress should put on addressing the issue of healthcare?

- Number-one priority: 59%
- A top priority: 71%
- Somewhat of a priority: 25%
- Low priority: 12%

[Breakdown by party]
- Democrats: 82%
- Independents: 65%
- Republicans: 59%
Democrats are more trusted on healthcare than either President Trump or Republicans in Congress.

Who do you trust more on dealing with the issue of healthcare?
While a plurality believe Trump is actively trying to sabotage health care, the number has declined slightly, pointing to a need to get it back on voters' radar screen.

- 16% He is doing what he can to implement the Affordable Care Act and help make it work as intended
- 21% He is not taking any action to help make the Affordable Care Act work, but he is not actively trying to sabotage it to make it fail
- 47% He is actively trying to sabotage the Affordable Care Act, and doing things to make it more likely that it will fail
- 14% Do not know enough to say

June 2018:
- 16% Don't know
- 21% Active sabotage
- 47% Implement

January 2019:
- 16% Don't know
- 21% Active sabotage
- 42% Implement
On a top-of-mind basis, voters say the priority for Congress should be making healthcare more affordable.

What would you like to see Congress do on the issue of healthcare? What specific aspects of healthcare do you think are most important for Congress to address?

- Make healthcare affordable for all, less expensive, lower cost: 36%
- Lower drug costs, overpriced drugs: 12%
- Make sure healthcare is accessible to all: 7%
- Protect ACA, Obamacare; improve ACA: 6%
- Repeal ACA, Obamacare; start over: 7%
Lowering costs (including Rx) is the top volunteered priority across party lines.

What, specifically, would you like to see Congress do on the issue of healthcare?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Independents</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare affordable for all Americans, less expensive</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower drug costs, overpriced pharmaceuticals</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End ACA, Obamacare; repeal Obamacare and start fresh</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make sure everyone has access to healthcare</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect ACA, fight to keep Obamacare, make it better, improve it, fine tune the ACA</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect coverage of preexisting conditions</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better coverage, more coverage, expand the coverage</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free healthcare for all Americans</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal healthcare for all</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When given a list, expanding coverage is the top priority for most Democrats, while independents and Republicans focus more on reducing health insurance costs.

My two top healthcare priorities for Congress:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>All voters</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Independents</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduce health insurance premiums and out-of-pocket costs</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crack down on excessive drug prices</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect people who have preexisting medical conditions</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand insurance coverage so more Americans are covered</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the quality of healthcare people receive</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand medical research for new cures and treatments</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For this year, Democratic voters’ focus is on improving or expanding the ACA rather than passing a new healthcare law.

Which one of these would you like to see Congress do this year about the Affordable Care Act?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
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<th>Democrats</th>
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<th>Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keep the current law in place, with changes to make it work better</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand the current law to provide more coverage under Medicare, Medicaid, and other public programs</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass a new healthcare law, like Medicare for All, that would provide universal coverage for all Americans</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeal the current law, and replace it with a system that relies more on the free market, with less government involvement</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL KEEP/EXPAND CURRENT LAW</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
And their immediate preference is for Democrats in Congress to pass concrete steps to improve healthcare.

Which one of the following, if either, do you think Democrats in Congress should focus more on this year?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work to reduce excessive drug prices, protect people with preexisting conditions, and stop efforts by the Trump administration to roll back coverage under the current healthcare law</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance proposals for major changes in the health insurance system to achieve universal health insurance coverage for all Americans</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither of these</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Democrats:
- 56% reduce drug prices, etc.
- 40% major changes

For the longer term, when Democrats are asked to choose between these alternatives, they are evenly split:
- Building on current private health insurance system by providing new government-run options: 44%
- Replacing the current for-profit private healthcare system with a new government-run Medicare-for-All program: 44%
A majority of voters say government should play a bigger role in the healthcare system and providing coverage.

Compared with its current role, do you think government should play a bigger role, a smaller role, or about the same role as now in the healthcare system/providing health insurance coverage?
Democrats have the political high ground in the debate over junk plans.

**Who would you agree with more on the issue of healthcare?**

**Democrats** who want to make sure that insurance companies actually provide the coverage you need when you get sick and require insurance companies to cover people with preexisting conditions

- **Democrats**: 93%
- **Independents**: 60%
- **Republicans**: 82%

**Republicans** who want to lower the cost of your healthcare by eliminating requirements that you pay for more insurance coverage than you want or need

- **Democrats**: 58%
- **Independents**: 40%
- **Republicans**: 18%
Insurance and drug companies are primary targets of the blame for rising healthcare costs; among political actors, Trump/Republicans get more blame than Democrats.

If my healthcare premiums and copays go up this year, it is more the fault of:

| Health insurance companies and drug companies who are raising prices to increase their profits | 44% |
| President Trump and Republicans who have been actively working to undermine and sabotage the Affordable Care Act | 32% |
| Democrats who wrote the Affordable Care Act, known as Obamacare | 24% |

| Democrats | 43% |
| Independents | 48% |
| Republicans | 43% |
Most favored Democratic healthcare policies focus on consumer protections and drug costs.

Consumer protections to lower costs:

- Stop health insurance companies from selling junk health insurance plans that do not provide coverage for essential medical treatments and drugs or plans that discriminate against people with preexisting medical conditions

- Stop surprise medical bills that include unexpected charges by prohibiting insurance companies from charging higher out-of-network rates for services when a patient goes to an in-network hospital or medical practice

- Require all health insurance plans to fully cover more basic services before charging a deductible or copay, including more primary care and follow-up visits

Cracking down on excessive drug prices:

- Require drug companies to notify the government in advance when they plan to significantly raise drug prices and create a mechanism to identify and stop unjustified increases

- Require Medicare to negotiate directly with drug companies to get lower prices for prescription drugs

- Hold congressional hearings with drug company executives to stop abusive conduct and practices of drug companies in setting and raising the prices of prescription medicines

85% favor

84% favor

83% favor

84% favor

82% favor

79% favor
Democrats have potential to further grow their advantage on healthcare in 2019.

Who do you trust more on dealing with the issue of healthcare?

Democrats in Congress:
- Trust a lot more

Trump/Republicans in Congress:
- Trust a lot more

Democrats vs. Trump

Initial view
- Democrats: 50% (35% more)
- Trump/Republicans: 39% (25% more)

Informed view
- Democrats: 56% (41% more)
- Trump/Republicans: 32% (21% more)

Democrats vs. Republicans

Initial view
- Democrats: 51% (32% more)
- Trump/Republicans: 19% (15% more)

Informed view
- Democrats: 51% (32% more)
- Trump/Republicans: 17% (17% more)
Movers (toward trusting the Democrats) are especially fired up by their proposal to end junk plans.

Movers toward Trusting Democrats:

- 63% are Trump voters (two-thirds of whom do not strongly approve of Trump on healthcare)
- 72% are non-college educated (58% overall), including 38% with a high school degree or less (30% overall)
  - 29% are white non-college educated women (20% overall)
- Four in 10 (39%) say the healthcare system does not work either for themselves or for most Americans (33% overall)
- 40% live in small towns or rural areas (26% overall)
- 51% make $40,000/year or less (41% overall)
- 19% are uninsured (9% overall)

Top Democratic Proposals among Movers:

- **Stop health insurance companies from selling junk health insurance plans** that do not provide coverage for essential medical treatments and drugs or plans that discriminate against people with preexisting medical conditions (67% very favorable)
- **Stop surprise medical bills** that include unexpected charges by prohibiting insurance companies from charging higher out-of-network rates for services when a patient goes to an in-network hospital or medical practice (61% very favorable)
- **Hold congressional hearings with drug company executives to stop abusive conduct** and practices of drug companies in setting and raising the prices of prescription medicines (60% very favorable)
- **Require drug companies to notify the government** in advance when they plan to significantly raise drug prices and create a mechanism to identify and stop unjustified increases (60% very favorable)
- **Require all health insurance plans to fully cover more basic services** before charging a deductible or copay, including more primary care and follow-up visits (59% very favorable)
Most convincing Democratic healthcare messages for both the base and movers:

- Democrats believe that healthcare is a right and not a privilege, and think all Americans should have a right to quality, affordable healthcare.

- Democrats understand that the rising cost of healthcare is a huge financial burden on American families today and a major cause of economic stress, and they are taking action to reduce excessive healthcare costs and make healthcare more affordable.

- Now that Democrats are in the majority in the House of Representatives, they will use their oversight authority to hold drug companies and insurance companies accountable for shady practices that jack up costs and reduce people’s access to needed care.

- Democrats know there are common-sense things we can do right now to address the high cost of healthcare, and they want to work in a bipartisan way with Republicans to get them done this year.

- Democrats are committed to protecting Medicare for older Americans, and will oppose efforts to privatize Medicare or cut Medicare benefits.