

# United for Action: Americans' Agenda for Healthcare

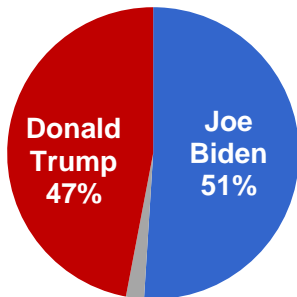
*Key findings from a national survey among 1,201 voters  
Conducted January 25 to 27, 2021 for Protect Our Care*

PROTECT  
OUR CARE

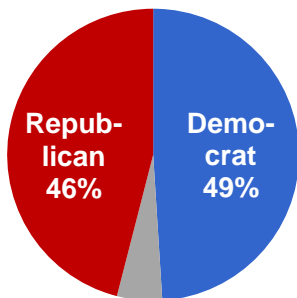
**HART**  
**RESEARCH**  
ASSOCIATES

# Composition of the Sample

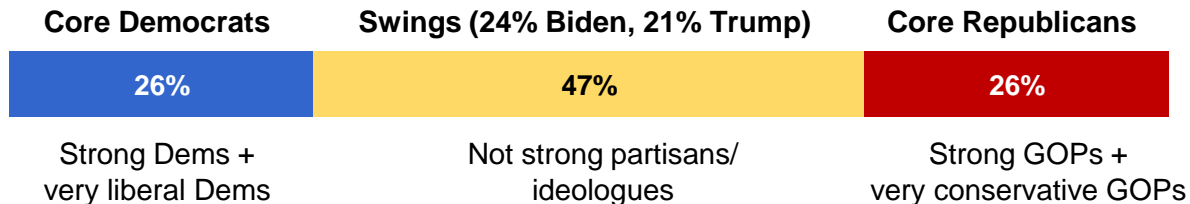
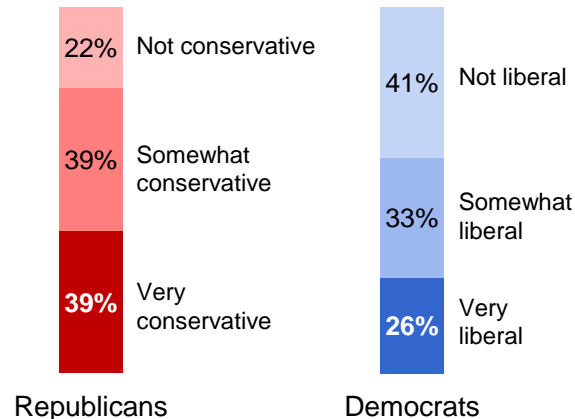
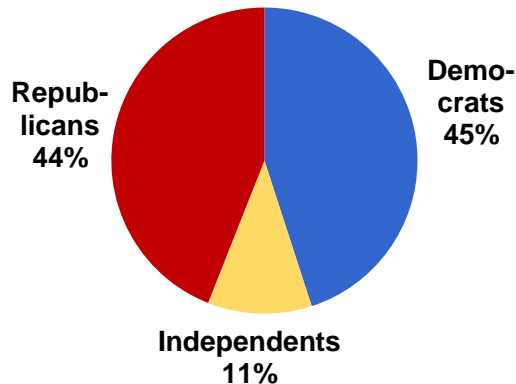
Vote for President



Vote for U.S. House



Party ID



# Key Takeaways

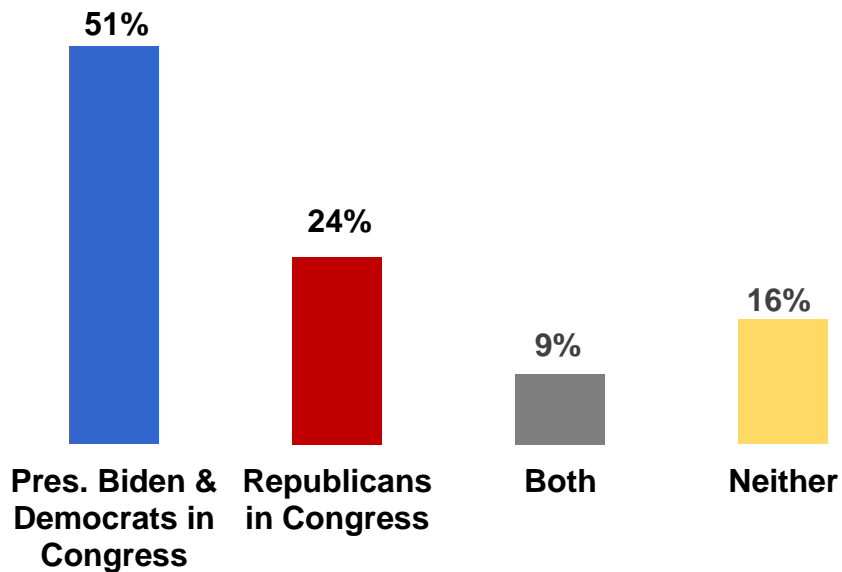
- Lowering healthcare costs and making insurance more affordable for more people stand clearly at the top of voters' priorities for the President and Congress once the COVID rescue plan passes.
- Large bipartisan majorities say that high healthcare costs and people losing coverage are big problems in the country today.
- The top item on the healthcare agenda is stopping excessive drug prices by giving Medicare the power to negotiate with drug companies, and there is large majority support for other Democratic healthcare policies.
- President Biden and Democrats are more trusted than Republicans on healthcare issues, and many voters who supported Republicans in 2020 say they are more likely to vote Democratic in 2022 if Democrats deliver on healthcare.
- Voters want Democrats to focus on doing as much as possible to lower healthcare costs and expand coverage, even if Republicans won't support it.
- Voters recognize that the COVID crisis exposed weaknesses and inequities in our healthcare system, and there is power in framing a health policy agenda around the serious healthcare issues raised by the pandemic.

# COVID RESCUE

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# By a 2-to-1 margin, President Biden and the Democrats are more trusted than the Republicans on dealing with COVID.

*Who do you trust more to have the better approach in dealing with the coronavirus pandemic?*

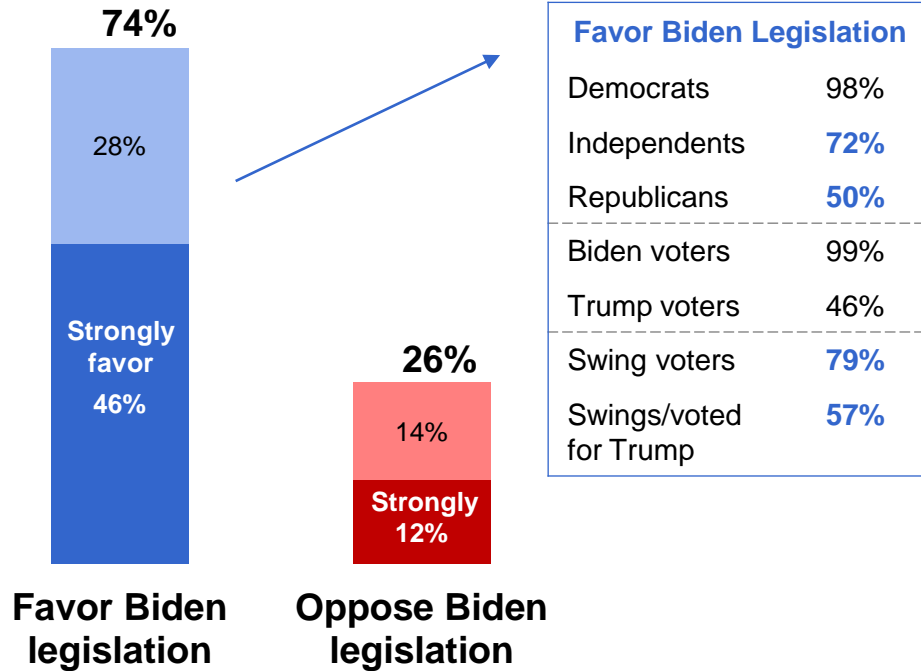


	Biden/ Democrats	Repub- licans
Democrats	89%	1%
Independents	52%	14%
Republicans	12%	51%
Swing voters	52%	17%
Whites	42%	30%
Blacks	81%	5%
Latinx	76%	13%

*Without tie to Biden, Democrats are more trusted than Republicans by a slightly smaller margin (44% to 25%, with 16% trusting both equally).*

# Voters overwhelmingly support President Biden’s coronavirus relief package after reading all its elements.

*Support for President Biden’s Proposed Legislation to Address the Coronavirus Pandemic\**



Favor Biden Legislation	
Democrats	98%
Independents	72%
Republicans	50%
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Biden voters	99%
Trump voters	46%
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Swing voters	79%
Swings/voted for Trump	57%

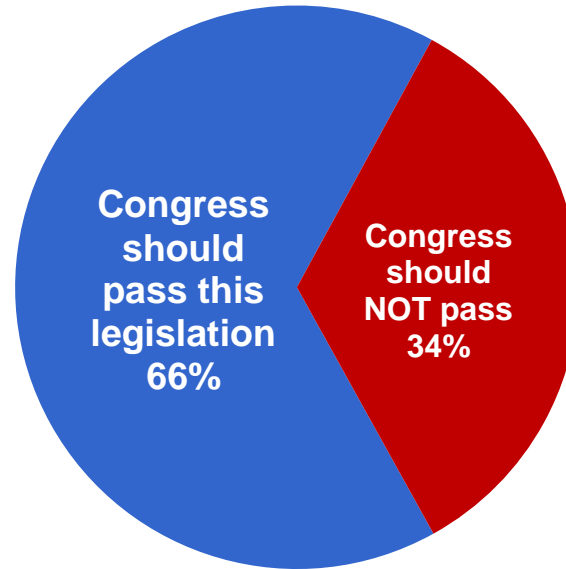
\* Provisions outlined prior to question:

- \$1,400 in economic stimulus payments to individuals, in addition to the \$600 passed in December
- Funding to expand vaccine distribution and increase COVID-19 testing
- Funding to help schools reopen safely
- Funding to help people afford health insurance if they lost their job or employer health coverage
- Funding to support state and local governments in dealing with the pandemic
- Emergency paid leave for parents
- Continuing unemployment insurance through Sept. for people who lost jobs because of pandemic, incl. self-employed & gig workers
- Expansion of the child tax credit for low- and middle-income families
- Increased food and nutrition assistance for low-income individuals, including infants and children
- Additional assistance for small businesses
- An increase in the minimum wage to \$15 per hour
- Emergency funding for local transit systems

# Even after pressure-testing against a hard-hitting criticism, two-thirds of voters continue to support the Biden COVID rescue package.

*Support for President Biden's Proposed Legislation after Arguments from Supporters and Opponents\**

Should Pass Legislation	
Democrats	96%
Independents	65%
Republicans	36%
Very conserv. GOPs	21%
Other GOPs	47%
Swing voters	<b>69%</b>
Whites	59%
Blacks	<b>95%</b>
Latinx	<b>81%</b>



\* **Supporters of President Biden's proposal** say it does what is most needed to (a) slow and stop the spread of the coronavirus, (b) provide help to Americans who have been the hardest hit by the coronavirus, and (c) speed our economic recovery and prevent deep and permanent damage to the economy. Supporters say that, at a time when the number of new COVID-19 cases and deaths are at record highs, strong action is essential now to get the pandemic under control and get the country back on the road to recovery.

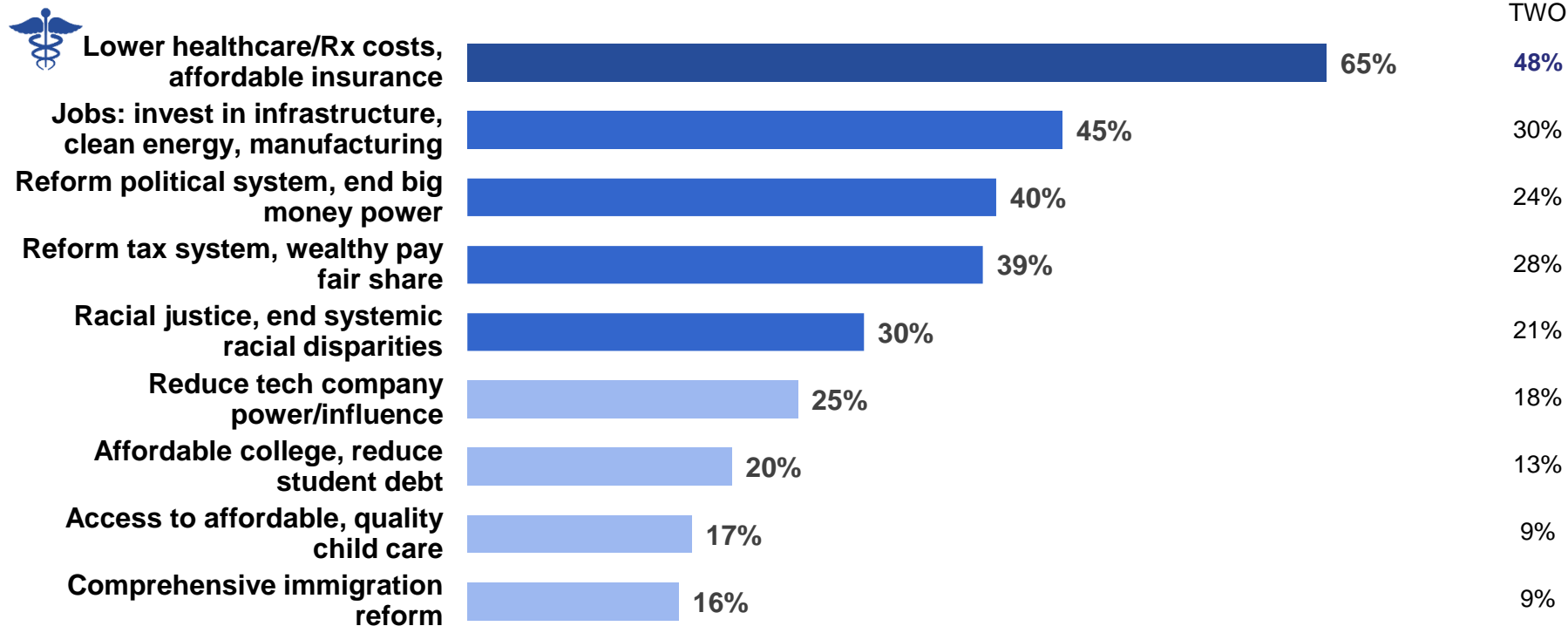
**Opponents of President Biden's proposal** say that the country already has spent \$4 trillion to address the coronavirus and we cannot afford another \$1.9 trillion that will put the country even deeper into debt. Opponents say Biden's plan isn't about combating COVID-19. It is a liberal wish list of items that should not be in a COVID-19 relief package.

# HEALTHCARE AGENDA



# After COVID is addressed, the dominant item on voters' agenda (*by far*) is lowering the cost of healthcare.

*Top THREE Most Important Issues for President and Congress this Year (after COVID)*

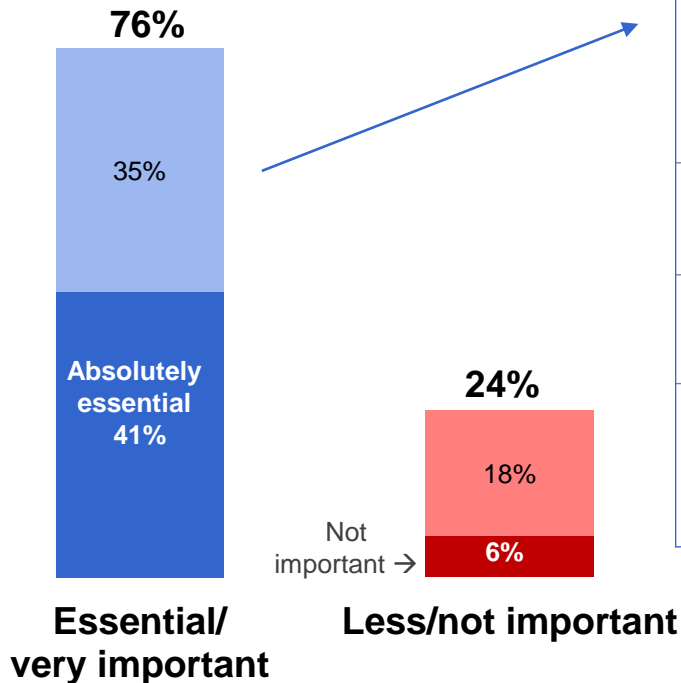


# Healthcare is the top issue priority across party lines.

<i>THREE Most Important Issues for President &amp; Congress</i>	All voters	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Swings	Senate battlegrounds	Whites	Blacks	Latinx
Lower healthcare/Rx costs, affordable insurance	65%	66%	57%	66%	64%	66%	67%	60%	60%
New jobs: invest in infrastructure, clean energy, manufacturing	45%	45%	48%	45%	51%	48%	45%	37%	47%
Reform political system, end big money power	40%	31%	36%	50%	38%	44%	45%	21%	32%
Reform tax system, wealthy pay fair share	39%	50%	40%	28%	42%	37%	38%	40%	43%
Racial justice, end systemic racial disparities	30%	48%	27%	12%	27%	25%	24%	61%	35%
Reduce tech company power/influence	25%	7%	28%	43%	20%	28%	30%	11%	14%
Affordable college, reduce student debt	20%	22%	26%	15%	23%	18%	17%	33%	28%
Access to affordable, quality child care	17%	18%	13%	17%	16%	13%	15%	22%	24%
Comprehensive immigration reform	16%	14%	20%	16%	16%	19%	15%	16%	18%

# There is urgency behind the issue, with three-quarters saying it is essential or very important that the President and Congress take action to lower healthcare costs this year.

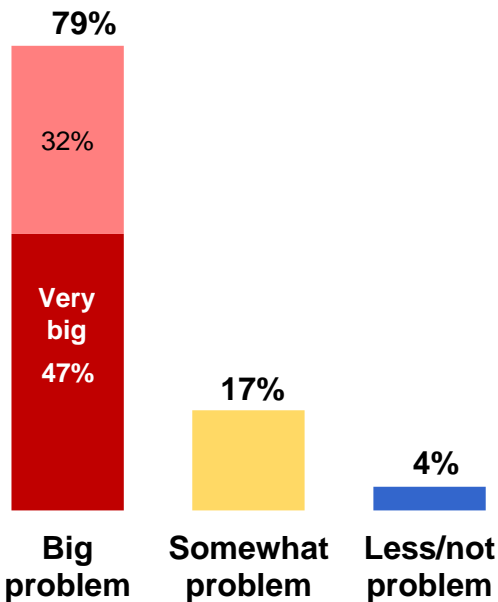
*How important is it for the president and Congress to pass legislation this year to lower the cost of healthcare and drugs and expand access to affordable health insurance?*



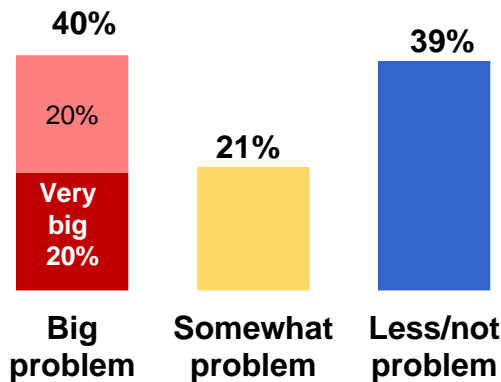
Essential/Very Important	
Democrats	93%
Independents	68%
Republicans	63%
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Swing voters	77%
Senate battlegrounds	76%
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Biden voters	92%
Trump voters	61%
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Whites	74%
Blacks	94%
Latinx	79%

# Four in five perceive healthcare costs to be a major problem in the country, and three in five say that healthcare costs are at least somewhat of a problem for them personally.

*High healthcare costs for most Americans*



*High healthcare costs for me personally*

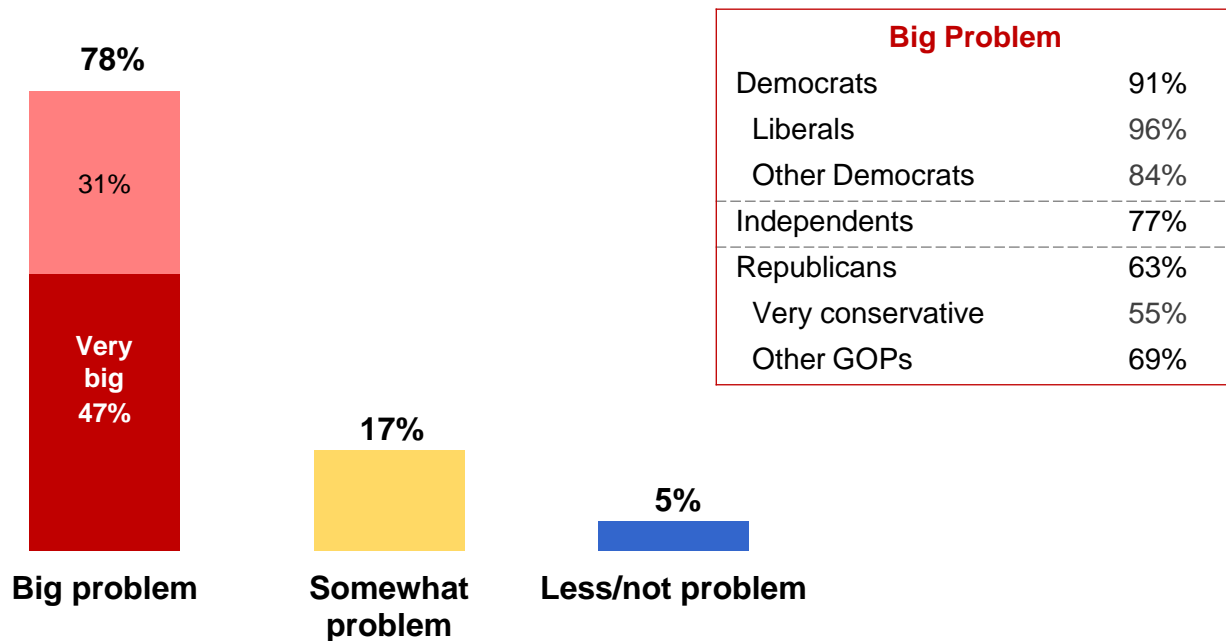


**Very/Fairly Big Problem**

Whites	37%
Blacks	48%
Latinx	49%
Age 18 to 34	47%
Age 35 to 64	42%
Age 65/older	28%
Purchase own healthcare	60%
Uninsured	62%

# In a similar vein, voters overwhelmingly think that a lack of access to affordable healthcare is a big problem.

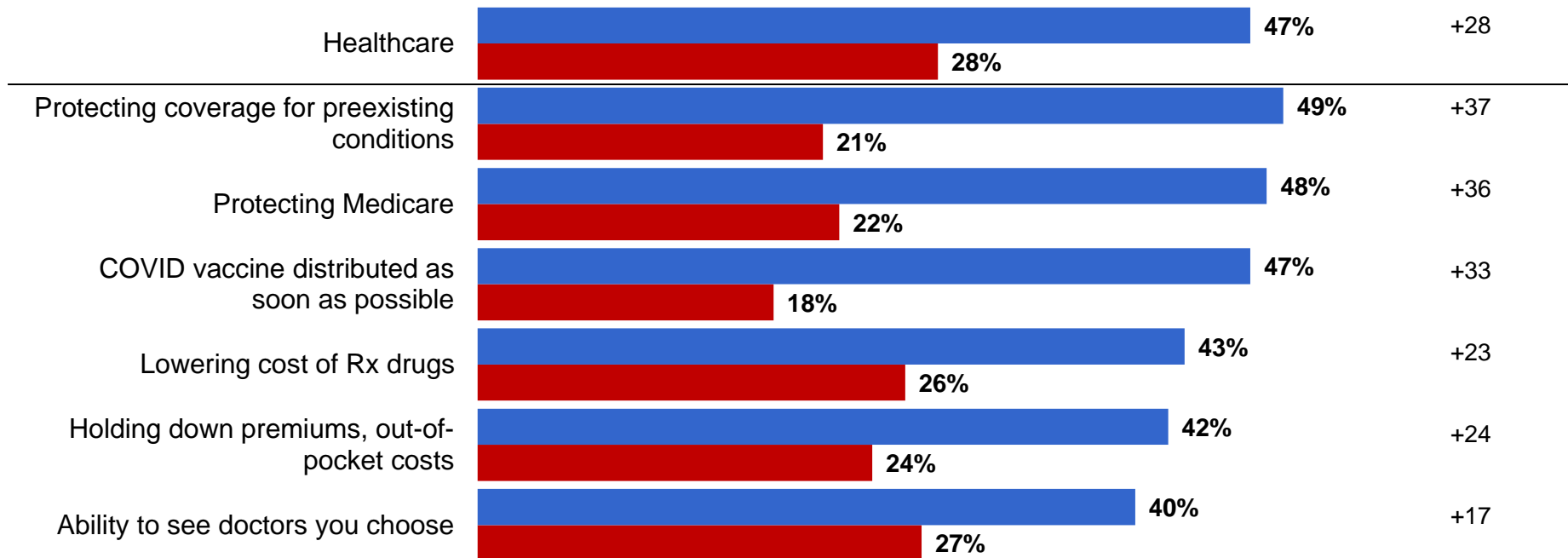
*People losing health insurance or not being able to afford insurance or healthcare*



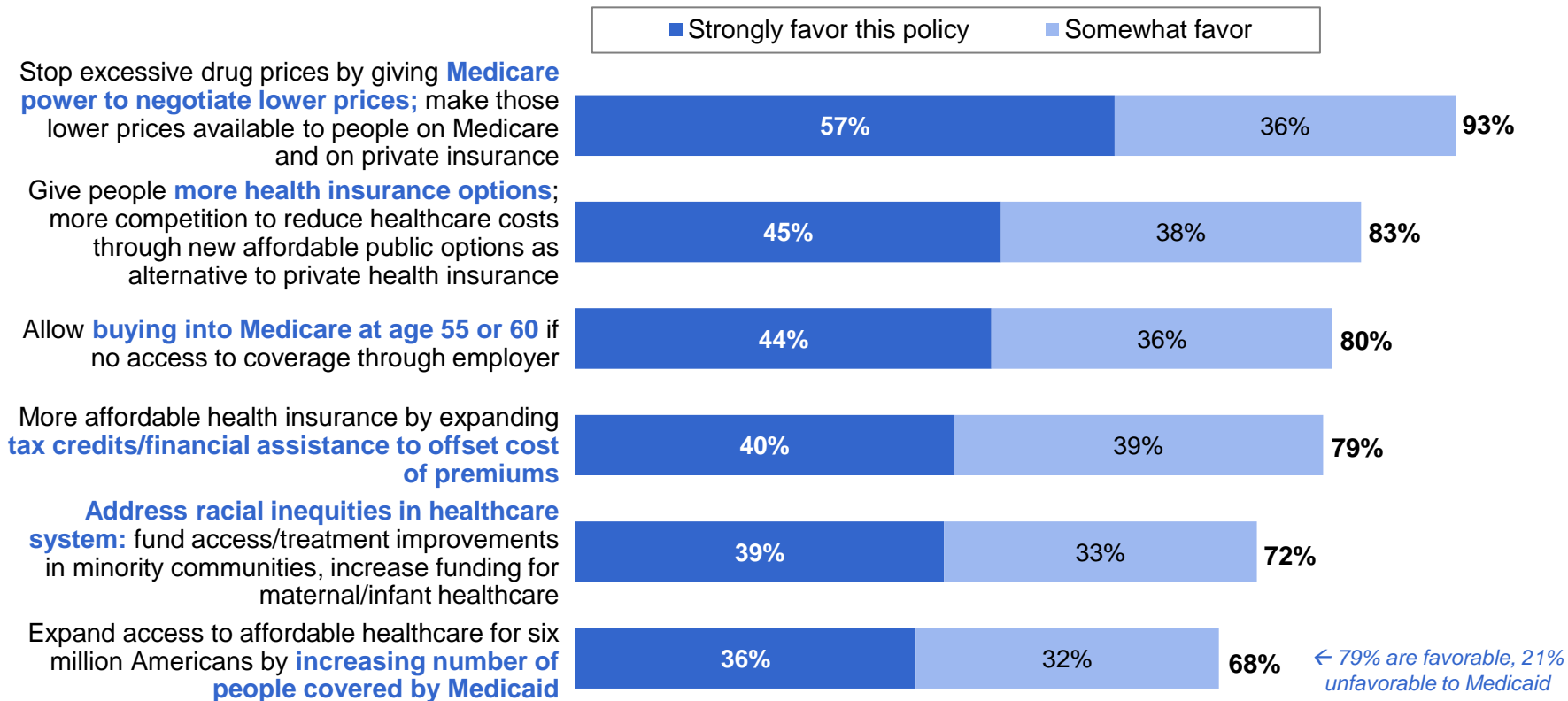
# On healthcare in general AND on specific aspects of healthcare, Biden and Democrats are more trusted than Republicans.

■ Trust Biden/Democrats in Congress more ■ Trust GOPs in Congress more

Swing voters: NET trust Biden/Dems



# There is broad support for several of the Democrats' healthcare policies, especially controlling drug prices.



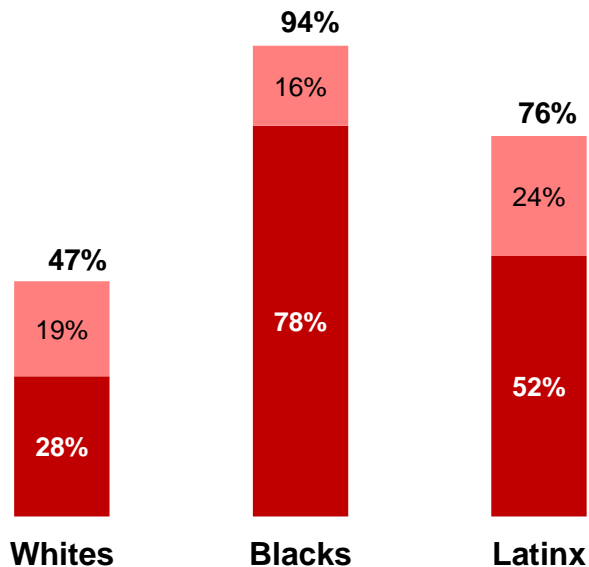
## These provisions garner large majority support across party lines, with Republicans overwhelmingly supportive of taking action to lower Rx costs.

	DEMOCRATS		INDEPENDENTS		REPUBLICANS	
	Total Favor	Strongly Favor	Total Favor	Strongly Favor	Total Favor	Strongly Favor
Stop excessive drug prices by giving <b>Medicare power to negotiate lower prices</b> ; make those lower prices available to people on Medicare and on private insurance	98%	70%	89%	54%	89%	45%
Give people <b>more health insurance options</b> ; more competition to reduce healthcare costs through new affordable public options as alternative to private health insurance	96%	61%	80%	45%	70%	29%
Allow <b>buying into Medicare at age 55 or 60</b> if no access to coverage through employer	94%	62%	78%	36%	66%	27%
More affordable health insurance by expanding <b>tax credits/financial assistance to offset cost of premiums</b>	93%	56%	71%	33%	67%	24%
<b>Address racial inequities in healthcare system</b> : fund access/treatment improvements in minority communities, increase funding for maternal/infant healthcare	93%	65%	65%	35%	54%	14%
Expand access to affordable healthcare for six million Americans by <b>increasing number of people covered by Medicaid</b>	93%	60%	65%	28%	45%	14%



# Voters of color perceive greater racial disparities in our healthcare system, and that is driving their issue priorities.

*Racial disparities in healthcare today*



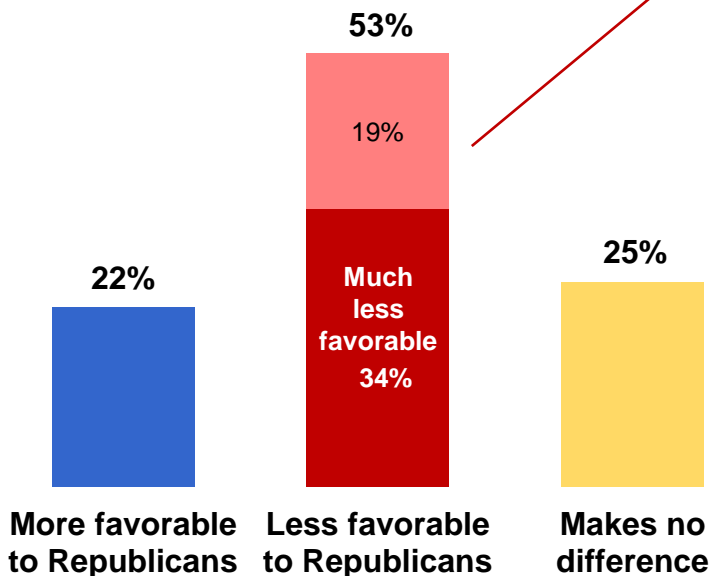
*Three most important healthcare policies*

	Whites	Blacks	Latinx
Stop excessive Rx prices	76%	49%	62%
More insurance options	60%	47%	58%
More affordable health insurance	57%	47%	44%
Allow buying into Medicare at age 55 or 60	43%	35%	44%
Address racial inequities in healthcare	27%	69%	45%
Increase number of people covered by Medicaid	29%	53%	47%

# There is a downside for Republicans in obstructing the Democrats' healthcare agenda *(and a warning sign for Democrats if they fail to deliver on healthcare this year).*

*Suppose most Republicans in Congress voted against the healthcare policies you have been looking at. How would it make you feel about Republicans in Congress?*

**55%** would be less favorable to Democrats if they fail to pass any significant healthcare legislation this year (13% more favorable, 32% no difference) – including **57% of swing voters**



Less Favorable to Republicans	
Democrats	75%
Independents	50%
Republicans	32%
- Very conservative	21%
- Other GOPs	38%
-----	
Swing voters	56%
Swings/voted Trump	37%
-----	
Whites	50%
Blacks	67%
Latinx	59%

# Two-thirds of voters – including almost half of Republicans – want Democrats to do the most possible to lower healthcare costs, even if they have few or no Republicans on board.

*Which approach do you want President Biden and the Democrats in Congress to take?*

Pass legislation that would **do the most possible** to lower healthcare costs and expand access to affordable health insurance, **even if very few—if any—Republicans vote for it.**



Pass legislation that would **be more bipartisan and attract more Republican support**, even if it does less to lower healthcare costs or expand access to affordable health insurance.



<b>Legislation that would do the most possible to lower costs and expand access</b>	Democrats	86%	Swing voters	<b>67%</b>	White men non-college grads	58%
	Independents	<b>68%</b>	Swings/voted Trump	<b>53%</b>	White men college grads	50%
	Republicans	44%	CNN/MSNBC viewers	88%	White women non-college grads	65%
	Very conserv.	35%	Fox News viewers	<b>53%</b>	White women college grads	63%
	Other GOPs	50%	Newsmax/OAN viewers	31%	Blacks	<b>90%</b>
			Non-cable news viewers	59%	Latinx	<b>78%</b>

# Voters largely see the amount drug companies charge as unreasonable, and a fight over Medicare price negotiations carries significant upside for Democratic candidates.

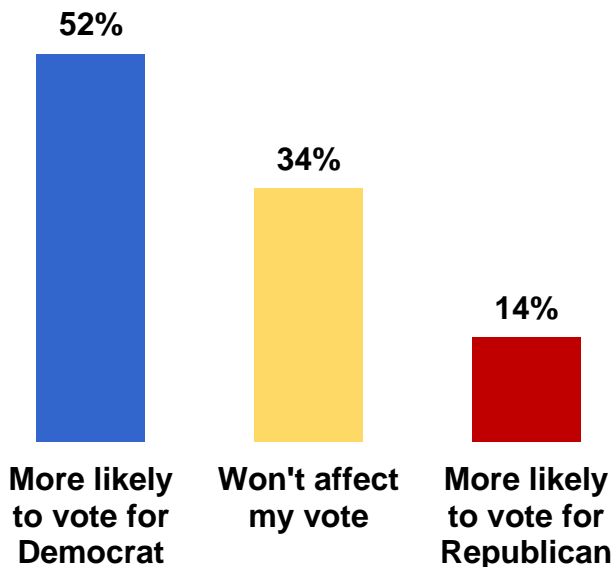
Suppose in the next election for Congress the *Democrat favors giving Medicare power to negotiate for lower drug prices* and the *Republican opposes this*: how would this affect your vote?



What pharma companies charge for Rx drugs:

21% reasonable

**79% unreasonable**  
(37% very unreasonable)

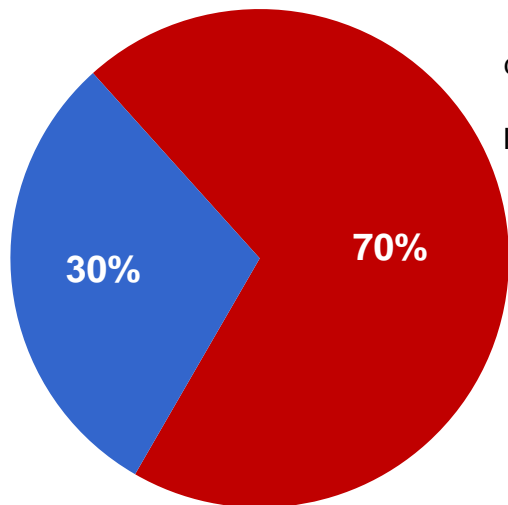


	More likely to vote for Democrat	Voted for Democrat in 2020
Independents	51%	44%
Republicans	23%	6%
Swing voters	58%	49%
Swings/voted Trump	32%	8%
Suburbs	54%	48%
Small town	45%	39%
Rural area	38%	31%
White men non-college grads	42%	29%

# The argument for making drug companies negotiate with Medicare far outweighs the argument against it.

*On the issue of drug prices, which do you agree with more?*

**Americans depend on the pharmaceutical industry to develop new cures and treatments** to save lives, just as it did in developing safe and effective coronavirus vaccines. Putting government price controls on medicines will reduce the ability of the drug companies to discover new life-saving cures and treatments for diseases such as Alzheimer's.

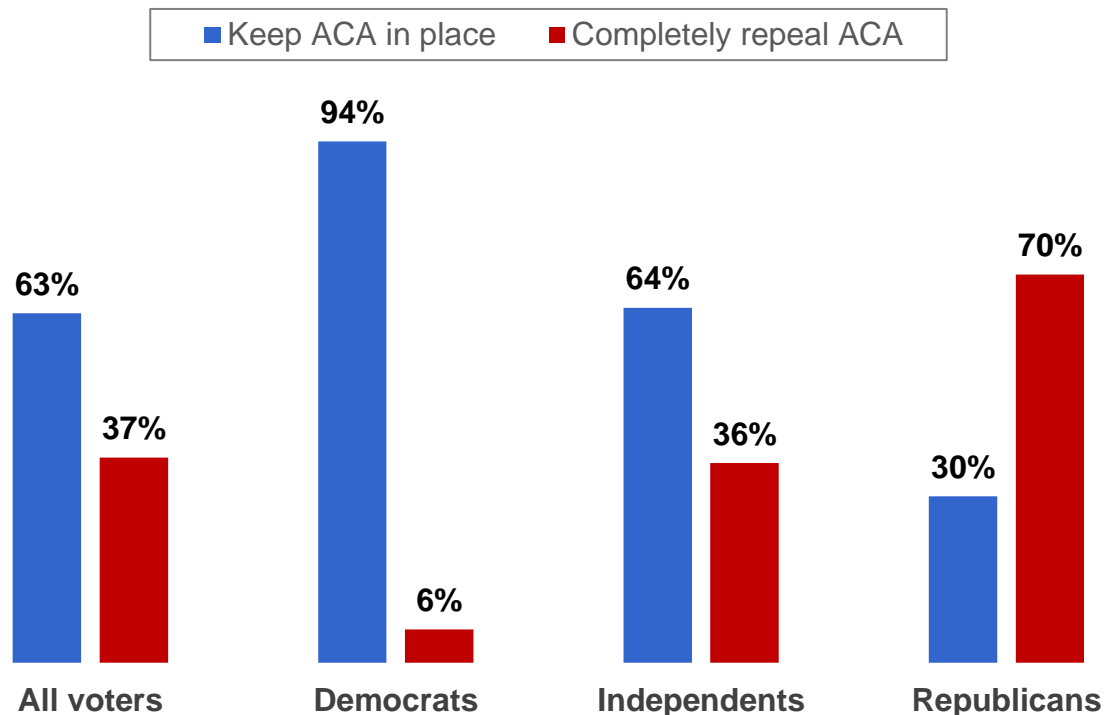


**Drug companies are making record profits by charging outrageous amounts** for medicines and constantly raising prices for drugs that people depend on. Far too many Americans cannot afford their prescriptions or go into debt to pay for them. Instead of letting drug companies charge whatever they want, we should make them negotiate with Medicare for fair prices.

Democrats	77%
Independents	77%
Republicans	61%
Very conserve.	58%
Other GOPs	63%
Swing voters	70%
Swings/voted Trump	62%

# The large majority of voters oppose the GOP lawsuit to overturn the ACA and want the law upheld.

*With the support of President Trump and Republicans in Congress, several Republican state attorneys general have filed a lawsuit to completely repeal the Affordable Care Act, which if successful would end protections for people with preexisting conditions and cause more than 20 million Americans to lose their health insurance. This case is now pending before the U.S. Supreme Court. What would you prefer for the ACA?*



# More than a quarter (27%) of all voters who did NOT vote for the Democrat for Congress in November are “gettable” on the basis of these two healthcare issues (*Rx costs and/or ACA expansion*).

*Profile of voters who voted Republican or did not vote in the election for U.S. Congress, but say they would be more likely to vote for a Democratic candidate based on their stance on Medicare drug price negotiations and/or ACA expansion\**

- Half (49%) are soft Republicans, while 22% are strong Republicans and 29% identify as Independents/Democrats.
  - 72% voted for Trump, but 20% voted for Biden (*compared to only 8% of all non-Democrat voters*). Half (52%) who voted for Trump did so with mixed feelings.
- They are evenly split on gender (49% male, 51% female) and 63% do not have college degrees. Half (49%) are in the suburbs, while 22% are in cities and 29% are in rural areas. Their age distribution looks like the electorate as a whole.
  - 79% identify as white (*compared to 87% of all non-Democrat voters*)
- 41% have a household income under \$50K (*compared to 36% of all non-Democrat voters*) and – more importantly – **44% say healthcare costs are a big problem for them personally** (*compared to 33% of all non-Democrat voters*)
- 53% do not watch cable news. Of those that do, 24% watch Fox News, 19% watch CNN/MSNBC, and only 4% watch Newsmax/OANN.