

TO: Protect Our Care
FROM: Geoff Garin and Guy Molyneux
DATE: February 28, 2023
RE: Fighting Republican Cuts to Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act

Our new national poll for Protect Our Care included several questions about Medicaid, as Republicans in Congress prepare to target Medicaid for deep cuts.

The poll shows there is widespread support for Medicaid among voters, as well as significant opposition to cuts in Medicaid funding. The case against the GOP's Medicaid cuts is strengthened by the fact that two-thirds of all families who have Medicaid coverage include at least one person who works full time, and without Medicaid they likely would be uninsured. Voters also oppose Republican Medicaid cuts because of the important role that Medicaid plays in providing health care to people with severe mental and physical disabilities and in helping families afford quality nursing home care and in-home.

The survey interviews were conducted February 14-19 among a representative national cross section of 1,201 voters.

1. Medicaid is favorably regarded by a large majority of voters, including a majority of Republicans. Overall, 66% of voters express a favorable opinion of Medicaid (25% very favorable, 42% somewhat favorable), while just 22% are unfavorable (15% somewhat unfavorable, 7% very unfavorable); 12% say they do not know enough about it to have an opinion. There is support for Medicaid across party lines: Democrats are favorable by 82% to 11% and Republicans are favorable by 55% to 30%. Swing voters are favorable to Medicaid by 65% to 22%. Large majorities of white voters (63%), Black voters (80%), and Hispanic voters (75%) have a favorable opinion of Medicaid.

2. Democrats are more trusted than Republicans on dealing with Medicaid. On a head-to-head basis, 43% say they trust Democrats in Congress more, 26% say they trust Republicans in Congress more, 11% say

they trust both parties equally, and 20% don't trust either. Democratic voters (79%) are more likely than Republican voters (55%) to have confidence in their own party on Medicaid. Swing voters trust Democrats more by 43% to 22%.

3. A large majority of voters say it is important to prevent harmful cuts to Medicaid, and voters oppose Republican proposals to cut Medicaid by a wide margin. Fully seven-in-ten voters say it is extremely important (39%) or above average in importance (32%) to prevent cuts to Medicaid that would reduce healthcare access for lower-income households and cut funding for nursing home care. 87% percent of Democrats say it is important to prevent these cuts, and so do 58% of Independents and 58% of Republicans. Large majorities of voters across virtually all demographic groups agree about the importance of stopping harmful cuts to Medicaid, including 62% of white voters, 84% of Black voters, and 73% of Hispanic voters.

When asked more specifically about proposals by House Republicans to make large cuts to Medicaid, only 24% are favorable to the idea, while 53% are unfavorable, including 41% who are very unfavorable; 23% are neutral. Even when Republican voters know the proposals to cut Medicaid are coming from Republican officials, they are only evenly split (32% favorable, 35% neutral, 33% unfavorable). Swing voters oppose the GOP Medicaid cuts by 52% to 21%, and Democrats oppose them by 73% to 18%.

4. The arguments against Republican Medicaid cuts are powerful – especially messages that highlight the role Medicaid plays for people with disabilities, families that need nursing home care or in-home care, or lower-wage workers who do not get insurance through their jobs. We asked voters to say whether each of seven considerations is a very important, somewhat important, or not important reason to oppose Republican Medicaid cuts. All of them are seen as very important by a majority of voters.

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important
Medicaid is a major source of healthcare for people with severe mental and physical disabilities. It provides coverage to 60% of all children with disabilities and 30% of all non-elderly adults with disabilities.	60	35	5
Medicaid helps pay the costs for more than 60% of all nursing home residents nationwide and plays a key role in helping families afford quality nursing home care for their elderly parents and family members with disabilities.	58	35	7
Medicaid provides more than 3.2 million Americans with home and community-based long-term care, allowing many seniors and people with disabilities to remain in their homes rather than move to an institutional setting.	56	38	6
Medicaid is responsible for expanding healthcare coverage for the most economically vulnerable groups in our country, and cutting Medicaid would increase the number of Americans with no health insurance coverage at all.	53	39	8
Medicaid is a major source of health insurance for lower-wage workers who do not get healthcare through their job. Two-thirds of all families who have Medicaid coverage include at least one person who works full-time, and without Medicaid, they would very likely be uninsured.	53	39	9
Medicaid is a major source of funding for rural hospitals and plays a key role in giving rural hospitals the financial ability to stay open and continue serving their communities.	52	41	7
Medicaid covers the cost of 40% of births in the United States and plays a key role in the health of new mothers and infants.	51	39	10

Swing voters, seniors, and white women without college degrees all respond strongly to the messages about the vital role Medicaid plays for people with disabilities, the importance of Medicaid in helping families afford nursing home care, and Medicaid’s role in providing access to home- and community-based long-term care.

When we ask voters to sort through the list and select the most convincing reasons to oppose the GOP Medicaid cuts, the most frequently selected item (both overall and with swing voters) is that, “Two-thirds of all families who have Medicaid coverage include at least one person who works full-time, and without Medicaid, they would very likely be uninsured.”

The Affordable Care Act

Our poll clearly also demonstrates the popularity of the provisions in the Inflation Reduction Act that lower the cost of health insurance for those who buy coverage on their own through the Affordable Care Act. Overwhelmingly voters want Congress to do even more to lower the cost of health insurance, and Republican cuts to the Affordable Care Act that would make insurance more expensive for Americans would be extremely unpopular. Republican cuts to the ACA that would result in fewer people with coverage would be similarly unpopular.

- 84% place a high importance on the provision of the Inflation Reduction Act that reduces insurance premiums by an average of \$800 per person for the millions of Americans who purchase coverage on their own through the ACA.
- 76% favor making the savings on ACA insurance premiums permanent, instead of allowing that provision to expire in 2025.
- 81% say it is extremely important or above average in importance that the President and Congress do more to lower the cost of health insurance.
- 74% say that it is extremely or above average in importance that the President and Congress do more to increase the number of people with health insurance coverage.
- Only 26% support the House Republican proposal to totally repeal the Affordable Care Act and let insurance companies charge older people much more for coverage and deny coverage altogether to people with pre-existing conditions.