



To: Mark Merritt, PCMA
From: Jon McHenry & Whit Ayres
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Re: Voter Attitudes Regarding Medicaid Pharmacy Spending

Our national survey of registered voters, conducted November 15-18, 2010, shows high levels of concern regarding state budgets. Two-thirds of voters prefer cutting spending to increasing taxes as the approach to balancing budgets. While voters do not support cutting spending on Medicaid if it reduces benefits for patients in the program, *nearly two-thirds of voters support cutting spending on Medicaid if it does not require cutting benefits*. Key findings of the survey, with a margin of error of plus-or-minus 3.1 percent are:

- 1. Eighty-four percent of voters are concerned about their state's budget situation.** Fifty-six percent of voters are very concerned about their state's budget situation and 28 percent are somewhat concerned.
- 2. Two-thirds of voters prefer cutting spending to raising taxes as the approach to make sure their state's budget is balanced.** Voters choose spending cuts by a 65 to 17 percent margin over tax increases.
- 3. Voters support reducing spending on Medicaid, *provided benefits are not cut for patients in the program*.** Voters support reducing spending on Medicaid by a 63 to 25 percent margin "if it did not require cutting benefits for patients in the program." A plurality of voters opposes reducing spending on Medicaid (49 to 36 percent) "if it meant reducing benefits for patients in the program or allowing fewer people to participate in the program."
- 4. Voters find approaches to cutting Medicaid costs acceptable when they involve reducing costs for prescription drugs, but find cutting payments to physicians and hospitals unacceptable.** Voters find "requir[ing] Medicaid patients to use generic drugs unless their doctor objects" acceptable by an 85 to 12 percent margin, find "mak[ing] sure Medicaid does not pay more to drugstores for prescription drugs than private plans pay" acceptable by an 80 to 15 percent margin, find "mak[ing] local drugstores compete with each other in order to be included in a Medicaid network, like they do for Medicare Part D and private sector plans" acceptable by a 74 to 16 percent margin, and find "mak[ing] sure that different pharmacies do not issue duplicate prescriptions to the same patient" acceptable by a 74 to 20 percent margin. Voters find cutting payments to physicians and hospitals who see Medicaid patients unacceptable by 64 to 29 percent and 61 to 31 percent margins, respectively.

- 5. One likely reason for voters' flexibility regarding prescription drugs in Medicaid is that the vast majority of voters have at least three pharmacies in their area.** Eighty-five percent of voters have at least three pharmacies in their area, including 61 percent who have more than five pharmacies in their area.

Methodology

This survey of 1000 registered voters was conducted November 15-18, 2010 by live interviewers. Respondents were selected randomly using random-digit dialing, and screened for being registered to vote. Respondents come from each state in proportion to current voter registration statistics. By party, the sample is 34 percent Democrat, 30 percent Republican, and 37 percent independent. By race, the sample is 66 percent white, 16 percent African American, 12 percent Hispanic, 2 percent Asian, and 5 percent other/refused. By gender, the sample is 46 percent male and 54 percent female.

The margin of error for responses with an even split – 50 percent for one response and 50 percent for another response – is plus or minus 3.1 percent. The margin of error is smaller when one response receives a higher level of support. For example, the margin of error is plus or minus 2.68 percent when 75 percent of respondents choose one response and 25 percent choose another response.