

# Public Opinion on Health Care Reform: 15 Minutes, 15 Slides

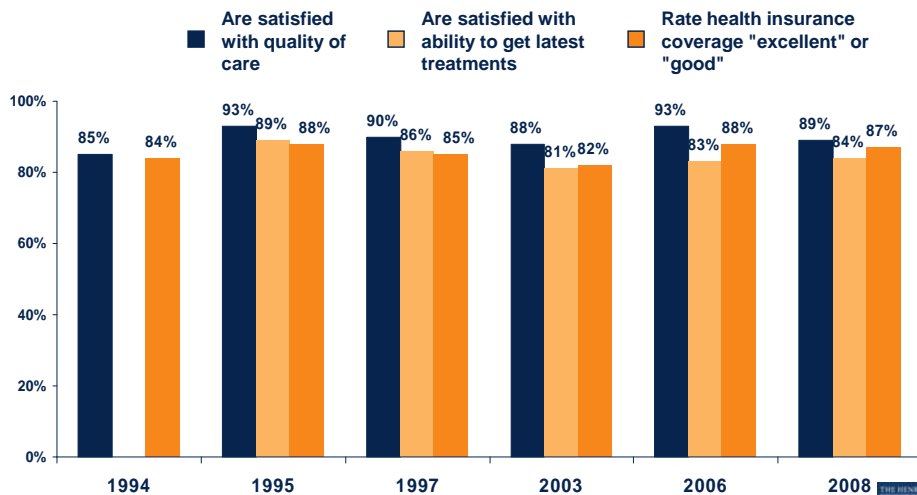
**Claudia Deane**  
 Assoc. Director, Public Opinion & Survey Research  
 Kaiser Family Foundation  
 August 19, 2009



CHART 1

## Yes, high levels of personal satisfaction in some areas

Among those with health care coverage, percent who...



Sources: ABC News Poll (Jul. 1994, Nov. 1995, Aug. 1997), ABC News/Washington Post Poll (Oct. 2003), ABC News/Kaiser Family Foundation/USA Today Poll (Sept. 2006), Kaiser Family Foundation (June 2008)



CHART 2

## But there's a flip side....Actual problems with cost

- Half say they or a member of their household have put off some sort of health care because of the cost in the past year
- Two in ten say they or a member of their household have had problems paying medical bills over the past year
- That percentage doubles among certain groups, such as the uninsured, those in poor health and those with lower incomes

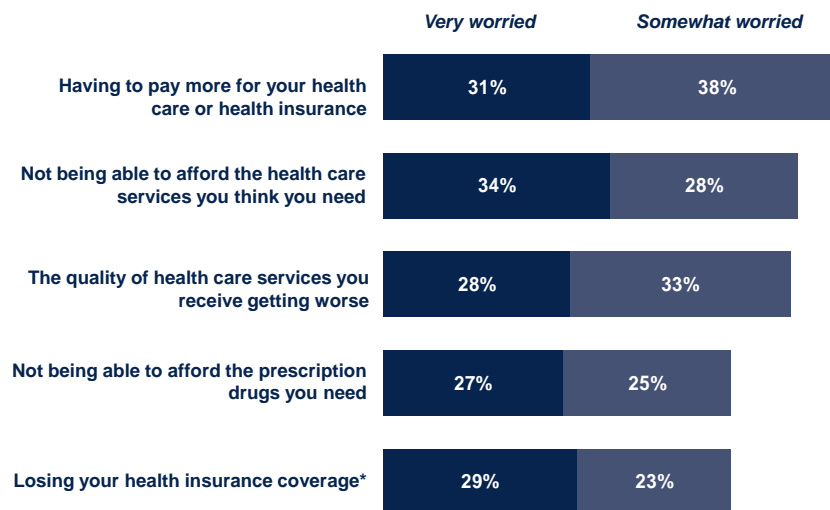


Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted July 7-14, 2009)



CHART 3

## Worry even more widespread



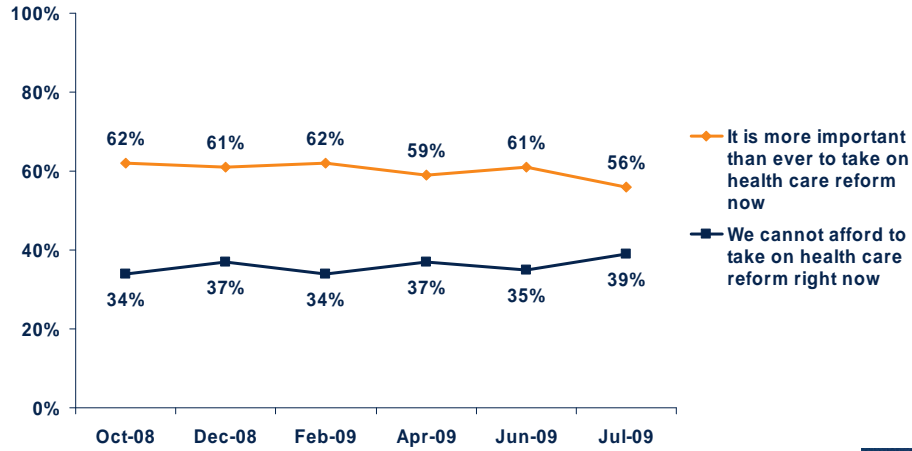
Note: Various items based on half samples. Item marked with an \* asked only of those with coverage.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted July 7-14, 2009)



CHART 4

## Majority support has persisted

Which comes closer to describing your own views? Given the serious economic problems facing the country...



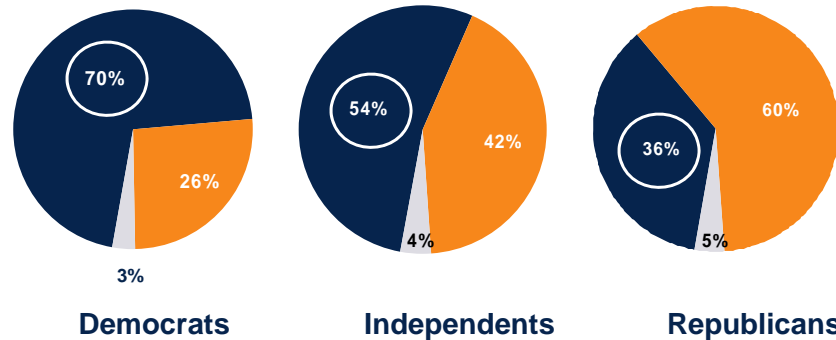
Note: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.  
Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation surveys



CHART 5

## Stark partisan differences from the get go

■ It is more important than ever to take on health care reform now ■ We cannot afford to take on health care reform right now ■ Don't know/Refused



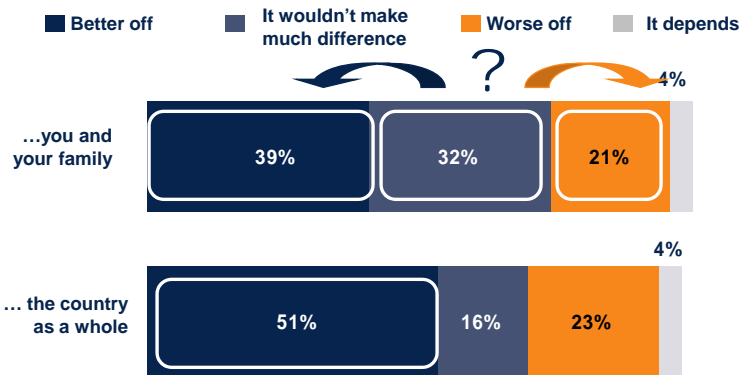
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted July 7-14, 2009)



CHART 6

## One to watch

Do you think (you and your family/the country as a whole) would be better off or worse off if the president and Congress passed health care reform, or don't you think it would make much difference?



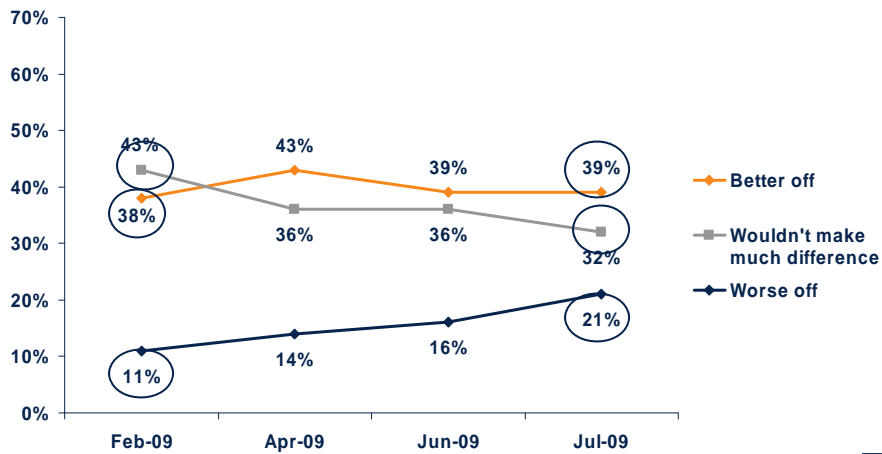
Note: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted July 7-14, 2009)



CHART 7

## Impact on own family: Time trend

Do you think you and your family would be better off or worse off if the president and Congress passed health care reform, or don't you think it would make much difference?



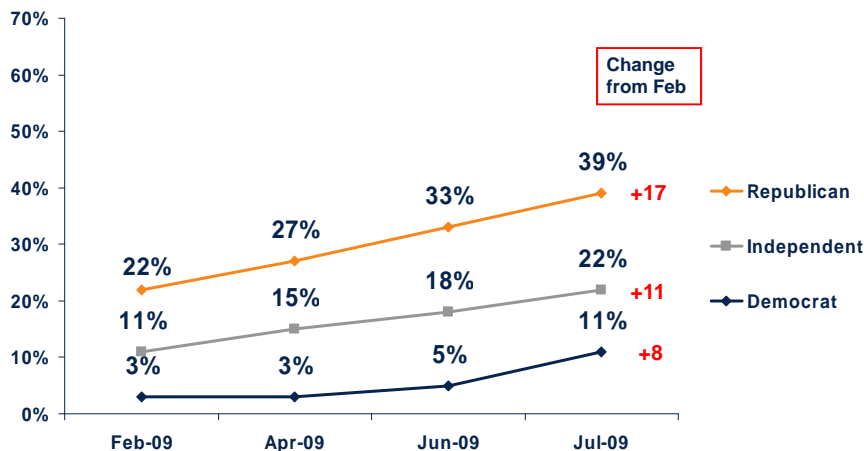
Note: "Don't know/Refused" and "It depends (vol.," responses not shown.  
Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation surveys



CHART 8

## Percent saying will be worse off up in all groups

% saying will be personally worse off if president and Congress pass health care reform



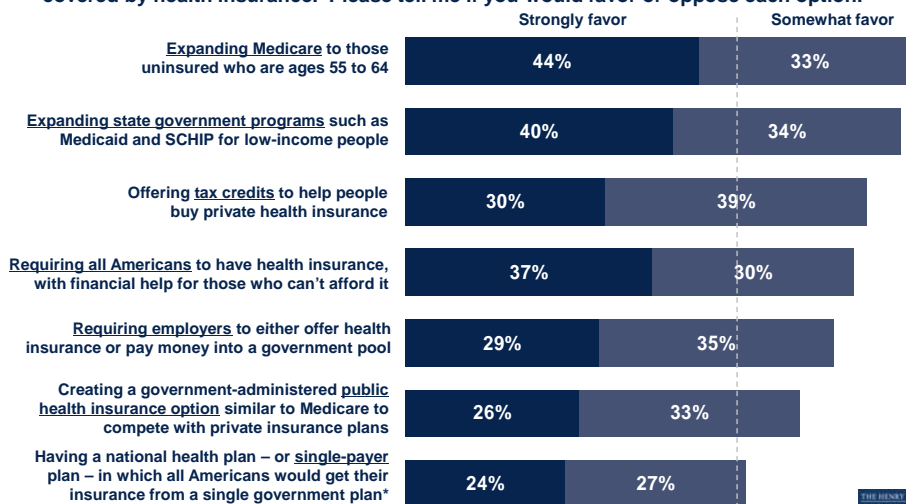
Note: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.  
Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation surveys



CHART 9

## Support remains for many ways of expanding coverage

Now I'm going to read you some different ways to increase the number of Americans covered by health insurance. Please tell me if you would favor or oppose each option.



Note: Various items based on half samples. Items marked with an \* asked of two separate half samples as a wording experiment.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted July 7-14, 2009)



CHART 10

## Opinions on a range of topics malleable (ie, Public plan)

Would you favor or oppose creating a government-administered public health insurance option similar to Medicare to compete with private health insurance plans?



**POST CHALLENGE:**  
 What if you heard that a public health insurance option could give people more choices in finding health insurance plans?  
 insurance companies?



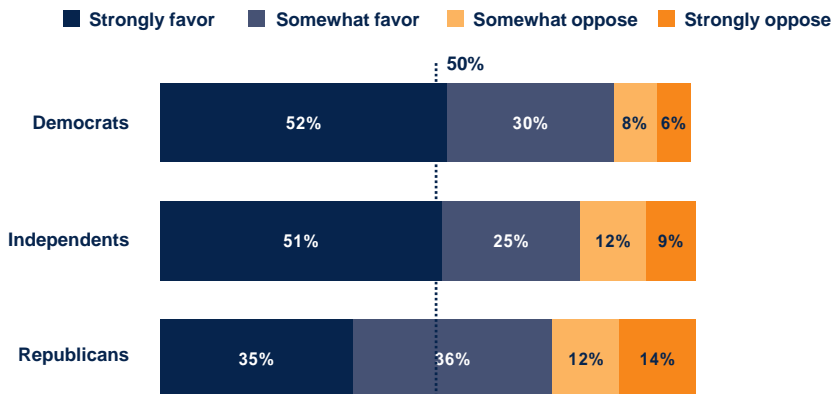
Note: Follow up questions asked of those who initially opposed. Responses shown on all graphs are based on total; on bottom graphs, "favor" includes those who initially favored and those who favored after hearing the follow up. "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.  
 Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted July 7-14, 2009)



CHART 11

## Partisans agree?! Pre-existing conditions stink

Do you favor or oppose the federal government requiring health insurance companies to cover anyone who applies, even if they have a prior illness?



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (conducted July 7-14, 2009)

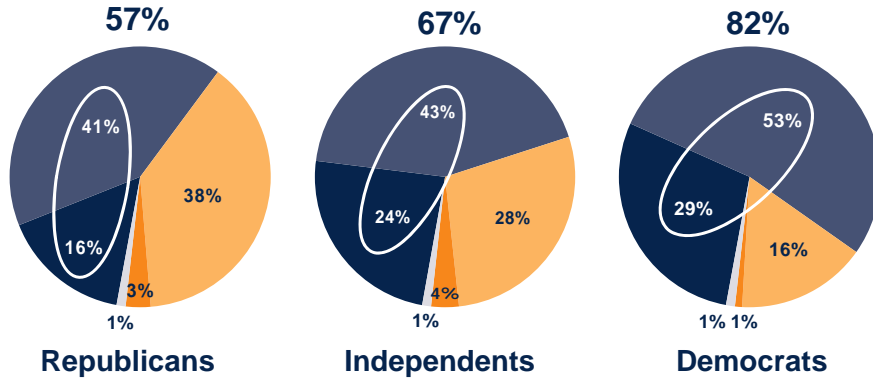


CHART 12

## Partisans agree: major changes needed

Which one of the following comes closest to your view about the health care system in America today?

- Needs complete overhaul
- Needs major changes
- Needs minor changes
- Works fine as is
- Don't know/Refused



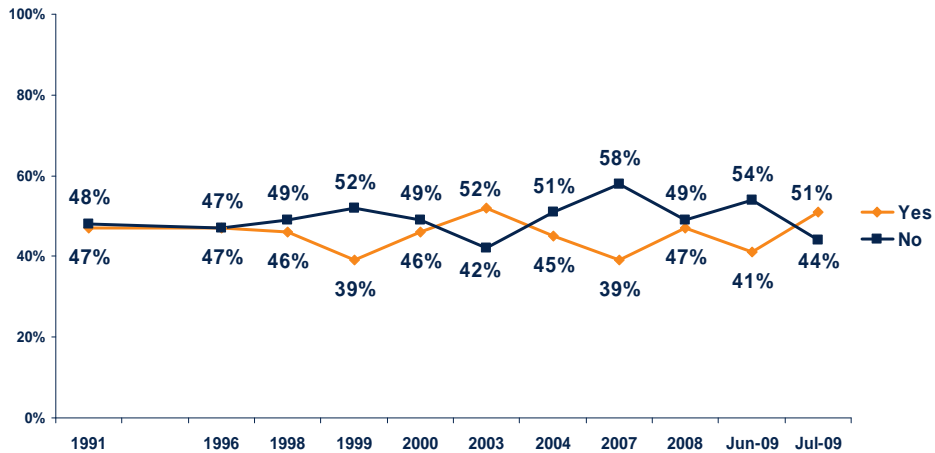
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard School of Public Health, Pre-Election Poll: Voters, Health Care and the 2008 Election (conducted Sept 10-21, 2008).



CHART 13

## Willingness to pay

Would you be willing to pay more -- either in higher health insurance premiums or higher taxes -- in order to increase the number of Americans who have health insurance, or not?



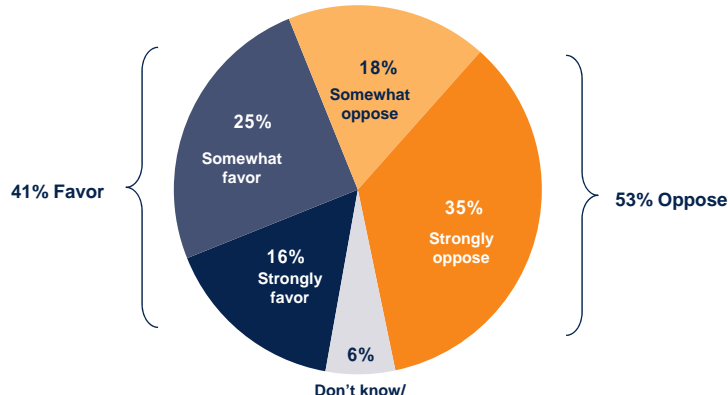
Note: Asked of half sample in July 2009. "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.  
 Sources: NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll (Jun. 1991), KFF/HSPH Polls (Nov. 1996; Nov. 1998; Oct. 1999; Nov. 2000; Feb. 2003; and Nov. 2004), Washington Post/KFF/HSPH Survey (May 2007), KFF/HSPH *The Public's Health Care Agenda for the New President and Congress* (Dec. 2008); Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Tracking Poll* (Jun. and Jul. 2009)



CHART 14

## Changing tax treatment of employer health benefits

Right now, workers do not pay taxes on the money that their employer puts into their health insurance benefits. Some policymakers are proposing that workers with the most generous health care benefits should pay taxes on a share of the money the employer puts into that health insurance, with those taxes helping to pay for health care reform including covering more of the uninsured. Do you favor or oppose changing the law so that workers with the most generous health care benefits would pay taxes on the money their employer puts toward their coverage?



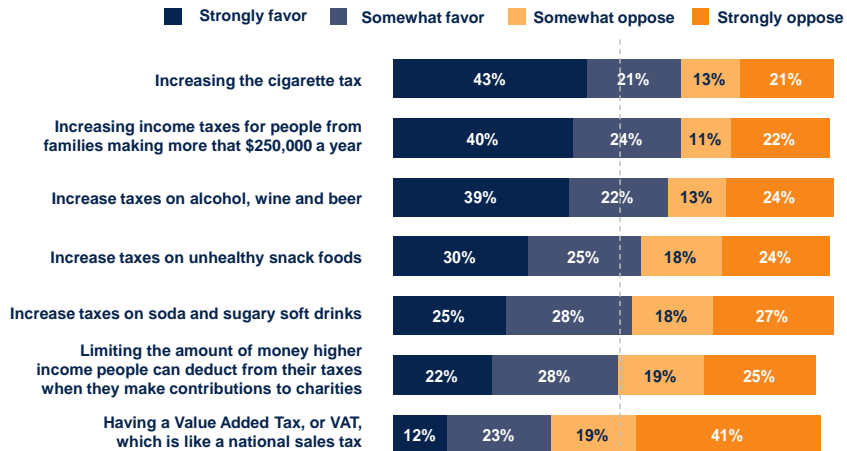
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted July 7-14, 2009)



CHART 15

## Other tax options

Please tell me if you would favor or oppose each of the following to help pay for health care reform and provide coverage for more of the uninsured.



Note: Asked of half sample. "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown.  
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted July 7-14, 2009)





THE HENRY J.  
KAISER  
FAMILY  
FOUNDATION

