

Americans
for Health Care



Center for
American Progress



Affordable Health Care for All Americans:

Reshaping the Debate over Health Care



gerstein | agne
strategic communications



Project Overview

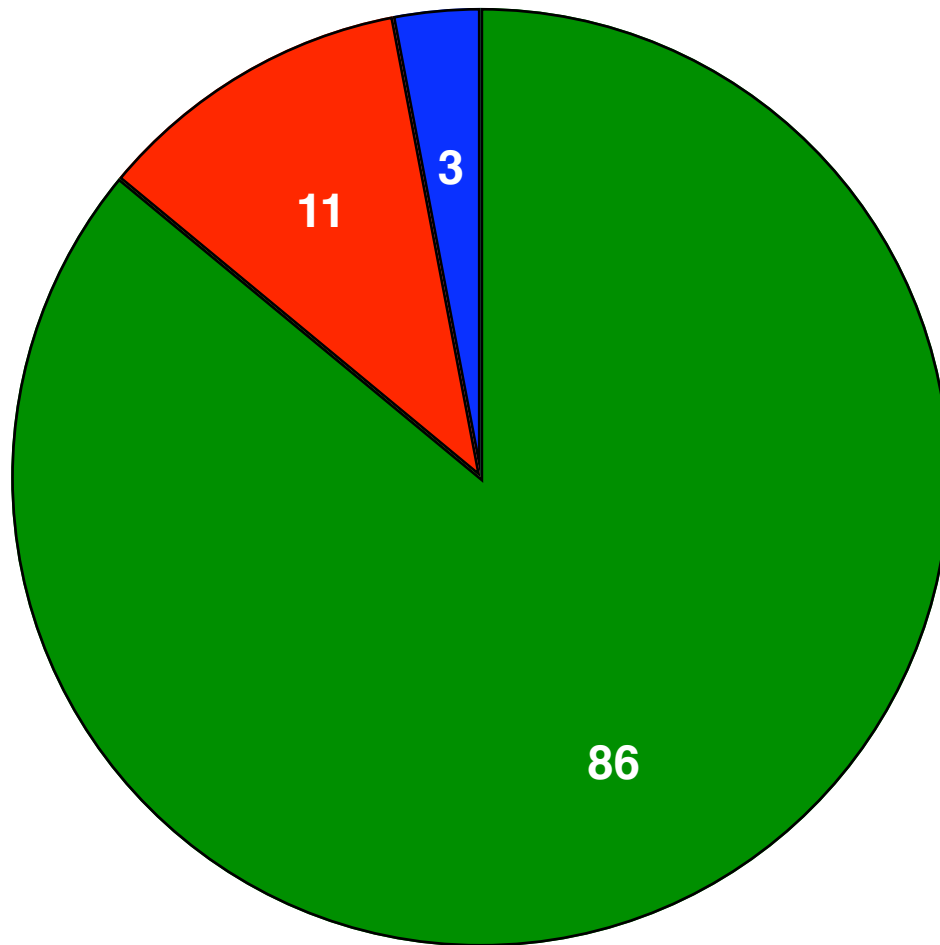
- **National survey of 1,104 adults (876 registered voters, 228 non-voters)**
- **Conducted November 15-22, 2005**
- **Built on thorough review of previous research**
- **Goal was to move past existing attitudes and build a strategic framework for overcoming long-standing obstacles to coverage for all Americans**



Political Environment

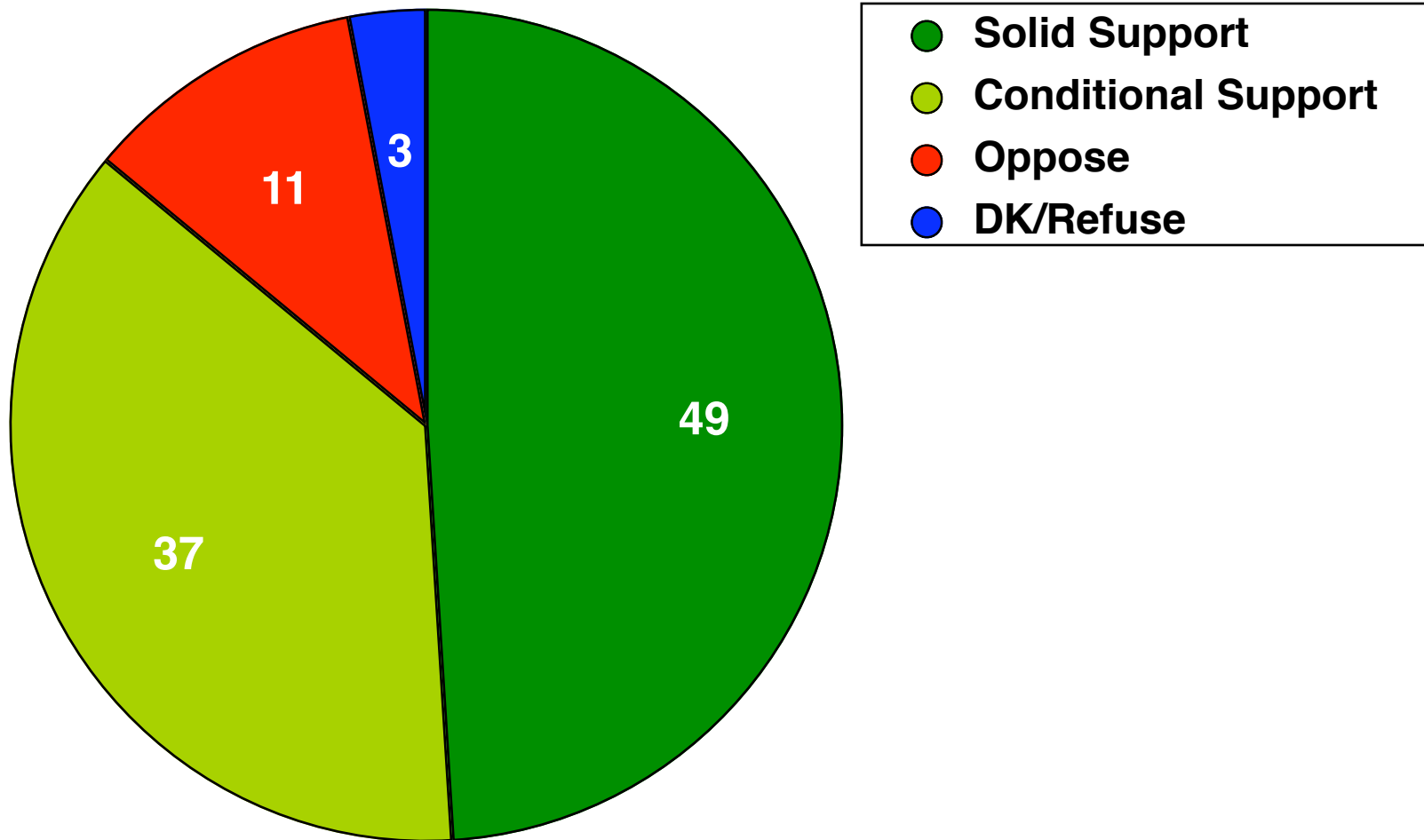
- **Pervasive pessimism about current direction (27 percent right direction, 63 percent wrong track)**
- **Record low views of both parties**
- **Health care viewed as top national economic threat**
- **Health care top personal economic threat (by 2-to-1 margin)**

Overwhelming Support



Do you support or oppose **reforming our current health care system to provide affordable health coverage for all Americans?**

Impact of Big Government





Demographic Targeting

- **Solid Support**
 - ◆ **African-Americans** 61 percent
 - ◆ **Union Households** 60 percent
 - ◆ **Small Business Owners** 56 percent
 - ◆ **Under 30** 56 percent
- **Conditional Support**
 - ◆ **Hispanics** 59 percent
 - ◆ **Older Non-College** 44 percent
 - ◆ **Non-College Women** 43 percent
 - ◆ **Pre-Retirement (50–64)** 41 percent



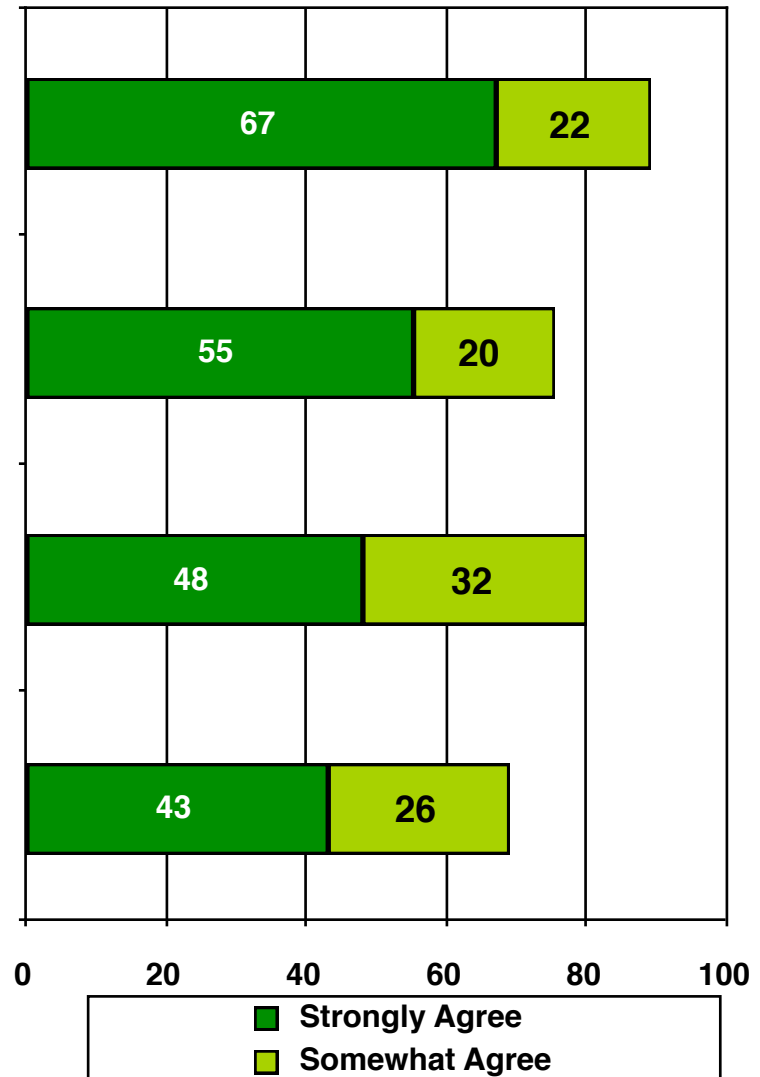
Public Preconceptions

With costs rising out of control and the quality of health coverage declining, the health care system in our country is broken, and we need to make fundamental changes.

The White House and Congress have failed to address America's health care crisis, helping health insurance and drug companies but leaving America with higher costs, fewer benefits, and millions more uninsured.

A greater emphasis from insurance providers on regular medical check-ups and preventive care would decrease health care costs for everyone

Providing health coverage for all Americans would reduce overall health care expenses



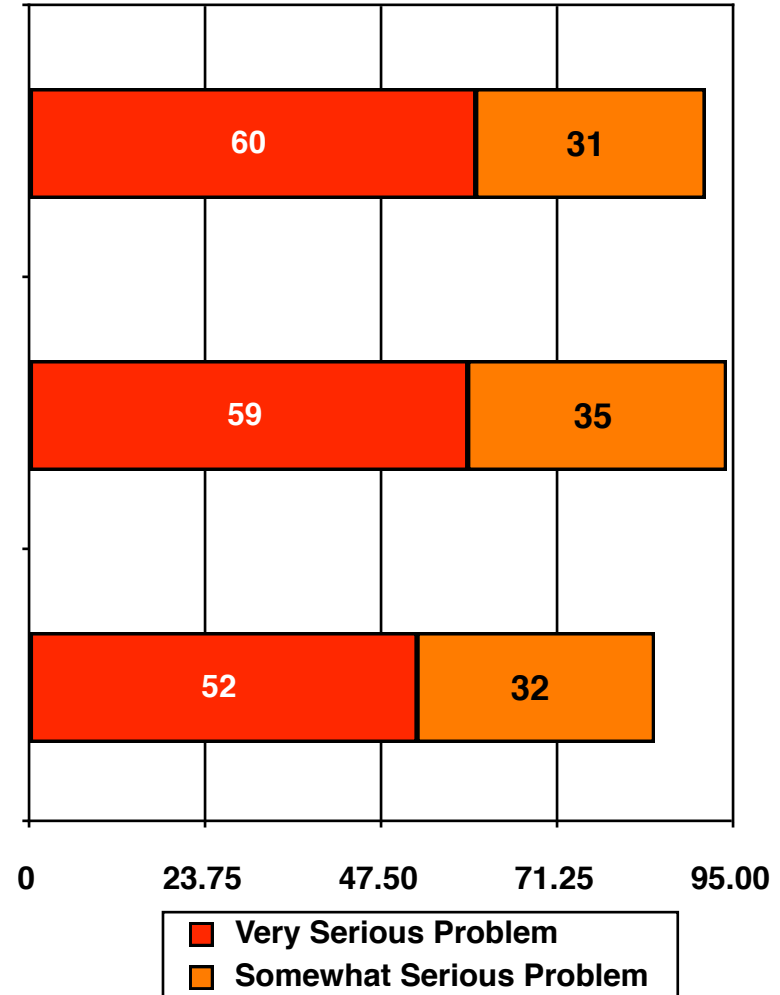


Corporate Greed

Over the past 5 years, health insurance premiums for workers have grown by 73 percent while wages have grown by only 15 percent.

Rising insurance premiums have left 45 million Americans uninsured, yet health insurance companies have experienced record profits.

In 2002, the top 10 drug manufacturers in the United States together made more in profits than the other 490 companies in the Fortune 500, combined.



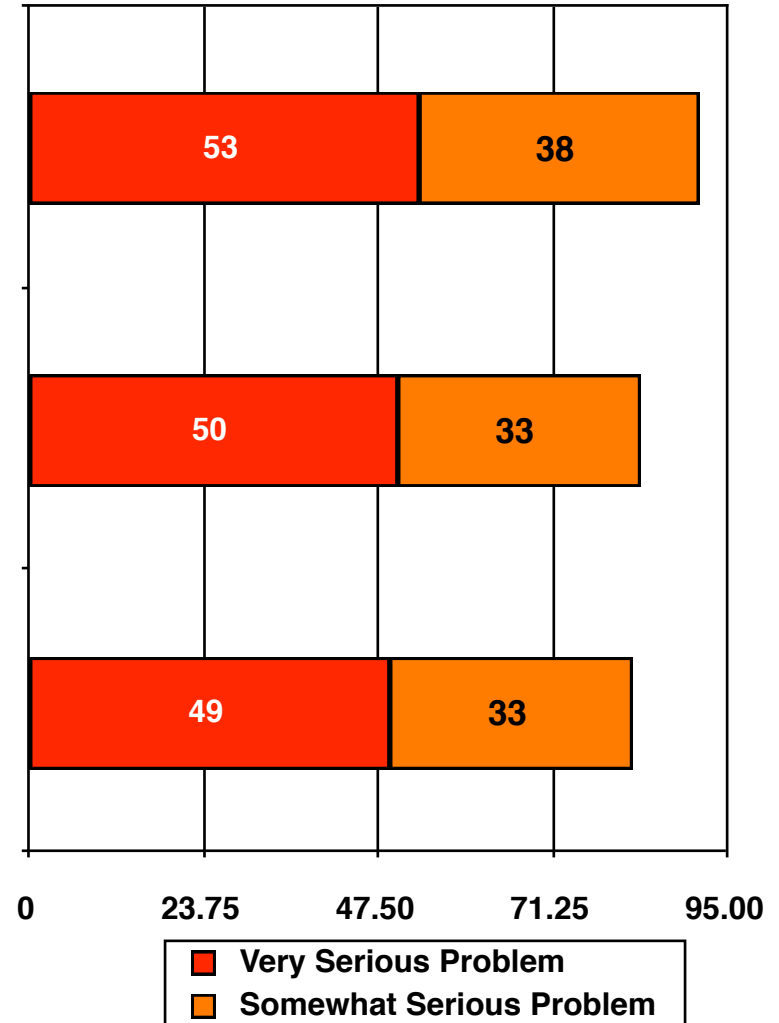


American Workers and

Nearly half of all small businesses no longer provide health coverage for their employees.

Four out of five uninsured Americans live in working families.

Nearly half of all Americans who file for bankruptcy do so because of medical expenses.



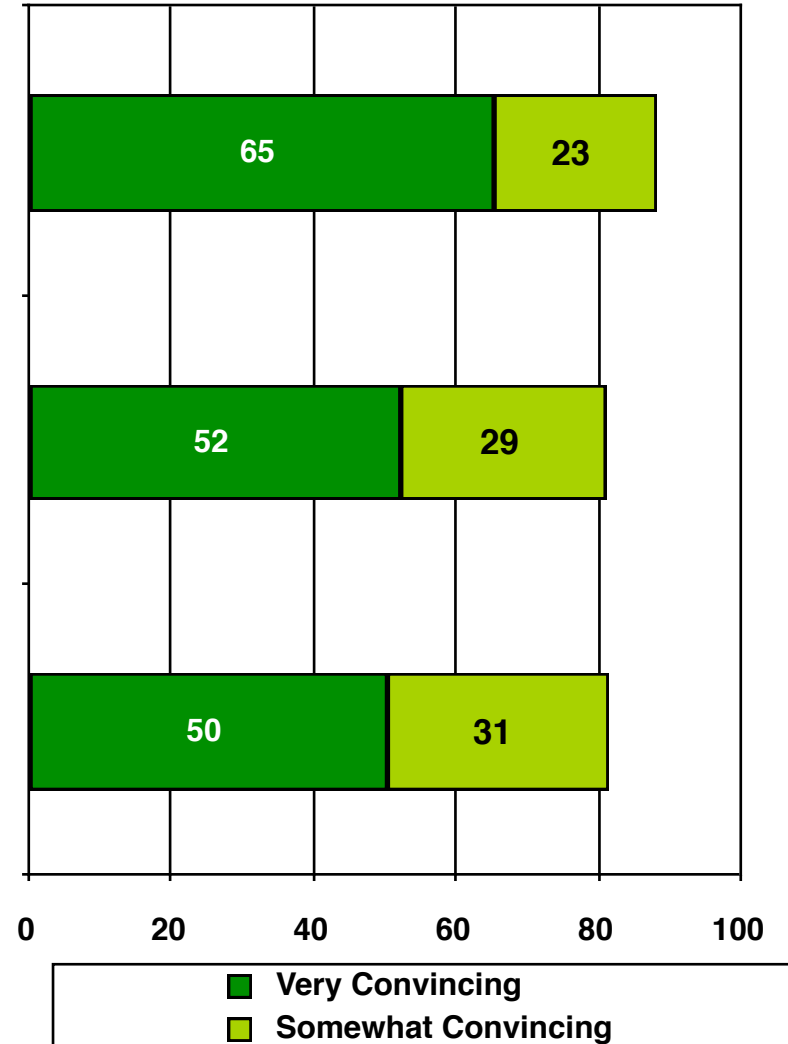


Building the Case for Big Change

Middle class and working families are hurting. Health care costs are skyrocketing while benefits are being cut, and family incomes can't keep up with rising health burdens. It's just wrong for anyone who works hard, pays taxes and plays by the rules to go without decent health care or to be driven into economic hardship because of health costs.

Middle class and working families are hurting. Health care costs are skyrocketing while benefits are being cut, and family incomes can't keep up with rising health burdens. We must help these families get affordable health coverage and reduced costs, to provide a minimum level of economic security that will allow them to save for retirement and education or buy a home.

American businesses are having more trouble competing globally while shouldering the burden of America's broken health care system. We need to keep health care costs down, help businesses provide health insurance to workers and make sure every worker can get insurance if our economy is going to prosper.





Opposition Messages Much Weaker

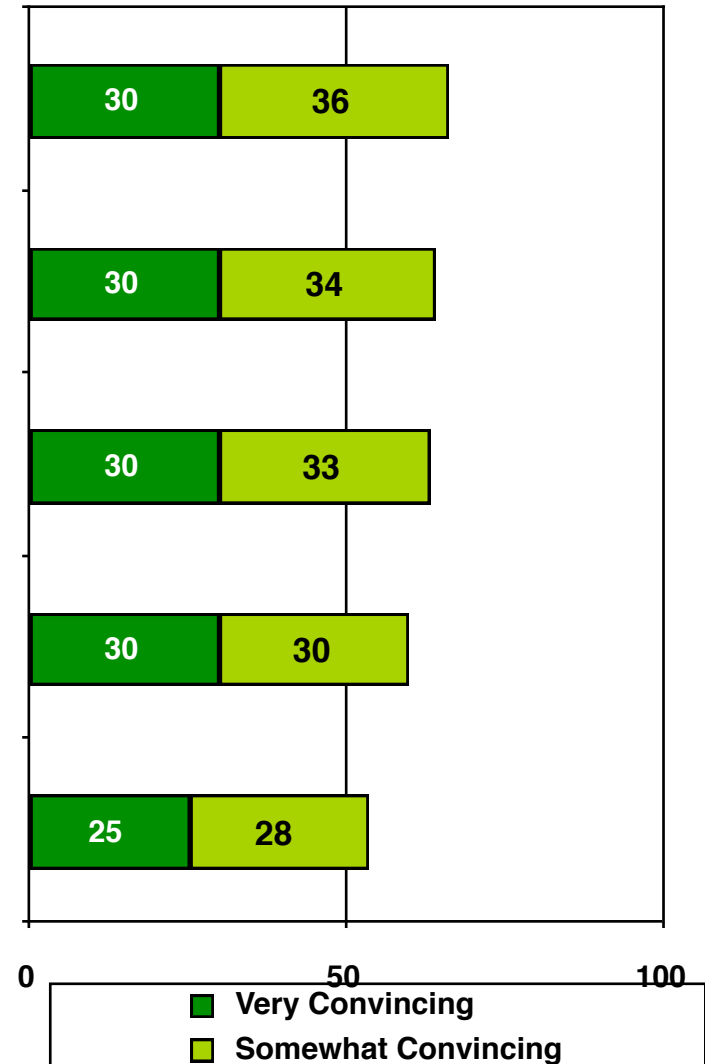
Health care for all Americans will require the government to raise billions of dollars in new taxes. No matter what people say about reducing health costs, individuals will have to pay more out of pocket for their own health care.

Getting government more involved in health care is the worst possible solution to our health care problems. It is nothing more than socialized medicine that will lead to poor quality care, long waits, increased red tape, and fewer choices in doctors and hospitals.

Extending health coverage to all Americans will do nothing to lower out-of-control costs and will drive employers who currently offer coverage to drop it once they know the government will pick up the expenses.

Our country has the finest health care and medical technology in the world because of our market-based system and our ability to pay doctors and other top medical professionals according to their expertise. Government-run health care would destroy this system, as well as the research and experimentation that drive it to be the best in the world.

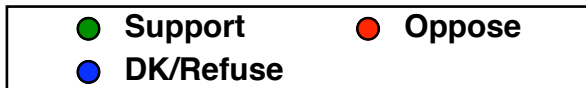
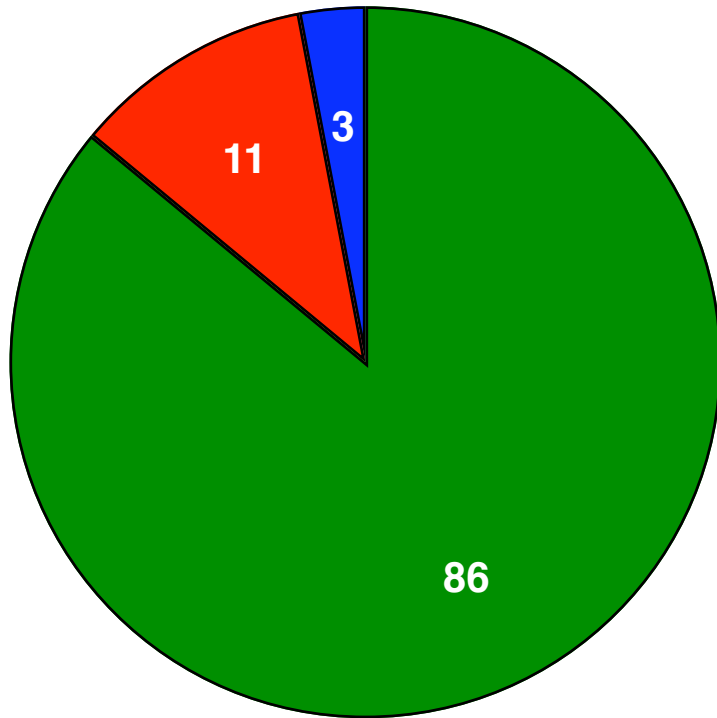
Rather than more government involvement in health care, we should put consumers in charge of their own health care by providing tax credits and other savings accounts that allow individuals to choose their own doctors and the type of care they want.



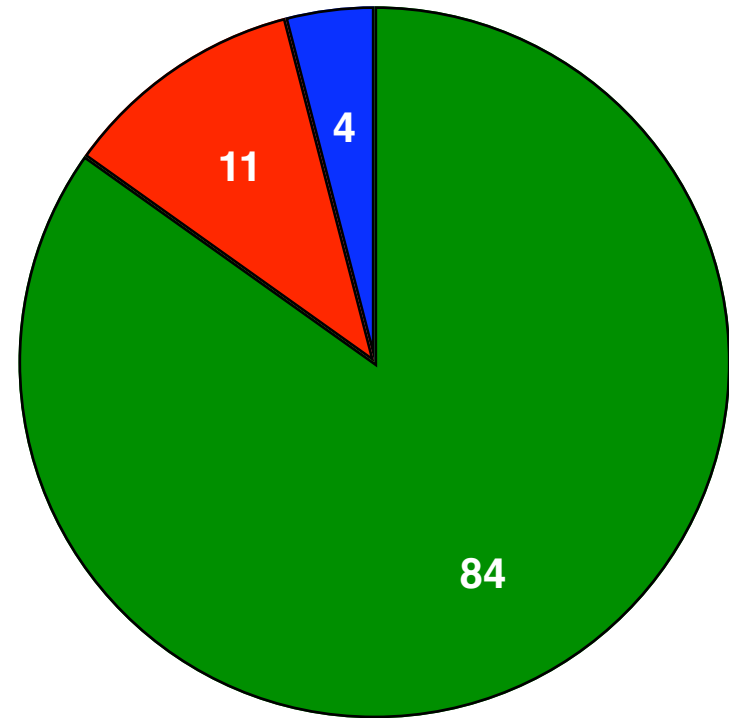


Overall Support Holds Steady

Initial Support



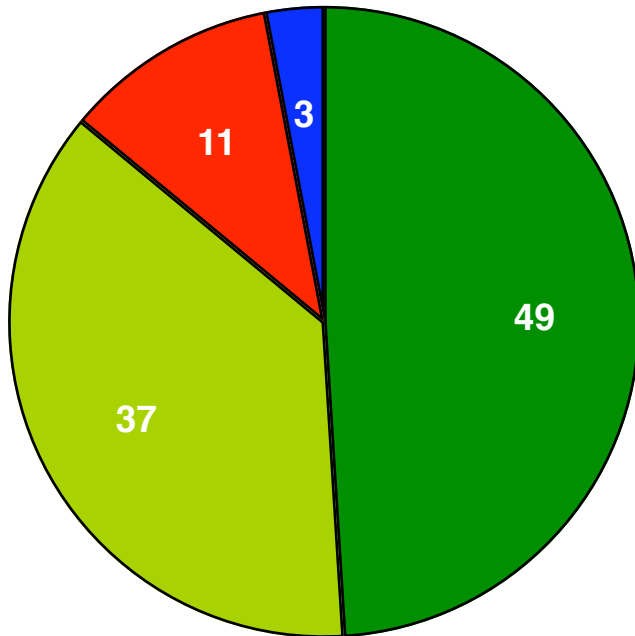
Final Support



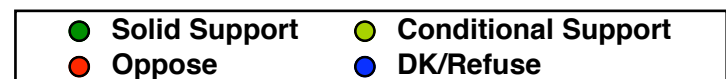
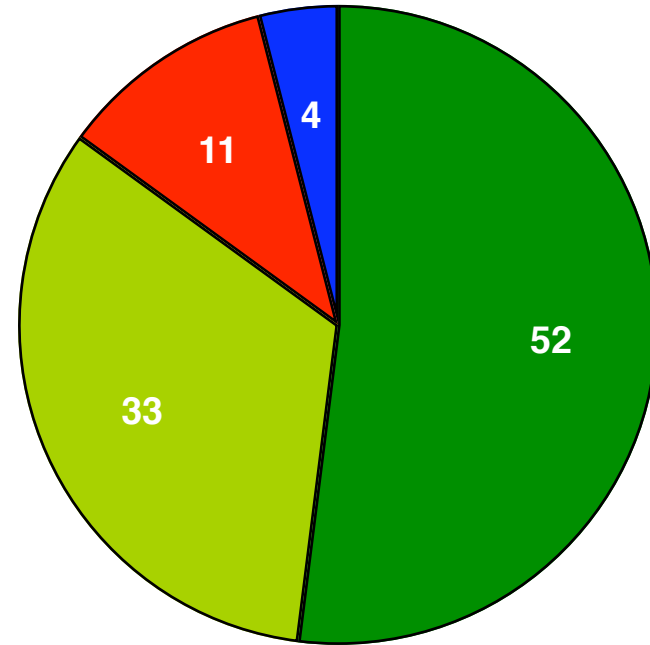


Majority Now Solid in Support

Initial Support



Final Support



Strongest gains among Hispanics, Pre-Retirement, and Older Non-College



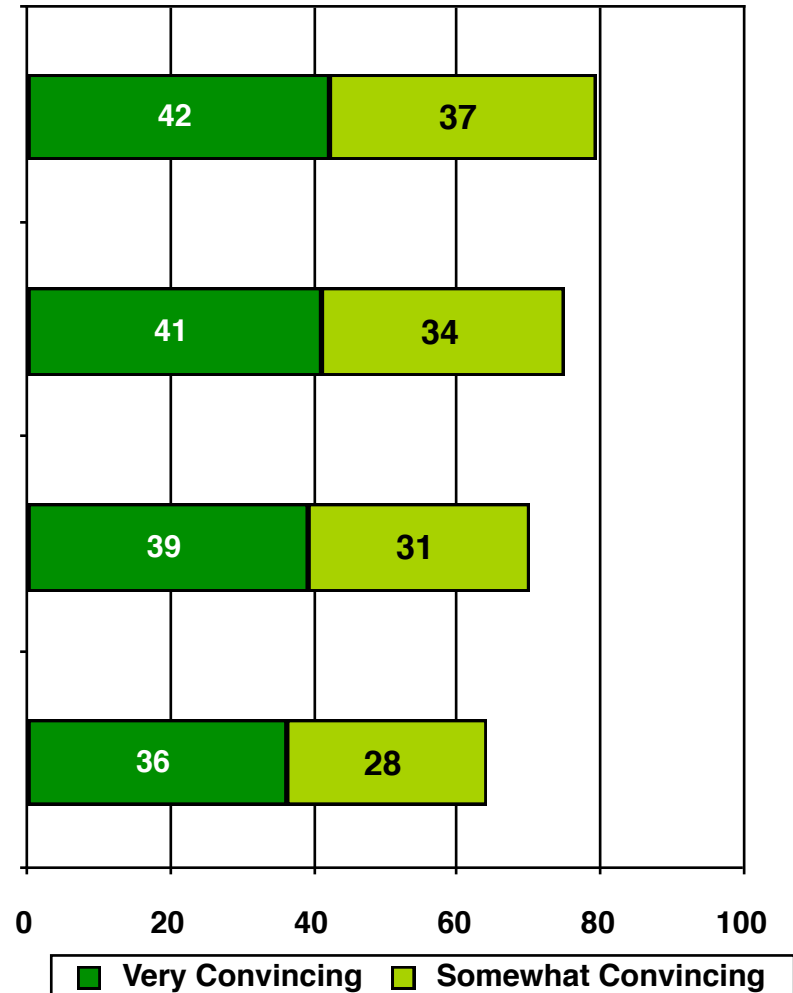
Reassuring Conditional Supporters

In a system where everybody benefits from health care coverage, everyone should help pay for it and share responsibility for health care costs.

Americans are already paying huge sums for the uninsured through expensive emergency room visits, higher premiums and deductibles. For a lot less, we could extend coverage to everyone and reduce everyone's costs.

Although it will cost about \$150 billion a year to cover every American, our nation will save more in the long run and build a more secure economy by eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy and creating a healthier population.

Although it will cost about \$150 billion a year to cover every American, you and other Americans will personally only have to pay about \$10 more per week to help cover everyone, bring down costs, and create a healthier population.





Stage 1 - Tell The Truth

- ◆ Middle class and working families are hurting. Health care costs are skyrocketing while benefits are being cut. Family incomes can't keep up with rising health burdens.
- ◆ The White House and Congress have failed to address America's health care crisis, helping health insurance and drug companies but leaving America with higher costs, fewer benefits, and millions more uninsured.
- ◆ *Bottom line: The health care system in our country is broken, and we need to make fundamental changes.*



A Progressive

Stage 2 - Define The Debate

- ◆ It's just wrong for anyone who works hard, pays taxes, and plays by the rules to go without decent health care or to be driven into economic hardship because of health costs.
We must reform our current health care system to provide affordable health care to all Americans.
- ◆ In a system where everybody benefits from health care coverage, everyone should help pay for it and share responsibility for health care costs.
- ◆ American businesses are having more trouble competing globally while shouldering the burden of America's broken health care system. They must be partners in the solution.



Stage 3 - Outline Principles and Reassure Conditional Supporters

- ◆ We *can* provide affordable health coverage for all Americans within the current system, and without government taking a significantly larger role in the health care system.
- ◆ Four bedrock principles of real reform
 1. Affordable coverage for all Americans
 2. Maintain choice of doctors and plans
 3. Control costs
 4. Expand preventive care