# Americans & Health Care Reform: How Access and Affordability Are Shaping Views

# Summary of Survey Findings

Prepared for:

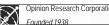
## Results for America

A Project of Civil Society Institute

Prepared by

## **OPINION RESEARCH CORPORATION**

**September 15, 2004** 



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## **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

A series of questions were in CARAVAN®, ORC International's twice-weekly national survey. The purpose of the research was to gain an understanding of the views of American adults on health care reform and what is driving those views.

Results are based on telephone interviews conducted September 2-5, 2004 among a sample of 1020 adults 18 years old or older residing in private households in the continental United States.

Completed interviews were weighted by four variables: age, sex, geographic region, and race, to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total adult population.

The margin of error at a 95% confidence level is plus or minus three percentage points for the entire sample. Smaller sub-groups will have larger error margins.

As required by the Code of Standards of the Council of American Survey Research Organizations, we will maintain the anonymity of our respondents. No information will be released that in any way will reveal the identity of a respondent. ORC has exercised its best efforts in the preparation of this information. In any event, ORC assumes no responsibility for any use that is made of this information or any decisions based upon it.

Most Americans are concerned about increasing medical costs and high prescription drug prices. As a result, they appear willing to look at new ways to ensure access to affordable health care. Demographic characteristics tend to have only a small impact on attitudes. While there is some variation along political lines, large percentages of conservatives join their moderate and liberal counterparts in supporting sweeping health care reforms.

- Substantial numbers of Americans are feeling the impact of increasing health care costs and shrinking coverage.
  - A total of 56% of adults with health insurance representing some 100 million American adults report that their coverage has been cut or that they are paying more for coverage.
  - Among those with health care insurance who purchase prescription drugs:
    - One-third (34%) are either already purchasing (6%) or planning to purchase (33%) lower costs drugs from pharmacies in Canada or other nations.
    - Nearly two in ten (18 percent) say they either skip medications or reduce dosages to "stretch" their medication due to high costs. This percentage equates to over 20 million adults playing a form of Russian roulette with their medications.

- ■Clear majorities of Americans appear willing to accept a greater government role in health care, with 78% agreeing that health care is a necessity like water, gas and electricity and should be "regulated by government to ensure fair prices, accountability, access for everyone and quality services."
  - Slightly fewer adults (67%) feel that it would be a good idea for the US to adopt the approach of other major nations and "guarantee . . . citizens health insurance on the job, through government programs, or via a nonprofit source."
  - While 61% of conservatives agree with most moderates and liberals that health care should be regulated like utilities, they are split (48% vs. 44%) as to whether the government should adopt the approach of other major nations and guarantee health insurance. In contrast, seven out of ten moderates and nine in ten liberals believe that such a guarantee would be "a good idea."
    - The name given this guarantee has only limited impact on the level of support. Support is strong enough to withstand the label of "Socialized Medicine" or "Canadian-style Health Care" among 61% of those who feel it is a good idea. Call it "National Health Insurance" and 77% (a majority of 52% of all adults) say they will still support it.

Varying majorities of Americans say that they support government action or regulation to control spiraling health care costs.

- ■When it comes to prescription drug costs:
  - Eight out of ten (83%) of adults (including 75% of conservatives) say that the U.S. should follow the lead of other nations and negotiate buying prescription drugs on a bulk basis in order to help control the costs of these medications.
  - Similar proportions (78% of all American adults and 71% of conservatives) support requiring state permission before health insurance companies can raise premiums
  - Six in ten Americans (and a surprising 50% of conservatives) favor limiting the profits of pharmaceutical companies, while 55% (47% of conservatives) would support restricting pharmaceutical companies' marketing spending.

#### ■In addition:

- Half of conservatives, 62% of moderates and 72% of liberals would support government controls on hospital costs.
- Half of all adults would favor the federal government ensuring catastrophic medical costs, although here only 39% of conservatives would do so, compared to 52% of moderates and 63% of liberals.
- Faith in health insurers to control costs appears limited. Only 19% are willing to give "HMOs the power to reject more medical procedures ordered by doctors as 'medically necessary" as a cost control method.

- ■Eight in ten Americans agree that all should have access to the kinds of health insurance available to most federal employees (79%) and that "all children in America should all be covered under a federal health care program that would provide for both their preventive and acute health care needs" (81%).
  - Liberals overwhelmingly (92%) agree that all Americans be able to get "the same kind of health coverage that federal workers already get, and at the same price the federal workers pay." They are joined by two-thirds of conservatives and 81% of moderates.
  - On providing federal insurance to children, 65% of conservatives agree with 86% of moderates and 95% of liberals.
- ■Three quarters of American adults (including 71% of conservatives) disagree with the idea that that patients who get HMO or other medical coverage on the job in the private sector should "have FEWER legal rights than people who get their health care benefits from a government job or through Medicare or Medicaid." An even higher 83% (76% of conservatives) believe that patients should have the right to sue their HMOs for damages if the health-care maintenance organization denies coverage for "medically necessary" care ordered by a doctor.

## **DETAILED FINDINGS**

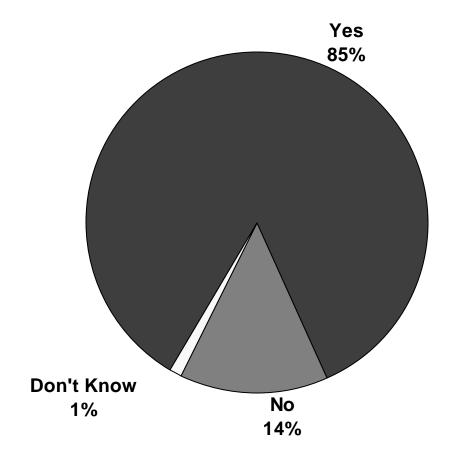


## Coping with Rising Health Care Costs

- Americans are feeling the pinch of rising health care costs.
  - Out of the 85% of respondents who report currently have health insurance coverage, 56% say they have had to either cut back their coverage or pay more.
  - Among those with insurance who purchase prescription drugs:
    - Nearly two in ten (18%) say they either skip medications or reduce dosages to "stretch" their medication due to high costs.
    - Over one-third (34%) are either purchasing (6%) or considering purchasing (33%) lower cost drugs from pharmacies in Canada or other nations.

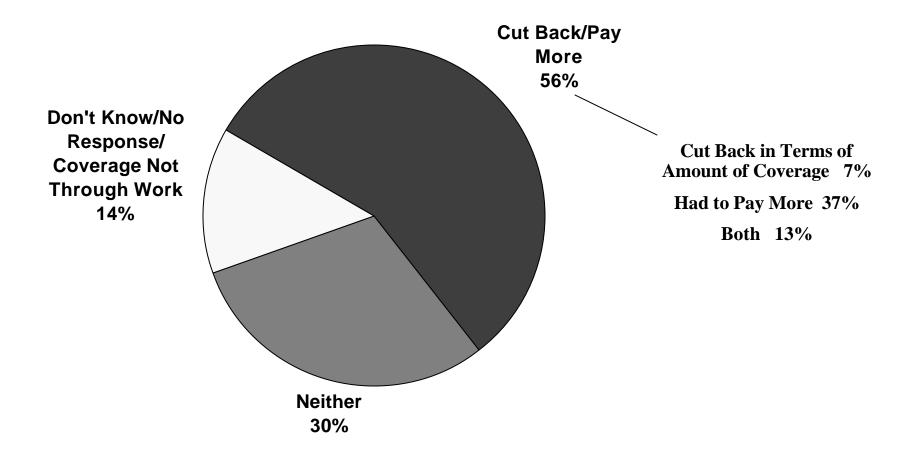
## Currently Have Health Insurance Coverage

H9 Do you currently have health insurance coverage?



## Cutting Back/Paying More for Coverage

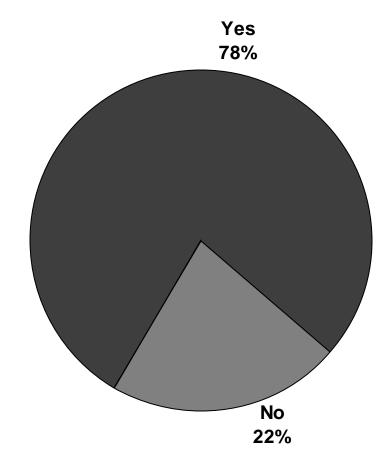
H12: Has your health insurance coverage through work been cut back in terms of the amount of coverage, or have you had to pay more either in terms of a bigger deductible or a larger share of the premium?



Base = Currently Have Health Insurance (877).

# Prescription Medication Purchaser

H13: Do you buy prescription medications for yourself or a family member?

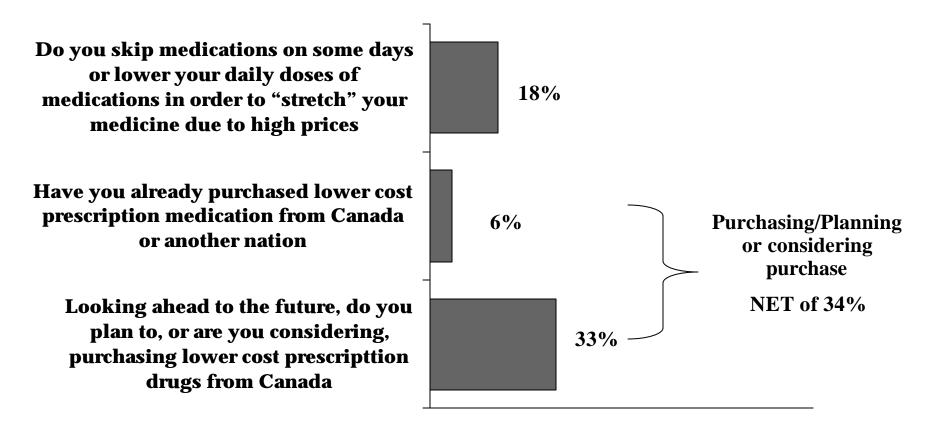


Base = Currently Have Health Insurance (877).

## Stretching Prescription Drug Dollars

H14: Staying on the topic of those prescription medications . . .

### **Percent Saying "Yes"**



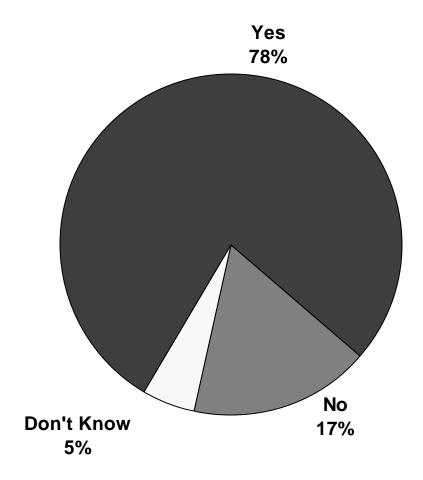
 $Base = Have\ Health\ Insurance\ and\ buy\ prescription\ medications\ for\ self\ or\ family\ member\ (n=706)$ 

## The Government's Role

- Most (78%) adults see health care as a necessity and favor government regulation.
  - Six out of ten conservatives (61%) agree with the substantial majorities of moderates (82%) and liberals (96%) who say that the U.S. should "treat health care like other necessities of life, such as water and electricity, that are regulated by government to ensure fair prices, accountability, access for everyone and quality services."
- A slightly smaller majority (67%) feel that it would be a good idea for the US to adopt the approach of other major nations and guarantee "citizens health insurance on the job, through government programs, or via a nonprofit source."
  - While conservatives are split (48% vs. 44%), a majority of moderates (69%) align with nearly all liberals (90%).
  - As a practical matter, how such a guarantee is labeled does make some difference in the level of support. However, support is strong enough to withstand the label of "Socialized Medicine" or "Canadian-style Health care "among 61% of those who believe this approach is a good idea. Call it "National Health Insurance" and 77% (a majority of 52% of all adults) say they will still support it.
    - Referring to the program as "socialized medicine" would reverse the opinion of nearly half (46%) of the conservatives who support the concept.

# Should U.S. Regulate Health Care to Ensure Fair Pricing, Accountability, Access and Quality?

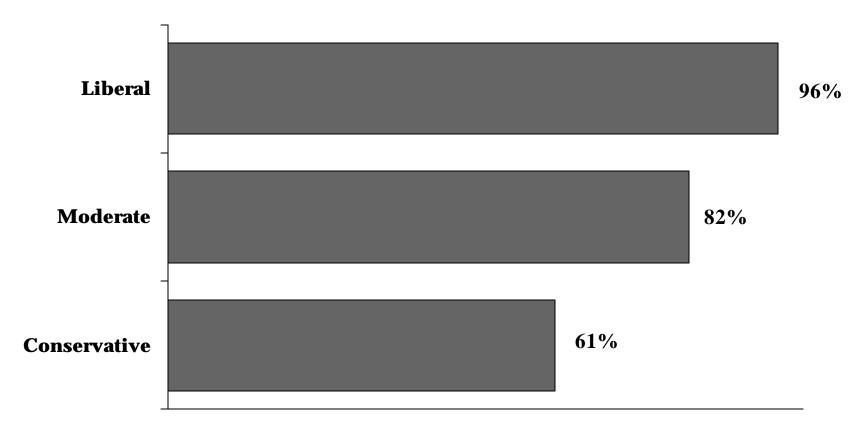
H4: Should America treat health care like other necessities of life, such as water and electricity, that are regulated by government to ensure fair prices, accountability, access for everyone and quality services?



# Should U.S. Regulate Health Care to Ensure Fair Pricing, Accountability, Access and Quality?

H4: Should America treat health care like other necessities of life, such as water and electricity, that are regulated by government to ensure fair prices, accountability, access for everyone and quality services?

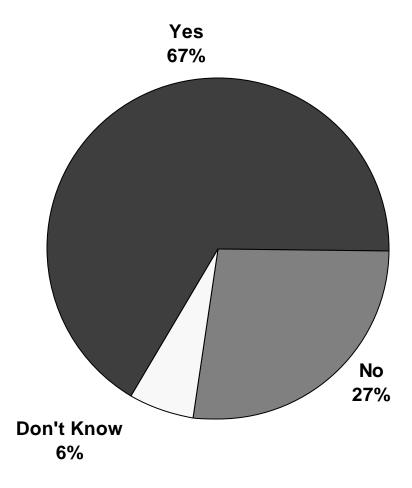
### **Percent Saying "Yes"**



Base = Liberal (203); Moderate (390); Conservative (374)

# Should U.S. Guarantee Health Insurance Like Other Major Nations?

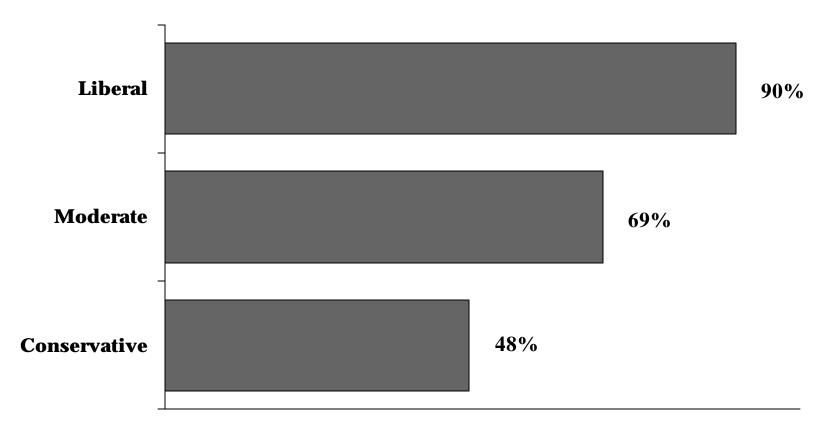
H5: Other major nations, such as Canada and England, guarantee their citizens health insurance on the job, through government programs, or via a nonprofit source. Would it be a good or bad idea for the United States to adopt the same approach to providing health care to everyone?



# Should U.S. Guarantee Health Insurance Like Other Major Nations?

H5: Other major nations, such as Canada and England, guarantee their citizens health insurance on the job, through government programs, or via a nonprofit source. Would it be a good or bad idea for the United States to adopt the same approach to providing health care to everyone?

### **Percent Saying "Good Idea"**

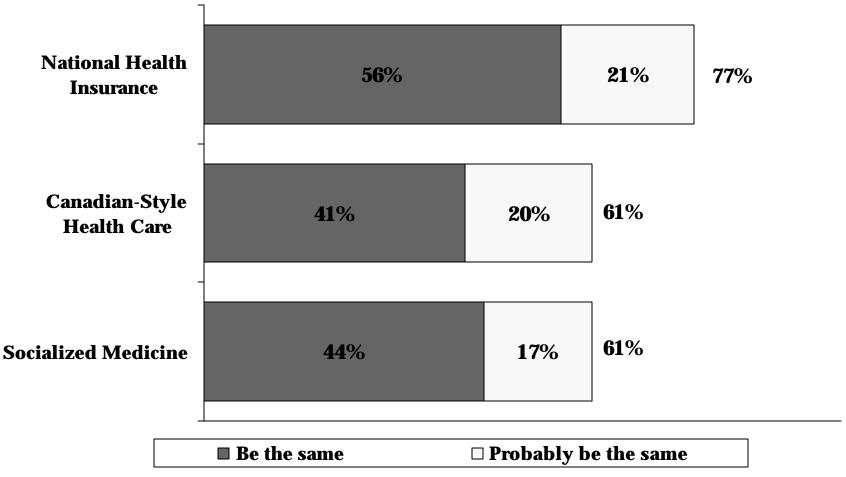


Base = Liberal (203); Moderate (390); Conservative (374)

# What's In a Name? (Should U.S. Guarantee Health Insurance Like Other Major Nations? – continued)

H6: Would you continue to have that view if such an approach was labeled in each of the following ways? Would your view be the same, probably be the same, might change or definitely change if the approach was labeled as . . .



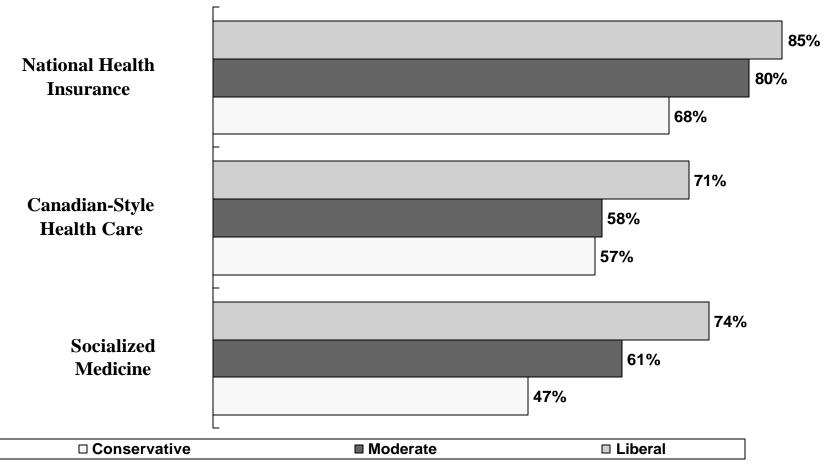


Base = Believe it would be a good idea for the US to have the same approach of as others nations to provide healthcare to everyone (665)

# What's In a Name? (Should U.S. Guarantee Health Insurance Like Other Major Nations? – continued)

H6: Would you continue to have that view if such an approach was labeled in each of the following ways? Would your view be the same, probably be the same, might change or definitely change if the approach was labeled as . . .

### Percent Saying View (a "good idea") Would Be/Probably Be the Same



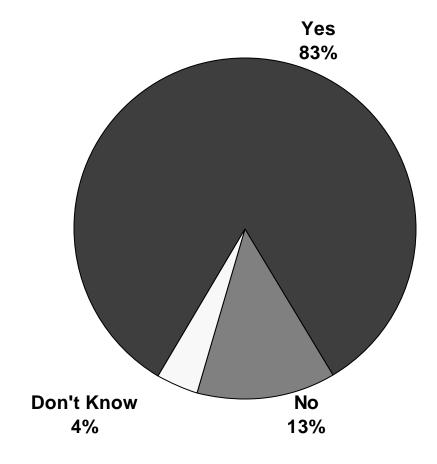
Base = Believe it would be a good idea for the US to have the same approach of as others nations to provide healthcare to everyone: Liberal (182); Moderate (265); Conservative (175)

## Controlling Health Care Costs

- Consistent with general views on the government's role, most Americans support government action or regulation to control spiraling health care costs.
  - Eighty-three percent (including 75% of conservatives) say that the U.S. should follow the lead of other nations and negotiate buying prescription drugs on a bulk basis in order to help control the costs of these medications.
  - An impressive 60% (one-half of conservatives) favor limiting the profits of pharmaceutical companies, while 55% (47% of conservatives) would support restricting pharmaceutical companies' marketing spending.
  - Nearly eight of ten (78%) of all American adults (71% of conservatives) support requiring state permission before health insurance companies can raise premiums
  - Sixty percent (50% of conservative, 62% of moderates and 72% of liberals) would support government controls on hospital costs.
  - Fifty percent would favor the federal government insuring against catastrophic medical costs.
    - Here, the political split is widest. While 63% of liberals and 52% of moderates support "making the federal government responsible for your catastrophic medical costs," only 39% of conservatives do.
- Americans are skeptical of managed care as a means of controlling costs. Barely two out of ten (19%) are willing to give "HMOs the power to reject more medical procedures ordered by doctors as 'medically necessary."

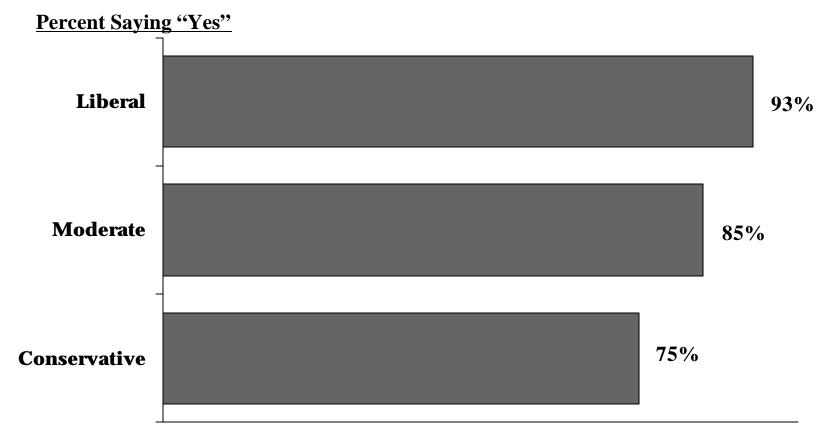
# Should U.S. Gov't Negotiate Prescription Drug Costs?

H7: Other major nations such as Canada pay a third of the cost that Americans do for prescription drugs because they buy their medicine in bulk purchases from pharmaceutical companies to get the cheapest price. In the U.S., drug companies supported legislation that forbids the U.S. Government from doing the same kind of bulk purchasing to hold down drug costs. Do you think America should do what other nations do by negotiating to buy prescription medication on a bulk basis in order to control prescription drug costs?



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Base = Liberal (203); Moderate (390); Conservative (374)

## Support for Cost Control Measures

H8: I am going to ask you about some possible ways to control health care costs. Please tell me if you would support or oppose each of these steps.

### **Support Summary**

Requiring health care insurers to get the permission of the state government before raising their premiums, in the same way that auto insurers now have to, in most states

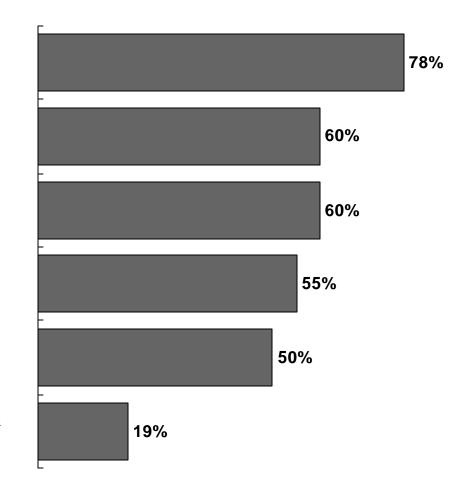
Putting a limit on the annual profits of pharmaceutical companies as one way of holding down prescription medication costs

Imposing government control on hospital costs

Limiting how much pharmaceutical companies can spend on television, magazine and other advertisements and promotions to generate demand for their drugs

Making the federal government responsible for your catastrophic medical costs, for example, hospital and other bills that total \$30,000 or more

Giving HMOs the power to reject more medical procedures ordered by doctors as "medically necessary"



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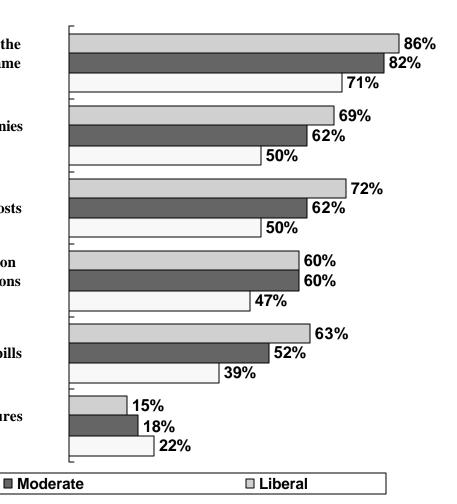
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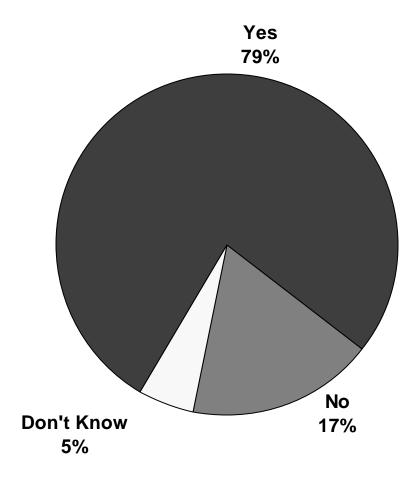
□ Conservative

## Access to Health Care Insurance – Specific Programs

- A substantial majority (79%) of adults think all should have access to the kinds of health insurance available to most federal employees, when informed that "(n)early all federal employees are covered by generous and comprehensive health insurance plans involving few out-of-pocket costs, such as copayments."
  - Liberals overwhelmingly (93%) agree that all Americans be able to get "the same kind of health coverage that federal workers already get, and at the same price the federal workers pay." They are joined by two-thirds of conservatives and 80% of moderates.
- Similarly, 81% believe that that children's health care should be a priority.
  - Sixty-five percent of conservatives agree with 86% of moderates and 95% of liberals that, "regardless of the current health insurance coverage situation of their parents, children in America should all be covered under a federal health care program that would provide for both their preventive and acute health care needs."

# Should All Have Access to the Same Coverage as Federal Workers?

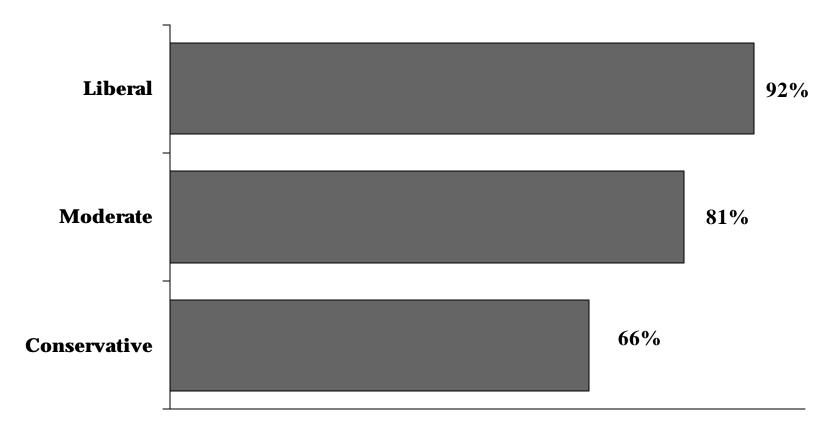
H3: Nearly all federal employees are covered by generous and comprehensive health insurance plans involving few out-of-pocket costs, such as co-payments. Should all Americans be able to get the same kind of health coverage that federal workers already get, and at the same price the federal workers pay?



# Should All Have Access to the Same Coverage as Federal Workers?

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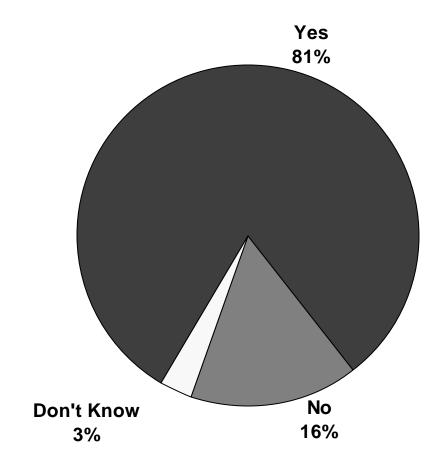
### **Percent Saying "Yes"**



Base = Liberal (203); Moderate (390); Conservative (374)

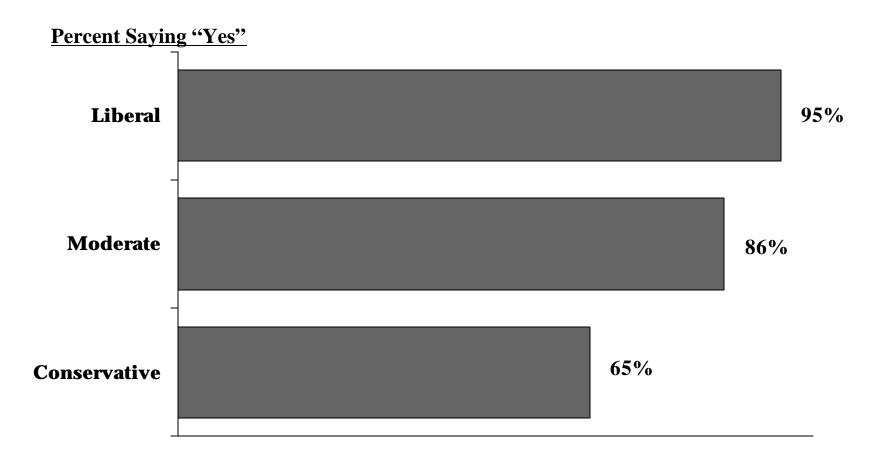
# Support for a Federal Program Providing for All Children's Health Insurance

H15: Do you think that, regardless of the current health insurance coverage situation of their parents, children in America should all be covered under a federal health care program that would provide for both their preventive and acute health care needs?



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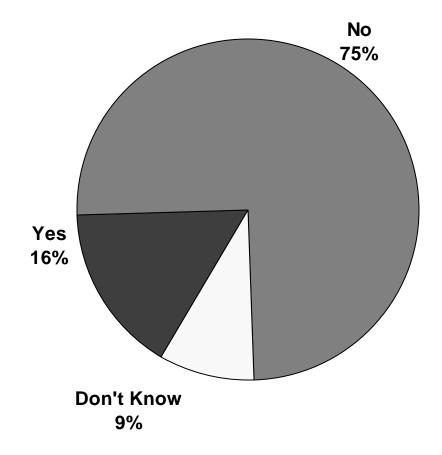
Base = Liberal (203); Moderate (390); Conservative (374)

## Legal Rights

- Most American adults reject the idea that a patient's legal rights should turn on where they get their health insurance.
  - A resounding 75% answer "**no**" when asked "Should patients who get HMO or other medical coverage on the job in the private sector have FEWER legal rights than people who get their health care benefits from a government job or through Medicare or Medicaid?"
    - 7 This view echoes across all political views, with 71% of conservatives joining nearly 80% of moderates and liberals.
- According to more than 8 out of ten adults (83%), patients should be able to hold HMOs legally responsible if they deny coverage for "medically necessary" care ordered by a doctor.
  - Seventy—six percent of conservatives (along with 91% of liberals and 86% of moderates) agree that patients should have the right to sue for damages in such circumstances.

## Should the Source of Health Insurance Determine Legal Rights?

H1: Should patients who get HMO or other medical coverage on the job in the private sector have FEWER legal rights than people who get their health care benefits from a government job or through Medicare or Medicaid?



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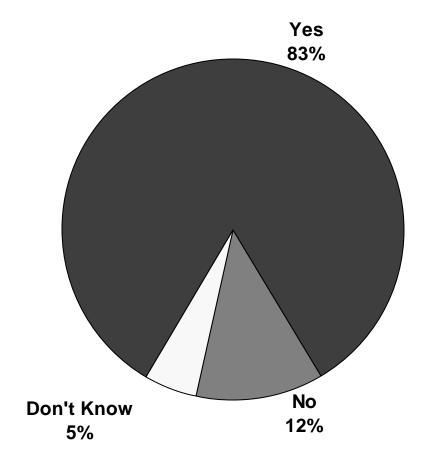
### **Percent Saying "No"**



Base = Liberal (203); Moderate (390); Conservative (374)

# Right To Sue HMOs?

H2: Should patients have the right to sue their HMOs for damages if the health-care maintenance organization denies coverage for "medically necessary" care ordered by a doctor?



## Right To Sue HMOs?

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### **Percent Saying "Yes"**



Base = Liberal (203); Moderate (390); Conservative (374)

## **DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

	(n)=	TOTAL (1020) %
Men Women		48 52
Northeast Midwest South West		20 23 36 22
White/Cauc Black/Afric American		81 11
Liberal Moderate Conservativ	⁄e	21 38 35
18-34 years 35-54 years 55 years old older	old	31 40 28

# **APPENDIX**



### RELIABILITY OF SURVEY PERCENTAGES

Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results.

The table below shows the possible sample variation that applies to percentage results reported herein. The chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than the indicated number of percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.

Size of Sample on Which Survey Results	Approximate Sampling Tolerances Applicable to Percentages At or Near These Levels				
Are Based	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	<u>50%</u>
1,000 interviews	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%
500 interviews	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%
250 interviews	4%	5%	6%	6%	6%
100 interviews	6%	8%	9%	10%	10%

### Additional Sampling Tolerances for Samples of 1,000 Interviews

9% or 91%	8% or 92%	7% or 93%	6% or 94%	5% or 95%
2%	2%	2%	1%	1%
4% or 96%	3% or 97%	2% or 98%	1% or 99%	
1%	1%	1%	.2%	

### SAMPLING TOLERANCES WHEN COMPARING TWO SAMPLES

Tolerances are also involved in the comparison of results from independent parts of the sample. A difference, in other words, must be of at least a certain number of percentage points to be considered statistically significant – that is not due to random chance. The table below is a guide to the sampling tolerances in percentage points applicable to such comparisons, based on a 95% confidence level.

Differences	Requ	ired for	Signif	fican	ce At
<b>A</b> 1	<del>-</del>				

Size of Samples	or Near These Percentage Levels				
Compared	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	<u>50%</u>
1,000 and 1,000	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%
1,000 and 500	3%	4%	5%	5%	5%
1,000 and 250	4%	6%	6%	7%	7%
1,000 and 100	6%	8%	9%	10%	10%
500 and 500	4%	5%	6%	6%	6%
500 and 250	5%	6%	7%	7%	8%
500 and 100	6%	9%	10%	11%	11%
250 and 250	5%	7%	8%	9%	9%
250 and 100	7%	9%	11%	11%	12%
100 and 100	8%	11%	13%	14%	14%

# Questionnaire



#### Poll on "Health Care"

#### Prepared for: Results for America, A Project of Civil Society Institute September 2-5, 2004

#### OPINION RESEARCH CORPORATION

NOTE: PERCENTAGES MAY NOT ADD TO 100% DUE TO ROUNDING \* INDICATES A RESPONSE OF LESS THAN .05%

BASE: Total Respondents (1020)

H1 Should patients who get HMO or other medical coverage on the job in the private sector have FEWER legal rights than people who get their health care benefits from a government job or through Medicare or Medicaid?

Yes 16% No 75% Don't Know 9%

BASE: Total Respondents (1020)

H2 Should patients have the right to sue their HMOs for damages if the health-care maintenance organization denies coverage for "medically necessary" care ordered by a doctor?

Yes 83% No 12% Don't Know 5%

BASE: Total Respondents (1020)

Nearly all federal employees are covered by generous and comprehensive health insurance plans involving few out-of-pocket costs, such as co-payments. Should all Americans be able to get the same kind of health coverage that federal workers already get, and at the same price the federal workers pay?

Yes 79% No 17% Don't Know 5%

BASE: Total Respondents (1020)

H4 Should America treat health care like other necessities of life, such as water and electricity, that are regulated by government to ensure fair prices, accountability, access for everyone and quality services?

Yes **78%**No **17%**Don't Know **5%** 

#### Poll on "Health Care"

#### Prepared for: Results for America, A Project of Civil Society Institute September 2-5, 2004

#### OPINION RESEARCH CORPORATION

BASE: Total Respondents (1020)

H5 Other major nations, such as Canada and England, guarantee their citizens health insurance on the job, through government programs, or via a nonprofit source. Would it be a good or bad idea for the United States to adopt the same approach to providing health care to everyone?

Good 67% Bad 27% Don't Know 6%

BASE: Guaranteed Health Care Is Good Idea (n=665)

Would you continue to have that view if such an approach was labeled in each of the following ways? Would your view be the same, probably be the same, might change or definitely change if the approach was labeled as . . . [READ AND ROTATE ITEMS]

	<u>A.</u>	<u>B.</u>	<u>C.</u>
	National health	Canadian-style	Socialized
	<u>insurance</u>	health care	medicine
Same (net)	77%	61%	61%
Be the same	<b>56%</b>	41%	44%
Probably be the same	21%	20%	17%
Change (net)	19%	32%	34%
Might change	15%	23%	24%
Definitely change	5%	8%	9%
Don't Know	3%	7%	5%

BASE: Total Respondents (1020)

Other major nations such as Canada pay a third of the cost that Americans do for prescription drugs because they buy their medicine in bulk purchases from pharmaceutical companies to get the cheapest price. In the U.S., drug companies supported legislation that forbids the U.S. Government from doing the same kind of bulk purchasing to hold down drug costs. Do you think America should do what other nations do by negotiating to buy prescription medication on a bulk basis in order to control prescription drug costs?

Yes 83% No 13% Don't Know 4%

# Poll on "Health Care" Prepared for: Results for America, A Project of Civil Society Institute September 2-5, 2004

#### **OPINION RESEARCH CORPORATION**

BASE: Total Respondents (1020)

H8 I am going to ask you about some possible ways to control health care costs. Please tell me if you would support or oppose each of these steps. [READ AND ROTATE ITEMS]

	<b>SUPPOR</b>	<b>OPPOSE</b>	DON'T KNOW
A. Putting a limit on the annual profits of pharmaceutical companies as one way of holding down prescription medication costs	<u>T</u> 60%	36%	4%
B. Limiting how much pharmaceutical companies can spend on television, magazine and other advertisements and promotions to generate demand for their drugs	55%	40%	4%
C. Requiring health care insurers to get the permission of the state government before raising their premiums, in the same way that auto insurers now have to, in most states	78%	18%	4%
D. Giving HMOs the power to reject more medical procedures ordered by doctors as "medically necessary"	19%	76%	4%
E. Imposing government control on hospital costs	60%	34%	6%
F. Making the federal government responsible for your catastrophic medical costs, for example, hospital and other bills that total \$30,000 or more	50%	42%	8%

BASE: Total Respondents (1020)

H9 Do you currently have health insurance coverage?

Yes **85%**No **14%**Don't Know **1%** 

H10 OMITTED / NOT ASKED

H11 OMITTED / NOT ASKED

#### Poll on "Health Care"

### Prepared for: Results for America, A Project of Civil Society Institute September 2-5, 2004

#### OPINION RESEARCH CORPORATION

BASE: Have Health Insurance (n=877)

H12 Has your health insurance coverage through work been cut back in terms of the amount of coverage, or have you had to pay more either in terms of a bigger deductible or a larger share of the premium?

Cut Back/Pay More (net)	<i>56%</i>
Cut Back In Terms Of The Amount Of Coverage	<b>7%</b>
Had To Pay More	37%
Both	13%
Neither	30%
Coverage Not Through Work (Vol.)	9%
Don't Know	5%

BASE: Have Health Insurance (n=877)

H13 Do you buy prescription medications for yourself or a family member?

Yes **78%**No **22%**Don't Know \*

BASE: Have Health Insurance and buy prescription medications for self or family member (n=706)
H14 Staying on the topic of those prescription medications . . . [READ STATEMENTS]

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	DON'T KNOW
A. Do you skip medications on some days or lower your daily doses of medications in order to "stretch" your medicine due to high prices	18%	81%	1%
B. Have you already purchased lower cost prescription medication from Canada or another nation	6%	93%	*
C. Looking ahead to the future, do you plan to, or are you considering, purchasing lower cost prescription medication from Canada or another nation	33%	63%	5%

### Poll on "Health Care"

### Prepared for: Results for America, A Project of Civil Society Institute September 2-5, 2004

#### OPINION RESEARCH CORPORATION

BASE: Total Respondents (1020)

H15 Do you think that, regardless of the current health insurance coverage situation of their parents, children in America should all be covered under a federal health care program that would provide for both their preventive and acute health care needs?

Yes	81%
No	16%
Don't Know	3%

BASE: Total Respondents (1020)

H16 Do you consider yourself to be liberal, moderate, or conservative?

Liberal 21%
Moderate 38%
Conservative 35%
Don't Know/None Of These 5%