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AMA Releases Battleground Poll Results Showing GOP Health Reform Fixes Unpopular with Many Americans

Voters in Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Nevada, Ohio, Tennessee, West Virginia strongly disapprove of Medicaid cuts, elimination of patient protections

CHICAGO – The American Medical Association (AMA) today released poll results showing that policies currently under consideration— particularly Medicaid cuts and narrowed coverage plans – are largely unpopular among voters in states representing nearly every region of the country.

In advance of the Senate’s vote on health system reform legislation, the AMA commissioned a poll of registered voters in seven states, including [Alaska](#), [Arkansas](#), [Colorado](#), [Nevada](#), [Ohio](#), [Tennessee](#), and [West Virginia](#). Voters were asked their opinion of the health system reform legislation that was recently passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, provisions of the Senate legislation, and the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

“If either the House or Senate health reform bill were to become law, not only would millions of Americans lose their insurance coverage, but many more would have higher – perhaps unaffordable – deductibles and copayments that will discourage them from seeking the care they need,” said AMA President David O. Barbe, M.D. “These polls of voters from states across the country show that the proposed Medicaid cuts hit home, affecting many respondents directly and imperiling access to care. Americans are not only overwhelmingly opposed to the current reform proposals, but they are opposed to many of the major provisions on which they are built. Both the Senate and House bills as currently drafted violate the important principle ‘first, do no harm.’ It is clear that changes are needed to our health system and that a bipartisan approach is necessary to achieve those results. Americans agree that the proposals currently before Congress are a massive step in the wrong direction.”

Key findings from the polls show:

- Widespread support in each state for Medicaid and opposition to reducing spending on the program—as both the House and Senate bills would do.
- When asked if federal funding for Medicaid expansion should be eliminated or reduced in their state, respondents in each of the seven states were overwhelmingly opposed—ranging from a 54 percent majority to as much as a 63 percent majority.

Voters in each state surveyed oppose provisions in the bill that would cause socioeconomically-disadvantaged people to purchase health care plans with a low cost, but very limited access to care, so-called “skinny plans.” For instance, when asked if low-income people should be provided with assistance from the federal government to purchase inexpensive plans that would only protect them from very serious illness and not offer any preventive or routine services, a majority of respondents in all states but Arkansas were strongly opposed.

In addition to polling these specific fixes, the polls also found that respondents in each state had an overall low opinion of the House-passed health care bill. In fact, when asked whether the House-backed reform bill was a good idea or a bad idea, no more than 26 percent of voters in any of the seven states support the bill.

Public Opinion Strategies conducted the statewide polls by phone in Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Nevada, Ohio, and Tennessee between June 13 and 20, 2017. The samples were drawn from the voter file proportional to the statewide registered voter population. Quotas were set by specific demographics such as region, age, gender, and ethnicity based on data from the U.S. Census and the voter file in order to ensure the sample is representative statewide. Polling in West Virginia was conducted by Voter/Consumer Research from June 19-22, 2017.

Yesterday, the AMA [expressed its opposition to the Senate's proposed health care bill](#) based on its [health system reform objectives](#) released in January and shared at the time with Members of Congress – primary among them that people who currently have insurance, including Medicaid coverage, should not become uninsured.

Complete interview schedules for [Alaska](#), [Arkansas](#), [Colorado](#), [Nevada](#), [Ohio](#), [Tennessee](#), and [West Virginia](#) are available online.

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