



Health Care Drumbeat: New Polling and Messaging to Move Federal Action in 2021



Dedicated to creating a nation where the best health and health care are equally accessible and affordable to all

Today's Agenda

1. Current Political Landscape

- Jen Taylor, Senior Director of Federal Relations, Families USA

2. Voters Want Health Policy Change

- Melissa Burroughs, Associate Director of Strategic Partnerships, Families USA

3. Small Business Owners Need Health Policy Change

- Cassie Mills, Vice President of Communications, Small Business Majority

4. Building the Movement: Messaging to Get Us Where We Want to Go

- Melissa Burroughs, Families USA



Current Political Landscape

What's Happening in Washington?

- **Immediate COVID Relief: American Rescue Plan**
 - Short term coverage affordability improvements, optional 12-mo Medicaid postpartum coverage, Medicaid expansion incentives, state fiscal relief, investments in safety net and variety of human services, etc.
- **Building Back Better**
 - 2 parts:
 - 1) Infrastructure (*today!*)
 - 2) Health and “Human Infrastructure” (*TBA in April*)
 - More permanent coverage investments and ACA improvements
 - Drug pricing? (HR 3 saves more than \$450 million on price negotiation and invests back in the Medicare program)
 - Public option? System transformation? Immigrant health? Health equity?
- **Ongoing Investments in Health and Health Care**
 - President’s Budget
 - Congressional Appropriations
 - Other bipartisan health bills: e.g. Lower Health Care Costs Act, MCH



Challenges and Opportunities

Collective Challenges

- **Crowded Agenda:** Getting health provisions into the package at all (competing priorities – infrastructure, climate change, American manufacturing, etc.)
- **Prioritization:** Balancing health policy priorities
- **Cost:** Structural changes are expensive, bill must be offset (probably w/ other health policies), moderate Dems may raise cost concerns
- **Tight voting margins:** Dem narrow majority means EVERY vote counts!

Shared Opportunities: Partnerships, Communications, and Collective Action

- **Coalitions:** Opportunities to weigh in on shared priorities and show broad and powerful support for action
- **Collective Actions:** Sign-on letters, briefings, webinars, co-authored work, lifting up partner resources like reports, infographics, and blog posts
- **Unified Messaging:** Strategically utilizing paid and earned media, as well as social media and storytelling, to build momentum for change
- **Public Support for Bold Action on Health Care:** *We've got the data to back it up!*

Voters to Congress and President Biden: It's Time to Go Big on Health Care Reform



Key Findings

1. Voters across the American electorate are looking for meaningful action this year on healthcare.

When asked what they want Biden and Congress to focus on this year, healthcare is a top-of-mind priority for voters. Three in four voters (75%) say healthcare should be a high or one of the top priorities for President Biden and Congress this year, including 91% of Democrats, 75% of independents and 58% of Republicans.

2. There is greater concern that Congress won't go far enough (51%) in making changes to the healthcare system than that it will go too far (40%).

Worry about lack of action is even stronger when it comes to addressing the cost of prescription drugs: 67% are more concerned that Congress will not go far enough vs. 23% who are more concerned Congress will go too far, including majorities of Democrats, independents and Republicans.

Key Findings *(continued)*

3. While voters want to see expanded coverage and an equity focus in healthcare reform, addressing excessive costs is their paramount concern.

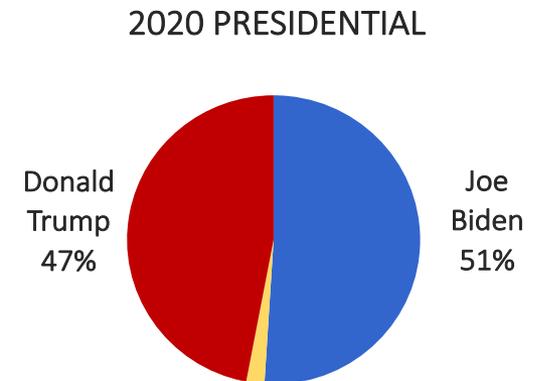
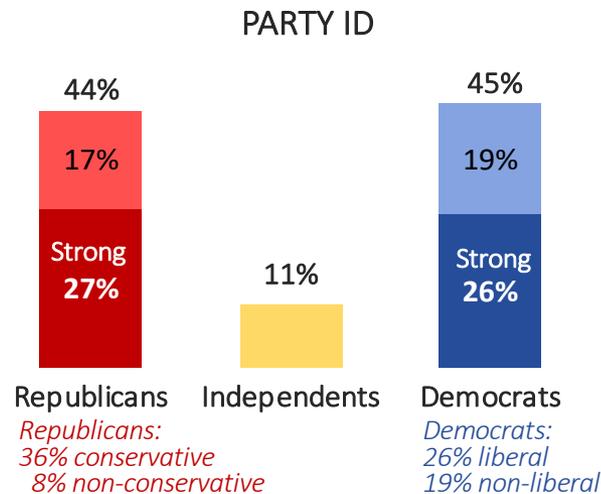
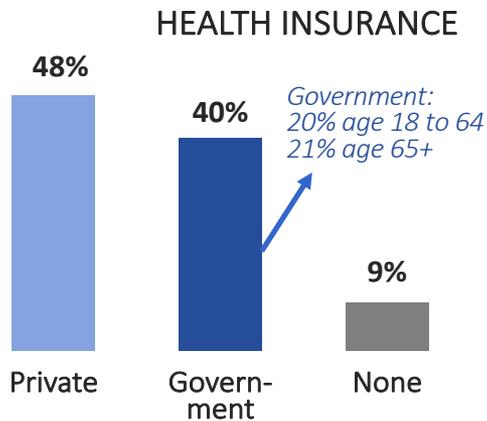
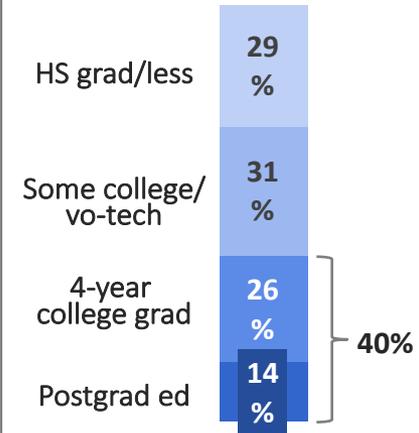
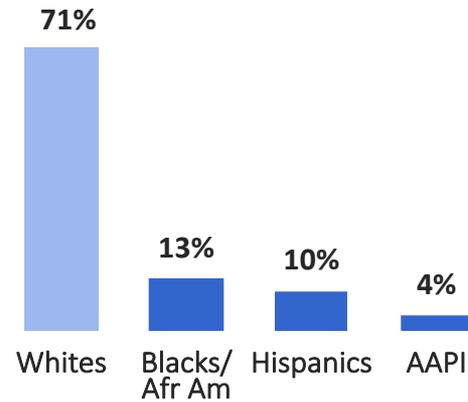
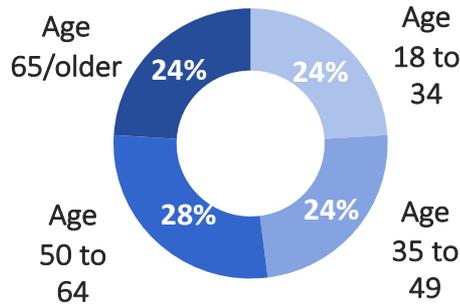
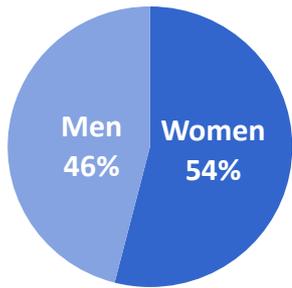
The most important actions voters want to see on healthcare, and the proposed actions that voters rate most favorably, are lowering the price of prescription drugs (92% important, 83% favorable) and lowering the cost of healthcare (89% important, 80% favorable).

4. The most effective communications about healthcare reform should address voters' core concerns about excessive prices and corporate abuses, but also meet the current moment with a call to unite to make sure everyone can get quality, affordable healthcare.

Voters are clear that the status quo in the American healthcare system is not working. Fully 82% believe that the healthcare system today works more for the benefit of the insurance and drug industries rather than for the benefit of the average person (18%), a sentiment that holds true across demographic groups and partisan lines.

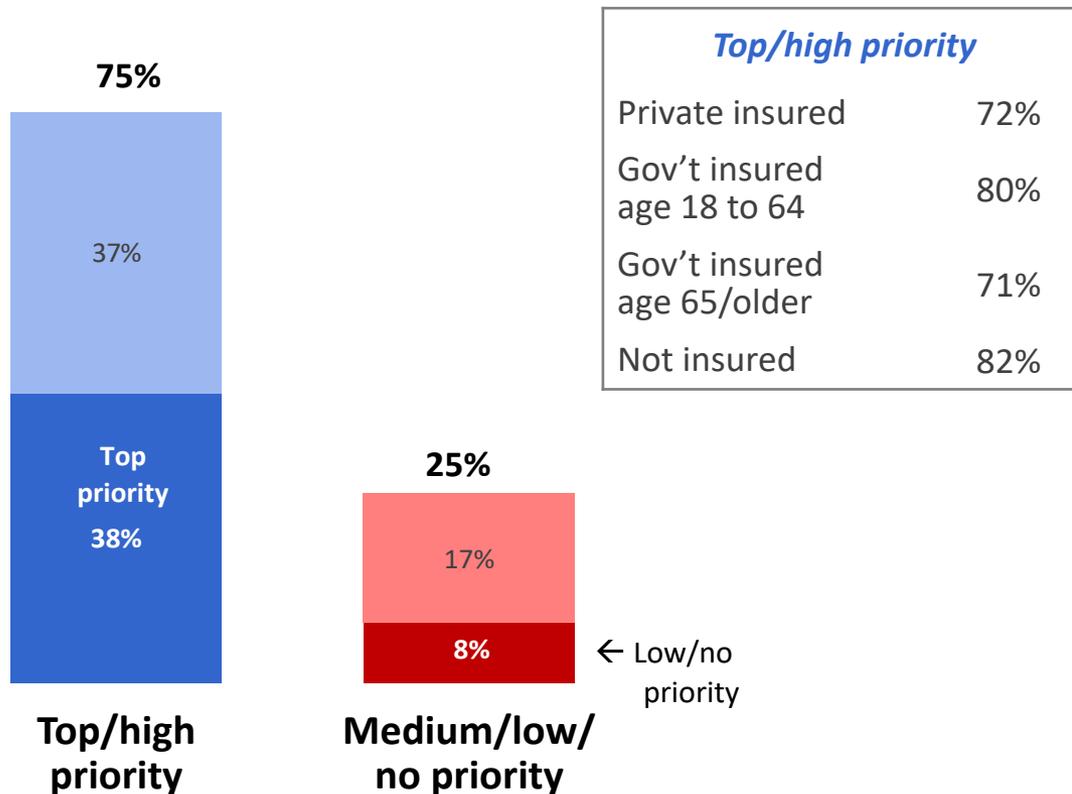
Methodology and Profile of the Electorate

➔ Online survey among 1,607 voters nationwide, fielded January 27 to February 1, 2021



Voters want President Biden and Congress to act on healthcare this year.

Priority Healthcare Should Be for President and Congress this year



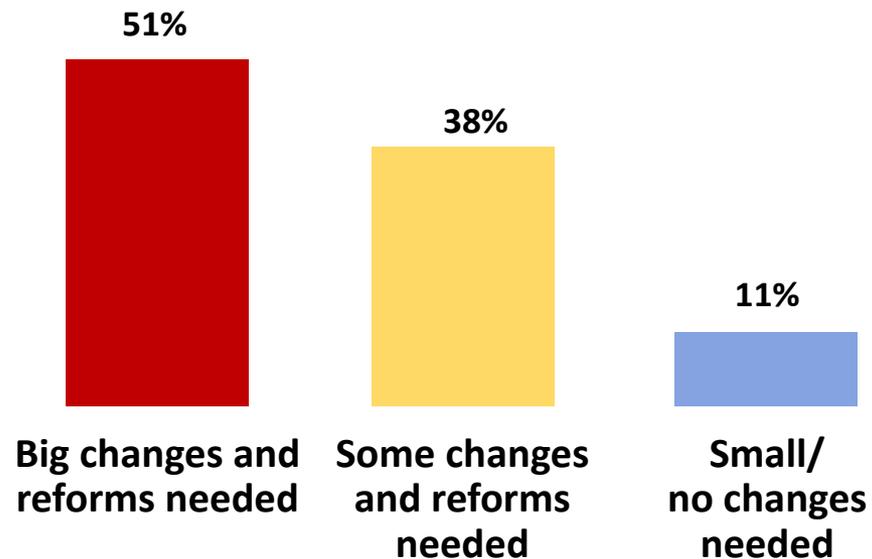
There is broad support for reforming the healthcare system; support is particularly strong among voters of color.

Attitudes toward Healthcare System, Key Subgroups

	Should be top/ high priority	<i>Big reforms needed</i>
Men	70%	45%
Women	78%	55%
Whites	69%	46%
Blacks	93%	68%
Hispanics	85%	58%
Democrats	91%	62%
Liberal Democrats	94%	69%
Non-liberal Democrats	88%	53%
Independents	75%	59%
Republicans	58%	37%
Conservative Republicans	55%	35%
Non-conservative Republicans	70%	47%
Swing voters	73%	49%

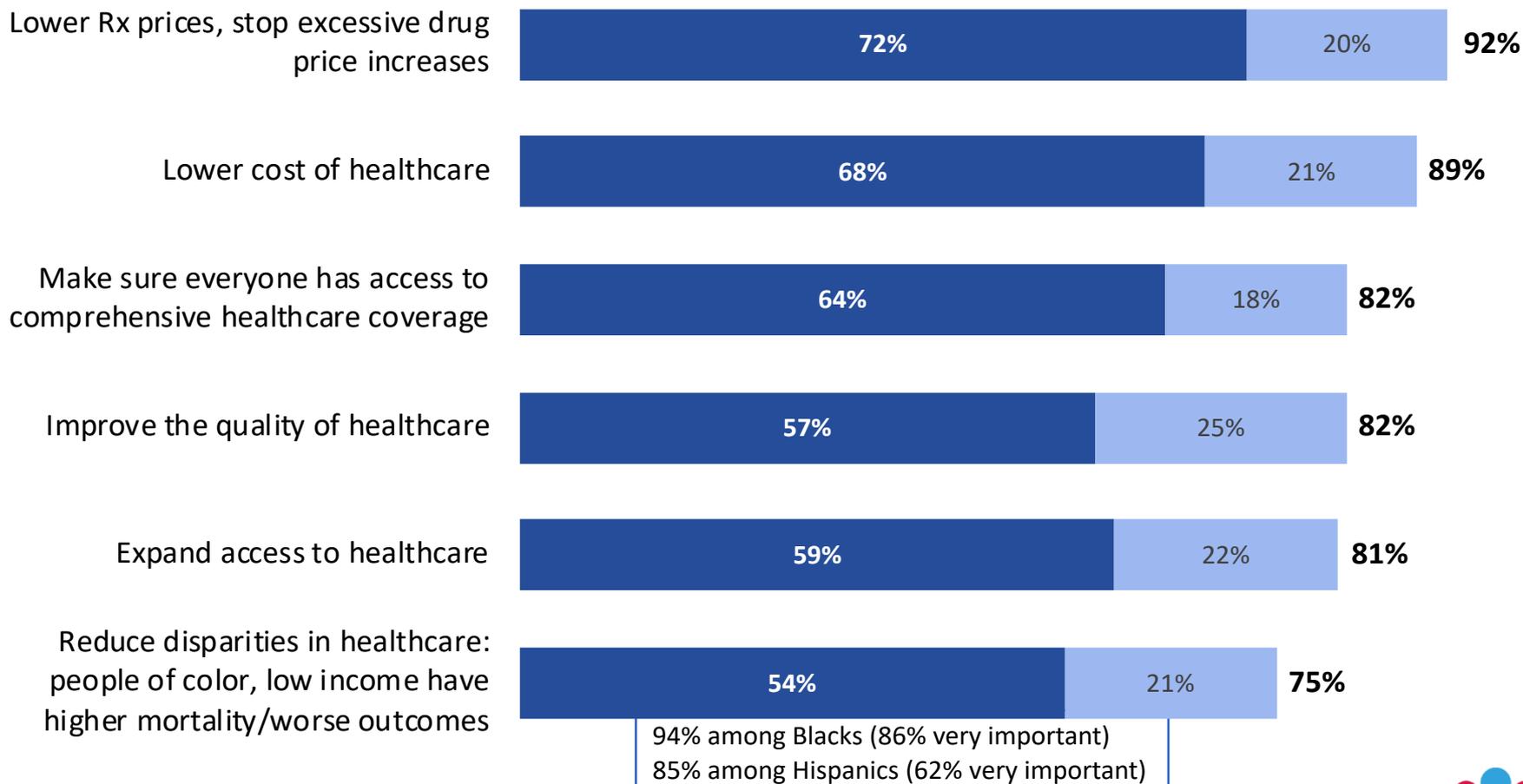
Voters are looking for meaningful changes to the healthcare system.

Amount of Changes/Reform Needed in Healthcare System



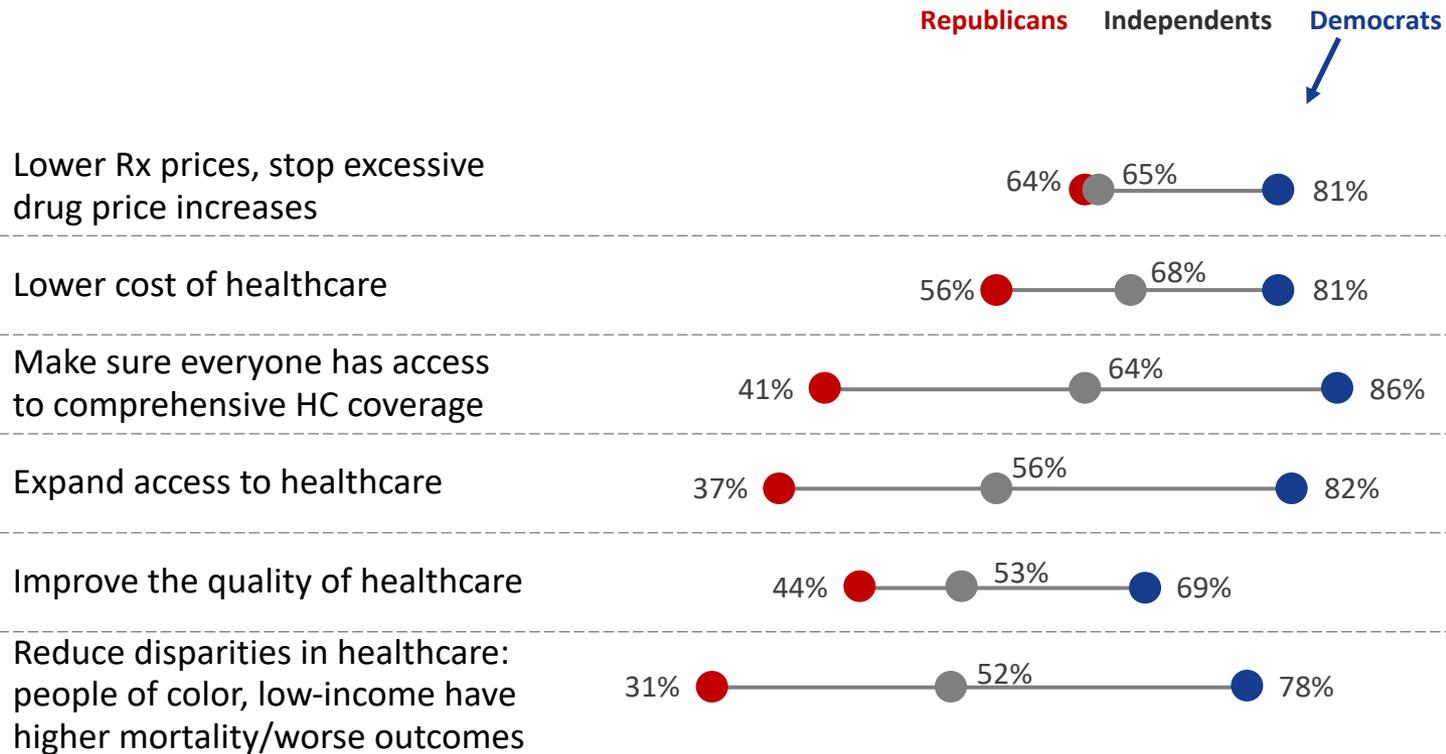
Voters want a number of priorities to be on the healthcare agenda, with addressing costs the most urgent concern.

■ Very important for President/Congress to take action on this ■ Fairly important



There is bipartisan consensus on the urgency of addressing costs; Democrats and independents want a more far-reaching agenda.

Very important priority for President and Congress



There is greater concern that Congress won't go far enough (*rather than too far*) in making changes to the healthcare system.

Bigger Worry about Congressional Action on the Healthcare System

Won't go far enough making needed changes to lower healthcare costs/ensure all Americans have health insurance



Will go too far making changes that increase government spending/give government too much control over the way our healthcare system works



	Won't go far enough	Will go too far
Liberal Democrats	81%	12%
Non-liberal Democrats	63%	25%
Independents	51%	34%
Non-conservative Republicans	47%	40%
Conservative Republicans	23%	70%

Across party lines, voters are more concerned that Congress won't go far enough (*rather than too far*) to regulate drug prices.

Bigger Worry about Congressional Action on Prescription Drugs

Won't go far enough to lower Rx drug costs, allow drug companies to continue charging excessive amounts, making medicines too expensive for many

67%

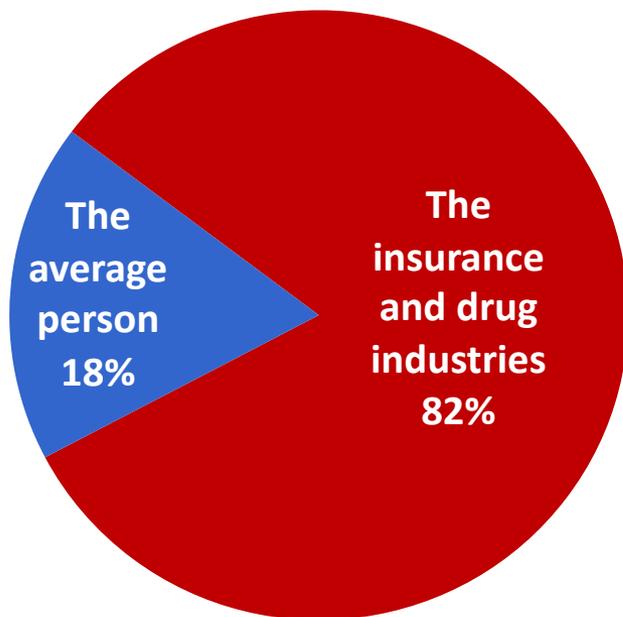
Will go too far regulating Rx drug costs, reduce companies' ability to invest in research and development of new life-saving medicines

23%

	Won't go far enough	Will go too far
Liberal Democrats	81%	11%
Non-liberal Democrats	67%	20%
Independents	67%	22%
Non-conservative Republicans	73%	16%
Conservative Republicans	55%	36%

Overwhelming majorities believe that the system works more for the insurance and drug industries than for the average person.

The healthcare system today works more for the benefit of:



Healthcare system works more for insurance and drug industries	
Whites	82%
Blacks	83%
Hispanics	81%
Democrats	87%
Independents	83%
Republicans	77%
Swing voters	84%
Private insured	83%
Government insured	80%
Not insured	86%
Income under \$40K	84%
Income \$40K to \$75K	85%
Income over \$75K	77%

**Small Business Majority:
Small Business Owners Need Health Policy Change**



Overview: Small business struggling to access healthcare during pandemic

- National survey of 500 small business owners nationwide, including oversamples of Black, Latino and Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) entrepreneurs; conducted by Lake Research Partners
- The poll was fielded before the latest round of stimulus passed but provides important insights into the challenges small businesses continue to face.

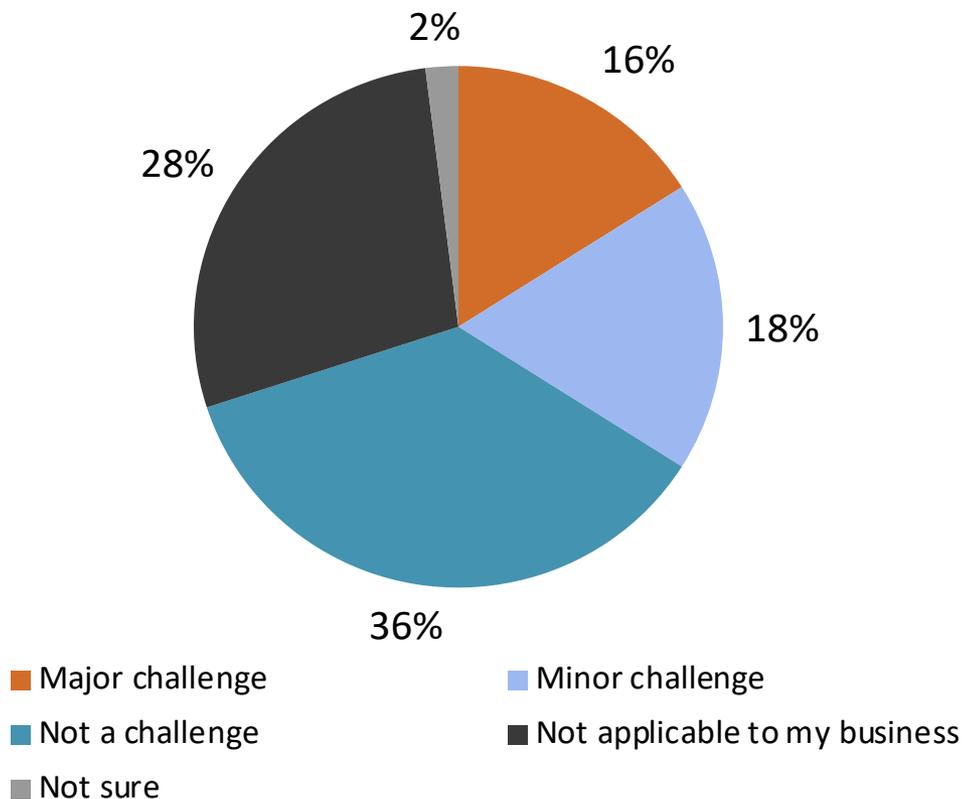
Read more:

smallbusinessmajority.org/our-research/healthcare/small-businesses-struggling-access-healthcare-during-covid-19-pandemic

Small business struggling to access healthcare during pandemic



Small businesses owners struggling to access health insurance for themselves and their employees



1 in 3 (34%) small businesses report it's been a challenge to obtain health insurance coverage for themselves and their employees during the pandemic.

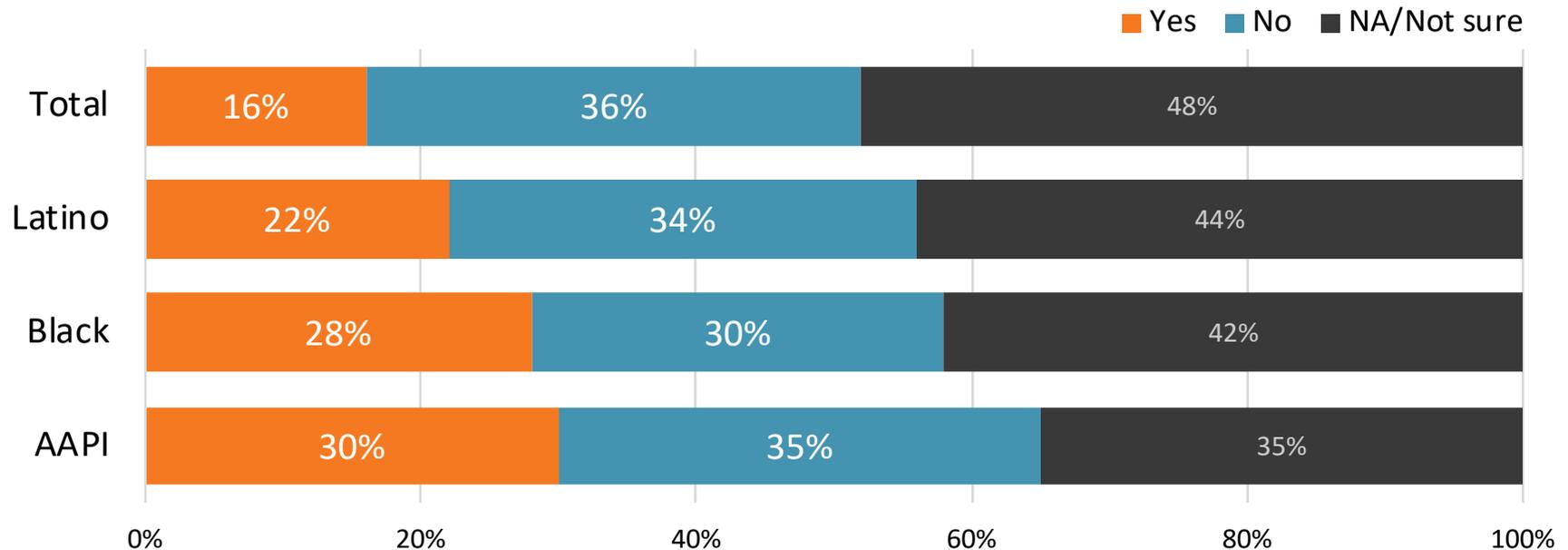
Black, Latino and AAPI small business owners are more likely to list this as a challenge than white small business owners (50% Black, 44% AAPI and 43% Latino small businesses).

Small business struggling to access healthcare during pandemic



Cuts to employee health coverage

Small businesses owners plan to make cuts to employee health coverage



Read more:

smallbusinessmajority.org/our-research/healthcare/small-businesses-struggling-access-healthcare-during-covid-19-pandemic



Small business struggling to access healthcare during pandemic

Why is maintaining benefits a challenge?

- Historically, small businesses have struggled to access and offer health coverage due to the cost; represented a disproportionate number of the working uninsured prior to the ACA.
- When small businesses can afford coverage, they often **pay more than big businesses.**
- Meanwhile, many small businesses are still struggling to maintain payroll; 60% still haven't brought back their entire workforce.
- And, this is an even greater challenge for business owners of color who have faced **inequitable access to capital and emergency resources during the pandemic.**

Read more:

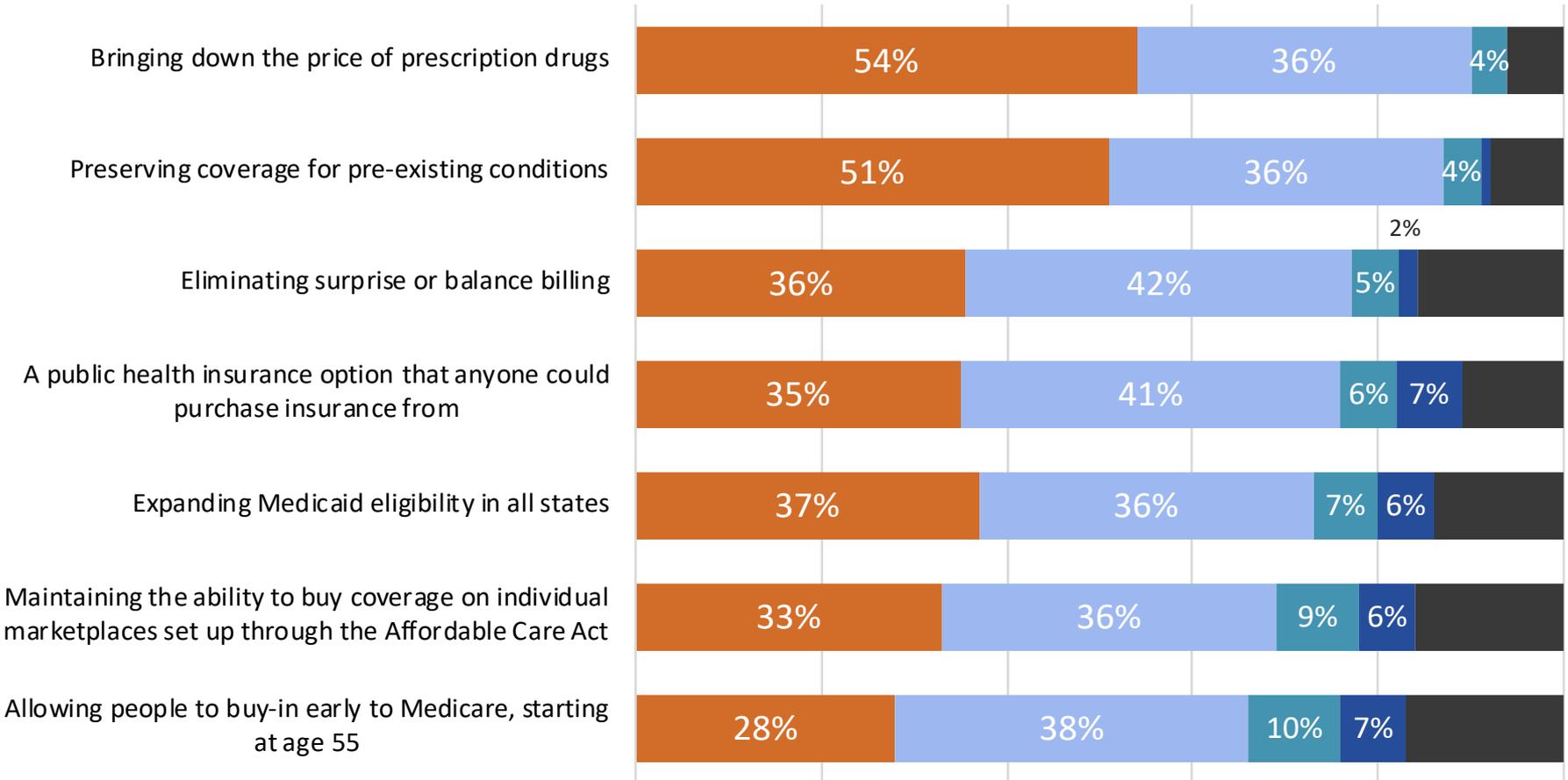
smallbusinessmajority.org/our-research/healthcare/small-businesses-struggling-access-healthcare-during-covid-19-pandemic

Small business struggling to access healthcare during pandemic

Small businesses' views on policy proposals



Strongly support Support Oppose Strongly oppose Neutral/Don't care



How We Get Where We Want To Go





UNITED FOR HEALTH

Messages that bridge the political divide
to finish the job on health reform

FAMILIESUSA 
THE VOICE FOR HEALTH CARE CONSUMERS

Review: Underlying Messaging Research

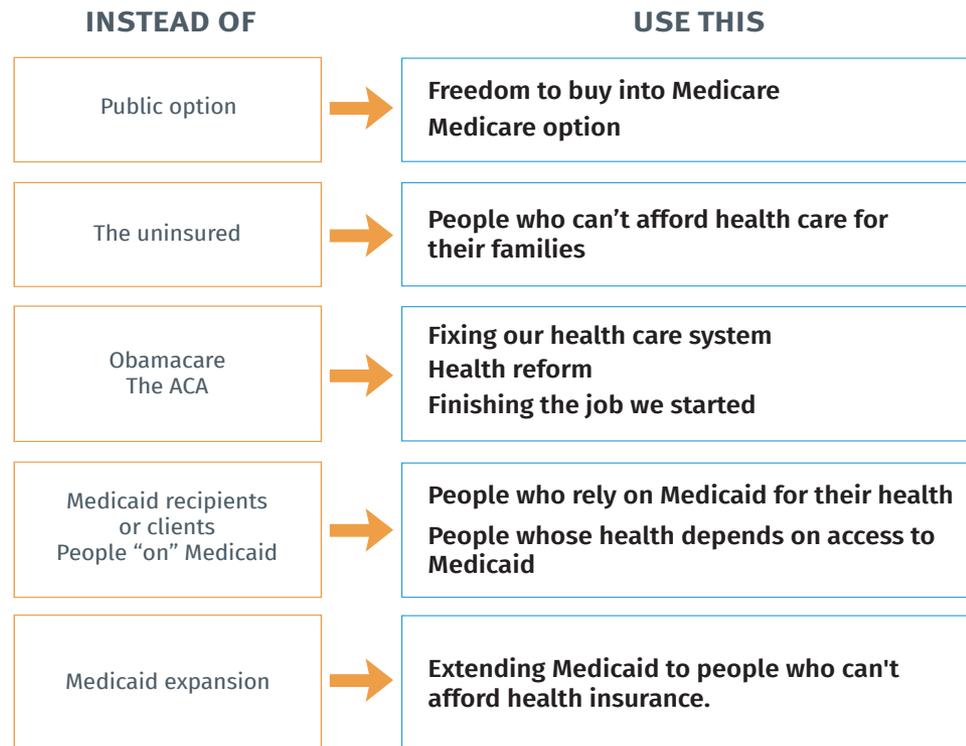
- **We developed and tested:**
 - Effective narratives that can beat the toughest messages taken from opponents;
 - Brief, evocative statements or “talking points,” and brief messages on specific policies.
- We identified a range of messages consistent with the broader goal of the health care movement, allowing for advocates’ different priorities and constituencies
- We assessed these messages in the contexts of the pandemic, health equity, and the underlying causes of health and illness (social determinants of health)
- Messages navigate the complications of health care reform that was only half-completed the first time and thus is only half-popular.

Successful policy story telling



- **Connect with values** and metaphor such as we all deserve the same quality of care or a family doctor.
- **Raise concerns** about antagonists or impediments to success such as racial and economic inequality, insurance and drug companies and politicians failing to lead.
- **Restore hope.** End with a resolution such as letting Medicare be an option, opening Medicaid up, and tackling impediments to health, equity, and access.

Changing our language



TALKING POINTS: Short & Strong Messages

Access, Affordability & Coverage

- All of us should have the opportunity to live a healthy life and receive high quality health care regardless of our race, ethnicity, or gender.
- I believe in a family doctor for every family. No one in this country should ever have to worry that they can't afford health care or have to choose between filling a prescription and paying their rent or mortgage.
- Our elected representatives shouldn't have a better health care than the rest of us. We should give them one year to fix the problem and if they can't come to an agreement, their families and staff can pick from whatever options the rest of us have.
- It's time we took an honest, non-partisan look at what has and hasn't worked in health reform and fix the problems already. It's time to finish the job we started, not tear it down.
- It's time the world's military superpower treats health as a national security issue which threatens our lives and security as surely as any foreign enemy would. You don't wave a white flag at a virus a thousandth of the size of a speck of dust. You fight it, you beat it, and you protect your country.



TALKING POINTS: Short & Strong Messages

Equity

- The greatness of a nation can be measured by how it handles adversity. Whether we're White, Black, or Brown, none of us is safe when any of us is living from paycheck to paycheck, without insurance, and can't afford to take off if we're sick.
- Cancer, COVID, and medical bills don't come in red and blue, and they don't check to see if you have a green card. It's unbelievable that, during a deadly pandemic, too many public officials haven't figured out that we're all in this together, that if some of us get sick, all of us are at risk.
- If there's anything we've learned from a virus that doesn't care where you come from or how much you earn, it's that if any of us is sick, all of us can become sick, and we all should have access to affordable health care, regardless of our color, wealth, or immigration status.
- The coronavirus not only exposed the problems with our health care system but gave us a blueprint for change. Wealth shouldn't buy health, and color shouldn't buy illness. We're all in this together, and we're all more essential than we know.



Next Steps and Resources

Remember: Steal these messages!

- **RESOURCES**
 - **Digital Toolkit, Polling Information, Messaging Guide**
 - **All of these will be circulated after the webinar**
- Use these lessons and messages to shape your own communications– they can be applied to any health policy issue!
- Share this information with your allies & ask them to join you in joint communications/collective actions
- **Want to get more involved? Contact Families USA to learn about additional ways to apply messaging, partner, and plug in to the work.**



Questions?