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# More Republicans See Health Care Stance as ‘Very Important’ to Midterm Vote

*Views of ACA Little Changed Following Enrollment Surge*

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION  
ON THIS REPORT:**

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# More Republicans See Health Care Stance as ‘Very Important’ to Midterm Vote

## *Views of ACA Little Changed Following Enrollment Surge*

In looking ahead to this fall’s elections, Republicans are more likely than Democrats to view a candidate’s position on the Affordable Care Act as very important to their vote. A new national survey finds that 64% of Republican registered voters say a candidate’s stance on the health care law will be very important in their voting decision, compared with 52% of Democrats and 45% of independents.

The new national survey by the Pew Research Center and [USA TODAY](#), conducted April 3-6 among 1,010 adults, finds more continue to disapprove (50%) than approve (37%) of the 2010 health care law. [Last month](#), the balance of opinion was similar – 53% disapproved of the law, while 41% approved.

Six-in-ten (60%) voters who oppose the health care law say that a candidate’s stance on the health care law will be very important to their vote, compared with about half (48%) of voters who support the law.

Opinion about the 2010 health care law, as well as its views of its current and future impact, remains deeply divided along partisan lines. By roughly eight-to-one (83% to 10%), Republicans disapprove of the law while Democrats, by a less lopsided margin (73% to 16%) approve of it. Only about a third of independents (34%) approve of the law while 54% disapprove. Opinions across partisan groups are little changed from last month.

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### **GOP Voters More Likely to See ACA as ‘Very Important’ to their Vote**

*% of registered voters saying stance on health care law is “very important” to their vote in congressional election*



Survey conducted April 3-6, 2014.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER/USA TODAY

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## Views of Health Care Law's Impact

A majority of Americans (57%) say the health care law has not had much of an effect on themselves and their families, though somewhat fewer say that today than did so last September (63%). About a quarter (24%) say the law's impact has been mostly negative while 17% say it has been mostly positive.

On balance, more also say the law has had a negative than positive impact on the country (43% vs. 30%). But negative views of the law's impact on the country have declined (from 49%) – and positive views have risen (from 23%) – since December.

The public's assessments of the law's future impact also remain more negative than positive. Currently, 35% say in coming years the law will have a mostly negative effect on them and their families, 29% expect the effect will be mostly positive, while 30% say the law will not have much of an effect.

Slightly more expect the impact on the country will be negative than positive (44% vs. 38%); relatively few Americans (12%) say the law will not have much of an impact on the country.

Comparable percentages of Democrats (58%) independents (58%) and Republicans (52%) say the law has not yet had much of an effect on them or their families. But most Republicans (61%) expect the law *will have* a mostly negative personal impact; by contrast, 55% of Democrats think the law's impact will be mostly positive. Independents have mixed expectations about the law's effects – 34% say it will be mostly negative, 28% say mostly positive and 31% think it won't have much of an effect.

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### Continuing Partisan Divide in Views of the ACA

<i>View of 2010 health care law ...</i>	<b>Total</b> %	<b>Rep</b> %	<b>Dem</b> %	<b>Ind</b> %
Approve	37	10	73	34
Disapprove	50	83	16	54

*So far, how has the health care law affected ...*

#### **You and your family**

Mostly positive	17	7	30	17
Mostly negative	24	39	10	24
Not much of an effect	57	52	58	58

#### **The country as a whole**

Mostly positive	30	11	56	26
Mostly negative	43	69	16	47
Not much of an effect	17	17	18	17

Survey conducted April 3-6, 2014. Don't know responses not shown.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER/USA TODAY

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Majorities of Republicans say in coming years the law will have a mostly negative effect on them and their families (61%) and the country (73%). Democrats express the opposite viewpoints – 55% see the law’s future personal impact positively and 70% say it will have a positive effect on the country.

While independents are divided over the law’s potential personal impact, more say it will have a mostly negative (46%) than a mostly positive (34%) effect on the country.

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### Nearly Half of Independents Say ACA Will Negatively Affect Country

*In the coming years, how will the health care law affect ...*

	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
<b>You and your family</b>				
Mostly positive	29	8	55	28
Mostly negative	35	61	10	34
Not much of an effect	30	27	33	31
<b>The country as a whole</b>				
Mostly positive	38	14	70	34
Mostly negative	44	73	14	46
Not much of an effect	12	10	11	13

Survey conducted April 3-6, 2014. Don't know responses not shown.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER/USA TODAY

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## About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted April 3-6, 2014 among a national sample of 1,010 adults, 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (510 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 500 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 280 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source and MKTG under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region to parameters from the 2012 Census Bureau's American Community Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status, based on extrapolations from the 2013 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Unweighted sample size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	1,010	3.6 percentage points
Republican	273	7.0 percentage points
Democrat	299	6.7 percentage points
Independent	331	6.3 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER/USA TODAY**  
**April 3-6, 2014 OMNIBUS**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**N=1,010**

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.1 As I read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past week, please tell me if you happened to follow each news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. First, **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE] [IF NECESSARY "Did you follow [ITEM] very closely, fairly closely, not too closely or not at all closely?"]**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
a. The situation involving Russia and Ukraine					
April 3-6, 2014	26	31	18	23	2
March 20-23, 2014: <i>Russia taking control of Ukraine's Crimea region</i>	30	33	14	21	1
March 6-9, 2014: <i>Russia sending troops into Ukraine's Crimea region in response to a new Ukrainian government</i>	28	31	17	23	1
February 27-March 2, 2014: <i>Political violence and a new government in Ukraine</i>	19	28	21	31	1
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
August 29-31, 2008: <i>The ongoing hostilities between Russia and the Republic of Georgia</i>	22	31	26	20	1
August 22-25, 2008	27	39	22	12	*
August 15-18, 2008	35	35	15	15	*
August 8-11, 2008: <i>Russia sending troops into the Republic of Georgia</i>	17	22	23	37	1
b. The investigation into a missing Malaysia Airlines plane					
April 3-6, 2014	33	31	21	14	1
March 20-23, 2014	39	33	18	9	1
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
July 11-14, 2013: <i>A plane crash in San Francisco</i>	24	32	21	22	1
November 16-19, 2009: <i>News about a US Airways flight crashing into the Hudson River</i>	44	34	14	8	*
May 15-18, 2009: <i>The investigation into a February plane crash in Buffalo, New York</i>	17	26	25	33	*
February 13-16, 2009: <i>A plane crashing into a house near Buffalo, New York, killing 50 people</i>	32	39	16	13	*
August 22-28, 2008: <i>A plane crash in Madrid, Spain</i>	8	22	32	37	1
July 20-23, 2007: <i>A plane crash in Brazil that killed nearly 200 people</i>	13	28	27	31	1
November, 2001: <i>The recent crash on an American Airlines plane near Kennedy Airport in New York</i>	48	34	13	4	1
February, 2000: <i>Crash of an Alaskan Airlines jet near Los Angeles</i>	35	40	17	8	*
December, 1999: <i>The crash of an EgyptAir plane off the coast of New England and the investigation into what happened</i>	30	44	15	10	1
July, 1999: <i>Crash of an American Airlines flight in Arkansas</i>	19	38	25	17	1

**PEW.1 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
July, 1996: <i>The crash of a Paris-bound TWA plane off the coast of New York</i>	69	23	6	2	*
February, 1990: <i>Crash of Colombian airliner near JFK airport in New York</i>	33	39	18	10	0
c. News about how the rollout of the 2010 health care law is going					
April 3-6, 2014	25	25	20	29	1
March 20-23, 2014	24	25	22	27	2
March 6-9, 2014	23	27	18	31	2
February 6-9, 2014	23	24	23	30	1
January 2-5, 2014	30	24	18	27	2
December 12-15, 2013	26	26	22	25	1
November 14-17, 2013	37	28	16	19	*
October 31-November 3, 2013: <i>News about health insurance exchanges opening around the country as part of the 2010 health care law</i>	32	32	19	17	*
October 17-20, 2013	33	28	22	17	*
October 3-6, 2013	33	24	22	20	1
August 29-September 1, 2013: <i>News about parts of the health care law that are about to take effect</i>	23	25	21	30	*
July 18-21, 2013	25	25	19	30	*
June 28-July 1, 2012: <i>The Supreme Court decision on the 2010 health care law</i>	45	21	14	19	*
March 29-April 1, 2012: <i>Supreme Court hearings about the 2010 health care reform law</i>	29	27	17	27	*
November 17-20, 2011: <i>The U.S. Supreme Court agreeing to hear legal challenges to last year's health care reform law</i>	18	24	24	33	1
February 3-6, 2011: <i>A federal judge ruling that part of the new health care law is unconstitutional</i>	25	28	19	28	1
January 20-23, 2011: <i>News about Republican efforts to repeal last year's health care law</i>	29	29	20	21	1
December 16-19, 2010: <i>A federal judge ruling that parts of the new health care law are unconstitutional</i>	28	24	17	30	1
September 23-26, 2010: <i>News about portions of this year's health care reform law beginning to take effect</i>	37	31	17	14	1
April 16-19, 2010: <i>News about the new health care reform law</i>	40	30	16	14	*
April 9-12, 2010	46	27	15	12	*
April 1-5, 2010	42	27	14	16	*
March 26-29, 2010: <i>Debate over health care reform</i>	49	29	12	10	*
March 19-22, 2010	51	24	11	14	*
March 12-15, 2010	40	31	16	13	*
March 5-8, 2010	42	27	17	15	*
February 26-March 1, 2010	29	29	19	22	*
February 19-22, 2010	33	28	19	19	*
January 29-February 1, 2010	39	27	16	17	*
January 22-25, 2010	41	32	15	11	*
January 15-18, 2010	37	27	19	18	*



## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	Very closely	Fairly closely	Not too closely	Not at all closely	(VOL.) DK/Ref
January 8-11, 2010	39	26	20	15	*
December 18-21, 2009	42	27	16	14	*
December 11-14, 2009	42	30	15	14	*
December 4-7, 2009	42	28	15	14	1
November 20-23, 2009	42	29	14	15	*
November 13-16, 2009	38	26	17	17	1
November 6-9, 2009	35	28	15	22	1
October 30-November 2, 2009	32	26	19	23	*
October 23-26, 2009	40	27	16	17	1
October 16-19, 2009	36	28	15	21	*
October 9-12, 2009	37	29	14	19	1
October 2-5, 2009	39	29	16	16	*
September 25-28, 2009	45	31	12	12	0
September 18-21, 2009	44	26	19	11	*
September 11-14, 2009	44	27	14	15	*
September 3-6, 2009	40	26	16	17	0
August 28-31, 2009	40	28	17	14	1
August 21-24, 2009	49	24	12	15	1
August 14-17, 2009	39	31	15	15	1
August 7-10, 2009: <i>Debate in Washington over health care reform</i>	40	27	17	15	1
July 31-August 3, 2009	47	26	14	13	1
July 24-27, 2009	44	28	15	13	*
July 17-20, 2009	33	31	13	21	2
July 10-13, 2009	24	29	20	27	*
June 26-29, 2009	29	26	20	25	1
June 19-22, 2009	28	28	20	23	*
June 12-15, 2009	29	26	18	26	*
May 15-18, 2009: <i>Debate over Barack Obama's health care plans</i>	25	30	20	24	*
March 6-9, 2009: <i>Obama proposing a \$630 billion fund for overhauling health care</i>	41	32	13	14	*
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
October, 1994: <i>The debate in Congress about health care reform</i>	32	37	18	12	1
September, 1994: <i>The Clinton administration's health care reform proposals</i>	32	41	18	9	*
June, 1994	34	40	19	7	*
May, 1994	37	37	16	9	1
January, 1994	38	38	15	9	*
Early January, 1994	40	40	14	6	*
December, 1993	45	35	12	7	1
October, 1993	44	32	17	6	1
September, 1993	49	34	11	6	*
August, 1993: <i>Reports about the White House task force on health care reform headed by Hillary Clinton</i>	27	32	25	15	1
June, 1993	28	38	19	15	*
May, 1993	30	30	25	14	1
d. Reports about safety defects in cars made by General Motors					
April 3-6, 2014	19	25	22	33	1
March 20-23, 2014: <i>Reports about safety defects in cars made by Toyota and General Motors</i>	14	23	25	37	1

**PEW.1 TRENDS FOR COMPARISON...**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
January 29-February 1, 2010: <i>Toyota's recall and temporary halt of sales of many cars and trucks because of problems with sudden acceleration</i>	21	30	22	26	1
Early October, 2000: <i>The recall of defective Firestone tires</i>	42	34	16	8	*

**NO ITEM e**

f. The Supreme Court overturning certain limits on campaign donations					
April 3-6, 2014	13	17	21	49	1
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
January 22-25, 2010: <i>The Supreme Court overturning campaign finance limits on corporations and unions paying for ads about political candidates</i>	18	21	25	34	1
December, 2003: <i>The Supreme Court decision upholding campaign finance reform legislation</i>	8	17	28	45	2
April, 2001: <i>The debate in Congress over campaign finance reform</i>	14	27	25	33	1
g. A deadly shooting at Fort Hood Army post in Texas					
April 3-6, 2014	28	29	20	23	1
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>	28	29	20	33	1
September 19-22, 2013: <i>The shooting at the Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. where 13 people were killed</i>	33	32	22	12	*
December 14-16, 2012: <i>A deadly shooting at an elementary school in Connecticut</i>	57	26	10	5	2
December 13, 2012: <i>The shooting at a shopping mall near Portland, Oregon</i>	19	28	33	20	1
August 9-12, 2012: <i>A deadly shooting at a Sikh temple in Wisconsin</i>	20	31	23	25	1
July 26-29, 2012: <i>The shooting at a movie theater near Denver, Colorado</i>	41	33	16	9	1
July 20-22, 2012	48	25	15	11	1
April 5-8, 2012: <i>A shooting at a small college in Oakland, California, that killed seven people</i>	21	28	25	25	2
March 1-4, 2012: <i>A deadly school shooting near Cleveland, Ohio</i>	26	31	22	19	1
December 8-11, 2011: <i>Deadly shootings at Virginia Tech University</i>	20	27	29	24	1
January 13-16, 2011: <i>News about a Congresswoman and others shot in Tucson, Arizona</i>	49	28	12	11	1
November 6-9, 2009: <i>A shooter killing 13 people at Fort Hood Army post in Texas</i>	44	34	14	8	*
August 7-10, 2009: <i>A shooting at a fitness club in Pennsylvania, killing four</i>	13	28	25	34	1
June 12-15, 2009: <i>A deadly shooting at the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.</i>	26	34	17	23	*

**PEW.1 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
April 3-6, 2009: A shooter killing several people at an immigration services center in Binghamton, New York	26	32	19	23	*
March 13-16, 2009: A shooting spree in Alabama that resulted in the death of 11 people	18	33	24	25	*
February 15-18, 2008: The shootings at Northern Illinois University that resulted in the death of 7 people	26	40	19	15	0
February 8-11, 2008: A shooting at a city council meeting in Missouri where six people were killed	13	28	25	33	1
December 14-17, 2007: Shootings at two religious centers in Colorado	17	31	24	27	1
December 7-10, 2007: A shooting at a shopping mall in Omaha, Nebraska where eight people were killed	30	36	18	15	1
October 12-15, 2007: The shooting at a high school in Cleveland, Ohio	22	32	25	20	1
April 20-23, 2007: The shootings at Virginia Tech University that resulted in the death of 33 people	45	37	13	5	*
October, 2006: Recent shootings at schools in Pennsylvania and other states	46	33	12	8	1
March, 2001: The shooting of students and teachers at a San Diego high school	39	37	16	7	1
March, 2000: The shooting of a 6-year-old girl at a Michigan school	40	38	15	7	*
September, 1999: The shootings in a Jewish community center in Los Angeles	29	34	22	14	1
Late April, 1999: The shooting of students and teachers by two students at a Colorado high school	68	24	6	2	*
June, 1998: The shooting at a high school in Springfield, Oregon	46	36	14	4	*
March, 1998: The shooting at a middle school in Jonesboro, Arkansas	49	33	12	5	1

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.2 Do you approve or disapprove of the health care law passed by Barack Obama and Congress in 2010?

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
April 3-6, 2014 (U)	37	50	12
February 27-March 16, 2014	41	53	5
December 3-8, 2013 (U)	41	54	5
October 9-13, 2013	41	52	7
September 4-8, 2013 (U)	42	53	5
June 28-July 9, 2012 <sup>1</sup>	47	43	9
June 7-17, 2012	43	48	9
April 4-15, 2012	41	49	10
March 7-11, 2012	47	45	8
January 5-9, 2011	41	48	11
November 4-7, 2010	43	47	10

<sup>1</sup> Prior to September 2013, the question asked about "the health care legislation." In addition, the reference to when the law was passed has changed over time: January 2011 referenced the legislation passed "last year," November 2010 used "earlier this year," September through July, 2010 used "in March," and April 2010 used "last month."

**PEW.2 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
September 9-12, 2010	38	45	17
August 25-September 6, 2010	44	46	10
July 8-11, 2010	35	47	17
April 1-5, 2010	40	44	16

**TREND FOR COMPARISON:**

*As of right now, do you generally favor or generally oppose the health care bills being discussed in Congress?*

	<u>Generally favor</u>	<u>Generally oppose</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
March 11-21, 2010	40	47	13
March 10-14, 2010	38	48	13
February 3-9, 2010	38	50	12
January 6-10, 2010	39	48	13
December 9-13, 2009 <sup>2</sup>	35	48	17
November 12-15, 2009	42	39	19
October 28-November 8, 2009	38	47	15
September 30-October 4, 2009	34	47	19
September 10-15, 2009	42	44	14
August 20-27, 2009	39	46	15
July 22-26, 2009	38	44	18

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.3 In making your decision about who to vote for in the elections for Congress this year, will a candidate's stance on the health care law be... **[READ IN ORDER]?**

**BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=772]:**

(U)	
Apr 3-6	
<u>2014</u>	
54	Very important
30	Somewhat important
7	Not too important
7	Not at all important
2	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.4 So far, that is up until today, has the health care law had a mostly positive, mostly negative, or not much of an effect on you and your family?

(U)		(U)	(U)
Apr 3-6		Dec 3-8	Sep 4-8
<u>2014</u>		<u>2013</u>	<u>2013</u>
17	Mostly positive	15	17
24	Mostly negative	23	20
57	Not much of an effect	60	63
2	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	2	1

<sup>2</sup> Prior to January 2010, the question asked about "health care proposals" rather than "health care bills."

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.5 And looking ahead, do you think the overall effect of the health care law on you and your family over the coming years will be mostly positive, mostly negative, or will it not affect you much either way?

(U) Apr 3-6 <u>2014</u>		(U) Dec 3-8 <u>2013</u>	(U) Sep 4-8 <u>2013</u>
29	Mostly positive	26	25
35	Mostly negative	38	41
30	Not much of an effect	32	31
6	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	4	4

**ASK ALL:**

Now thinking about the effect of the 2010 health care law on the country as a whole...

PEW.6 So far, that is up until today, has the health care law had a mostly positive, mostly negative, or not much of an effect on the country as a whole?

(U) Apr 3-6 <u>2014</u>		(U) Dec 3-8 <u>2013</u>	(U) Sep 4-8 <u>2013</u>
30	Mostly positive	23	24
43	Mostly negative	49	38
17	Not much of an effect	22	31
10	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	6	7

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.7 And looking ahead, do you think the overall effect of the health care law on the country as a whole over the coming years will be mostly positive, mostly negative, or will it not affect the country much either way?

(U) Apr 3-6 <u>2014</u>		(U) Dec 3-8 <u>2013</u>	(U) Sep 4-8 <u>2013</u>
38	Mostly positive	39	35
44	Mostly negative	45	47
12	Not much of an effect	11	14
6	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	4	4

**ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

**ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):**

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> No <u>preference</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> Other <u>party</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>	Lean <u>Rep</u>	Lean <u>Dem</u>
Apr 3-6, 2014	27	27	34	8	1	3	15	12

**Key to Pew Research trends noted in the topline:**

(U) Pew Research Center/USA Today polls