



# Washington Health Care Issues Survey Results

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

CodeBlueNow! commissioned The Gilmore Research Group to conduct a telephone survey of 600 registered voters in Washington State to obtain their opinions regarding health care in the United States. The poll was conducted among randomly selected voters with household telephones between November 11th and December 26, 2007. The average survey lasted just under 14 minutes. The maximum margin of error for a survey of this size is  $\pm 4.0$  percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. Key findings from the survey are summarized below.

## KEY FINDINGS

- Survey respondents represent a cross-section of Washington State voters. Poll respondents are similar to all Washington residents in terms of age, ethnicity, income, gender and political leanings. The poll slightly over-represents Washingtonians age 55 and older while under-representing those age 18 to 24. Poll respondents also tend to be somewhat better educated and have higher incomes than the general population. Nearly one of five respondents (19%) are employed by (or related to someone employed by) a health care organization or health insurance company.
- Nearly all respondents (95%) have health insurance, and 89% have a personal doctor or primary care provider. Three of four Washingtonians (75%) are satisfied with their access to health care and the quality of care their family receives. However, just 42% say they are satisfied with the cost of their health care.
- Washington voters are less satisfied with the state of health care nationally than they are with their personal health care situation. Only about one of five (21%) are satisfied with Americans' access to health care, 40% are satisfied with the quality of care available to Americans and just 10% are satisfied with the cost of health care in the country.
- Satisfaction with the health care system tends to split along party and economic lines, with Democrats being generally less satisfied than Republicans. Those dissatisfied with cost are more likely to be females and also more likely to have annual incomes below \$75,000. Satisfaction with their personal health care situation also colors their perceptions of national health care. Those who are dissatisfied with access and cost on a personal level are more likely than others to also be dissatisfied with health care nationally.
- One in five Washington voters (20%) think today's health care system is better than it was ten years ago, but nearly half (47%) think the system is getting worse.
- When asked to name the **best thing** about today's health care system, one in four respondents (24%) said it is access to care and 21% said the quality of care. About one of four (26%) was unable to think of anything.
- When asked to name the **worst thing** about the current national health care system, 92% of

voters were able to identify an issue. Their comments focused on the difficulty people have getting access to care (46%) and the cost of health care (38%).

- At least two-thirds of all respondents agreed:
  - Health care professionals should provide information on treatment costs and benefits to allow patients to make good choices (86%)
  - Like public utilities, the health care system should be held accountable for where money comes from as well as how and why it is spent (76%)
  - Basic health care benefits should include coverage for any licensed health care professional (75%)
  - There should be uniform standards or guidelines for health care that professionals can use (73%)
  - Every American should have affordable access to health care services they need (70%). *This is the only attribute where 2 of 3 respondents agreed, but less than half of those who vote Republican agreed.*
  - Health care services should stress prevention over high-tech cures (68%).
- About 50%-60% of all respondents agreed with these items, while about 25% gave a neutral response, and only about one of five disagreed :
  - There is enough money going into health care to provide quality care for all people (60% agreement)
  - Health insurance should be a shared responsibility of individuals, employers and government (59%)
  - Employers should continue to play a major role in providing health care (57%)
  - We should have one basic set of health care benefits for all people (51%) *More disagreed than provided a neutral response.*
  - Health care is a community responsibility for public safety like the fire department or police (50%)
- Less than half of the Washington respondents agreed with these items; about one of four gave neutral responses, and larger proportions disagreed:
  - They would be willing to pay more for health care if they knew what was being covered and where the money was going (42%)
  - There should be one organization that oversees the nation's health care and evaluates the effectiveness of all health care services (40%)
  - They would be willing to pay more for health care if they knew it would help their neighbors get the care they need (40%)
- More respondents disagreed than agreed that:

- Health insurance should be a personal responsibility like auto insurance (35%)
- Health insurance should be paid for by tax dollars and managed by local, state, or federal government (31%).
- When asked who they would trust to create a new health care system, a majority of Washington voters (63%) said they would trust health care professionals. About six of ten Republican, Democrat, and Independents voters all shared this view. The second most trusted group would be the public or common people (50%). Less than half mentioned non-profit organizations (43%), the federal government (32%), business professionals (29%) or academic institutions (27%). Six percent mentioned something else, 5% didn't know, and 2% said there was no one they could trust.
- Compared to the groups listed above, a majority of Washington voters (62%) said they would be inclined to trust a non-partisan, non-profit group of citizens and professionals to frame a new national health care system.
- Washington voters identified the three most important elements of a national health care system as access to health care coverage, affordability, and quality of care.
- Respondents were divided when it came to expectations that the 2008 Presidential election will chart a new vision for a revised health care system with 54% saying it is "likely" and 42% saying it is "not likely." The rest of the respondents "didn't know".
- When asked which party has the most meaningful health care proposal, approximately one in four respondents (25%) said they "don't know." Independent (31%) and Republican voters (26%) were more likely than Democrats (15%) to say "don't know" in response to this question. Given the bias in "don't know" responses, it is not surprising that Democrats emerged as the party with "the most meaningful proposal" (41%). Nearly one of four Independent voters (24%) and 9% of the Republican voters also said the Democrats have the better health plan. Fifteen percent of respondents favored Republican proposals, and 18% said neither party has a meaningful proposal.

## CONCLUSIONS

Although most Washington State voters appear to be in a good situation personally with their health insurance coverage, access to health care and quality of care, a large majority believe the national health care system needs improvement. They are especially concerned about the costs of health care and Americans' access to care. Regardless of political leanings, the majority of Washington voters value having enough information to be active participants in health care decisions, accountability in health care spending, benefits that cover a wide range of professional practitioners, and high quality health care standards.

Affordability is an issue that breaks along party lines. Washington voters who tend to vote Republican are less convinced of the need for a system where everyone has access to affordable care (45% of those who vote Republican agreed affordable access was important compared to 90% of Democratic voters and 66% of Independent voters). Of all three groups of respondents, only among Democratic voters did a majority agree they would pay more for health care either because

they knew what was being covered and where the money was going or because by paying more they could help others get needed coverage.

Although Washingtonians see the need for reform, there is no clear consensus about who should lead the charge, who should oversee a national health care system if one emerges, or how it should be paid for. Most voters find the idea of a non-partisan, non-profit organization of citizens and professionals appealing for this role, but many want assurances about the expertise of the people within the organization, its goals and how it would be funded. Most respondents do not trust government to solve the problem and verbatim comments indicate many voters are not convinced that a national health care system will resolve the health care crisis. What is clear is that whatever group tackles the problem needs to rely heavily on health care professionals and public input for advice and counsel.

# DETAILED FINDINGS

## INTRODUCTION

CodeBlueNow! commissioned the Gilmore Research Group to conduct a telephone survey of 600 voters in the State of Washington to obtain their opinions regarding health care in the United States. The poll was conducted among randomly selected voters with household telephones between November 11th and December 26, 2007. The average survey lasted just under 14 minutes. The maximum margin of error for a survey of this size is  $\pm 4.0$  percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. All statistically significant differences are reported at the 95% level of confidence unless stated otherwise.

## RESPONDENT PROFILE

Poll respondents represent a cross-section of Washington voters. As Table 1 shows, poll respondents are very similar to all Washington State residents in terms of age, ethnicity, income, gender and political leanings. The poll slightly over-represents Washingtonians age 55 and older while under-representing people age 18 to 34. This difference may in part be due to the fact that young people are sometimes less likely to be voters. For example, in the 2004 election, the voter turnout for 18-24 year olds was about 41% compared to more than 60% for those over age 50.<sup>1</sup> Survey respondents were also better educated and had higher incomes than the statewide population, and minority populations were somewhat less likely to be included in the survey. These differences may also be influenced by voting patterns.

Nineteen percent of respondents (19%) are employed by, or related to someone employed by a health care organization or health insurance company.

	Survey Respondents	2005 ACS		Survey Respondents	2005 ACS
<b>Age</b>			<b>Education<sup>1</sup></b>		
18 to 24	2%*	13%	Less than high school	3%*	13%
25 to 34	7*	18	High school graduate/GED	17*	28
35 to 44	16	19	Some college/technical	30	34
45 to 54	23	20	College graduate	31*	18
55 to 64	27	14	Beyond college graduate	19*	9
65 to 74	14*	8			
75+	11*	7	<b>Income</b>		
			Under \$25,000	14%*	22%
<b>Hispanic</b>			\$25,000 to \$35,000	9	10
Yes	3%*	9%	\$35,000 to \$50,000	18	15
No	97	91	\$50,000 to \$75,000	18	20
			\$75,000 to \$100,000	16	13
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			\$100,000 or more	24*	19
Caucasian	95%*	85%			
Black/African American	1	4	<b>Gender</b>		
Asian	2	7	Male	44%	50%
Native Hawaiian	-	1	Female	56	50
Am. Indian/Alaska Native	2	2			
Other	2	1	<b>Political Leanings/Registration<sup>2</sup></b>		
			Republican	32%	28%
<b>Minor Children at Home</b>			Democrat	47*	37
Yes	30%	30%	Independent	9*	28
No	70	70	Varies/Depends	12	N/A

<sup>1</sup> Comparison data for education taken from the 2000 U.S. Census. Political affiliation data from SurveyUSA News Poll #12797. The State of Washington does not track party affiliation.

<sup>2</sup>Note: "Don't know & Refused" responses were removed from the base of survey responses to allow comparability with ACS and Census data. May not sum to 100% due to rounding.

\* Significant difference between BlueCodeNow! survey and 2005 ACS Survey

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau

## PERSONAL HEALTH CARE

### Access to Health Care

Nearly all respondents (95%) have health insurance coverage through an employer (64%), Medicare/ Medicaid (28%) or a policy they purchased (23%). Those who do not have health insurance (5%) most commonly say the reason they don't have insurance is they are unemployed and/or insurance costs too much. More than one of ten Washington respondents (12%) said there was a time in the past year when they needed medical attention but could not get it because of cost.

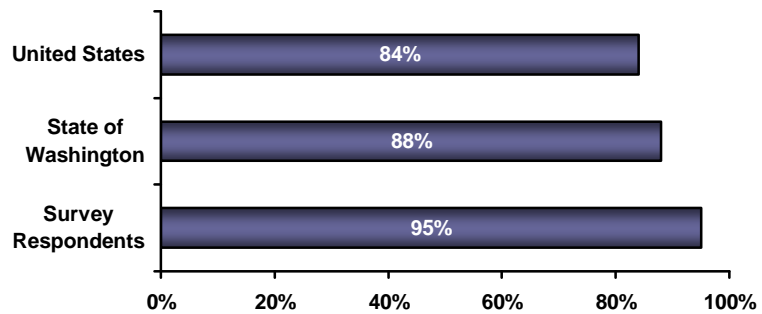
About nine in ten respondents (89%) have a personal doctor or a primary health care provider. Three of four respondents (75%) indicated they are satisfied with their access to health care (Figure 2). Respondents especially likely to be satisfied with their access to health care were:

- Age 65 and older (86%) versus 72% of those ages 35-64, and 62% of those ages 18 to 24.
- College graduates, males, and higher income respondents (80% each)

Just over one in ten respondents (11%) were dissatisfied with the access they or their family have to care. Respondents who were more dissatisfied than average with access to care included respondents:

**Figure 1**  
Percentage of Population with Health Insurance in Washington and the U.S.  
All respondents

(Base = 600)



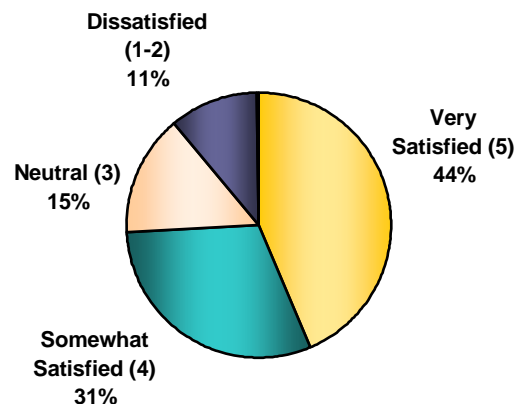
**Question 1:** Do you have any kind of health care coverage, including health insurance, prepaid plans such as HMO's or government plans such as Medicare?

**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau

May not sum to 100% due to rounding.

**Figure 2**  
Satisfaction with Access to Health Care  
All respondents

(Base = 600)



**Question 4a:** Thinking of your own and your family's experience with the health care system, how satisfied are you with your access to health care? Use a rating scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is "very dissatisfied" and 5 is "very satisfied".

"Don't know/Refused" responses were less than 1%.

May not sum to 100% due to rounding.

- Age 18-34 (17%), a level significantly higher than age 65 and above (5%)
- Those earning under \$50K per year (17%), a level significantly higher than those earning more than \$75K (7%).

### Satisfaction with Quality of Care Received

As Figure 3 shows, more than eight of ten respondents (83%) said they are satisfied with the quality of care they and their family receive. Males (89%), higher income respondents (86% among those earning \$75,000 or more), and college graduates (88%) had higher levels who were satisfied with the quality of their health care. Just 70% of the 18-34 year olds were satisfied compared to 85% of respondents older than age 34.

Those who vote Republican were more likely than Democratic voters to be satisfied with the quality of their health care (88% and 81% respectively).

### Satisfaction with Cost of Your Health Care

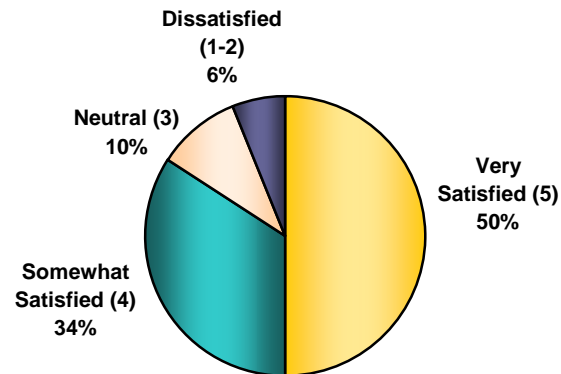
Although most Washington respondents have health insurance, only 42% said they are satisfied with the cost of their health care. The oldest group of respondents age 65 and up had a significantly higher level of satisfaction with cost (57%) than younger respondents (37%). That was the only significant difference for percent satisfied with cost of their health care.

Respondents most likely to be dissatisfied with the cost of their health care include:

- Those who purchased their own insurance (44%) vs. 32% of those buying through an employer and 21% of those

**Figure 3**  
Satisfaction with Quality of Care You and Your Family Receive  
All respondents

(Base = 600)



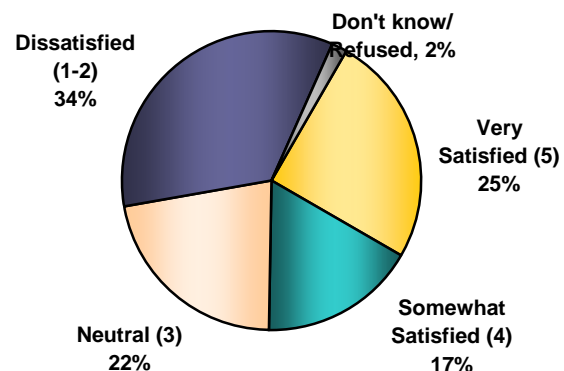
**Question 4b:** How satisfied are you with the quality of care you and your family receive? Use a rating scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is "very dissatisfied" and 5 is "very satisfied".

"Don't know/Refused" responses were less than 1%.

May not sum to 100% due to rounding.

**Figure 4**  
Satisfaction with the Cost of Health Care  
All respondents

(Base = 600)



**Question 4c:** And how satisfied are you with the cost of your health care?

**Scale:** 5 = Very satisfied, 1= Very dissatisfied.

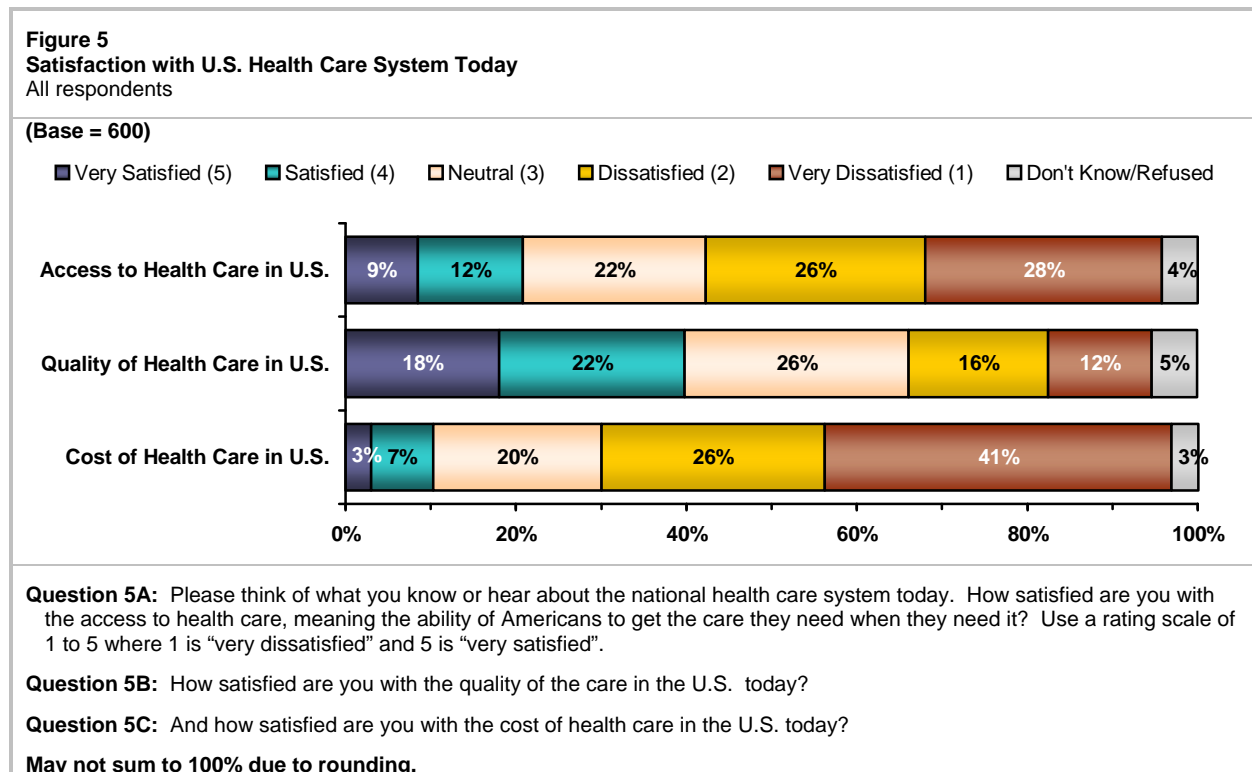
May not sum to 100% due to rounding.

with publicly provided insurance

- Age 55-64 (44%)
- Those without a college education (40%) vs. 29% of college graduates
- Those who usually vote Democrat (40%) vs. 31% for Independent voters and 29% for Republicans

## NATIONAL HEALTH CARE

Although most Washington voters seem pleased with their personal health care, they are also aware that health care is an issue on a national level. Only one of five respondents (21%) said they are satisfied with Americans' ability to get the care they need when they need it. Only four of ten respondents (40%) expressed satisfaction with the quality of health care in the United States and only 10% said they are satisfied with the cost of health care. Two of three Washington respondents (67%) are dissatisfied with the cost of health care in the U.S. today (Figure 5).



**Access to Care-** More than half of the Washington respondents (54%) said they are dissatisfied with the ability of Americans to get the care they need when they need it. Those who are more likely than average to be dissatisfied with access to health care in America included:

- Females (61% v. 45% of males)
- Respondents ages 35-64 (58% v. 40% of those age 65 or older)
- College graduates (58% v. 49% of those with less education)
- Those dissatisfied with their personal access to health care (89% v. 46% of those who were satisfied with their access)
- Democrats (75% v. 50% of Independents and 29% of Republicans)

**Quality of Care** –Although four of ten respondents are satisfied (40%) with the quality of care in the country today, nearly three of ten are dissatisfied (29%). Those who are more likely than average

to be dissatisfied with the quality of care included:

- Females (35%) vs. 20% for males
- Respondents between 55 and 64 years old (34%) compared with 24% of those age 65 and above
- Western Washington voters (30%) compared to 21% for Eastern Washington
- Democrats (40%) versus 24% for Independents and 16% for Republicans
- Those dissatisfied with their personal access to health care (64%) versus 21% of those satisfied with their healthcare access
- Those dissatisfied with access to health care on the national level (48%) compared with 2% of those who are satisfied
- Those dissatisfied with the cost of their personal health care (34%) compared with 24% of those satisfied

**Cost of Care-** Only 10% of all respondents are satisfied with the cost of care in the country and 67% are dissatisfied. Those who are most likely to be dissatisfied with the cost of care include:

- Respondents ages 35-64 (74%)
- Those with incomes less than \$75K (71%) vs. 62% for higher income levels
- Females (74%) vs. 58% for males
- Democrats (82%) vs. 62% for Independents and 50% for Republicans
- Those dissatisfied with their personal access to health care (89%) versus 60% of those satisfied with their healthcare access
- Those dissatisfied with access to health care on the national level (88%) compared with 25% of those who are satisfied
- Those dissatisfied with the cost of their personal health care (92%) compared with 51% of those satisfied

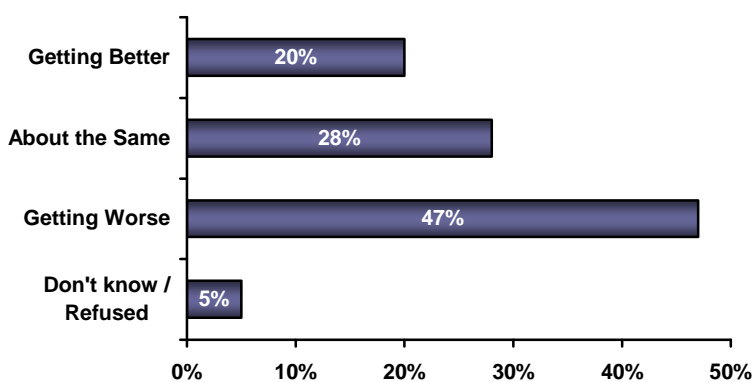
When asked to compare today's health care system with health care in the U.S. ten years ago, one in five respondents (20%) said it was getting better, just over one in four (28%) thought it was about the same and 47% said today's health care system is worse than it was ten years ago.

Respondents more likely to believe health care is getting worse include:

- Females (54%) vs. males (38%)
- Western Washington residents (49%) vs. 38% of Eastern Washington residents
- Respondents ages 55 to 64 (57%)
- Those who have health insurance through an employer (48%) compared with 38% of those with insurance from a public provider
- Respondents who are dissatisfied with their access to health care on a personal (72%) or national level (64%) compared with 47% overall
- Respondents who are dissatisfied with the cost of health care on a personal (58%) or national level (64%) compared with 47% overall

**Figure 6**  
Comparison of Today's Health Care System to Ten Years Ago  
All respondents

(Base = 600)



**Question 9:** Overall, would you say the health care system in the U.S. is getting better, getting worse or is about the same as ten years ago?

**May not sum to 100% due to rounding.**

### The Best Thing about our National Health Care System

When asked to name the best thing about the national health care system, nearly one in four respondents (24%) mentioned having access to care.

- *"It's good that we have access and don't have to wait for elective surgery."*
- *"I would say the quality. We get good health care quality, the care that is provided is excellent and the availability of care; there's access to a number of quality providers. "*
- *"The availability of emergency care or urgent care."*

A large number of respondents also mentioned the quality of care (21%).

- *“We do have excellent health care providers and knowledge base and testing available without a lengthy wait time.”*
- *“The quality; I think Americans have access to the best facilities and physicians.”*
- *“Well, there’s quality care for those who can afford it.”*

Seven percent of respondents (7%) mentioned research and technology and the ability to choose doctors and services as the best thing about national health care, 6% said the best thing is that people can get health care on their own, and it is not mandated by the government, and 5% mentioned prescription coverage. More than one in four Washington respondents (26%) were unable to name the best thing about our current national health care system.

### **The Worst Thing about our National Health Care System**

Respondents most frequently mentioned the difficulty people have in getting access to health care coverage (46%) when asked to name the worst thing about the current national health care system. Most of these comments referred to the fact that not everyone has coverage and that a lot of individuals go uninsured (24%) or that lower income people can’t get any access to insurance (9%) or cannot get adequate coverage (6%).

- *“It’s not accessible to a lot of people.”*
- *“Not all people have access to health care coverage.”*
- *“Probably that it’s not accessible to everyone. I think not everyone has good health care; it costs too much and it’s not provided by employers, probably because of costs, I don’t know.”*

Nearly four of ten Washington voters (38%) said the cost of health care is the worst thing. These respondents said health care is so expensive that many people cannot afford it, and about 5% also said the costs of prescriptions are too high.

- *“There are thousands of people who can’t afford the cost of insurance, so they go without it.”*
- *“It’s too expensive for everyone to get access to it.”*
- *“I really feel bad when people are dying when they can’t afford medical insurance.”*

The remaining “worst thing” comments about our current health care system included too much government involvement (4%), insurance company involvement (3%), complaints about individuals getting “a free ride” (3%) and several other miscellaneous comments. Only 8% of the Washington voters were unable to think of anything when answering this question.

## HEALTH CARE RELATED ISSUES

Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with a series of statements about health care and related issues using a five-point scale where 1 meant “strongly disagree” and 5 meant “strongly agree”. Their responses, in descending order of mean scores are shown in Table 2. Confirming a desire to be actively involved in their own health care, close to nine of ten respondents (86%) agreed that *“health care professionals should be required to give patients information about the costs and benefits of treatments and services so people can make good choices.”* More respondents agreed with this statement than any other. A strong majority of respondents also agreed that that:

- *“We need the same kind of public reporting and accountability in health care that we have in public companies, such as water and power companies so we know where the money comes from, how the money is spent, and why.”* (76%)
- *“Basic health benefits should include coverage for any licensed health care professional, such as naturopaths, acupuncturists and chiropractors, as long as they are certified and licensed by the state and by their profession.”* (75%)
- *“We need to have uniform standards and guidelines that health care professionals can use to make sure we receive the most effective care.”* (73%)
- *“We must make sure every person in America has health coverage to assure affordable access to the health care services they need.”* (70%)
- *“There is enough money already going into U.S. health care to provide quality care for all our people. We just need to make sure the money is used more effectively and efficiently.”* (60%)

Washingtonians were the least likely to agree that health insurance is a personal responsibility like auto insurance (35%), or that health insurance should be paid for by tax dollars and managed by the government (31%).

Washington voters were divided on the issue of whether one organization should oversee health care on a national level. About four of ten (40%) agreed with this concept and three of ten (29%) disagreed. Those who agreed with the concept were more likely to:

- Vote Democratic (53%) vs. 26% for Republicans and 37% for independents
- Be ages 50 to 64 (50%)

<b>Table 2</b>					
<b>Agreement with Health Care Issue Statements</b>					
All respondents					
<b>Read Across</b>	<b>Agree (4-5)</b>	<b>Neutral (3)</b>	<b>Disagree (1-2)</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>Mean*</b>
Health care professionals should be required to give patients information about the costs and benefits of treatments and services so people can make good choices.	86%	10%	4%	1%	4.43
We need the same kind of public reporting and accountability in health care that we have in public companies, such as water and power companies, so we know where the money comes from, how the money is spent, and why.	76%	13%	9%	3%	4.19
Basic health benefits should include coverage for any licensed health care professional, such as naturopaths, acupuncturists and chiropractors, as long as they are certified and licensed by the state and by their profession.	75%	14%	10%	1%	4.07
We need to have uniform standards and guidelines that health care professionals can use to make sure we receive the most effective care.	73%	18%	8%	1%	4.06
Health care services should stress preventing disease rather than relying on high technology cures.	68%	23%	6%	3%	4.03
We must make sure every person in America has health coverage to assure affordable access to the health care services they need.	70%	14%	15%	2%	4.01
There is enough money already going into U.S. health care to provide quality care for all our people. We just need to make sure the money is used more effectively and efficiently.	60%	19%	18%	3%	3.75
Health insurance should be a shared responsibility of individuals, employers and government.	59%	23%	16%	2%	3.72
We must let the public have a larger role in designing and managing their new health care system.	59%	24%	14%	2%	3.71
Employers should continue to play the major role in providing health insurance for their employees.	57%	25%	17%	2%	3.63
Health care is a community responsibility for public safety, like the fire department or police.	50%	23%	25%	3%	3.44
We should have one set of basic health benefits for all our people.	51%	19%	29%	2%	3.39
There should be one organization that oversees all our nation's health care and evaluates the effectiveness of all health care services, rather than having the numerous agencies that now exist.	40%	25%	29%	6%	3.16
I would be willing to pay more for health care if I was sure that it would help my neighbors get the care they need.	40%	27%	32%	1%	3.09
I would be willing to pay more for health care if I knew what was being covered and where the money was going.	42%	21%	35%	2%	3.06
Health insurance should be a personal responsibility like automobile insurance.	35%	25%	39%	2%	2.93
Health insurance should be paid for by tax dollars and managed by local, state or federal government.	31%	26%	40%	4%	2.80
<b>Question 7-01 thru 7-19:</b> I am going to read a series of statements about health care and related issues. For each statement, please tell me if you agree or disagree, using the 5-point scale again where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 means "strongly agree".					
* Don't know responses were excluded from the mean calculation. May not sum to 100% due to rounding.					

Washington voters were also divided on questions of who should pay for health insurance, as 35% agreed with this concept and 39% disagreed. Those who agreed that it should be a personal responsibility like automobile insurance are more likely than others to:

- Be males (42%) vs. 29% for females
- Be age 65 or older (49%)
- Vote Republican (54%)
- Believe health care services are better now than they were ten years ago (55%)
- Be satisfied with cost of care (69%) and access to care (62%) on a national level
- Say healthcare in the country is better than it was 10 years ago (55%)

Respondents also split in agreement on whether health care should be paid for with tax dollars and managed by the government or not. About one of three (31%) agreed, and 40% disagreed. Respondents who agree that health insurance should be paid for by taxes and managed by the government tend to be those who:

- Are dissatisfied with access to health care both on a personal level and a national level
- Believe the health care system in America is worse than it was ten years ago (39%)
- Are in the 55-64 age group (43%)
- Vote Democratic (47%)
- Have an annual income of less than \$75,000 (35%)
- Are an ethnic minority (55%)

Those who disagree with the idea of tax-funded, government-managed health care were more likely than others to:

- Be male (47%)
- Be age 35-54 (45%)
- Earn more than \$75,000 per year (51%)
- Vote Republican (63%)
- Think the health care system in the U.S. is better than it was ten years ago (58%)

Table 3 shows how agreement with the health care issue attributes varies by the political party of the respondents. While respondents who tend to vote Republican differed significantly in their level of agreement compared with those who vote with the Democrats on all but two statements, it is important to note that the majority of respondents in both groups agreed with eight of the seventeen statements tested.

**Table 3**  
**Percent Who Strongly Agree/Agree with Health Care Issue Statements by Voting Record**  
 All respondents

<b>Read Across</b>	<b>Total (600)</b>	<b>Republican (179)</b>	<b>Democrat (261)</b>	<b>Independent (115)</b>
<i>Health care professionals should be required to give patients information about the costs and benefits of treatments and services so people can make good choices.</i>	86%	85%	87%	85%
<i>We need the same kind of public reporting and accountability in health care that we have in public companies, such as water and power companies, so we know where the money comes from, how the money is spent, and why.</i>	76	63	<b>85*</b>	77
<i>Basic health benefits should include coverage for any licensed health care professional, such as naturopaths, acupuncturists and chiropractors, as long as they are certified and licensed by the state and by their profession.</i>	75	66	<b>81*</b>	72
<i>We need to have uniform standards and guidelines that health care professionals can use to make sure we receive the most effective care.</i>	73	64	<b>81*</b>	70
<i>We must make sure every person in America has health coverage to assure affordable access to the health care services they need.</i>	70	45	<b>90*</b>	66
<i>Health care services should stress preventing disease rather than relying on high technology cures.</i>	68	58	<b>77*</b>	67
<i>There is enough money already going into U.S. health care to provide quality care for all our people. We just need to make sure the money is used more effectively and efficiently.</i>	60	62	57	62
<i>Health insurance should be a shared responsibility of individuals, employers and government.</i>	59	43	<b>69*</b>	62
<i>We must let the public have a larger role in designing and managing their new health care system.</i>	59	50	<b>68*</b>	58
<i>Employers should continue to play the major role in providing health insurance for their employees.</i>	57	64	<b>50*</b>	60
<i>We should have one set of basic health benefits for all our people.</i>	51	30	<b>71*</b>	46
<i>Health care is a community responsibility for public safety, like the fire department or police.</i>	50	32	<b>69*</b>	40
<i>I would be willing to pay more for health care if I knew what was being covered and where the money was going.</i>	42	30	<b>53*</b>	41
<i>There should be one organization that oversees all our nation's health care and evaluates the effectiveness of all health care services, rather than having the numerous agencies that now exist.</i>	40	26	<b>53*</b>	37
<i>I would be willing to pay more for health care if I was sure that it would help my neighbors get the care they need.</i>	40	21	<b>58*</b>	32
<i>Health insurance should be a personal responsibility like automobile insurance.</i>	35	54	<b>18*</b>	41
<i>Health insurance should be paid for by tax dollars and managed by local, state or federal government.</i>	31	14	<b>47*</b>	24
<b>Question 7-01 thru 7-19:</b> I am going to read a series of statements about health care and related issues. For each statement, please tell me if you agree or disagree, using the 5-point scale again where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 means "strongly agree".				
<b>Numbers in bold font indicate statistically significant differences between those who vote Republican those who vote Democratic. Italicized items are those where the majority of respondents are in agreement regardless of voting tendencies.</b>				

Table 3 shows, for example, that there is no difference based on voting tendency in agreement with the first item, that health care professionals should be required to give patients information about costs and treatments so people can make good choices. Although there are significant differences in proportion of respondents who agree with the statement, a majority of respondents who vote with both parties in Washington agree that:

- *“Health care professionals should be required to give patients information about costs and treatments so people can make good choices”.*
- *“We need the same kind of reporting and accountability from health care companies that we have in public companies.”*
- *“Basic health benefits should include coverage for any licensed health care professional”*
- *We need uniform standards and guidelines that health care professionals can use to be sure we get effective care*
- *Health care services should stress preventing disease rather than relying on high technology cures.*
- *There is enough money already going into U.S. health care to provide quality care for all our people. We just need to make sure the money is used more effectively and efficiently.*

There are more acute differences in agreement based on voting tendencies on the remaining issues such as making sure that every person has access to affordable care, that individuals/employers/government should share responsibility for health insurance, that health care is a community responsibility like the fire department or police, and we need one set of basic health benefits for all the people.

For most respondents (66%), the statements shown in Tables 2 and 3 addressed their issues and concerns about the health care system. Those who had further comment most often reiterated concerns about access to care, health care costs, and breadth of coverage. A handful of respondents (about 7%) took the opportunity to say they are opposed to any type of national health care or socialized medicine. An additional 6% also talked about malpractice and fraud.

## CHARTING A NEW COURSE

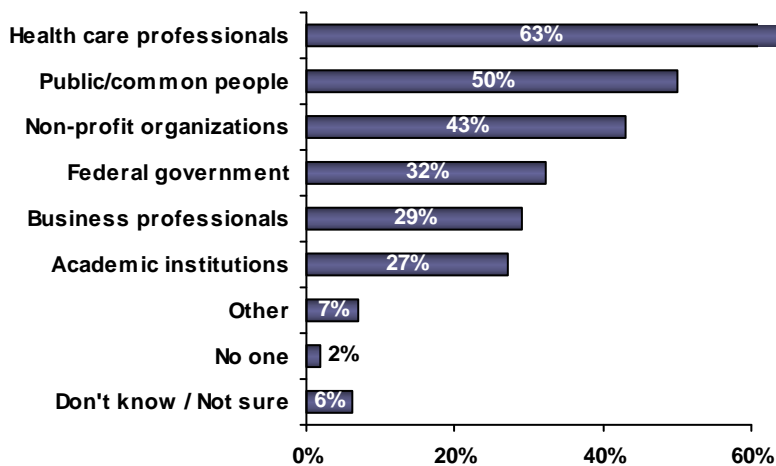
### *Who Would You Trust?*

After assessing opinions about the current health care system, respondents were asked a series of questions regarding what a new health care system might look like.

When asked who they would trust to create a new health care system, more than six of ten Washington voters (63%) said they would trust health care professionals, and half (50%) said they would trust the public/common people to create a new system. About four of ten (43%) would trust non-profit organizations (Figure 7).

**Figure 7**  
**Who Would You Trust to Create a New National Health Care System?**  
All respondents

(Base = 600)



**Question 10:** Who would you trust to create a new health care system, would you say...?

**Multiple responses accepted.**

Those who put their trust in health care professionals were more likely than others to:

- Be satisfied with Americans' current health care costs (73%)
- Believe the current health care system is better than it was ten years ago (70%)
- Be college-educated (67%) or have attended college (63%) vs. 51% for less educated
- Reside in Western Washington (65%) vs. 53% for Eastern Washington
- Be satisfied with their personal access to health care (67%)

Respondents who put their trust in non-profit organizations are more likely than others to:

- Be dissatisfied with access to health care on a national level (49%)
- Be dissatisfied with personal health care costs (47%) and on a national level (46%)
- Be younger than 54 (about 48%)
- Vote Democratic (53%) vs. 29% of those who vote Republican
- Be a college graduate (48%) vs. 37% of those with less education

Overall 32% of respondents said they would trust the federal government to create a new system. Respondents who were especially likely to trust the federal government were more likely to:

- Be dissatisfied with access to health care (40%) and the cost of health care (36%) on a national level
- Vote Democratic (43%) vs. 19% for Republicans
- Be college graduates (40%)
- Be members of an ethnic minority (50%)
- Be 55 to 64 years old (37%)
- Reside in Western Washington (34%) vs. 25% for Eastern Washington

Table 4 shows that about six of ten voters (63%) would trust and favor having health care professionals centrally involved in any effort to create a new health care system. This sentiment is consistent across all political persuasions.

<b>(Base)</b>	<b>Total (600)</b>	<b>Republicans (179)</b>	<b>Democrats (261)</b>	<b>Independents (115)</b>
Health care professionals	63%	62%	63%	60%
Public/Common people	50	41*	54	54**
Non-profit organizations	43	29*	53	42**
Federal government	32	19*	43	30**
Business professionals	29	33	25	31
Academic institutions	27	16*	39***	19

**Question 10M1: Who would you trust to create a new health care system, would you say...**

\*significantly lower than Democratic voters  
 \*\* significantly higher than Republican voters  
 \*\*\* significantly higher than Republican or Independent voters

Although half of all respondents say they would trust the public or the common people to create a new system those who tend to vote Republican are significantly less likely to say they would trust the public to create a new health care system (41%), than Democratic or Independent voters (54% each).

### Reaction to Involvement of Non-profit Organization

Washington voters were read a description of an organization not included in the list and asked if they would trust this type of an organization to shape a new national health care system. The description provided is as follows:

“I’m going to describe an organization that is working with the American public to design a new national health care system. This organization is non-profit and non-partisan, meaning it is not affiliated with any political party, any government agency or any medical or insurance group. It is made up entirely of citizens like you and experienced professionals.”

As Figure 8 shows, more than six of ten respondents (62%) said they would trust an organization like the one described above to design a new health care system, 12% would not trust this type of organization and 13% indicated they would need to know more before deciding. Another 11% didn’t know or refused to answer, and 3% gave some other type of response.

Close to six of ten respondents who tend to vote Republican (57%) or Independent (61%) and 70% of those who vote with the Democrats said they would trust this type of organization to shape a new health care system for the nation.

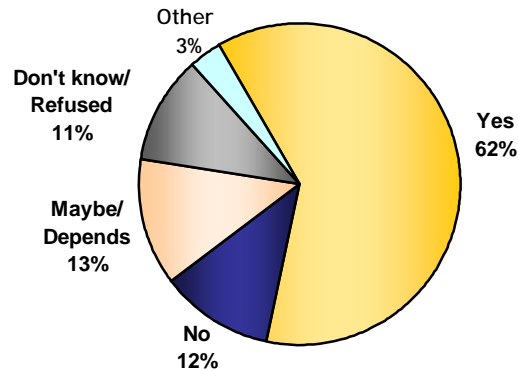
Compared to all respondents, those most likely to say they would trust an organization like the one described are:

- Dissatisfied with the cost of health care in the United States (69%) and also with access to care (71%)
- In the age 55-64 category
- Not educated beyond high school (75%)
- Have an annual income between \$50K and \$75K
- Usually vote Democratic (70%) vs. 57% for Republican

The 12% of Washington voters who say they would not trust an organization like the one described are more likely than others to:

**Figure 8**  
**Trust in a Non-Profit, Non-Partisan Organization**  
All respondents

(Base = 600)



**Question 10a:** I’m going to describe an organization that is working with the American public to design a new national health care system. This organization is non-profit and non-partisan, meaning it is not affiliated with any political party, any government agency or any medical or insurance group. It is made up entirely of citizens like you and experienced professionals. Would you trust this type of organization to shape a new health care system for the nation?

**Note:** Although multiple responses were accepted, the chart displays only the first response mentioned.

**May not sum to 100% due to rounding.**

- Vote Republican (20%)
- Be younger than 34 (17%) or older than 64 (15%)
- Be satisfied with access to health care (29%) and health care costs (42%) on a national level
- Believe today's health care system is better than it was 10 years ago (25%)

Nine percent of the Washington voters said “maybe” or said they wanted more information before deciding. Members of this group are more likely than average to be:

- College graduates (13%)
- Have an annual income greater than \$75,000 (14%)

Most comments made by respondents reflected a need for more information. They want to know more about the makeup of this nonprofit group, the backgrounds of the people involved, and the funding source. Some representative comments from these respondents include:

- *“Yes, but it should be a combined effort with government, medical, all the entities mentioned in prior question.”*
- *“I would trust them to design something, but I don't think that they could get it implemented.”*
- *“I would say yes, as long as they are getting input from the other sectors like business, medical, government, and public health. Even though they are not included in this scenario.”*
- *“You haven't told me who the group is or what their affiliations are. It's a pretty nebulous group. I don't know who's funding them.”*
- *“If it is in the framework of the groups that were mentioned in the last question. If it doesn't look at the financial aspects and health aspects, then it wouldn't work.”*
- *“Unless I knew more about it. I would like to know who the leaders are and backgrounds. Possibly based on more prudent information about that organization.”*
- *“It would depend on probably who the private citizens are. That they are not somehow involved behind the scenes with companies or the government, that may not be publicly known.”*
- *“Maybe, I would like to know more about them first.”*

## Most Important Elements of an Ideal Health Care System

When asked to name the three elements most important in an ideal health care system, respondent comments fell into five primary areas: access to coverage (72%), cost (57%), quality of care (33%), choice of providers (11%), and keeping pace with medical research and technology (8%). Table 5 lists responses within each category in descending order of mention.

Most of the comments related to coverage (mentioned by 72% of respondents) concerned access to coverage:

- “Accessibility to all socio-economic classes, and to foreigners in our country. Having the knowledge that people know it’s available to them, not just in English. We’re becoming a more cosmopolitan society. Control by the people. I’m not a big fan of the federal government. It shouldn’t be dictated by the party in power. There should be local control states and communities. I don’t want to see a socialist state, one size fits all, developed.”*
- “Everybody should have access to the best health care possible regardless of income. Availability of those wanting to enter the system by way of education, getting financing, and help for training.”*
- “Accessibility--it’s available to everyone.”*

Some comments about the cost of health care include a mix of viewpoints:

- “Cost. Equitable cost. Something that’s fair for everybody.”*
- “The cost of the premium should be affordable.”*
- “Should be based on a sliding scale depending on your income.”*
- “Cut back healthcare for anyone who is not a U.S. citizen.”*
- “Reasonable costs. Look, it should be like education; the public schools. Everyone gets a certain basic level. If you want more, you have to pay a certain amount more, like you do with private schools or whatever. Market driven prices. What the market will accept. Lots of facilities and hospitals. I don’t know.”*
- “Health care should be non-profit.”*

**Table 5**  
**Elements of an Ideal Health Care System**  
All respondents

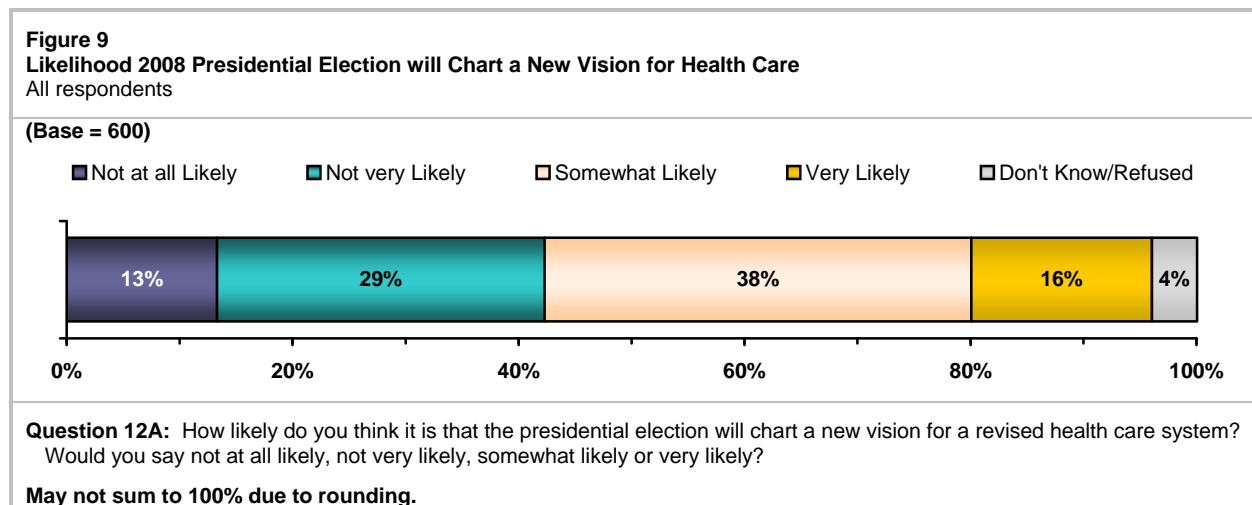
(Base)	Total (600)
<b>Coverage (Net)</b>	<b>72%</b>
Everyone is covered, everyone can get care	39
Availability of services/doctors	25
Preventive coverage	11
More coverage/better coverage	6
Need coverage for elderly, disabled, children	6
Offer broader range of coverages, dental, vision, etc.	5
Timely care / Not put on a waiting list	4
<b>Low, affordable cost (care, prescriptions, etc.)</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>Quality of Care (Net)</b>	<b>33%</b>
High quality care	24%
Well-trained doctors/professionals	8
<b>Personal Choice--choose own doctor/hospital/treatment</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Keeping up-to-date (Net)</b>	<b>4%</b>
Up-to-date technology	3
Quality of research / research advances	2
<b>Other (Net)</b>	<b>21%</b>
Personal accountability/responsibility	6
Not controlled by the government	4
Educate the public	3
Other	12
<b>Waste/Fraud (Net)</b>	<b>6%</b>
Honesty, know where money goes	3
Cap on malpractice lawsuits	2
<b>Don’t know / Not sure</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Question 11: What do you feel would be the top three most important elements of an ideal health care system?</b>	
<b>Multiple responses accepted.</b>	

Some comments about the quality of care include:

- *“Establish uniform minimum benefits. You have to cover mental health, preventive care and things that are not normally covered now and catastrophic medical expenses, so it’s not borne by the individual or the employer.”*
- *“Preventive care. Maintained before being ill. Adding naturopaths and such. We need to work better together. More funding. More doctors willing to work together with people better.”*
- *Preventive maintenance. Making sure, we have a healthy population before we need health care. Well child care; making sure children are healthy. Post-natal care.”*

## Health Care and the 2008 Presidential Election

Respondents were divided when it came to expectations that the 2008 Presidential election will chart a new vision for a revised health care system with 54% saying it is “likely” and 42% saying it is “not likely” (Figure 9).



Two of three Democratic voters (67%) said it was likely compared to 46% each for those who vote Republicans and Independent. Other groups who were especially likely to think health care will be a featured issue in the 2008 race for president include:

- Adults ages 18 to 34 (68% think it’s likely)
- Respondents who are dissatisfied with access to health care on a national level (58%) compared with 47% who are satisfied
- Respondents who are satisfied with their personal access to health care (58%) compared to 42% of those dissatisfied
- Those with employer provided health care (57%)

Respondents who think health care is unlikely to play a major role in the election include:

- Republican (49%) and Independent voters (50%)

- People who are dissatisfied with the access they have to their own health care (55%)

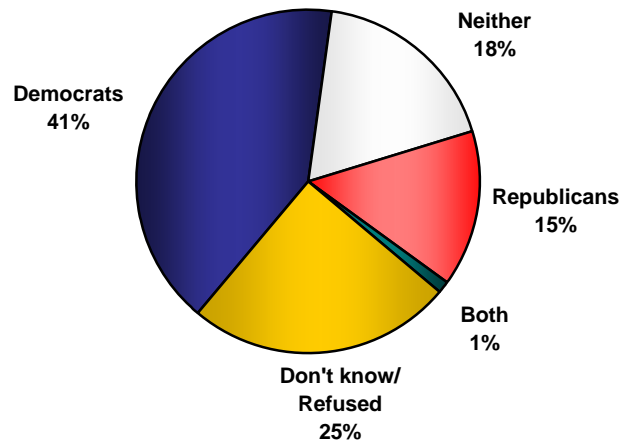
When asked which party has the most meaningful health care proposal, four in ten respondents (41%) said the Democrats have the most meaningful proposal, 15% said the Republicans and 18% said neither party (Figure 10). One-quarter of respondents (25%) said they “don’t know.” It is unclear from this response whether Washington voters are unable to choose between the proposals being floated by candidates in each party or if they are not familiar with what is being proposed. Independent voters (31%) and Republican voters (26%) were significantly more likely than Democratic voters (15%) to say “don’t know” in response to this question.

Given the bias in “don’t know” responses, it is not surprising that Democrats emerged as the party with “the most meaningful proposal.” Among the Democratic voters in the state, 76% said the Democratic Party has the most meaningful proposal. Nearly one of four Independent voters (24%) and 9% of the Republican voters also said the Democrats have the better health plan.

Forty-four percent of the Republican voters (44%) said the Republican Party has the most meaningful proposal, but only 6% of the Independent voters and 1% of the Democratic voters held that view. About one third of the Independent voters (35%), 20% of the Republicans and 7% of the Democrats said neither party has a meaningful proposal.

**Figure 10**  
**Party with Most Meaningful Health Care Proposal**  
All respondents

(Base = 600)



**Question 12b:** When it comes to candidate health care proposals, which party do you think has the most meaningful proposal?

**May not sum to 100% due to rounding.**