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AP-GfK Poll: Resistance to health care bill strong

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AP – FILE – In this March 30, 2010 file photo, President Barack Obama signs the Health Care and Education ...

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR, Associated Press Writer – 1 hr 8 mins ago

WASHINGTON – Opposition to President Barack Obama's health care law jumped after he signed it — a warning to Democrats running for re-election this fall that his victory could become their liability.

A new Associated Press-GfK poll finds Americans oppose the health care remake 50 percent to 39 percent. Before a divided Congress finally passed the bill and Obama signed it at a jubilant White House ceremony last month, public opinion was about evenly split. Another 10 percent of Americans say they are neutral.

Disapproval for Obama's handling of health care also increased from 46 percent before the bill passed to 52 percent currently — a level not seen since last summer's angry town hall meetings.

Nonetheless, the bleak numbers may not represent a final judgment for the president and his Democratic allies in Congress. That's because only 28 percent of those polled said they understand the overhaul extremely or very well, and a big chunk of those remain neutral.

Democrats hope to change public opinion by calling attention to benefits available this year for seniors, families with children transitioning to work and people shut out of coverage because of medical problems.

"There are some things I like, because I think that there are some people who need health care," said Jim Fall, 73, a retired computer consultant from Wrightwood, Calif.

But "I don't like the idea of the government dictating what health care should be like," added Fall. "Nor do I like them taking money out of Medicare. They are going to create more waste and they are going to take away benefits."

Seniors — reliable voters in midterm congressional races — were far more likely to oppose the law. Forty-nine percent were strongly opposed, compared with 37 percent of those 64 and younger. Seniors' worries that Medicare cuts to insurers, hospitals and other providers will undermine their care are a formidable challenge for Democratic congressional candidates this fall.

Analysts said such wariness on a major piece of social legislation is unusual.

"The surprise of this poll is that you would expect people to be more supportive of the bill now that it's the law of the land — and that's not the case," said Robert Blendon, a Harvard public health professor who follows opinion trends on health care. "The election for the House is going to be competitive, and health care is clearly going to be an issue."

The nearly \$1 trillion, 10-year health care remake would provide coverage to nearly all Americans while also attempting to improve quality and slow the ruinous pace of rising medical costs.

Nonpartisan congressional budget analysts say the law is fully paid for. Its mix of Medicare cuts and tax

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Viagra for women?

A recent study may mean we're a step closer.

increases, falling mainly on upper-income earners, would actually reduce the federal deficit. And people covered by large employers may even see a dip in their premiums.

The public doesn't seem to be buying it.

Fifty-seven percent said they expect to pay more for their own health care, contrasted with 7 percent who expect to pay less. And 47 percent said they expect their own medical care to get worse, compared with 14 percent looking forward to an improvement.

"Based on the little information we know, somebody's going to have to pay for it, so it makes sense that taxes would go up," said Lang Fu, 48, an oil and gas engineer from Houston.

Politically, Americans are polarized. Democrats support the overhaul by 68 percent to 18 percent, while Republicans oppose it 85 percent to 9 percent. Whites oppose it by 57 percent to 32 percent, while minorities support it 61-27.

Political independents are roughly even, with 44 percent opposed and 40 percent in favor — within the poll's margin of error. Some may be swayed by appeals from Obama and the law's supporters.

Donna Christian of Kingsport, Tenn., is an independent leaning in favor of the law. A bad heart forced Christian, 45, to leave her job as a supervisor at a wireless phone company a few years ago. She and her 10-year-old daughter make do on a limited income, and have coverage through Medicaid.

"I think Americans are going to be better off in the long run even if they don't see that now," Christian said. "More will have coverage, and they'll be able to go to the hospital when they need to."

Ron Pollack, head of Families USA, a liberal advocacy group that supports the overhaul, said it will be "a real task" to turn public opinion around, but he's confident.

"When you dig deeper, individual provisions of the law have enormous support," he said. Pollack believes current polls reflect public disgust with a "very lengthy and messy process."

But Rep. Dave Camp, R-Mich., says Democrats already lost their chance to persuade the public.

"They have had 16 months to explain this bill," Camp said. "Good luck trying to explain it in the next six."

The AP-GfK Poll was conducted April 7-12, 2010, by GfK Roper Public Affairs and Media. It involved interviews with 1,001 adults nationwide on landline and cellular telephones. It had a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 4.3 percentage points.

Associated Press Polling Director Trevor Thompson, AP News Survey Specialist Dennis Junius and AP writers Alan Fram and Ann Sanner contributed to this report.

On the Net:

AP-GfK Poll: <http://www.ap-gfkipoll.com>.

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839  336

Maybe American's are smarter than we gave them credit for. Let's throw the ACORNicrats out!

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Above Average Joe 9 hours ago | [Report Abuse](#)961   360

April 14, 2010 AP WASHINGTON Obama's recent ratings pivot from racial slurs, some published, some not. President Obama has in the opinion of many sealed his own legacy starting with the association of Reverend Jeremiah Wright, a radical religious leader. The President's interference in local issues adds inflammatory accusations such as the comment made during a press conference regarding Gates and Crowley. Racial gestures permeate the President's demeanor even when speaking to predominantly white audiences. Days after the healthcare vote, President Obama mocked Americans by laughing at those who vowed to repeal the law. In our opinion, President Obama will not regain the trust of at least 69% of voting Americans come November 2012. His leadership skills are not mature enough to withstand the principles which Americans embrace from the Constitution. A President should be a role model to those aspiring to lead. Yet he mocks those who object or disagree with him. It has been a long year watching this President divide the country. In the interests of a sound America, it is time for President Obama to step down and move out of the way.

[Replies \(47\)](#)Dadfirst 9 hours ago | [Report Abuse](#)824   210

Fifty-seven percent said they expect to pay more for their own health care, contrasted with 7 percent who expect to pay less. And 47 percent said they expect their own medical care to get worse, compared with 14 percent looking forward to an improvement.

Is this the change you were hoping for?

[Replies \(31\)](#)Thor 9 hours ago | [Report Abuse](#)681   199

People r realizing what this monster bill is going to cost.probably to late to stop it now though.People should do there homework sooner.Hello 20% value added tax!!!!!!!!!!!!

[Replies \(18\)](#)Nicolas 9 hours ago | [Report Abuse](#)217   749

The economy is getting better, healthcare won't even be an issue come election time. It's almost always about the economy.

[Replies \(41\)](#)Michael Perex 9 hours ago | [Report Abuse](#)766   233

A new poll shows..... what nonsense. They new what we didn't want and they chose not to listen. It's okay though. The bill will be repealed because it is utter trash and anyone having had anything to do with voting that monstrous piece of garbage into law, will find themselves in the unemployment line soon.

[Replies \(23\)](#)Dc Daddy 9 hours ago | [Report Abuse](#)714   204

AP POSTS BAD OBAMA NEWS AT NIGHT... POSTS PRO OBAMA ARTICLES DURING THE DAY... AP u r a bunch of pansies... Americans never liked this bill but the 3 commies rammed it down our throats whether we liked it or not.. "You'll like it after we pass it" ... "Lets pass it first to see whats in it" ... man, what is this country coming to?

[Replies \(16\)](#)Above Average Joe 9 hours ago | [Report Abuse](#)574   162

Ever see baby birds or chicks in a nest crying and begging with their mouths wide open and bodies flailing wildly when Mama bird comes back with a worm? Thats what Obama voters look like.... 300 people a day die from lack of health care according to Obama.... Thats a big number of people to kill while America waits for his mandatory healthcare to kick in 4 years from now.... Snowjob....priceless.

[Replies \(19\)](#)

Texbella13 9 hours ago | [Report Abuse](#)564   135

Gee, say it isn't so. The rest of you have now seen the writing on the wall. It's about time, we've been waiting for you to get a clue!

[Replies \(9\)](#)Bailedout 9 hours ago | [Report Abuse](#)527   128

If they wanted disapproval number they should have asked the millions who have lost their homes to foreclosure. To put Obama's Olympian hypocrisy in perspective, one need only examine the federal budget tables posted on the White House website by Obama's own Office of Management and Budget.

They reveal these startling facts: When calculated by the average annual percentage of the Gross Domestic Product that he will spend during his presidency, Obama is on track to become the biggest-spending president since 1930, the earliest year reported on the OMB's historical chart of spending as a percentage of GDP. When calculated by the average annual percentage of GDP he will borrow during his presidency, Obama is on track to become the greatest debtor president since Franklin Roosevelt.

Obama will outspend and out-borrow the admittedly profligate George W. Bush, a man Obama and his lieutenants routinely malign for fiscal recklessness and who, when in office, was often hailed even by his allies as a Big Government Republican. Obama will even outspend—but not quite out-borrow—his fellow welfare-state liberal FDR, who had to contend with both the Depression and World War II

Bush ran annual deficits that averaged 3.4 percent of GDP—and that includes fiscal 2009, when the deficit soared to 9.9 percent of GDP and Obama signed a \$787 billion stimulus bill (some of which was spent in fiscal 2009) after Bush left office. Obama, according to OMB, will run deficits that average 7.05 percent of GDP—or more than twice the average deficits under Bush.

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