



**PUBLIC OPINION  
STRATEGIES**

**TO:** MARJORIE DANNENFELSER, SUSAN B. ANTHONY LIST  
**FROM:** ALEX BRATTY, PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES  
**RE:** KEY FINDINGS FROM A NATIONAL SURVEY  
**DATE:** SEPTEMBER 9, 2009

**KEY FINDINGS**

- 1) *More than four-in-ten voters (43%) say they would be less likely to support the president’s proposed health plan if the government pays for abortions. Forty-six percent (46%) say it would make no difference to their support, and 8% say it would make them more likely to support the plan.* More than one-third (36%) say they would be “much less likely” to support the president’s health plan if the government pays for abortions.



Importantly, Independent voters track closely to this aggregate data with 44% saying they would be less likely to support the president’s plan, and another 46% saying it would make no difference to their level of support. Interestingly, just 12% of Democrats say it would make them more likely to support the plan, while the majority (59%) say it would make no difference to their support. A significant 25% of Democrats say it would make them less likely to support the president’s plan.

There is also a notable lack of gender gap on this measure with 41% of men and 44% of women saying they would be less likely to support the president’s health plan if it included the government paying for abortions.



- 2) *When asked a series of questions related to their attitudes towards government involvement in offering abortion services, in each case a majority of voters say they do not want the government paying for abortions.*

Again, on each of these measures Independents and a significant proportion of Democrats prefer that the government not fund abortions.



*A majority (55%) agree that “whatever my opinion on the issue, I think it would be wrong for the government to pay for abortions.”*

	Agree	Disagree
	<b>77%</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Independents</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>43%</b>
	<b>38%</b>	<b>58%</b>

*More than half (52%) agree that “I do not want the government to help fund health care plans that cover abortions.”*

	Agree	Disagree
	<b>77%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Independents</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>45%</b>
	<b>32%</b>	<b>62%</b>

*Almost six-in-ten (58%) disagree that “if the government is going to make a public health plan available for all Americans it has an obligation to provide abortion services under that plan.”*

	Agree	Disagree
	<b>17%</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>Independents</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>60%</b>
	<b>56%</b>	<b>39%</b>

**THE BOTTOM LINE**

This data would suggest that government funding of abortion services is unappealing to voters. If this element is included in the president’s proposed health plan it could alienate Independent voters and a significant proportion of the Democratic Base.

**METHODOLOGY**

On behalf of The Susan B. Anthony List, Public Opinion Strategies was pleased to conduct a national survey of N=800 registered voters. The survey was conducted August 30 - September 1, 2009 and has a margin of error of  $\pm 3.5\%$ .

# Susan B. Anthony List National Survey

## *Interview Schedule*

Field Dates: August 30 - September 1, 2009  
Project #09365

N = 800 registered voters  
Margin of Error =  $\pm 3.46\%$

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A. Are you registered to vote at this address?

100% YES (**CONTINUE TO QUESTION B**)

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B. Are you, or is anyone in your household, employed by a newspaper, television or radio station, or a political party, or by a candidate for political office?

100% NO

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Now, talking just a little about the President's proposed health care plan which may include creating a public health insurance plan that would be administered by the federal government.

S1. As part of this proposed public plan, if the government paid for abortions would this make you (**ROTATE**) – more likely or less likely – to support the President's proposed health plan, or would it make no difference to your opinion one way or the other?

(**IF CHOICE, THEN ASK:**) Would you be much (more/less) likely or just somewhat (more/less) likely to support the plan?

8% **TOTAL MORE LIKELY**

43% **TOTAL LESS LIKELY**

5% MUCH MORE LIKELY

3% SOMEWHAT MORE LIKELY

7% SOMEWHAT LESS LIKELY

36% MUCH LESS LIKELY

46% NO DIFFERENCE

1% DON'T KNOW (**DO NOT READ**)

2% REFUSE (**DO NOT READ**)

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And, please tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

**(IF AGREE/DISAGREE, THEN ASK:)** Would you say you strongly (agree/disagree) or just somewhat (agree/disagree) with this statement?

<b>STRONG AGREE</b>	<b>SMWHT AGREE</b>	<b>SMWHT DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONG DISAGREE</b>	<b>DK (DNR)</b>	<b>REF (DNR)</b>
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The first/next one is... **(RANDOMIZE QS2-S4)**

S2.	Whatever my opinion on the issue, I think it would be wrong for the government to pay for abortions.	45%	10%	15%	27%	2%	1%
		<b>55%</b>		<b>42%</b>			

S3.	I do not want the government to help fund health care plans that cover abortions.	42%	10%	15%	29%	3%	1%
		<b>52%</b>		<b>44%</b>			

S4.	If the government is going to make a public health plan available for all Americans it has an obligation to provide abortion services under that plan.	21%	17%	13%	45%	3%	1%
		<b>38%</b>		<b>58%</b>			

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Now, I have just a few more questions for statistical purposes only...

D1. And, just to be sure we have a representative sample, in what year were you born?

3%	18 - 24
13%	25 - 34
29%	35 - 44
18%	45 - 54
20%	55 - 64
17%	65 AND ABOVE

\* REFUSED

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D2. And what was the last grade you completed in school? (**DO NOT READ CATEGORIES**)

**26% HIGH SCHOOL OR LESS**

**26% SOME COLLEGE**

**48% COLLEGE+**

*	SOME GRADE SCHOOL (1-8)
5%	SOME HIGH SCHOOL (9-11)
21%	GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL (9-12)
3%	TECHNICAL OR VOCATIONAL SCHOOL (12)
23%	SOME COLLEGE (13-15)
30%	GRADUATED COLLEGE (16)
18%	GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL (16+)

\* REFUSED (**DO NOT READ**)

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D3. And in politics today, do you consider yourself... **(ROTATE)**  
a Republican, a Democrat, or something else?

**(IF REPUBLICAN OR DEMOCRAT, ASK:)** Would you call yourself a **STRONG**  
(Republican/Democrat) or a **NOT-SO-STRONG** (Republican/ Democrat)?

**(IF SOMETHING ELSE, ASK:)** Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or to the  
Democratic party?

**28% TOTAL REPUBLICAN**

**36% TOTAL DEMOCRAT**

20% STRONG REPUBLICAN

8% NOT-SO-STRONG REPUBLICAN

10% LEAN TO REPUBLICANS

19% SOMETHING ELSE/INDEPENDENT

6% LEAN TO DEMOCRATS

12% NOT-SO-STRONG DEMOCRAT

24% STRONG DEMOCRAT

\* DON'T KNOW **(DO NOT READ)**

1% REFUSED **(DO NOT READ)**

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D4. Generally speaking, do you consider yourself to be **(ROTATE TOP TO BOTTOM, BOTTOM  
TO TOP)** conservative, moderate ...or... liberal ...on most issues?

**(IF CONSERVATIVE/LIBERAL, ASK)** And would you say you are **VERY**  
(conservative/liberal), or just **SOMEWHAT** (conservative/liberal)?

**40% TOTAL CONSERVATIVE**

**20% TOTAL LIBERAL**

21% VERY CONSERVATIVE

19% SOMEWHAT CONSERVATIVE

37% MODERATE

9% SOMEWHAT LIBERAL

11% VERY LIBERAL

2% DON'T KNOW **(DO NOT READ)**

\* REFUSED **(DO NOT READ)**

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S5. On the issue of abortion, would you say you are more likely to vote for a **(ROTATE)** -- right to life candidate, a pro-choice candidate, -- or would it not make much difference on how you might vote?

31% RIGHT TO LIFE CANDIDATE  
33% PRO-CHOICE CANDIDATE  
33% NO DIFFERENCE  
  
2% UNDECIDED/NOT SURE **(DO NOT READ)**  
1% REFUSED **(DO NOT READ)**

D5. Regardless of how you may feel today...for which of the following candidates did you vote for President... **(ROTATE 1 & 2)**

<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>Voted</u></b>	
41%	43%	John McCain
		...OR...
51%	54%	Barack Obama
*	*	Bob Barr <b>(DO NOT READ)</b>
*	*	Ralph Nader <b>(DO NOT READ)</b>
2%	2%	SOMEONE ELSE <b>(DO NOT READ)</b>
2%	–	DID NOT VOTE <b>(DO NOT READ)</b>
*	–	DON'T KNOW/DON'T RECALL <b>(DO NOT READ)</b>
3%	–	REFUSED <b>(DO NOT READ)</b>

Thinking a little more about you...

D6. Do you have a health plan, that is, are you covered by a private health insurance plan or by a government program such as MediCARE, MediCAID or Tricare? **(SPECIFY) (IF GIVE MULTIPLE PUNCHES, ASK FOR PRIMARY PLAN)**

**89% TOTAL YES**  
**9% NO**

68% YES, Private Health Insurance  
15% YES, MediCARE  
3% YES, MediCAID  
3% YES, Tricare

9% NO

2% DON'T KNOW **(DO NOT READ)**  
\* REFUSED **(DO NOT READ)**

D7. Other than being an American, what is your main ethnic or racial heritage? **(READ CHOICES)**

- 76% WHITE
  - 12% AFRICAN AMERICAN OR BLACK
  - 8% HISPANIC AMERICAN OR LATINO
  - 2% ASIAN AMERICAN
  - 1% **OTHER (DO NOT READ) (IF PUNCH , THEN ASK:)** Now I realize you just said your main ethnic or racial heritage doesn't fall into any of the categories I just mentioned...but if you had to choose JUST ONE of these categories, which ONE would you choose?
  - 1% **REFUSED (DO NOT READ)**
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D8. **GENDER (BY OBSERVATION, BUT ASK EVERYONE)** Are you employed outside of the home, are you a homemaker, or are you retired?

**(IF EMPLOYED OUTSIDE THE HOME, ASK:)** And, are you paid on an hourly basis or do you draw a yearly salary?

- 48% TOTAL MALE**
  - 52% TOTAL FEMALE**
  
  - 15% MALE/EMPLOYED/HOURLY
  - 18% MALE/EMPLOYED/SALARY
  - \* MALE/HOMEMAKER
  - 10% MALE/RETIRED
  - 4% MALE/NOT IN LABOR FORCE
  - 1% MALE/REFUSED **(DO NOT READ)**
  
  - 13% FEMALE/EMPLOYED/HOURLY
  - 14% FEMALE/EMPLOYED/SALARY
  - 7% FEMALE/HOMEMAKER
  - 12% FEMALE/RETIRED
  - 5% FEMALE/NOT IN LABOR FORCE
  - 1% FEMALE/REFUSED **(DO NOT READ)**
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