

# **Health Reform in the 2008 Presidential Election: Implications for the Future**

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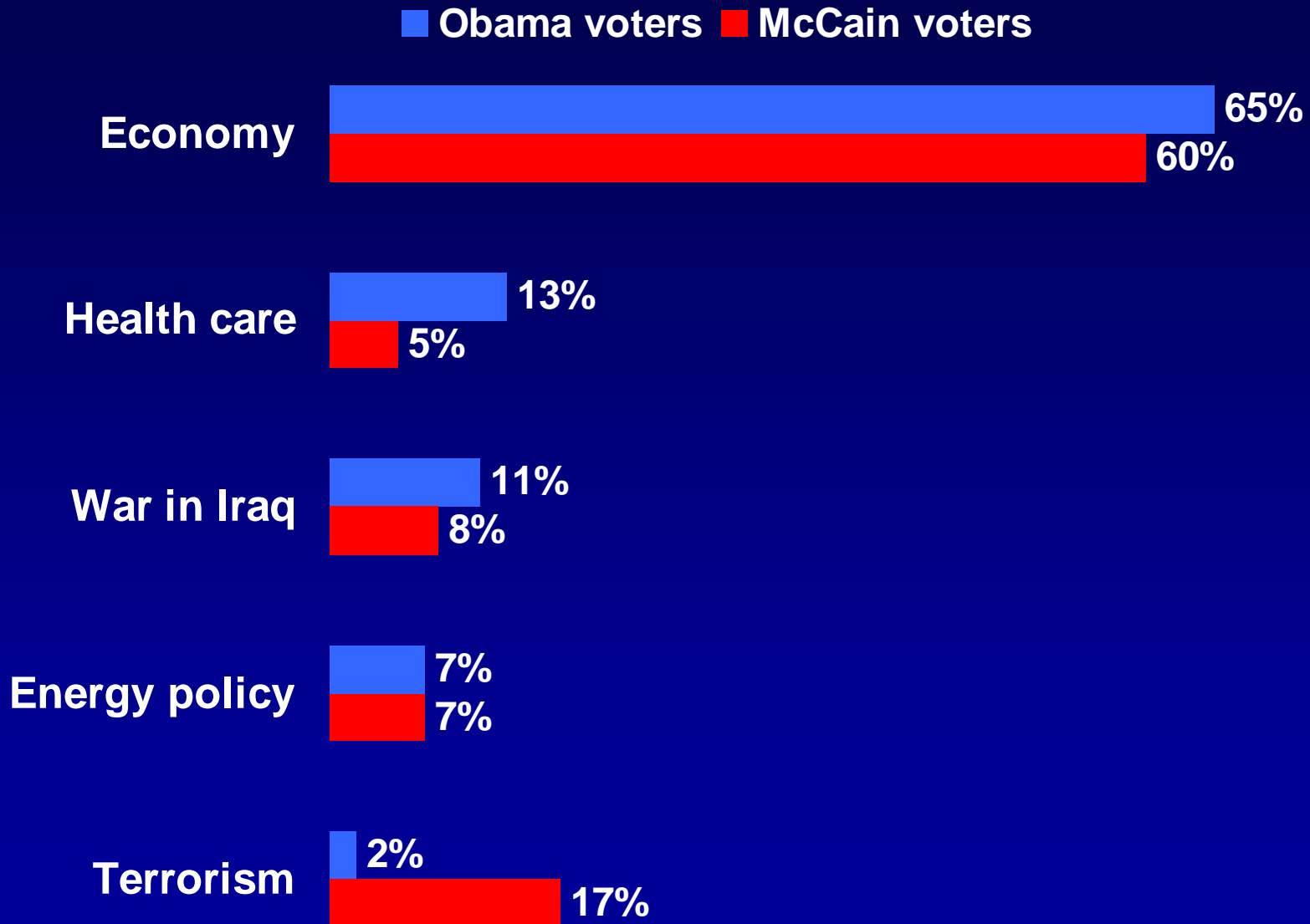
## Key Findings from the Election (1)

- Health care second most important issue for Obama/ far below economy
- Health care seen as an economic problem by Obama voters
- Three-quarters of those picking health care voted for Obama
- Very high expectations from Obama voters that something big could happen in health care

# Key Points (2) Implications for Future

- Supporters of Senators Obama and McCain differed *greatly* on views of future reform
- Obama vs. McCain voters—
  - Placed higher priority on broader health reform
  - Favored more expansive role for federal government in changing system/expanding coverage
  - Favored more government regulation of health care/less emphasis on private sector/individual responsibility
  - Favored less restrained overall federal health spending
  - Favored tax increases for upper-income people
- Vision of candidates/voters so disparate that in absence of one party control of Congress/Presidency, major reform hard to achieve
- Economic crisis likely to have major consequences on future health debates

# Most Important Issue Facing the Country



*National Exit Polls, November 2008.*

# Problems faced as a result of changes in economy

## % saying serious problem

*Paying for gas*



*Paying health care/insurance*



*Inadequate job income*



*Paying rent or mortgage*



*Paying for food*



*Losing money on stock market*

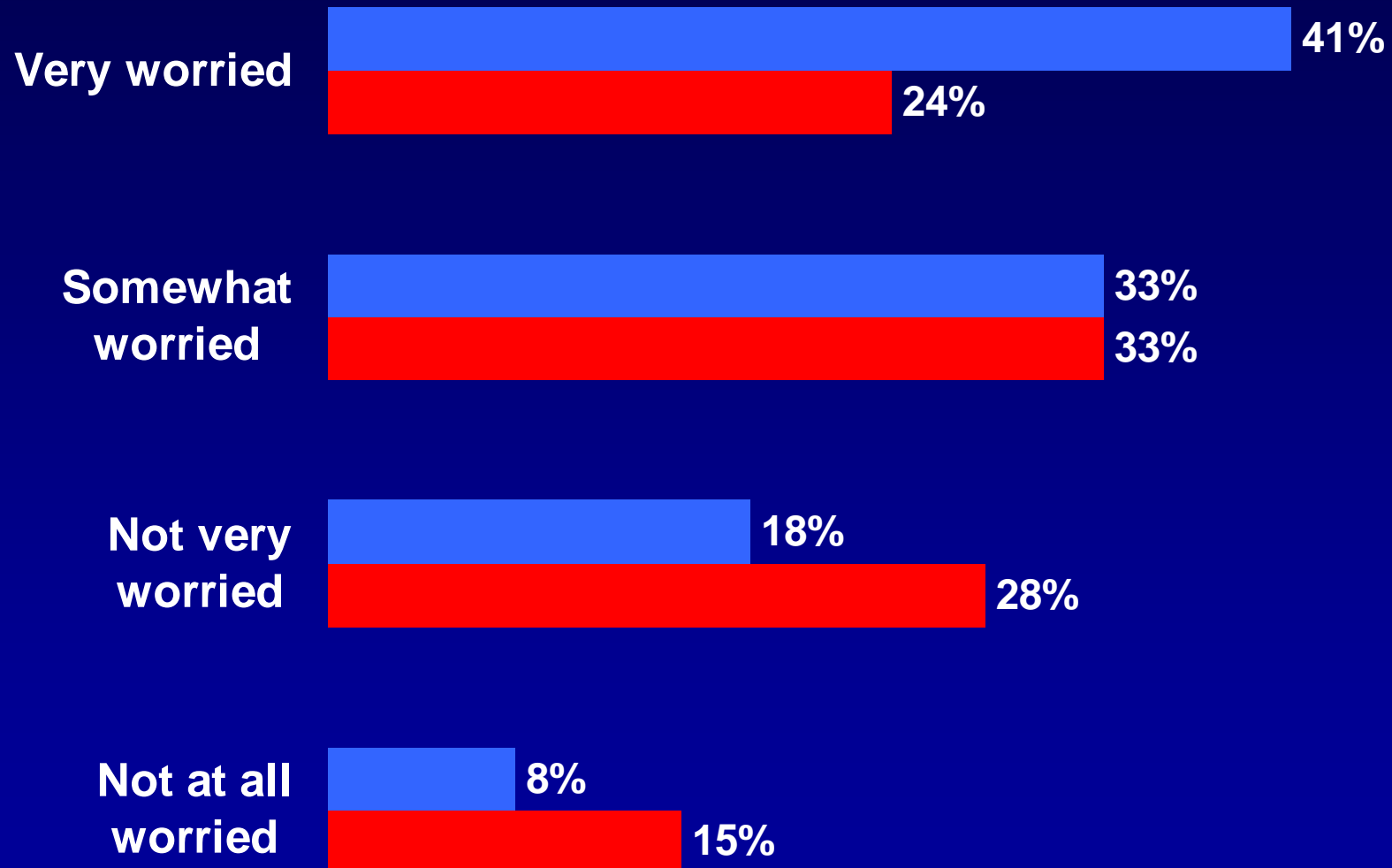


*Personal debt*



# How Worried Are You about Being Able to Afford the Health Care Services You Need?

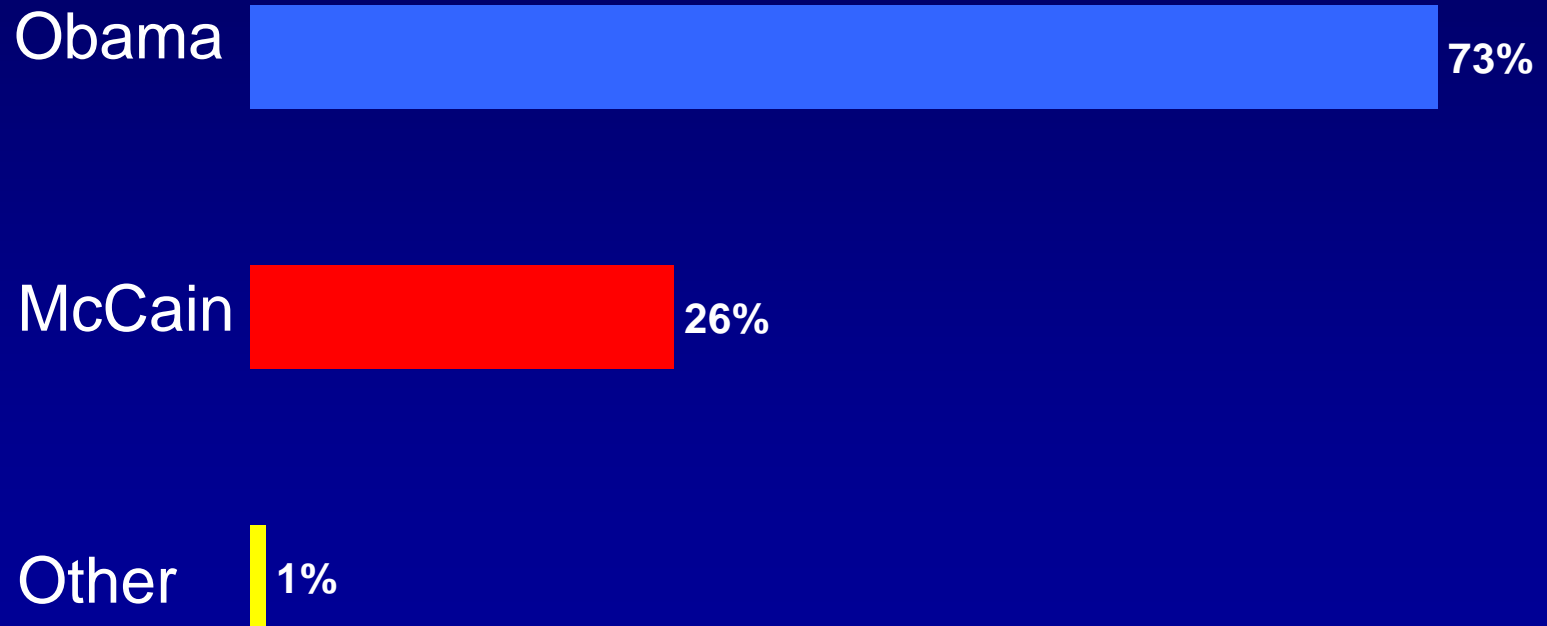
■ Obama voters ■ McCain voters



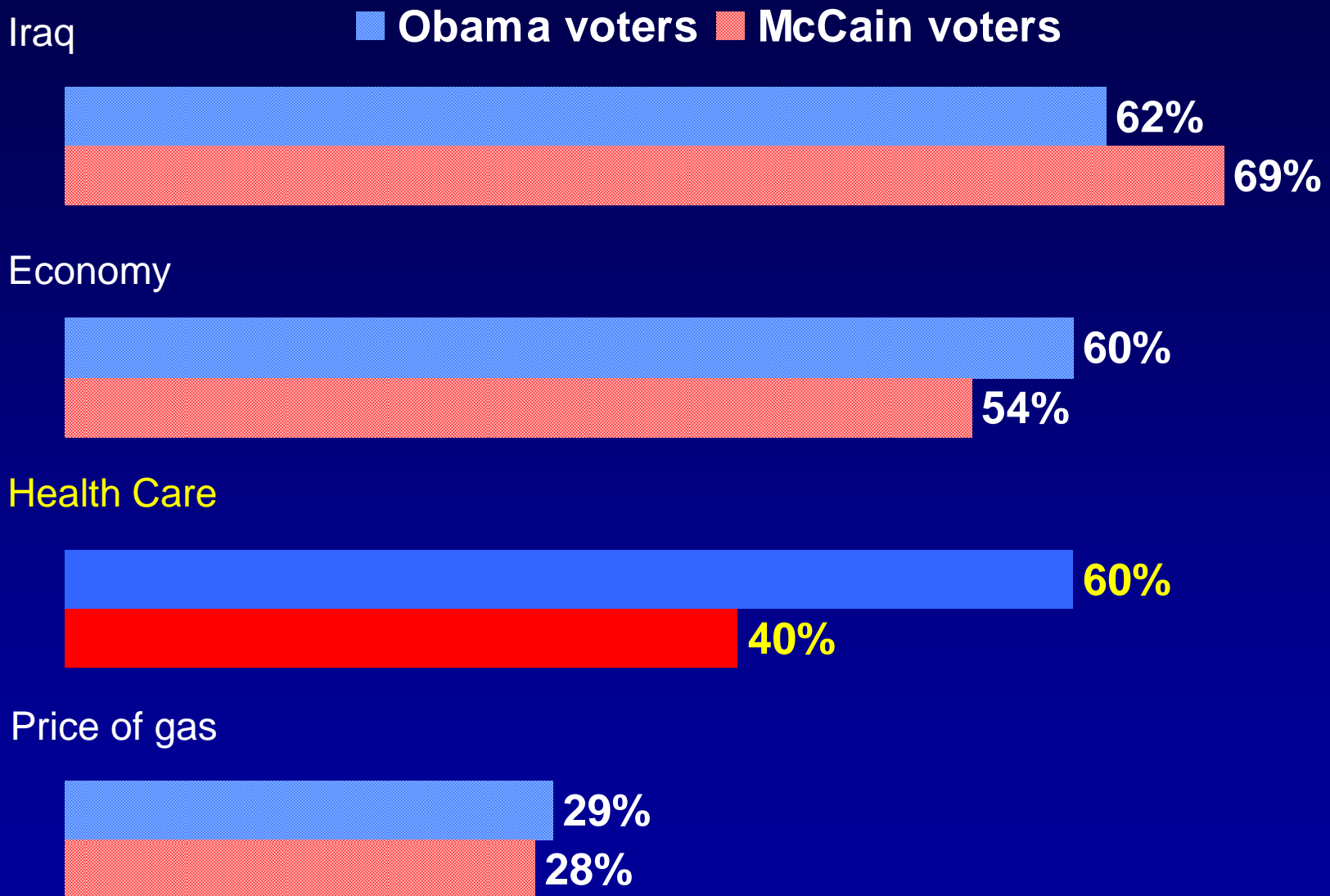
*National Exit Polls, November 2008.*

# Vote Distribution by Those Who Thought Health Care Most Important Issue

*(9% of total voters)*



# Will the Outcome of the Presidential Election Make a Great Deal of Difference on Various Top Issues?



Harvard School of Public Health/Harris Interactive poll of Registered Voters, October 16-19, 2008.

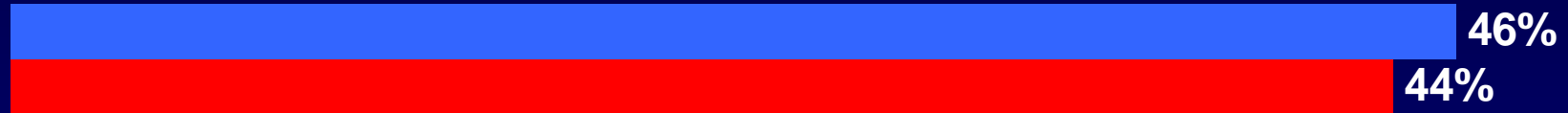


# Views of Obama vs. McCain Voters

# Health Care Priorities for Next President

■ Obama voters ■ McCain voters

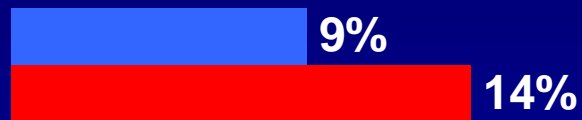
Making health care/insurance more affordable



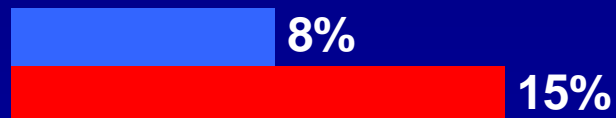
Expanding health insurance coverage for uninsured



Improving Medicare/Rx drug program



Improving the quality of care and reducing medical errors



Reducing spending on government health programs like Medicare and Medicaid

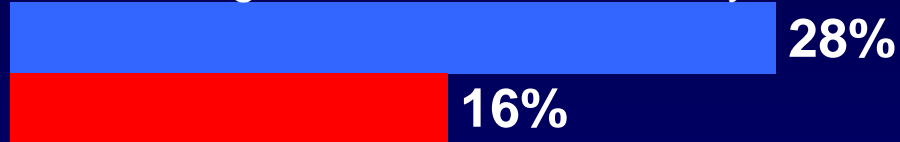


Blendon et al, "Voters and Health Reform in the 2008 Presidential Election." *NEJM*, November 6, 2008..

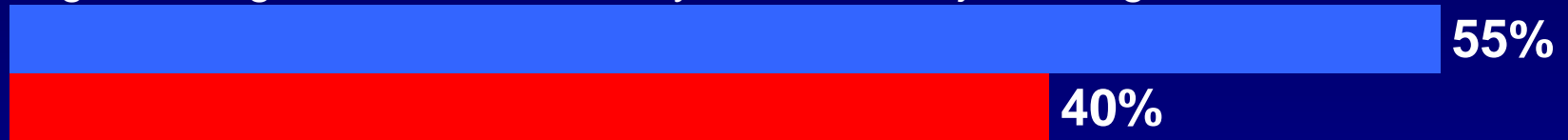
# Views of Health Care System

■ Obama voters ■ McCain voters

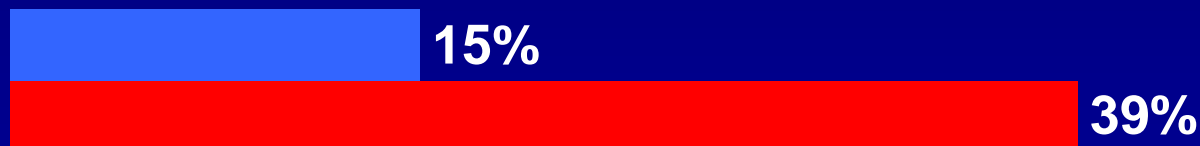
So much wrong with our health care system that it needs to be completely overhauled



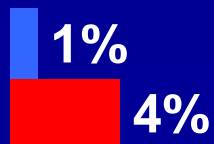
Some good things about our health system, but major changes are needed



Works pretty well, but minor changes are needed



Works well and does not need to be changed



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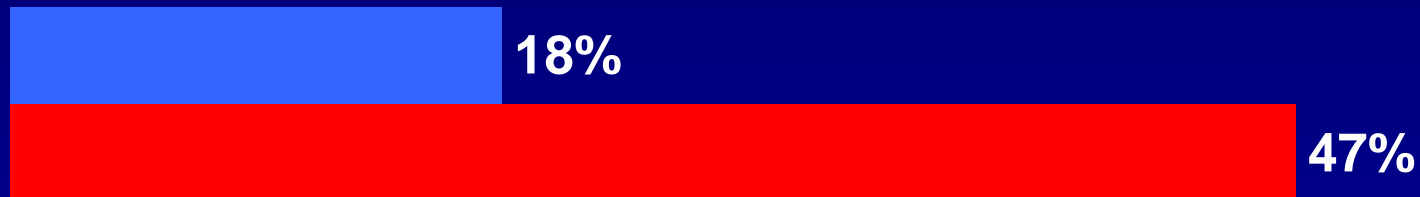
# Who Should Have the Most Responsibility for Helping to Ensure that Americans Receive Health Insurance Coverage

■ Obama voters ■ McCain voters

Federal government



Individuals themselves



Employers and businesses



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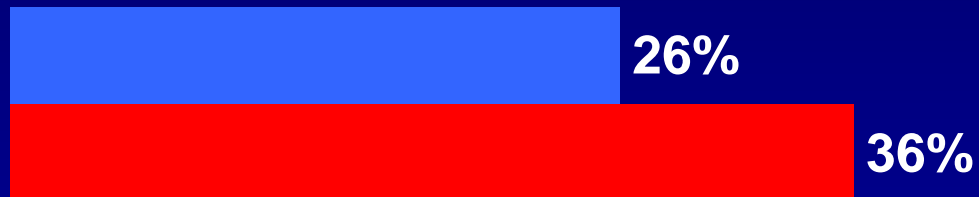
# Preferred Health Insurance Coverage Policy

■ Obama voters ■ McCain voters

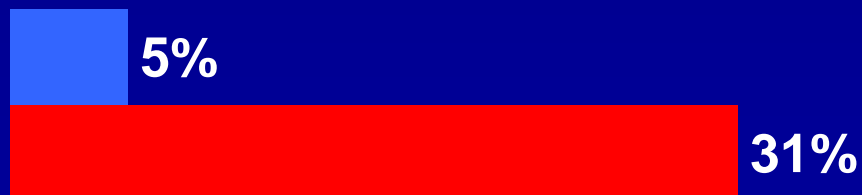
Make major effort to provide health insurance to all/would involve substantial increase in spending



Work to provide health insurance for some of the uninsured/would involve less new spending



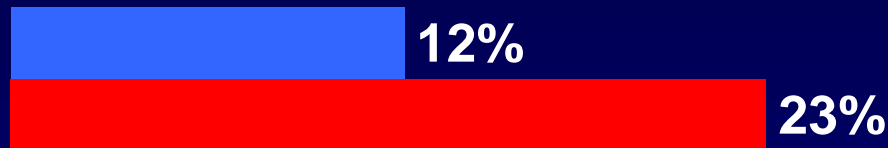
Keep things basically how they are



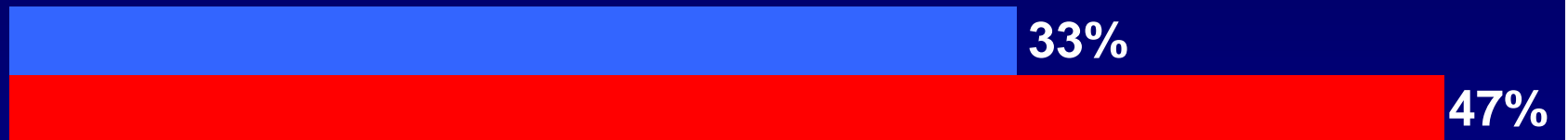
# Importance to You that Health Care Proposal Not Raise Taxes

■ Obama voters ■ McCain voters

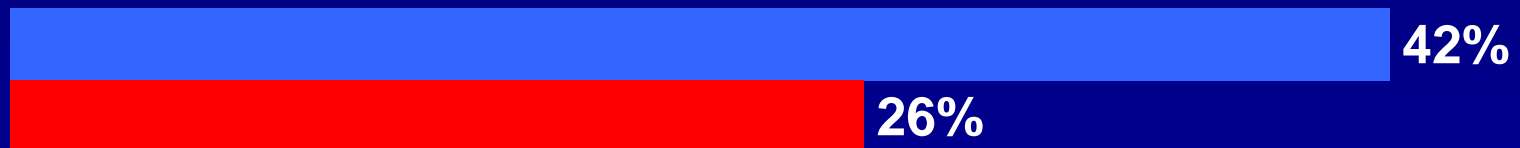
Most important consideration



Very important consideration



Somewhat important

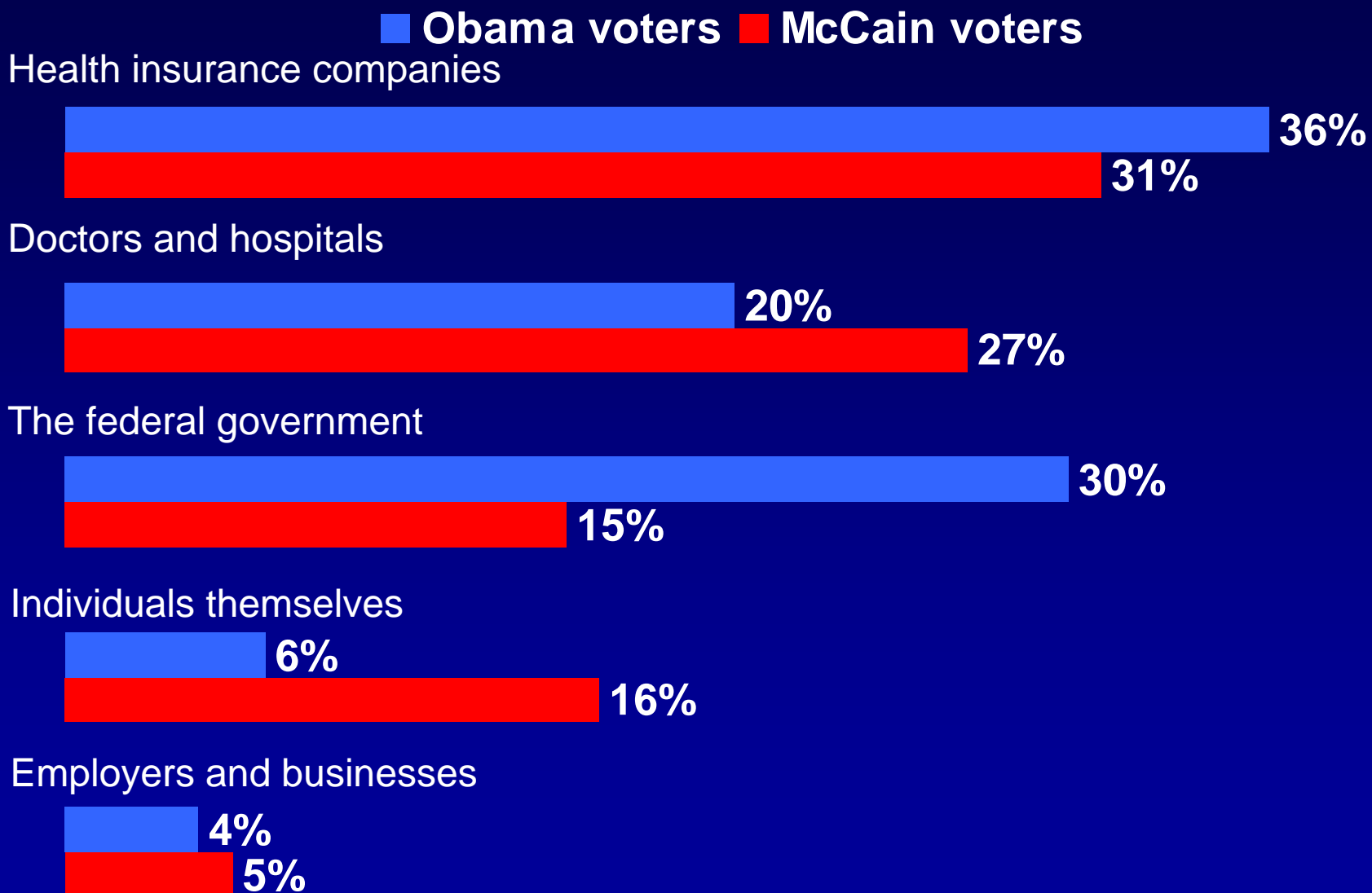


Not important at all



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# Who Should Have the Most Responsibility for Slowing the Rise in Health Care Costs?

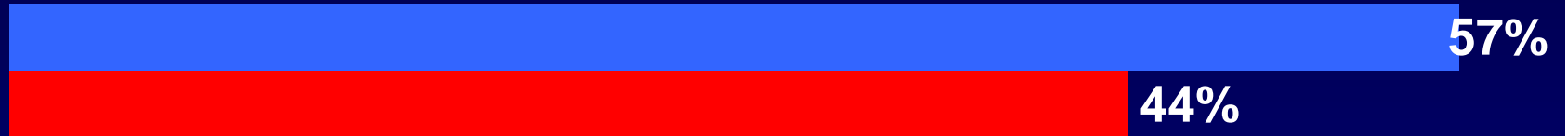


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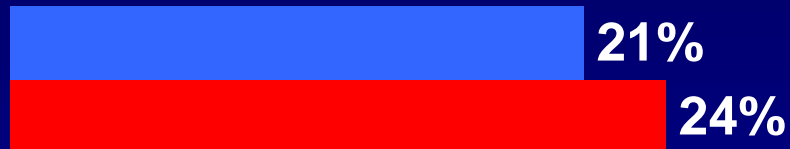
# Priorities to Address Rising Health Costs

■ Obama voters ■ McCain voters

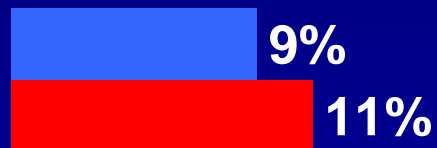
Reducing the amount people pay for their health care and insurance



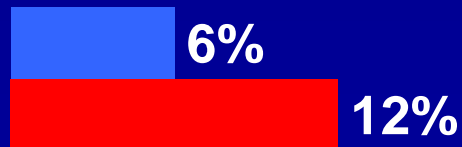
Reducing what the nation as a whole spends on health care



Reducing the amount employers pay to provide health insurance to their workers



Reducing future spending on government health insurance programs like Medicare and Medicaid

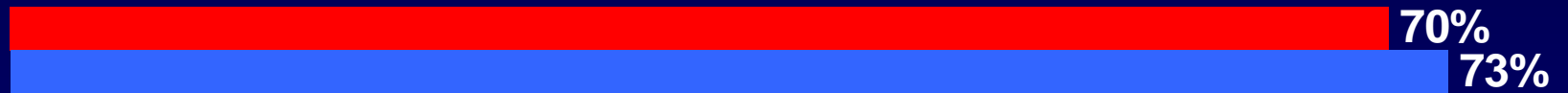




# Future Federal Spending on Health Care (% wanting spending increase)

■ McCain voters ■ Obama voters

Medical care for veterans



Programs to prevent disease and improve health



Medicare



Programs to protect against bioterrorism



Biomedical research



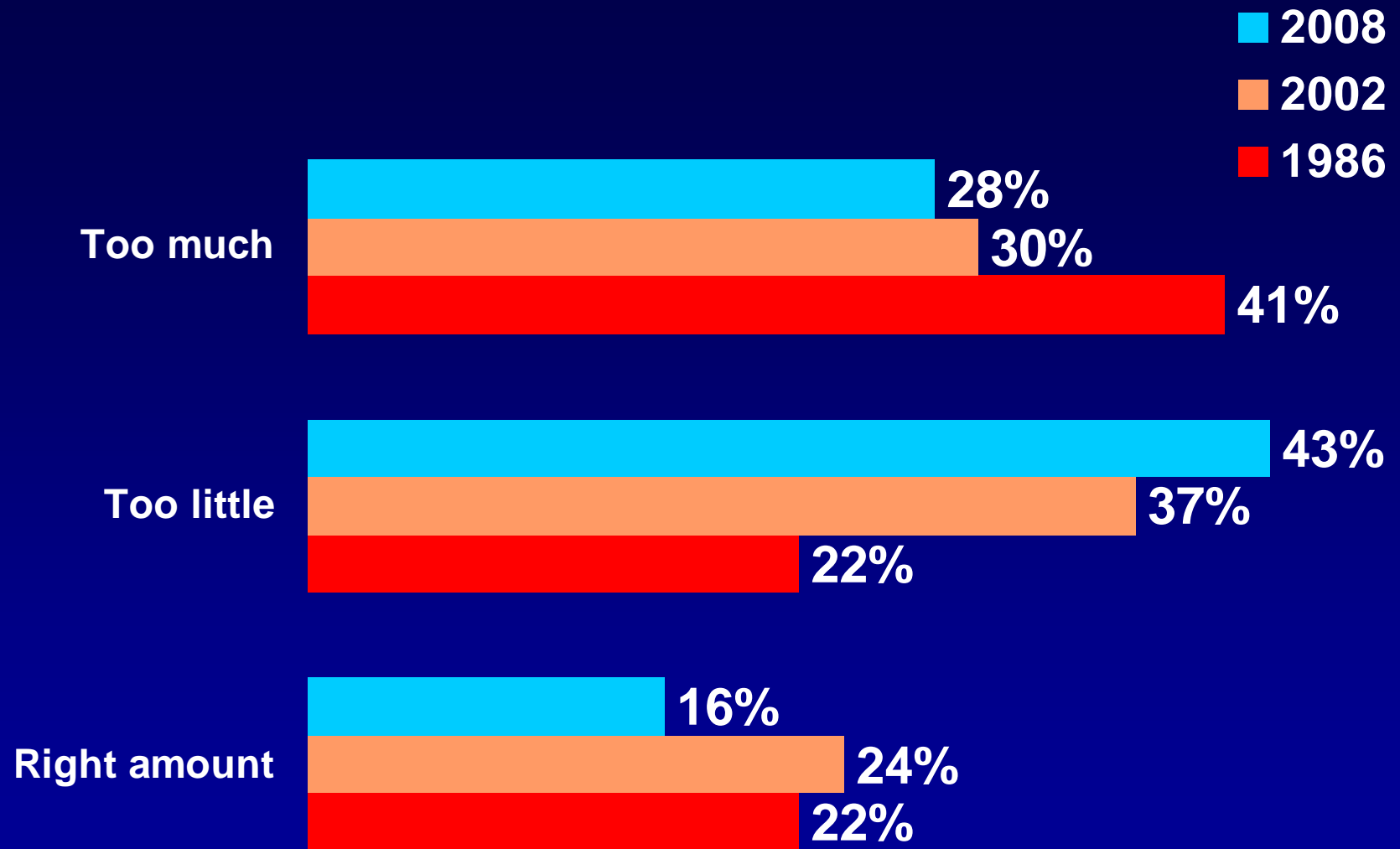
Medicaid



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The Future

# Public's Views of Federal Regulation of Business



"Don't know" responses not shown

CBS News polls, 1986, 2002, September 27-30, 2008.