IMPLICATIONS OF THE 2012 ELECTION FOR HEALTH CARE:
THE VOTERS’ PERSPECTIVE

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Obama Voters’ Perspective on the Future of Health Care

• Nation remains polarized over health policy. As a result of the election, Obama’s voters’ policy views will likely dominate future decisions. These include:
  • Favor a more expansive government role in health care
  • Favor implementing the ACA
  • Favor keeping Medicare and Medicaid in their current form
  • Oppose increased restrictions on abortion
  • Oppose health care cuts to solve deficit and more likely to support tax increases and defense cuts
• The reality that the House and the governorships remain a majority Republican suggests there will be conflicts on many of these issues
Voters’ Views of Most Important Issue Facing the Country

- **Economy**
  - Obama Voters: 55%
  - Romney Voters: 64%

- **Health Care**
  - Obama Voters: 27%
  - Romney Voters: 9%

- **Federal Budget Deficit**
  - Obama Voters: 9%
  - Romney Voters: 21%

- **Foreign Policy**
  - Obama Voters: 6%
  - Romney Voters: 3%

Edison Research/National Election Pool, National Exit Poll, 2012
Public Attitudes about the Affordable Care Act

Average of available polls in each time period

‡KFF April 2012; AP-GfK February 2012; Gallup-USA Today February 2012; ABC-WP March 2012; Pew Research Center March 2012; CBS-NYT March 2012.
Which Candidate Will Do A Better Job on Health Care: The Past Four Elections

Average of available polls in each time period

2000 Election* Gore v. Bush

Democratic Candidate

Republican Candidate

2004 Election† Bush v. Kerry

2008 Election‡ Obama v. McCain

2012 Election§ Obama v. Romney

Role of Government in Health Care
Voters’ Views on the Role of Government to Solve Problems

Government is doing too many things better left to businesses and individuals

- Obama Voters: 24%
- Romney Voters: 79%

Government should do more to solve problems

- Obama Voters: 70%
- Romney Voters: 15%

Edison Research/National Election Pool, National Exit Poll, 2012
Voters’ Support for The Federal Government Continuing Efforts to Make Sure Most Americans Have Health Care Coverage

- **Favor**
  - Obama Voters: 92%
  - Romney Voters: 33%

- **Oppose**
  - Obama Voters: 5%
  - Romney Voters: 62%
Voters’ Views on Government Responsibility for Fixing the Health Care System

Harvard School of Public Health, October 24-November 4, 2012.

Federal should be more responsible

- Obama Voters: 55%
- Romney Voters: 8%

State should be more responsible

- Obama Voters: 15%
- Romney Voters: 40%

Both (vol.)

- Obama Voters: 15%
- Romney Voters: 5%

Oppose government involvement in trying to fix health care

- Obama Voters: 11%
- Romney Voters: 42%
Critical Policy Issues
Voters’ Preference for Controlling Rising Health Care Costs

Increasing federal government regulation of charges by insurance companies, doctors, and hospitals

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Obama Voters</th>
<th>Romney Voters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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</tbody>
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The federal government providing incentives for more competition among insurance companies, doctors, and hospitals

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Obama Voters</th>
<th>Romney Voters</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>58%</td>
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Neither (vol.)

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<th>Obama Voters</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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Voters’ Views on What Should Be Done with the Affordable Care Act After the Election

**Expand it**

- **Obama Voters:** 49%
- **Romney Voters:** 3%

**Leave it as is**

- **Obama Voters:** 29%
- **Romney Voters:** 7%

**Repeal some of it**

- **Obama Voters:** 13%
- **Romney Voters:** 36%

**Repeal all of it**

- **Obama Voters:** 2%
- **Romney Voters:** 48%

- **Implement/Expand**
  - **Obama:** 78%
  - **Romney:** 10%

- **Repeal some or all**
  - **Obama:** 15%
  - **Romney:** 84%

Edison Research/National Election Pool, National Exit Poll, 2012
Medicare should continue as it is today, with the government providing seniors with health insurance

Obama Voters: 83%
Romney Voters: 43%

Medicare should be changed to a system where the government provides seniors with a fixed payment or credit they could use either to purchase private health insurance or to pay the cost of remaining in the current Medicare program

Obama Voters: 12%
Romney Voters: 45%

Harvard School of Public Health, October 24-November 4, 2012.
Voters’ Views on What Should Be Done with Medicaid

Medicaid should continue as it is today, with the federal government paying for programs jointly with state governments and setting basic standards for coverage, benefits, and eligibility

- **Obama Voters**: 78%
- **Romney Voters**: 30%

Medicaid should be changed to a system where the federal government gives states a fixed amount of money and each state decides who to cover and what services to pay for

- **Obama Voters**: 16%
- **Romney Voters**: 60%

Harvard School of Public Health, October 24-November 4, 2012.
Voters’ Views on the Legality of Abortion

Legal in all cases

- Obama Voters: 45%
- Romney Voters: 13%

Legal in most cases

- Obama Voters: 35%
- Romney Voters: 25%

Illegal in most cases

- Obama Voters: 10%
- Romney Voters: 36%

Illegal in all cases

- Obama Voters: 5%
- Romney Voters: 21%

Edison Research/National Election Pool, National Exit Poll, 2012
Future Budget Deficit Decisions
Voters’ Agreement for Major Cuts to Health Care and Education Programs are Needed Given the Size of the Federal Deficit

- **Agree**
  - Obama Voters: 19%
  - Romney Voters: 54%

- **Disagree**
  - Obama Voters: 79%
  - Romney Voters: 44%

Harvard School of Public Health, October 24-November 4, 2012.
Voters’ Preferences for Reducing the Federal Budget Deficit: Budget Cuts (Part 1)

% who favor

Large cuts in future spending for Medicare

- Obama Voters: 17%
- Romney Voters: 25%

Large cuts in future spending for Medicaid

- Obama Voters: 19%
- Romney Voters: 36%

Large cuts in future spending for the new health care law, the Affordable Care Act

- Obama Voters: 31%
- Romney Voters: 50%

Harvard School of Public Health, October 24-November 4, 2012.
Voters’ Preferences for Reducing the Federal Budget Deficit: Budget Cuts (Part 2)

% who favor

Large cuts in the future spending for other areas of health
- **Obama Voters**: 17%
- **Romney Voters**: 41%

Large cuts in future defense spending
- **Obama Voters**: 53%
- **Romney Voters**: 16%
Voters’ Preferences for Reducing the Federal Budget Deficit: Willingness to Raise Taxes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% who favor</th>
<th>Obama Voters</th>
<th>Romney Voters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raising income taxes paid by people who make more than $250,000 a year income in order to raise more revenue</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising income taxes on everyone in order to raise more revenue</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising taxes on corporations in order to raise more revenue</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
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