

# The Uninsured in Massachusetts:

*An Opportunity for Leadership*

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Report for the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation

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## Executive summary

Massachusetts is currently facing the specter of recent job layoffs, a slowly growing economy, double-digit increases in health insurance premiums, a growing number of residents without health insurance, and cutbacks in state health care programs.<sup>1,2</sup> In this environment, a new survey of the public in Massachusetts finds that most people in the Commonwealth strongly believe that everyone in the state should be able to get the health care they need and are supportive of a number of proposals to ensure this. However, the survey also finds numerous challenges to significant action at the state level and points to the need for strong leadership on this issue.

The majority of residents of the Commonwealth believe that the health care system in Massachusetts has major problems (58%) or is in a state of crisis (14%). The survey also finds that a significant number of Massachusetts residents have had problems getting and paying for care in the past year. One in ten state residents said they did not get care they needed in the past year due to cost or that they had a problem paying medical bills in the past year. Among those who said they had a problem paying medical bills, 57 percent said they had been contacted by a collection agency.

Massachusetts residents are concerned about the uninsured problem in the Commonwealth today, but are conflicted in their views as what to do about it. The public strongly believes that everyone in the state should be able to get the health care they need, irrespective of their ability to pay. They see the state's uninsured problem as a top health care concern and one that is worsening over time.

There is also general support among the public in Massachusetts for a wide range of proposals to cover more of the uninsured in the state. Three of these proposals were favored by more than two-thirds of the public: expanding existing state programs, requiring employers to offer health insurance to employees, and tax credits and deductions to help the uninsured pay for health insurance. Lower levels of support were found for two proposals: (1) legally requiring individuals to have health insurance; and (2) a plan in which all Massachusetts residents would get their insurance from a single government plan, often referred to as a single payer plan. Of note, the public's strong support for expanding existing state programs to cover more of the uninsured suggests that the public opposes government efforts to cut the MassHealth program.

Even in today's fiscal environment, with the state facing serious financial difficulties, about one half of the Massachusetts public would support the state government making a major effort to insure more state residents, even if it meant a tax increase (47%). The public is also supportive of an increase in taxes on alcohol (80% favor) and tobacco (77% favor) if the money were used to decrease the number of uninsured in the state. In addition, majorities support increasing taxes of lottery winnings (70% favor) and a small increase in the state's income tax from 5.3 percent to 5.6 percent (61% favor) for that purpose.

Even with expansive state health care programs and a free care pool designed to help the uninsured get care, many uninsured residents report problems getting and paying for health care. Those who reported being uninsured at some point in the past year were approximately three times as likely as the continuously insured to report a time in the past year when they did not get needed care and having serious problems paying medical bills.

But the survey also points to a number of issues that could make significant action on the uninsured at the state level difficult at this time. Although there is a clear belief among the Massachusetts public that something should be done to help the uninsured, there is no clear consensus on a specific plan. The majority of the Massachusetts public believes that government should pay most of the cost of helping the uninsured in Massachusetts get coverage, but many believe that the federal, not the state, government should have this responsibility. In addition, while the public supports a number of proposals to help the uninsured, this support is vulnerable to negative arguments used in the past by groups opposed to these plans. Lastly, given the state's financial problems, expanding programs to cover more of the uninsured is not the top priority for state action.

The task of moving ahead on addressing Massachusetts' uninsured problem is not impossible in this climate. This is clearly an area where public leadership can really matter. Given the public's immediate concerns over the state's fiscal problems and rising health care costs, new uninsured initiatives would have to be phased in over a period of time. For expanding coverage to be a popular initiative in the future, two conditions must be met. First, the plan should be a hybrid, incorporating different aspects of the various proposals for expanding coverage in order to garner a wide range of support. Second, the plan must have the strong support of a coalition of leadership and community groups that is prepared to counter the negative arguments that will be put forward by opposition groups.

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## Introduction

Massachusetts is currently facing the specter of recent job layoffs, a slowly growing economy, double-digit increases in health insurance premiums, and cutbacks in state health care programs.<sup>1,2</sup> Recent studies have shown a substantial increase in the number of people living in Massachusetts who are without health insurance coverage and the security it provides. These disturbing trends have led many leadership groups to consider ways to provide assistance to those in Massachusetts without any health insurance coverage today.

The prospect of renewed statewide interest in this problem raises the question: Where do Massachusetts residents stand on the uninsured issue? This report presents results from a recent survey of Massachusetts residents to address six main questions: (1) What are current public perceptions of the uninsured problem in Massachusetts? (2) What values underlie Massachusetts residents' views of the uninsured and solutions to the problem? (3) What are the most widely supported solutions for addressing this problem? (4) How willing is the Massachusetts public to pay more taxes to assist the state's uninsured? (5) What are Massachusetts residents' views of the state of health care in the Commonwealth today? and (6) What do Massachusetts residents know and believe about the state's uninsured problem and current state programs that aid those in need? We then look at the implications of these findings for future action on the uninsured issue in Massachusetts.

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## Methods

The data presented here are derived from a survey of the Massachusetts public. The survey was designed by a team of researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health. The instrument was approximately 18 minutes in length. Interviews were conducted with 1,000 randomly selected Massachusetts state residents, age 18 and older, via telephone by Cogent Research of Cambridge, Massachusetts. The interviewing period was September 3–10, 2003. The data were weighted to accurately reflect the demographics of the state's adult population as described by the U.S. Census.

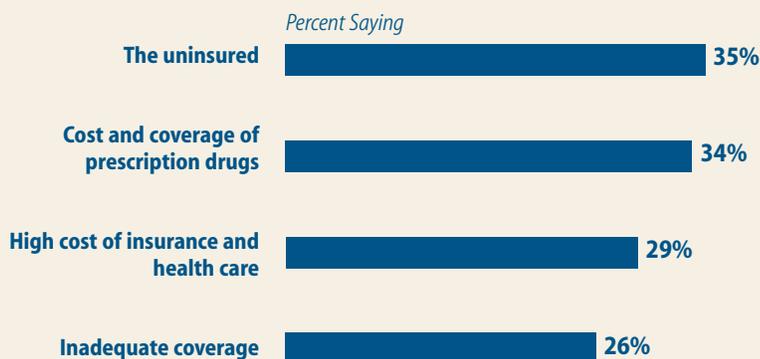
When interpreting these findings, one should recognize that all surveys are subject to sampling error. Results may differ from what would be obtained if the whole Massachusetts adult population had been interviewed. The size of this error varies with the number of persons surveyed and the magnitude of difference in responses to each question. The sampling error for surveys of 1,000 respondents is  $\pm 3$  percentage points.

# Perceptions of the problem of the uninsured in Massachusetts

Today the Massachusetts public sees the uninsured as one of the top health care problems facing the state. When asked to name, in their own words, the top two or three most important health care issues for the Massachusetts state government to address, the uninsured problem tied with the cost and coverage of prescription drugs as the top issue for state government (Exhibit 1). The other top issue was the high cost of health care and insurance (29%). Fifty-nine percent of the public said that the problem of the uninsured in Massachusetts has gotten worse over the past two years. Only five percent believed that this problem had gotten better (Exhibit 2). A similar finding was found in the survey when people were given three choices of what the top health care problems were. Forty-five percent chose the cost of health care, 44 percent chose people not covered by insurance and nine percent chose the quality of health care (Exhibit 3).

The public in Massachusetts sees the uninsured issue as a top concern and they believe that the quality of care that the uninsured receive is poorer than that received by the average insured person. However, the majority of the public in Massachusetts (65%) believe that the uninsured are able to get the health care they need (Exhibit 4). Only 29 percent believe that the uninsured are not able to get the care they need from doctors and hospitals. Among those who think the uninsured are able to get care, 70 percent believe that it is very (18%) or somewhat (52%) difficult for uninsured state residents to get this care. In addition, two-thirds of Massachusetts residents believe the care that the uninsured receive is not as good as the care an average insured person would get (Exhibit 5). Sixty percent also think that the uninsured in Massachusetts are not able to get the preventive care they need.

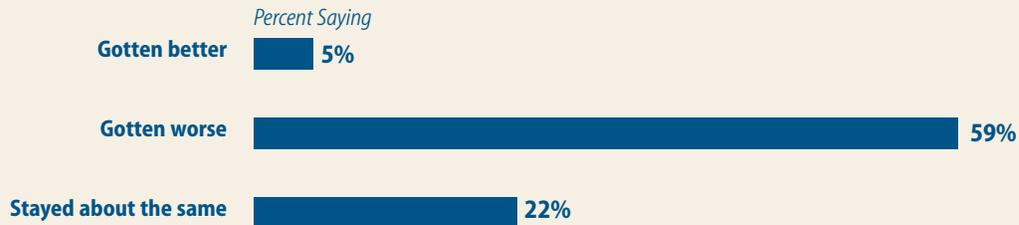
## Exhibit 1 Most important health care issues for Massachusetts state government to address



Adds to more than 100% due to multiple responses

Harvard School of Public Health/BCBS of Mass. Foundation/Cogent Research 2003

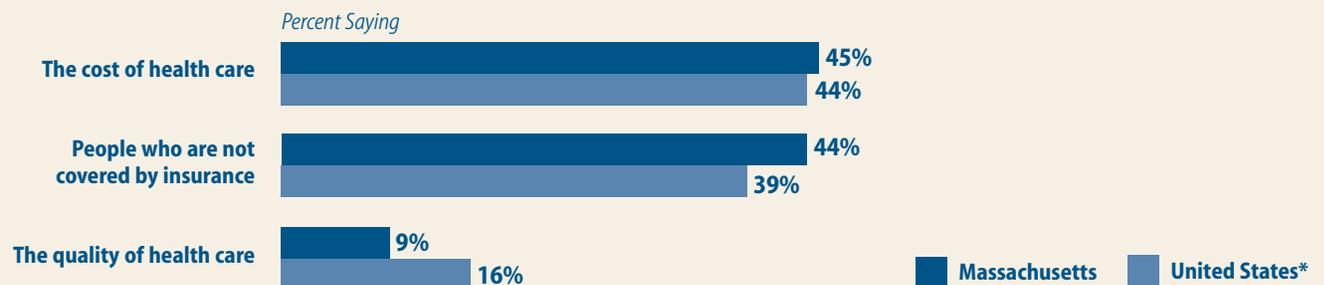
## Exhibit 2 Over the past two years, the problem of the uninsured has...



"Don't know" responses not shown

Harvard School of Public Health/BCBS of Mass. Foundation/Cogent Research 2003

## Exhibit 3 Which is the most important health care issue at the present time?

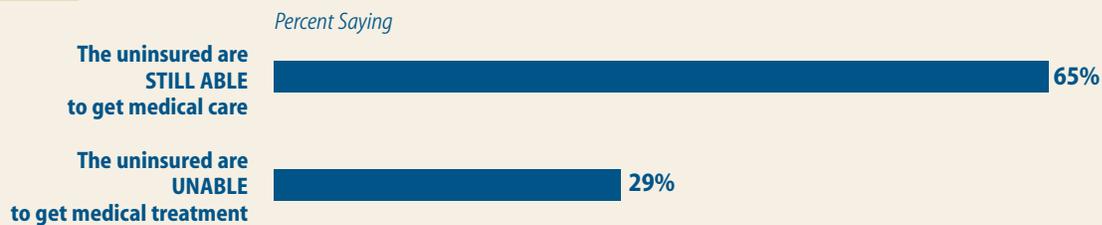


"Don't know" responses not shown

Harvard School of Public Health/BCBS of Mass. Foundation/Cogent Research 2003

\*RJ Blendon et al., "Americans' Views of the Uninsured," Health Affairs, 2003

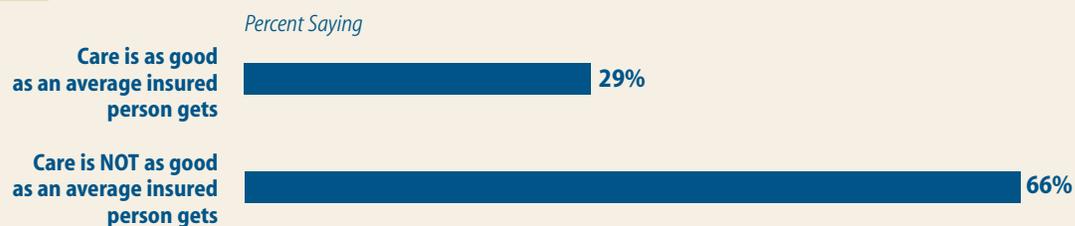
## Exhibit 4 Beliefs about whether the uninsured can get the care they need



"Don't know" responses not shown

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## Exhibit 5 Quality of health care received by the uninsured



"Don't know" responses not shown

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## Values underlying views of the uninsured and solutions to the problem

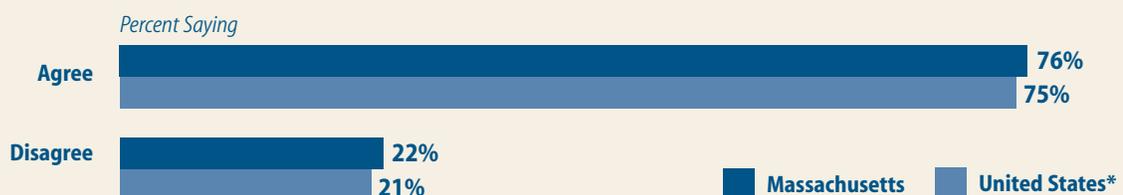
As a principle, Massachusetts residents believe that everyone in the state should be able to get the medical care they need, irrespective of their ability to pay for it. Seventy-six percent agreed with the statement “people who are unemployed and poor should be able to get the same amount and quality of medical services as people who have good jobs and are paying substantial taxes.” As shown in [Exhibit 6](#), the public in Massachusetts looks very similar to the nation as a whole on this question.

Most also believe that it is the government’s responsibility to see that this principle of equality is upheld. When respondents were asked who should pay most of the cost of helping the uninsured in Massachusetts get health insurance, the majority (57%) chose the government. When those who chose government as being primarily responsible for the cost of helping the uninsured were asked whether this should be the local, state, or the federal government, 62 percent chose federal (35% of the total population) and 32 percent chose the state government (18% of the total population) ([Exhibit 7](#)). Of note, approximately one third of the population chose a non-governmental source as being primarily responsible for funding a solution to this problem.

However, it is on the question of increased taxes to address this problem that the Massachusetts public’s egalitarian commitment to equal access to health care falters. Despite Massachusetts’ reputation as being very liberal on tax matters, public attitudes in Massachusetts track the nation as a whole. This attitude was reflected in their answers to three questions. Even though the public supports everyone getting the care they need, fewer than one-half of Massachusetts residents agreed with the statement “if the only way to make sure that everyone can get the health care services they need is to have a substantial increase in taxes, we should do it” ([Exhibit 8](#)). Again, the Massachusetts public looks very similar to the public nationwide. When it comes to equal quality of care for those who are uninsured, a slightly higher proportion of the public is willing to see taxes raised. Fifty-two percent agree with the statement “the uninsured should get care that is as good as the care insured people get, even if it means raising taxes” ([Exhibit 9](#)).

Similarly, when respondents were asked to choose a statement that came closest to what they thought government should do for the uninsured, 47 percent said they would like the government to make a major effort to provide insurance for nearly all of the uninsured, even though that might require a tax increase to pay for it. An equal proportion chose an alternative that did not involve a tax increase, either making a more limited effort (34%) or leaving things as they are (11%) ([Exhibit 10](#)). These findings track very closely with national survey findings about public attitudes toward taxes and the uninsured.<sup>3</sup>

### Exhibit 6 People who are unemployed and poor should be able to get the same amount and quality of medical services as people who have good jobs and are paying substantial taxes

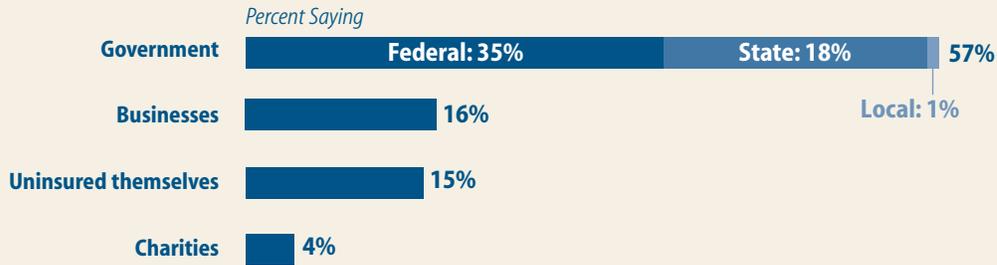


Harvard School of Public Health/BCBS of Mass. Foundation/Cogent Research 2003

\*Don't know" responses not shown

\*RJ Blendon et al., "Americans' Views of the Uninsured," *Health Affairs*, 2003

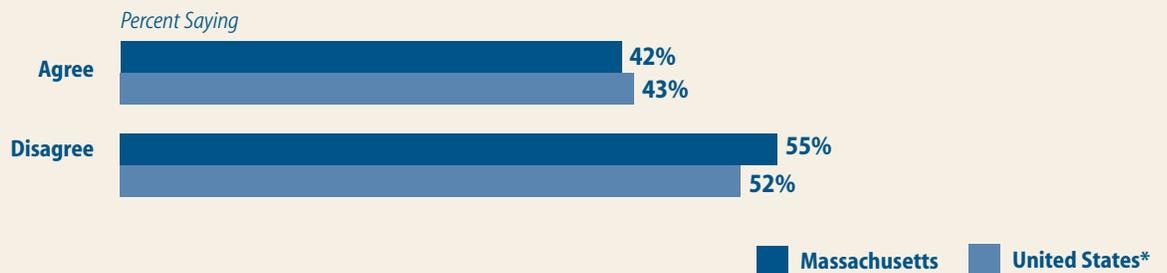
**Exhibit 7 Who should pay most of the cost for helping the uninsured in Massachusetts get health insurance?**



"Don't know" responses not shown

Harvard School of Public Health/BCBS of Mass. Foundation/Cogent Research 2003

**Exhibit 8 If the only way to make sure that everyone can get the health care services they need is to have a substantial increase in taxes, we should do it.**



"Don't know" responses not shown

Harvard School of Public Health/BCBS of Mass. Foundation/Cogent Research 2003

\*RJ Blendon et al., "Americans' Views of the Uninsured," Health Affairs, 2003

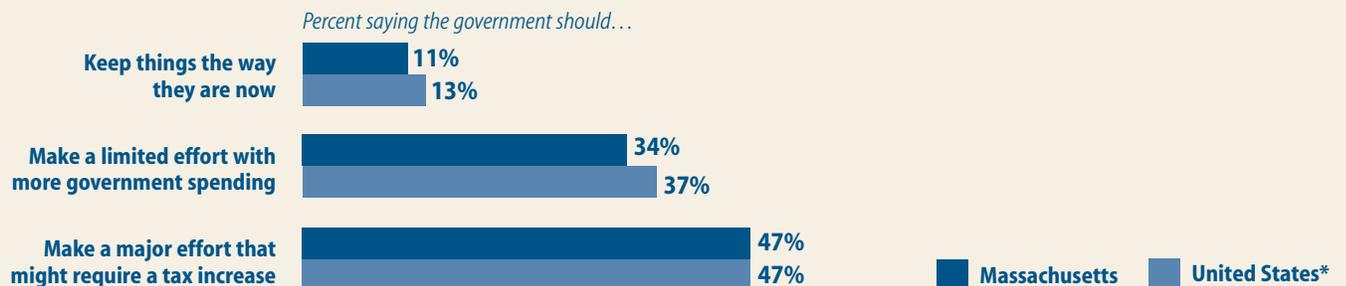
**Exhibit 9 Massachusetts residents' views of the level of care that should be provided to the uninsured**



"Don't know" responses not shown

Harvard School of Public Health/BCBS of Mass. Foundation/Cogent Research 2003

**Exhibit 10 Massachusetts residents' views about what the government should do about the uninsured**



"Don't know" responses not shown

Harvard School of Public Health/BCBS of Mass. Foundation/Cogent Research 2003

\*RJ Blendon et al., "Americans' Views of the Uninsured," Health Affairs, 2003

## Most popular solutions for solving the problem of the uninsured in Massachusetts

The survey finds that the majority of Massachusetts residents are supportive of a wide range of possible new state initiatives to cover the uninsured. However, there are important caveats here. First, though some proposals have more statewide support than others, there is no clear consensus around a single policy proposal to address the state's uninsured problem. Of even more significance, many residents are not strongly committed to their support of these various proposals. When challenged by negative arguments used in earlier debates, support plummets. In most cases, this leads to the proposals not being favored by the majority of respondents.

When given a brief, general description of various possible state initiatives for the uninsured, about three-fourths of those interviewed favored three possible ways of guaranteeing health insurance for more Massachusetts residents: (1) expanding state programs such as MassHealth for low income people (82%); (2) requiring businesses to offer private health insurance for their employees where the employer would be required by law to pay a fixed amount of the employee's insurance premium (76%); and (3) offering the uninsured tax deductions, tax credits, or other financial assistance to help them purchase private health insurance on their own (70%) ([Exhibit 11](#)).

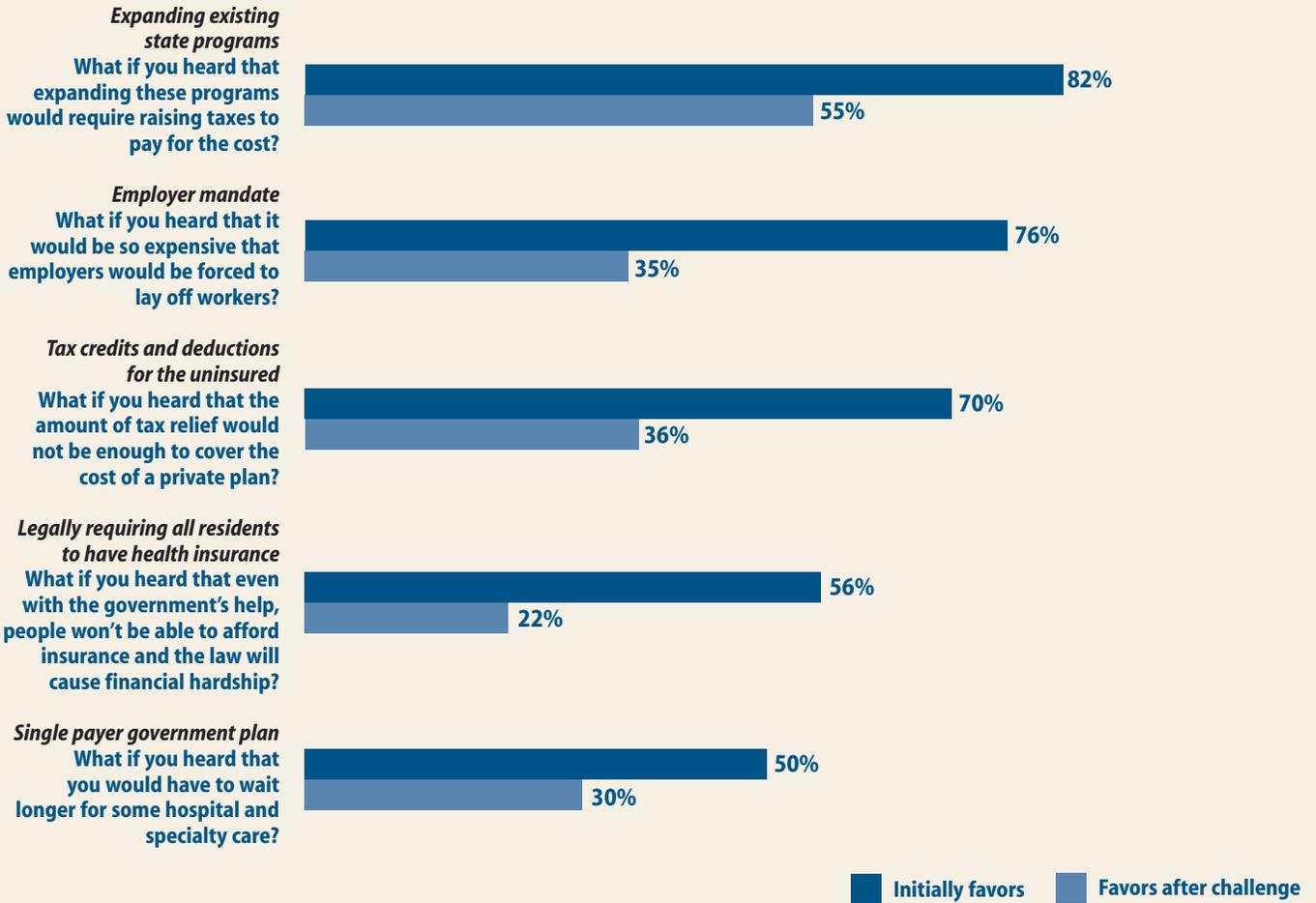
Two other proposals received somewhat less support. One of these was a law that requires all state residents to have health insurance that they buy themselves or get through an employer. People with low incomes would get help from the government to pay their health insurance premiums (56%). The other was enacting a state health plan, financed by taxpayers, in which all Massachusetts residents would get their insurance from a single government plan (50%) ([Exhibit 11](#)).

However, as shown in ([Exhibit 11](#)), public support for these proposals to aid the uninsured is relatively fluid. When challenged by negative arguments previously made by critics of these policies, public support for these plans falls substantially below 50 percent. The only exception is expanding existing state programs such as MassHealth for low-income residents, which had a 55 percent favorable rating even after being challenged.

The fluidity of public support for these proposals was also shown by offering people initially opposed to these plans positive arguments in their favor. Between three and 16 percent of people changed their minds after hearing favorable arguments for each of these proposals. The most convincing positive argument related to a single government health plan. Nearly one in six reversed their opposition to this plan when they were told that the state could save money and provide health insurance coverage for all residents.

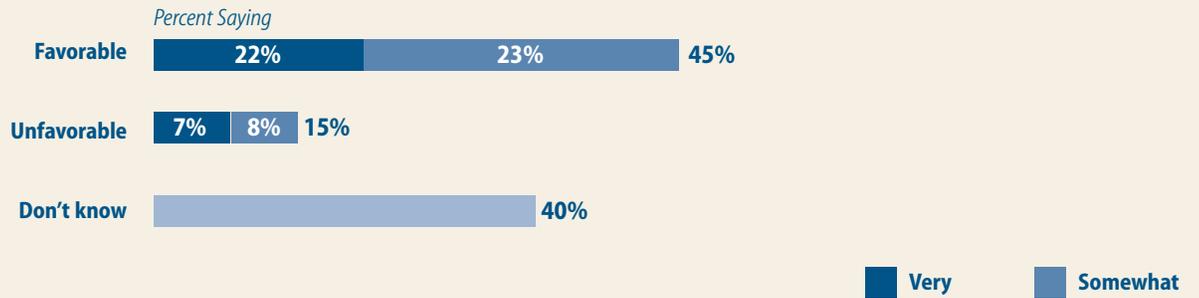
In addition to asking the public about specific potential state initiatives for covering the uninsured, we also asked them their general impression of the Canadian health care system. In recent years, a number of groups have suggested that the Canadian system might be a model for the Commonwealth or the U.S. as a whole. Four in ten residents of the state reported that they had not heard enough to have an opinion. About a quarter (23%) of the public said they had a very favorable opinion of the Canadian health system, a quarter (22%) somewhat favorable, eight percent somewhat unfavorable, and seven percent very unfavorable ([Exhibit 12](#)).

**Exhibit 11** How negative arguments affect support for proposals to cover the uninsured



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**Exhibit 12** Massachusetts residents' opinions of the Canadian health care system



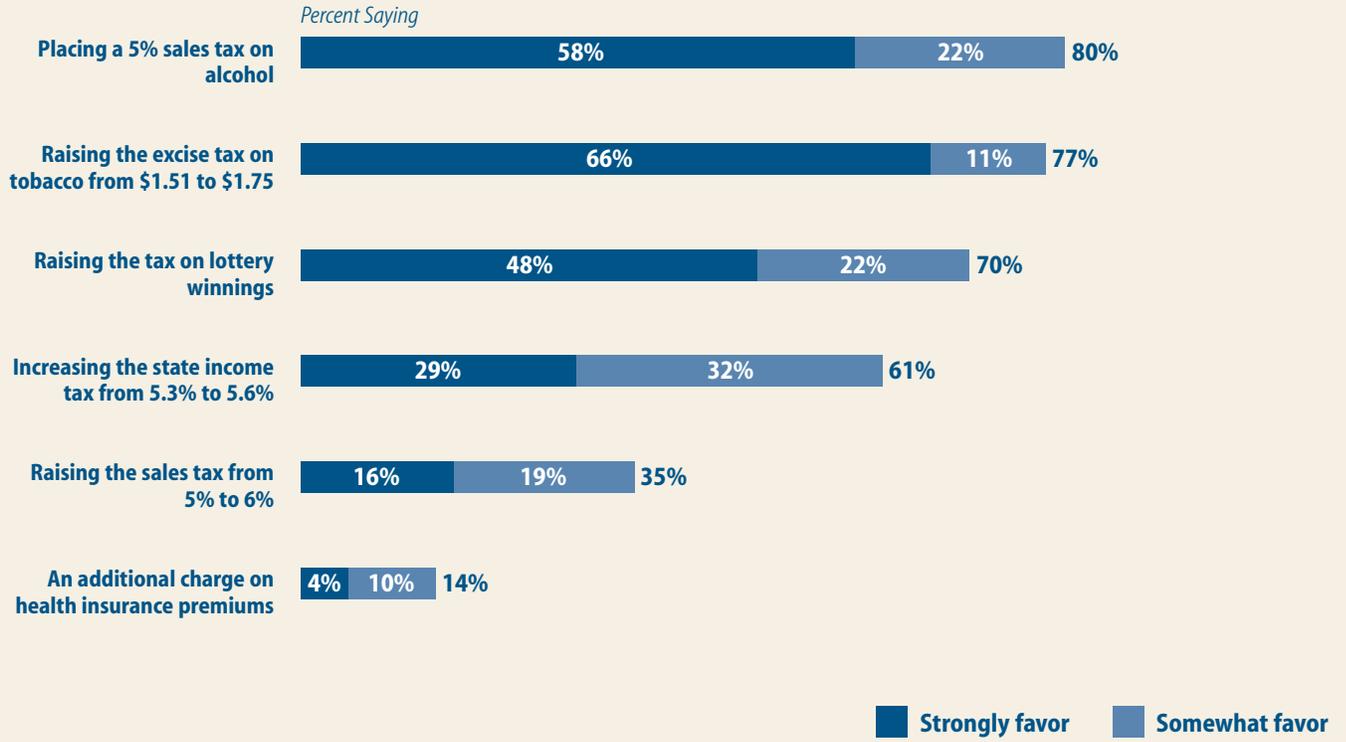
Harvard School of Public Health/BCBS of Mass. Foundation/Cogent Research 2003

## Willingness to pay taxes

The survey finds that although the Massachusetts public wants government to do more to aid the uninsured, they are nearly evenly divided on their general willingness to pay higher taxes to see this accomplished. There is support for specific, limited tax measures. As shown in [Exhibit 13](#), the majority of Massachusetts residents support four ways to pay for covering more of the uninsured: (1) placing a five percent tax on alcoholic beverages (80%); (2) raising the excise tax on tobacco from \$1.51 to \$1.75 (77%); (3) raising the tax on lottery winnings (70%); and (4) raising the state's current income tax from 5.3 percent to 5.6 percent (61%). However, majorities express strong support only for increased taxes on tobacco (66%) and alcohol products (58%).

The strongest public opposition to specific tax increases to aid the uninsured was found for two tax proposals. The first was to raise the Massachusetts sales tax from five to six percent, which was overwhelmingly opposed (64%). A similar negative response was found for the proposal for an additional charge to health insurance premiums to help the uninsured (84% opposed).

**Exhibit 13 Support for tax increases to pay for covering more of the uninsured**



*Harvard School of Public Health/BCBS of Mass. Foundation/Cogent Research 2003*

# The state of health care in Massachusetts

Most Massachusetts residents believe that the health care system in Massachusetts faces serious problems today. Fifty-eight percent believe that the health care system in Massachusetts has “major problems,” while 14 percent think that it is “in a state of crisis.” Only one percent of Massachusetts residents believe that the health care system does not have any problems (Exhibit 14).

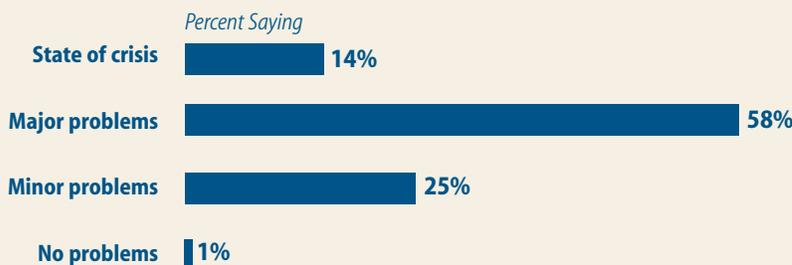
However, though Massachusetts residents are concerned about the state of health care in the Commonwealth, it is not their top issue. When Massachusetts residents are asked to name, in their own words, the most important problems facing the state of Massachusetts today, health care is not among the top three. Perhaps reflecting the state’s current economic problems, Massachusetts residents named the economy and unemployment as the top problems facing the state, followed by education and the state’s financial problems (Exhibit 15).

Along with a general concern about health care in the state, individual residents report problems over the last year with their own care. One in ten Massachusetts residents reported a time in the past year when they did not get the medical care they needed due to the high cost. In addition, 11 percent reported a time in the past year when they had a serious problem paying their medical bills. Among those having serious problems paying medical bills, 57 percent said they were contacted by a collection agency about those bills (6% of the total sample) and 11 percent considered filing for bankruptcy (1% of the total sample).

As shown in Exhibit 16, these problems were more prevalent among those who were currently uninsured or uninsured at some point during the past year. Those who were uninsured at any time in the past 12 months were approximately three times as likely as the continuously insured to report not getting needed care due to cost and to having a serious problem paying medical bills.

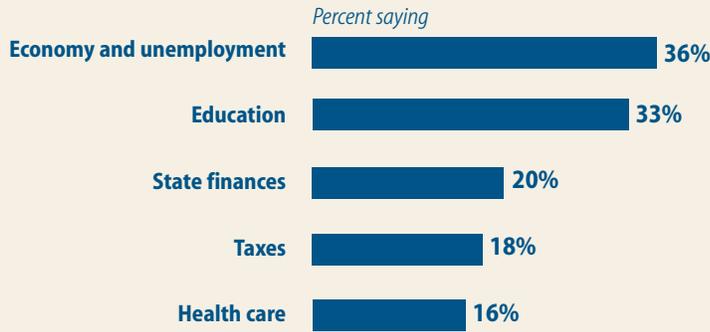
Massachusetts residents were asked about worries they may have about getting or paying for health care over the next six months. Twenty-nine percent reported being very worried that the amount they or their family pays for prescription drugs will increase. One in five (21%) reported being very worried that the amount they pay for their health care services or health insurance would increase. One in six was very worried that they might not be able to get the health care they think they need because they will not be able to afford it (16%) and that they might lose their health insurance coverage (16%) (Exhibit 17). As shown in (Exhibit 18) the Massachusetts public was significantly less concerned than the nation as a whole that the amount they pay for their health care services or health insurance would increase and they may not be able to get needed care because they cannot afford it.<sup>4</sup>

**Exhibit 14 State of the health care system in Massachusetts today**



*“Don’t know” responses not shown*

**Exhibit 15 Most important problems facing the state of Massachusetts today**



Adds to more than 100% due to multiple responses. Top five responses shown.

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**Exhibit 16 Problems getting or paying for medical care in the past 12 months**



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**Exhibit 17 Worries about getting and paying for care in the future**



Harvard School of Public Health/BCBS of Mass. Foundation/Cogent Research 2003

**Exhibit 18 Worries about getting and paying for care in the future Massachusetts compared to the United States**



\*Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard School of Public Health, Health News Index, June 2003

Harvard School of Public Health/BCBS of Mass. Foundation/Cogent Research 2003

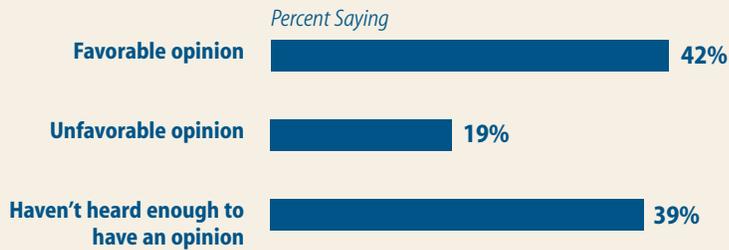
# Knowledge and perceptions of the uninsured

Although Massachusetts residents believe there is a serious uninsured problem in the Commonwealth, they are not familiar with much of the factual information relating to this issue. Only about one in four (23%) knew the approximate number of uninsured in the state (between 400,000 and 600,000 people).

When asked why people were uninsured, the majority of the public in Massachusetts reported that it was due to some combination of the following factors: They cannot afford it, their employer does not offer insurance, and they are unemployed. Few people think that the primary reason people are uninsured is because they don't believe they need coverage (2%).

Much of the public is not familiar with MassHealth, the state's Medicaid program. Approximately four in ten Massachusetts residents (42%) had a favorable opinion of the state's MassHealth program. However, an approximately equal proportion (39%) said they had not heard enough about the program to have an opinion (Exhibit 19). In addition, though this is one of the largest items in the state budget, a substantial share of state residents did not know what health care services were paid for by MassHealth. Only about half knew that MassHealth pays for doctor and hospital care for poor adults and children (54%) and health care for the disabled (51%). Only three in ten (28%) knew that MassHealth pays for nursing home care for the elderly.

## Exhibit 19 Massachusetts residents' opinions of MassHealth



"Don't know" responses not shown

Harvard School of Public Health/BCBS of Mass. Foundation/Cogent Research 2003

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## Implications for the future

This survey finds that Massachusetts residents are concerned about the uninsured problem in the Commonwealth today, but are conflicted in their views about what to do about it. The public strongly believes that everyone in the state should be able to get the health care they need, irrespective of their ability to pay. They see the state uninsured problem as a top health care concern and one that is worsening over time. They are supportive of a number of potential new statewide legislative initiatives to address this problem.

At the same time, however, Massachusetts residents see other state problems today as more pressing, particularly the economy, the state's fiscal problems, and public education. In addition, the public is divided when it comes to the issue of how to pay for expanding state-supported coverage for those who are now uninsured. They are also not firmly committed to any current specific proposals to expand coverage for the uninsured. Negative campaigns against many of these initiatives could lead to public support plummeting over time.

There is strong support today, however, for increased taxes on tobacco and alcohol products for designated use to aid the uninsured. There is also support, although somewhat weaker, for raising the tax on lottery winnings and a small increase in the state's income tax to address this problem.

Although there is no public consensus on any single approach to helping the uninsured in Massachusetts get coverage, a hybrid plan offers the possibility of gaining public support. The possibility of a compromise hybrid plan arises from the fact that large majorities of the public are amenable to three different approaches to covering the uninsured: (1) some form of requirement that some of the state's employers offer health insurance to their employees; (2) tax credits to buy private health insurance; and (3) expanding state government programs for low-income people to provide coverage (MassHealth). With a hybrid plan nearly everyone would get some element of their preferred way to deal with the problem of the uninsured, and opposition to a new initiative in the state would be lessened. To respond to Massachusetts residents' concerns about health care costs, such a hybrid plan would have to include visible ways to contain the costs of covering those who will be newly insured without taking steps that would seem threatening to those who were already insured.

The survey suggests that the biggest challenge for the state's leadership is how to raise the revenue for a large-scale expansion of health insurance coverage in Massachusetts. Many people in the Commonwealth see the federal government as having a major responsibility to aid the state on this issue. From the public perspective, a greater financial role by Washington has to be part of a successful state leadership strategy.

The task of moving ahead on addressing Massachusetts' uninsured problem is not impossible in this climate. This is clearly an area where public leadership can really matter. Given the public's more immediate concerns over the state's fiscal problems, new uninsured initiatives would have to be phased in over a period of time. But if the right type of proposal, sensitive to these conflicting public concerns, can be developed, it could become a very popular initiative in the years ahead.

## Notes

- 1 United States Census Bureau, “Annual Demographic Survey” September 2003.  
[http://ferret.bls.census.gov/macro/032003/health/h06\\_000.htm](http://ferret.bls.census.gov/macro/032003/health/h06_000.htm)
- 2 Massachusetts Division of Insurance, “Health Insurance Status of Massachusetts Residents” January 2003.  
[www.state.ma.us/dhcfp/pages/pdf/hism2002.pdf](http://www.state.ma.us/dhcfp/pages/pdf/hism2002.pdf)
- 3 RJ Blendon, JM Benson, CM DesRoches, “Americans’ Views of the Uninsured: An Era for Hybrid Proposals” Health Affairs Web Exclusive, August 27, 2003.  
[www.healthaffairs.org/WebExclusives/Blendon\\_Web\\_Excl\\_082703.htm](http://www.healthaffairs.org/WebExclusives/Blendon_Web_Excl_082703.htm)
- 4 Kaiser Family Foundation and the Harvard School of Public Health, “Health News Index” June 2003.

# Complete survey results

Survey administered by Cogent Research

Population: Massachusetts Adults (18+)

Sample size: 1,000

Length: 18 minutes

Field Dates: September 3–10, 2003

## 1. What do you think are the 2 or 3 most important problems facing the state of Massachusetts today? [Open-ended]

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) The economy	36%
<i>Unemployment (i.e. industry leaving, lack good paying jobs, etc.)</i>	25%
<i>Economy</i>	11%
2) Education (i.e. lack of funding, school closures, higher education costs, etc.)	33%
3) State finance	20%
<i>The budget (i.e. need to balance, out of control, etc.)</i>	9%
<i>Finances (i.e. budget cuts, deficit, no money, etc.)</i>	11%
4) Taxes (i.e. property taxes, etc.)	18%
5) Health care (i.e. insurance, prescription drugs, insurance cuts, costs, etc.)	16%
6) Government (i.e. politicians, size, not following through on commitments, etc.)	8%
7) Housing (i.e. affordable, etc.)	7%
8) Elderly issues (i.e. care, medication, etc.)	5%
9) Community service programs (i.e. lack of funding, social security, welfare, etc.)	4%
10) Infrastructure (i.e. roads, bridges, etc.)	4%
11) Mismanagement (i.e. overspending, giving money away, etc.)	4%
12) Public safety (i.e. crime, drugs, etc.)	4%
13) The environment	3%
14) Take care of own (i.e. healthcare, education, homelessness, etc.)	3%
15) Construction (i.e. the Big Dig, too much development, etc.)	2%
16) Public services (i.e. lack of funding, law enforcement, firefighters, etc.)	2%
17) Infrastructure (i.e. public transit, traffic)	2%
18) Cost of living in general	2%
19) Energy issues (i.e. gas prices, electricity, blackouts, etc.)	1%
20) Child care (i.e. affordable daycare, homeless children, teenage pregnancy, etc.)	1%
21) Helping disabled/mentally challenged (i.e. funding, mental health, etc.)	1%
22) Immigration issues (i.e. not speaking English, free health care, etc.)	1%
23) War/Terrorism/Homeland Security	1%
24) Infrastructure-unspecified	1%
25) Other	10%
26) Don't know	8%

## 2. What do you think are the top 2 or 3 most important HEALTH CARE issues for the MASSACHUSETTS STATE GOVERNMENT to address?

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) The Uninsured	35%
a. Universal health care (insurance for all)	13%
b. The uninsured in general	7%
c. Coverage/care for the poor, unemployed, uninsured	9%
d. Accessibility to care/insurance/prescription drugs in general	6%
2) Cost and coverage of prescription drugs	34%
a. Cost of prescription drugs	23%
b. Drug costs/coverage for seniors	9%
c. Drug costs/coverage for the poor	2%
3) Cost of health insurance/care (i.e. affordability, etc.)	29%
4) Inadequate coverage for various reasons	26%
a. Coverage/care for seniors	16%
b. Coverage/care for children	5%
c. Coverage/care for disabled, mentally challenged	3%
d. Lack of coverage for eyes and dental programs	1%
e. Coverage/care for self-employed, part-time workers	1%
5) HMO's/Medicare/Medicaid/MassHealth	6%
6) System needs to be looked at (i.e. insurance, mismanagement of funds, etc.)	6%
7) Quality health care (i.e. better system, etc.)	5%
8) Cutbacks (i.e. hospital closures, emergency treatment for uninsured, etc.)	4%
9) Health education/problems (i.e. AIDS, obesity, etc.)	4%
10) Staffing (i.e. more doctors, nurses, etc.)	3%
11) High cost of lawsuits against doctors	1%
12) Abuse of the system	1%
13) Government should stay out of health care in general	1%
14) Government run facilities/community health centers	1%
15) More research is needed on diseases	1%
16) Being able to choose your own doctor	1%
17) No problems/Everything is fine in general	1%
18) Other	5%
19) Don't know	11%

### 3. Which one of the following do YOU see as the most important health care issue at the present time? [RANDOMIZE]

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) The cost of health care	45%
2) People who are not covered by insurance	44%
3) The quality of health care	9%
4) Don't know	2%

### 4. [ASK if R answers COST in q3] Which of the following costs concerns you the most?

Analyzed Responses 454  
Unweighted Base 452

1) Hospital charges	12%
2) Doctor fees	6%
3) Drug prices	27%
4) The cost of health insurance	51%
5) Some other cost	2%
6) Don't know	2%

### 5. Which of these statements do you think best describes the health care system in Massachusetts today?

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) In a state of crisis	14%
2) Has major problems	58%
3) Has minor problems	25%
4) Does not have any problems	1%
5) Don't know	2%

**Now I would like to ask you some questions about the uninsured – that is, people who have no health insurance at all.**

### 6. Do you think that the problem of the uninsured in Massachusetts has gotten better over the past 2 years, worse over the past 2 years, or has it stayed about the same?

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Better	5%
2) Worse	59%
3) About the same	22%
4) Don't know	14%

## Values

### 7. In your opinion, who should pay most of the cost of helping the uninsured in Massachusetts get health insurance?

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) Businesses	16%
2) Charities	4%
3) The uninsured themselves	15%
4) Government	57%
5) Don't know	9%

### 8. [If R answers GOVERNMENT in q7] You said that the government should pay most of the cost of helping the uninsured in Massachusetts get health insurance. Should it be local governments, the state government, or the federal government?

Analyzed Responses 565

Unweighted Base 573

1) Local	2%
2) State	32%
3) Federal	62%
4) Don't know	4%

### 9. To the best of your knowledge, how many people in Massachusetts are uninsured?

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) Less than 200,000	6%
2) 200,000 to less than 400,000	27%
3) 400,000 to less than 600,000	23%
4) More than 600,000	22%
5) Don't know	23%

I'm now going to read you some statements about health care. For each, please tell me whether you agree or disagree. [Randomize]

### 10. People who are unemployed and poor should be able to get the same amount and quality of medical services as people who have good jobs and are paying substantial taxes.

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) Agree	76%
2) Disagree	22%
3) Don't know	2%

### 11. It's unfair to require the majority of people who are healthy to pay for most of the cost of treating those who are sick and are heavy users of hospitals and doctors.

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) Agree	43%
2) Disagree	52%
3) Don't know	5%

**12. If the only way to make sure that everyone can get the health care services they need is to have a substantial increase in taxes, we should do it.**

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) Agree	42%
2) Disagree	55%
3) Don't know	3%

## The uninsured in Massachusetts

**13. Which of the following do you think is the main reason why most of the uninsured in Massachusetts do not have health insurance?**  
[Randomize]

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) They can't afford it.	19%
2) They don't think they need it.	2%
3) Their employer does not offer insurance.	5%
4) They are unemployed.	6%
5) Some combination of the above	68%
6) Don't know	1%

**14. Do you think that most people in Massachusetts without health insurance are unable to get medical treatment, or that these uninsured people are still able to get medical care they need from doctors and hospitals?**

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) Unable to get medical treatment	29%
2) Still able to get medical care	65%
3) Don't know	6%

**15. [If R answers STILL ABLE TO GET CARE in q14] How difficult do you think it is for most people in Massachusetts who do not have HEALTH INSURANCE to get the medical care they need? Would you say it is... very difficult, somewhat difficult, not very difficult, or not difficult at all?**

Analyzed Responses 653

Unweighted Base 654

1) Very difficult	18%
2) Somewhat difficult	52%
3) Not very difficult	17%
4) Not at all difficult	9%
5) Don't know	4%

**16. Do you think that the care that most uninsured people in Massachusetts get is as good as the care that the average person with insurance would get, or do you think that their care would not be as good?**

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) Care is as good	29%
2) Care is not as good	66%
3) Don't know	5%

**17. Do you think that most people in Massachusetts without health insurance are unable to get preventive care, or that these uninsured people are still able to get preventive care from doctors and hospitals?**

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) Unable to get preventative care	60%
2) Able to get preventative care	29%
3) Don't know	11%

## Policy options

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about insurance programs that are available in Massachusetts.

**I am going to read you the names of two types of government insurance programs that many people in Massachusetts are enrolled in. As I read each one, please tell me if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the program.**

[Randomize so that half the sample gets asked about MassHealth first, and half gets asked about Medicare first]

**18a. MassHealth, the state's Medicaid program** [Randomize]

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) Favorable	42%
2) Unfavorable	19%
3) Haven't heard enough to have an opinion	39%

**18b. Medicare** [Randomize]

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) Favorable	57%
2) Unfavorable	18%
3) Haven't heard enough to have an opinion	25%

**These next few questions will be specifically about MassHealth, the state's Medicaid program.**

**19. To the best of your knowledge, does MassHealth pay for each of the following or not? If you haven't heard enough about MassHealth to know, please just say so.** [Randomize]

**a. Doctor and hospital care for poor adults and children**

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) Yes	54%
2) No	7%
3) Don't know	40%

**b. Health care for the disabled**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Yes	51%
2) No	6%
3) Don't know	43%

**c. Nursing home care for the elderly**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Yes	28%
2) No	21%
3) Don't know	51%

**d. Doctor and hospital care for most elderly people in the state**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Yes	39%
2) No	16%
3) Don't know	45%

**20. To the best of your knowledge, how many people in Massachusetts are enrolled in the MassHealth program? Is it about...**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) 500,000	18%
2) 750,000	20%
3) One million	14%
4) One and a half million or more	8%
5) Don't know	40%

**21. Which one of the following three statements comes closest to what you think government should do for people in Massachusetts who don't have health insurance? [Split sample: Half the sample gets response categories in this order, the other half in the opposite order]**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Keep things as they are now.	11%
2) Make a limited effort to provide health insurance for some of the uninsured, which would mean more government spending.	34%
3) Make a major effort to provide health insurance for most uninsured Massachusetts residents, which might require a tax increase to pay for it.	47%
4) Don't know	8%

**I'm going to read you one way to guarantee health insurance for more people who live in Massachusetts. After I read it, please tell me whether you would favor it or oppose it.**

[Randomize – Each R gets one option plus follow-up. That is, one-fifth of the sample gets 22a, one-fifth gets 23a, one-fifth gets 24a, one-fifth gets 25a, one fifth gets 26a].

**22a. A state health plan, financed by taxpayers, in which all Massachusetts residents would get their insurance from a single government plan?**

Analyzed Responses 176

Unweighted Base 181

1) Favors	50%
2) Opposes	41%
3) Don't know	9%

**22b. [If R FAVORS] What if you heard the following argument — Under this type of plan, you would wait longer for some hospital and specialty care. Would you still favor this type of plan or would you now oppose it?**

Analyzed Responses 88

Unweighted Base 90

1) Still favor	60%
2) Now oppose it	34%
3) Don't know	7%

**22c. [If R OPPOSES] What if you heard the following argument — Under this type of plan, we could save money and provide health insurance for everyone in the state. Would you still oppose this type of plan or would you now favor it?**

Analyzed Responses 72

Unweighted Base 74

1) Still oppose it	49%
2) Now favor it	38%
3) Don't know	13%

**22a-c. A state health plan, financed by taxpayers, in which all Massachusetts residents would get their insurance from a single government plan.**

Initially favors	50%
1) Initially favors, favors after challenge	30%
2) Initially favors, opposes after challenge	17%
3) Don't know after challenge	3%
Initially opposes	41%
4) Initially opposes, opposes after challenges	20%
5) Initially opposes, favors after challenge	16%
6) Don't know after challenge	5%
Initially don't know	9%

**23a. Requiring businesses to offer private health insurance for their employees. Under this type of plan, your employer would be required by law to pay a fixed amount of your health insurance premium while you pay the rest.**

Analyzed Responses 205  
Unweighted Base 213

1) Favors	76%
2) Opposes	18%
3) Don't know	6%

**23b. [If R FAVORS] What if you heard the following argument—Requiring employers to provide insurance would be so expensive that they would be forced to lay off workers. Would you still favor requiring employers to provide insurance or would you now oppose it?**

Analyzed Responses 156  
Unweighted Base 161

1) Still favor	47%
2) Now oppose it	46%
3) Don't know	8%

**23c. [If R OPPOSES] What if you heard the following argument—Requiring employers to provide insurance would decrease the number of state residents without health insurance because most of the uninsured work for employers who do not offer insurance now. Would you still oppose requiring employers to offer health insurance or would you now favor it?**

Analyzed Responses 36  
Unweighted Base 38

1) Still oppose it	69%
2) Now favor it	26%
3) Don't know	5%

**23a-c. Requiring businesses to offer private health insurance for their employees. Under this type of plan, your employer would be required by law to pay a fixed amount of your health insurance premium while you pay the rest.**

Initially favors	76%
1) Initially favors, favors after challenge	35%
2) Initially favors, opposes after challenge	35%
3) Don't know after challenge	6%
Initially opposes	18%
4) Initially opposes, opposes after challenge	12%
5) Initially opposes, favors after challenge	4%
6) Don't know after challenge	1%
Initially don't know	6%

**24a. Offering uninsured state residents income tax deductions, tax credits, or other financial assistance to help them purchase private health insurance on their own.**

Analyzed Responses 207  
Unweighted Base 206

1) Favors	70%
2) Opposes	25%
3) Don't know	5%

**24b. [If R FAVORS] What if you heard the following argument—The amount of the tax credit would not be enough to cover the cost of an individual health insurance plan. Would you still favor this plan or would you now oppose it?**

Analyzed Responses 145

Unweighted Base 143

1) Still favor	52%
2) Now oppose it	39%
3) Don't know	8%

**24c. [If R OPPOSES] What if you heard the following argument—Helping the uninsured to purchase private health insurance on their own allows them to choose a private plan that fits their needs. Would you still oppose this plan or would you now favor it?**

Analyzed Responses 52

Unweighted Base 52

1) Still oppose it	53%
2) Now favor it	40%
3) Don't know	8%

**24a-c. Offering uninsured state residents income tax deductions, tax credits, or other financial assistance to help them purchase private health insurance on their own.**

Initially favors	70%
1) Initially favors, favors after challenge	36%
2) Initially favors, opposes after challenge	27%
3) Don't know after challenge	6%
Initially opposes	25%
4) Initially opposes, opposes after challenge	13%
5) Initially opposes, favors after challenge	10%
6) Don't know after challenge	2%
Initially don't know	5%

**25a. Expanding state government programs for low-income state residents such as MassHealth, to provide coverage for state residents without health insurance.**

Analyzed Responses 210

Unweighted Base 202

1) Favors	82%
2) Opposes	15%
3) Don't know	3%

**25b. [If R FAVORS] What if you heard the following argument—Expanding state government programs would require raising taxes to pay for the expansion. Would you still favor this plan or would you now oppose it?**

Analyzed Responses 171

Unweighted Base 165

1) Still favor	68%
2) Now oppose it	25%
3) Don't know	7%

**25c. [If R OPPOSES] What if you heard the following argument — Expanding state government programs would build on government programs that are already in place and cover more than 1,000,000 people in Massachusetts. Would you still oppose this plan or would you now favor it?**

Analyzed Responses 32  
Unweighted Base 29

1) Still oppose it	73%
2) Now favor it	20%
3) Don't know	8%

**25a-c. Expanding state government programs for low-income state residents such as MassHealth, to provide coverage for state residents without health insurance.**

Initially favors	82%
1) Initially favors, favors after challenge	55%
2) Initially favors, opposes after challenge	21%
3) Don't know after challenge	6%
Initially opposes	15%
4) Initially opposes, opposes after challenge	11%
5) Initially opposes, favors after challenge	3%
6) Don't know after challenge	1%
Initially don't know	3%

**26a. Having a law that requires all state residents to have health insurance that they buy themselves or get through an employer. This would be similar to the law that requires people who drive cars to have auto insurance. People with low incomes would get help from the government to pay their health insurance premiums.**

Analyzed Responses 202  
Unweighted Base 198

1) Favors	56%
2) Opposes	35%
3) Don't know	9%

**26b. [If R FAVORS] What if you heard the following argument—Many uninsured people will not be able to afford to buy their own insurance even with government help and this would cause financial hardship. Would you still favor this plan or would you now oppose it?**

Analyzed Responses 113  
Unweighted Base 111

1) Still favor	40%
2) Now oppose it	50%
3) Don't know	10%

**26c. [If R OPPOSES] What if you heard the following argument — People should be responsible for making sure that they have health insurance, the same way they are responsible for having auto insurance. Would you still oppose this plan or would you now favor it?**

Analyzed Responses 71  
Unweighted Base 69

1) Still oppose it	67%
2) Now favor it	28%
3) Don't know	5%

**26a-c. Having a law that requires all state residents to have health insurance that they buy themselves or get through an employer. This would be similar to the law that requires people who drive cars to have auto insurance. People with low incomes would get help from the government to pay their health insurance premiums.**

Initially favors	56%
1) Initially favors, favors after challenge	22%
2) Initially favors, opposes after challenge	28%
3) Don't know after challenge	6%
Initially opposes	35%
4) Initially opposes, opposes after challenge	24%
5) Initially opposes, favors after challenge	10%
6) Don't know after challenge	1%
Initially don't know	9%

**27. Which of the following statements comes closer to your view? [Randomize]**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) The uninsured should get care that is as good as the care insured people get, even if it means raising taxes.	52%
2) The uninsured should get a basic level of care, which might not be as good but wouldn't require raising taxes.	42%
3) Don't know	6%

**28. I'm going to read you a list of ways that have been proposed for the state government to raise money. For each, please tell me whether you would strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose it if the money was used to decrease the number of uninsured people in Massachusetts.**

**a. An increase in the state income tax from 5.3% to 5.6%, the rate it was in 2001**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Strongly favor	29%
2) Somewhat favor	32%
3) Somewhat oppose	16%
4) Strongly oppose	21%
5) Don't know	2%

**b. Placing a 5% sales tax on alcohol**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Strongly favor	58%
2) Somewhat favor	22%
3) Somewhat oppose	5%
4) Strongly oppose	13%
5) Don't know	2%

**c. Raising the tax on lottery winnings**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Strongly favor	48%
2) Somewhat favor	22%
3) Somewhat oppose	9%
4) Strongly oppose	18%
5) Don't know	2%

**d. Adding an additional charge to health insurance premiums**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Strongly favor	4%
2) Somewhat favor	10%
3) Somewhat oppose	21%
4) Strongly oppose	63%
5) Don't know	2%

**e. Raising the excise tax on tobacco from \$1.51 to \$1.75**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Strongly favor	66%
2) Somewhat favor	11%
3) Somewhat oppose	6%
4) Strongly oppose	15%
5) Don't know	2%

**f. Raising the sales tax from 5% to 6%**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Strongly favor	16%
2) Somewhat favor	19%
3) Somewhat oppose	17%
4) Strongly oppose	47%
5) Don't know	1%

## Political activity

**29. On another topic, in the past year, have you voted for a candidate based mainly on their support for expanding coverage for the uninsured in Massachusetts?**

Registered voters only 896  
Unweighted Base 915

1) Yes	15%
2) No	81%
3) Don't know	4%

**30. Next, I'd like to ask you a question about the Canadian health care system. Would you say that you have a favorable or unfavorable view of the Canadian health care system, or haven't you heard enough about it to have an opinion?**

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) Favorable	45%
2) Unfavorable	15%
3) Haven't heard enough about it to know	40%

**31a. [If R answers FAVORABLE in q30] Would you say your opinion of the Canadian health care system is very favorable or somewhat favorable?**

Analyzed Responses 448

Unweighted Base 451

1) Very favorable	49%
2) Somewhat favorable	49%
3) Don't know	2%

**31b. [If R answers UNFAVORABLE in q30] Would you say your opinion of the Canadian health care system is very unfavorable or somewhat unfavorable?**

Analyzed Responses 154

Unweighted Base 163

1) Very unfavorable	45%
2) Somewhat unfavorable	53%
3) Don't know	3%

**Summary of 31a-31b**

Favorable	45%
Very favorable	22%
Somewhat favorable	23%
Unfavorable	15%
Somewhat unfavorable	8%
Very unfavorable	7%
Don't know	40%

## Insurance status

**32. Now a question about different kinds of health plans or health insurance, including those provided by the government. As I read each one, please tell me whether or not you personally are covered by it? [Rotate]**

**32a. Health insurance through your or someone else's work or union**

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) Yes	70%
2) No	30%
3) Don't know	1%

**32b. Health insurance bought directly by yourself or your family**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Yes	31%
2) No	68%
3) Don't know	1%

**32c. Medicare, a government plan that pays health care bills for people aged 65 or older and for some disabled people**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Yes	22%
2) No	77%
3) Don't know	1%

**32d. MassHealth or Medicaid**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Yes	11%
2) No	87%
3) Don't know	2%

**32e. Health insurance through some other group**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Yes	15%
2) No	84%
3) Don't Know	1%

**33. [R answers NO or DON'T KNOW to all of above] Does this mean that you are currently uninsured?**

Analyzed Responses 60  
Unweighted Base 53

1) Yes	74%
2) No	22%
3) Don't know	4%

**34. How many children under the age of 18 live in this household?**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) 0	62%
2) 1	15%
3) 2	14%
4) 3	6%
5) 4	1%
6) 5	1%
7) 6 or more	-

**35. (Is this child/Are any of these children) currently uninsured?**

Analyzed Responses 376

Unweighted Base 335

1) Yes	8%
2) No	92%
3) Don't know/Refused	1%

**35a. [R has more than 1 child in q34 and answers YES to q35] How many of these children are uninsured?**

Analyzed Responses 12

1) 0	25%
2) 1	8%
3) 2	50%
4) 3	8%
5) Refused	8%

**36. [R answers YES to q32a, b, c, d, or e or NO to q33] Was there anytime in the past 12 months when you were without health insurance?**

Analyzed Responses 955

Unweighted Base 962

Yes	13%
No	87%
Don't know	-

**37. [R is currently uninsured or uninsured at some point in the past 12 months] Please tell me the MAIN reason why you are/were uninsured. [Randomize]**

Analyzed Responses 164

Unweighted Base 130

1) It was/is too expensive	25%
2) Your employer did/does not offer health insurance	7%
3) Your employer offers health insurance but you were/are not eligible	8%
4) You did/do not think you need it	3%
5) You lost your job	23%
6) Some other reason	33%
7) Don't know	2%

**Thinking about the next six months, how worried are you that each of the following might happen to you?****38. The amount you pay for your health care services or health insurance will increase.**

Analyzed Responses 999

Unweighted Base 1000

1) Very worried	21%
2) Somewhat worried	32%
3) Not too worried	23%
4) Not at all worried	22%
5) Don't know	1%

**39. You might not be able to get the health care you think you need because you can't afford it.**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Very worried	16%
2) Somewhat worried	20%
3) Not too worried	24%
4) Not at all worried	39%
5) Don't know	1%

**40. You might lose your health insurance coverage.**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Very worried	16%
2) Somewhat worried	16%
3) Not too worried	21%
4) Not at all worried	45%
5) Don't know	3%

**41. The amount that you pay or your family pays for prescription drugs will increase.**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Very worried	29%
2) Somewhat worried	33%
3) Not too worried	17%
4) Not at all worried	19%
5) Don't know	2%

**42. On another topic, in the past 12 months, was there a time when you did not get medical care you needed due to cost?**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Yes	10%
2) No	90%
3) Don't know	-

**43. In the past 12 months, was there a time when you had a serious problem paying medical bills?**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Yes	11%
2) No	89%
3) Don't know/Refused	-

**44. [If R has serious problem paying bills] Were you contacted by a collection agency about owing money for medical bills?**

Analyzed Responses 111  
Unweighted Base 108

1) Yes	57%
2) No	43%

**45. [If R has serious problem paying bills] Did you consider filing for bankruptcy as a result of this problem?**

Analyzed Responses 111  
Unweighted Base 108

1) Yes	11%
2) No	89%

## Demographics

**46. In general, how would you describe your own health? Would you say it is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Excellent	27%
2) Very good	35%
3) Good	22%
4) Fair	11%
5) Poor	4%
6) Don't know	1%

**46. Which of the following categories includes your age? Please stop me when I reach the correct range.**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) 18-24	10%
2) 25-34	19%
3) 35-44	22%
4) 45-54	18%
5) 55-64	12%
6) 65+	18%
7) Refused	1%

**48. Would you describe yourself as Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino?**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Yes	3%
2) No	96%
3) Refused	2%

**48a. Which of the following best describes your race or ethnicity?**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Asian	2%
2) African American	4%
3) Caucasian	86%
4) Hispanic	1%
5) Other	3%
6) Refused	4%

**49. What is the highest level of education you have had the opportunity to complete?**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Less than high school	4%
2) Graduated high school	21%
3) Some college/Tech./Voc.	23%
4) Graduated college	32%
5) Graduate/professional school	19%
6) Refused	1%

**50. Would you please tell me which of the following categories includes your total annual household income? Please stop me when I reach the correct range.**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Less than \$35,000	23%
2) \$35,000 to less than \$50,000	15%
3) \$50,000 to less than \$75,000	19%
4) \$75,000 to less than \$100,000	14%
5) \$100,000 to less than \$150,000	10%
6) \$150,000 and above	5%
7) Don't know	3%
8) Refused	10%

**51. What is your political affiliation [Do not read]?**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Democrat	30%
2) Republican	13%
3) Independent	39%
4) Undeclared/Unenrolled/Unaffiliated	1%
5) Other	1%
6) Don't know/Refused	16%

**52. Are you a registered voter?**

Analyzed Responses 999  
Unweighted Base 1000

1) Yes	90%
2) No	9%
3) Don't know/Refused	1%

**53. [If YES to q52] Did you vote in the last gubernatorial election?**

Analyzed Responses 896  
Unweighted Base 915

1) Yes	82%
2) No	18%
3) Don't know/Refused	1%

**54. Is anyone in your household a member of a union?***Analyzed Responses* 999*Unweighted Base* 1000

1) Yes	20%
2) No	78%
3) Don't know/Refused	1%

**55. Does anyone in your household work in the health care industry?***Analyzed Responses* 999*Unweighted Base* 1000

1) Yes	21%
2) No	79%
3) Don't know/Refused	1%

**56. Gender (observe)***Analyzed Responses* 999*Unweighted Base* 1000

1) Male	48%
2) Female	52%

## About the authors

**Robert J. Blendon, Sc.D.** is currently Professor of Health Policy and Political Analysis at both the Harvard University School of Public Health and the John F. Kennedy School of Government. He also serves as a faculty member in the Shorenstein Center on Press and Politics at the Kennedy School. In addition, he directs the Harvard Opinion Research Program and the Henry J. Kaiser National Program on the Public, Health and Social Policy, which focuses on the better understanding of public knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about major domestic public policy issues. He also co-directs the Washington Post/Harvard University/Kaiser Family Foundation survey project, which was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

Between 1987 and 1996 he served as Chairman of the Department of Health Policy and Management at the Harvard School of Public Health and as Deputy Director of the Harvard University Division of Health Policy Research and Education. Prior to his Harvard appointment, Dr. Blendon was senior vice-president at The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. In addition, he has served as a senior faculty member for the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National Governor's Association, and the U.S. Congress Committee on Ways and Means.

Dr. Blendon is a member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences and the Council of Foreign Relations, a former advisory board member to the Director of The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the editorial board of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, and a former Board of Trustees member of Johns Hopkins Hospital. He is also a Past President of the Association of Health Services Research and winner of their Distinguished Investigator Award. He is also a recipient of the Baxter Award for lifetime achievement in the health services research field.

He is a graduate of Marietta College. He is also a graduate of the School of Business at the University of Chicago, with a Masters in Business Administration. In addition, he holds a Doctoral degree from the School of Public Health of Johns Hopkins University, where his principal attention was directed toward health policy.

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**Elizabeth Raleigh** is a Research Associate at the Health Opinion Research Program (HORP). Since joining the staff in 2002, she has worked on several projects on a range of topics in public health and domestic policy. Her responsibilities include: conducting literature reviews and background research, drafting survey questionnaires, and analyzing data.

Prior to her work at HORP, she conducted an independent research project in Seoul, Korea on a Fulbright Fellowship. Elizabeth holds a B.A. in American Civilization from Brown University.

**John M. Benson** is managing director of the Harvard Opinion Research Program. At Harvard since 1992, John has directed numerous national and international polling projects leading to more than 50 publications in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *Health Affairs*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *Brookings Review*, *Social Science Research*, and other domestic policy and polling journals. Since 1995, John has played a key role in the design and analysis of a series of surveys with *The Washington Post* and the Kaiser Family Foundation on public knowledge, values, and attitudes on domestic policy issues. He has also managed survey projects with The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, National Public Radio, *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, and *The Boston Globe*.

John is specifically interested in public attitudes about end-of-life decisions and other issues involving moral values. He also serves as survey consultant to Medscape.com and as contributing editor to *The Public Perspective*.

Previously, John was associate editor of *The Public Perspective* and senior opinion analyst at The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, where he was instrumental in the development of the POLL database, an essential research tool in the field of public opinion. He has an M.A. in History of Science from the University of Wisconsin.