

Obamacare

MESSAGING GUIDE



Crossroads **GPS**

Introduction

President Obama famously declared in 2009: “If you like your health care, you can keep your health care.” And during the Affordable Care Act debate of 2009 and 2010, this mantra became a truth to many Americans observing the debate in Washington.

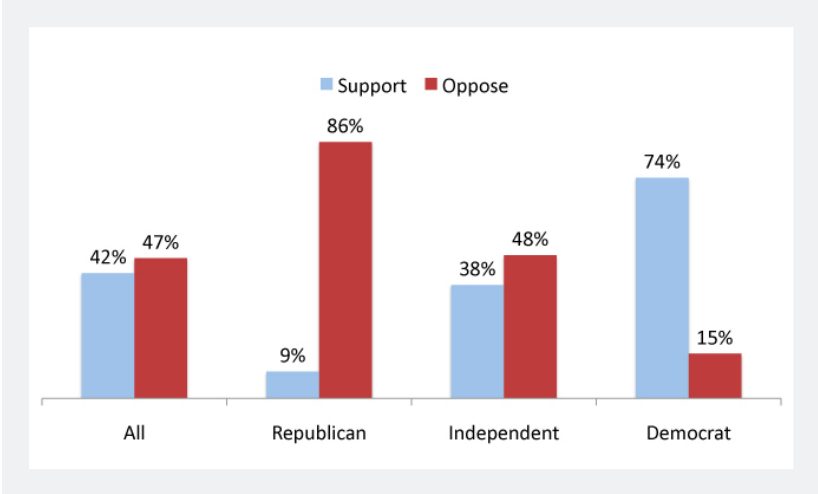
But now, as Obamacare’s congressional authors are calling implementation of the bill a “train wreck,” Americans who both supported and opposed the bill are finding out that the President’s statement isn’t true. Over the next two years, millions of Americans who believed the President’s promise will find that their health care is changing dramatically – as they move from the familiarity of employer-based care to the uncertainty of government-run exchanges.

Crossroads Grassroots Policy Strategies (Crossroads GPS) recently surveyed 1000 registered voters to gauge their attitudes about health care generally, as well as their knowledge of the changes coming to the health care system because of Obamacare. The findings were frankly stunning.

From the survey:

- 62% of Americans – including 61% of self-identified Democrats – believe the top priority for health care reform should be affordability, not covering the uninsured or improving quality
- Americans by a 2-1 margin prefer a system where they have the flexibility to purchase insurance with more limited coverage, as opposed to requiring comprehensive coverage in all plans
- Support for health savings accounts is at an astounding 81%
- Americans oppose shutting down the government in order to repeal Obamacare by a 64-29 margin – including 66% of Independents

Bottom line: Conservatives have tremendous messaging opportunities as Obamacare is implemented, as well as significant challenges. This messaging guide outlines the findings of our research.



TAKEAWAY #1:

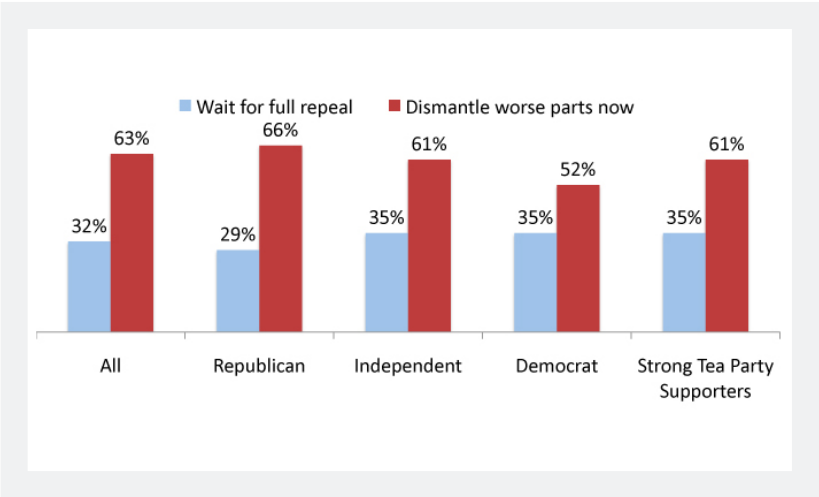
Obamacare attitudes have been highly stable

Message: *“The public wants to do away with Obamacare now, just as they always have since it was enacted.”*

TAKEAWAY #2:

Republicans and Independents believe we should “dismantle” the law piece by piece, rather than waiting for years to repeal it outright

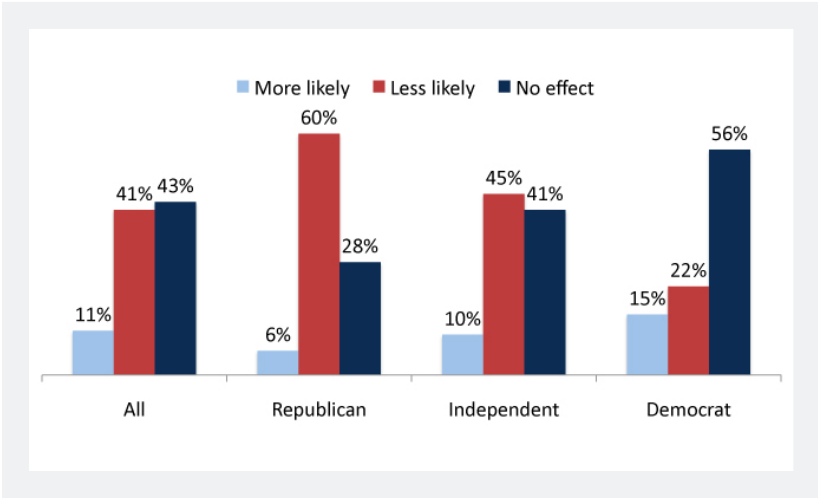
Message: *“We need to repeal and replace Obamacare – but until we get that opportunity, we need to dismantle this law piece by piece.” Note: Say “dismantle Obamacare” in lieu of “fix Obamacare.”*

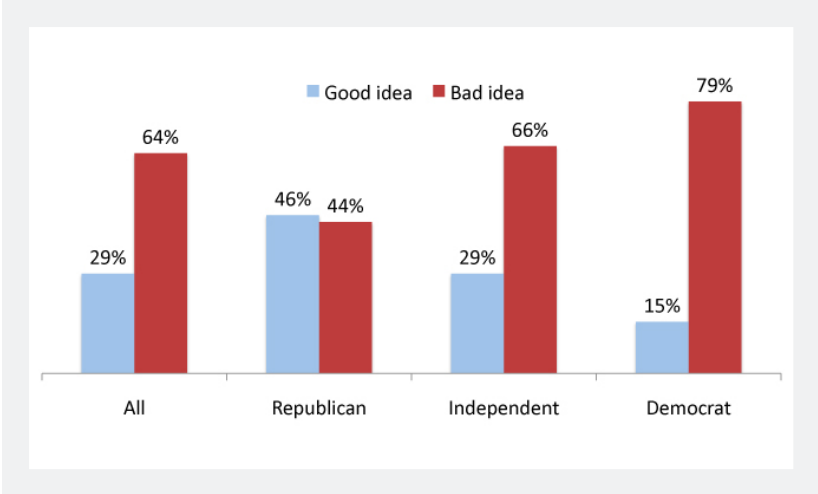


TAKEAWAY #3:

Voters don’t trust the IRS to enforce Obamacare

Message: *“We can’t rely on the IRS to treat people fairly – so we certainly can’t rely on the IRS to enforce Obamacare fairly, or keep our private medical information confidential.”*





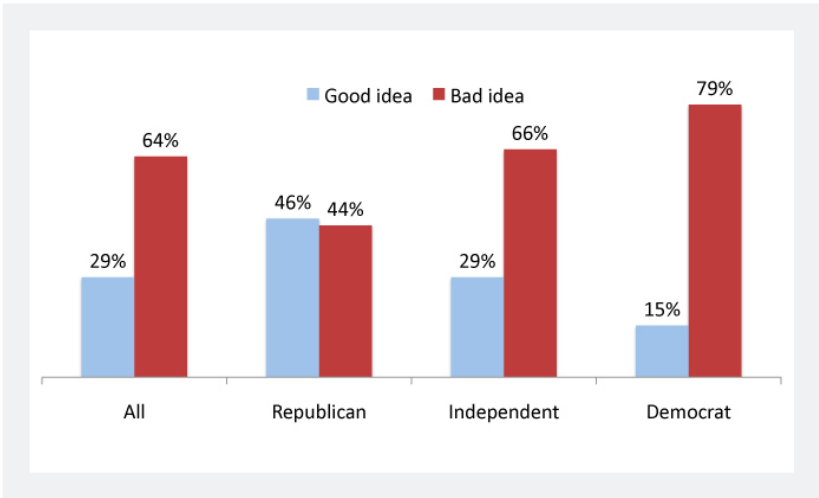
TAKEAWAY #4:

While a majority want to get rid of Obamacare, shutting the government down to do so is a potential catastrophe – especially with Independents. Even those who oppose the law don’t want more Washington brinksmanship, and they’ll blame Obamacare’s opponents for it.

TAKEAWAY #5:

People want health care solutions – and affordability is top of mind

Message: *“One of the worst things about Obamacare is how it dramatically increases costs – all while there are realistic, proven ways we can make health care more affordable for families.”*



TAKEAWAY #6:

People believe Obamacare’s proponents when they criticize the insurance industry, and are concerned about being at the mercy of the industry.

Note: While trust in government is low, it’s critical to remember that less than 45% of Americans trust insurance companies to make decisions about health care.

Which would you trust more to make decisions about your health care coverage?

PRIVATE COMPANIES44%
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT36%
DON’T KNOW20%

“In March (2012), the CBO estimated that 27 million people would still be uninsured in 2022. It now finds that 30 million will be uninsured 10 years from now.”

– Investor’s Business Daily, 7/24/2012

TAKEAWAY #7:

Obamacare even fails to live up to its biggest promise: universal coverage

Message: *“Not only do you get higher costs with Obamacare – it doesn’t even create the universal coverage it promised. Its biggest promise – universal coverage – isn’t even achieved a decade from now.”*

Conclusions

Conservatives have real opportunities to promote market-based solutions to health care as Obamacare is implemented. But challenges and pitfalls exist as well. Winning messages include:

- We want to “dismantle the worst parts of Obamacare
- While Obamacare hurts families by driving up health care costs, we support policies that will make health care more affordable for families, including:
 - Allow for less expensive catastrophic policies
 - Expand HSAs
 - Purchase health insurance across state lines
 - Purchase health insurance with pre-tax dollars
 - Allow seniors to use Medicare money to purchase private policies
- We are not interested in more Washington drama, but real practical solutions
- Not only does Obamacare increase costs and put employer-provided health coverage at serious risk – but it fails in even its primary objective of universal coverage

The entire survey is available on the Crossroads GPS website, at www.crossroadsgps.org

Paid for by Crossroads GPS. www.crossroadsgps.org.