

Missouri Foundation for Health

Views of Missouri Voters on Issues Relating to Health Care Reform

December 11, 2012

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Views of Missouri Voters

Periodically, the Missouri Foundation for Health commissions Lake Research Partners and The Tarrance Group to assess the attitudes of the state's residents on health care issues, including the Patient Protection and Affordability Act (ACA).

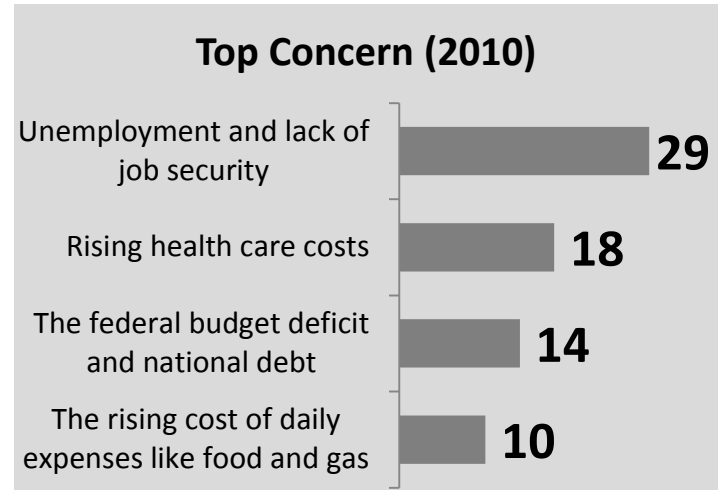
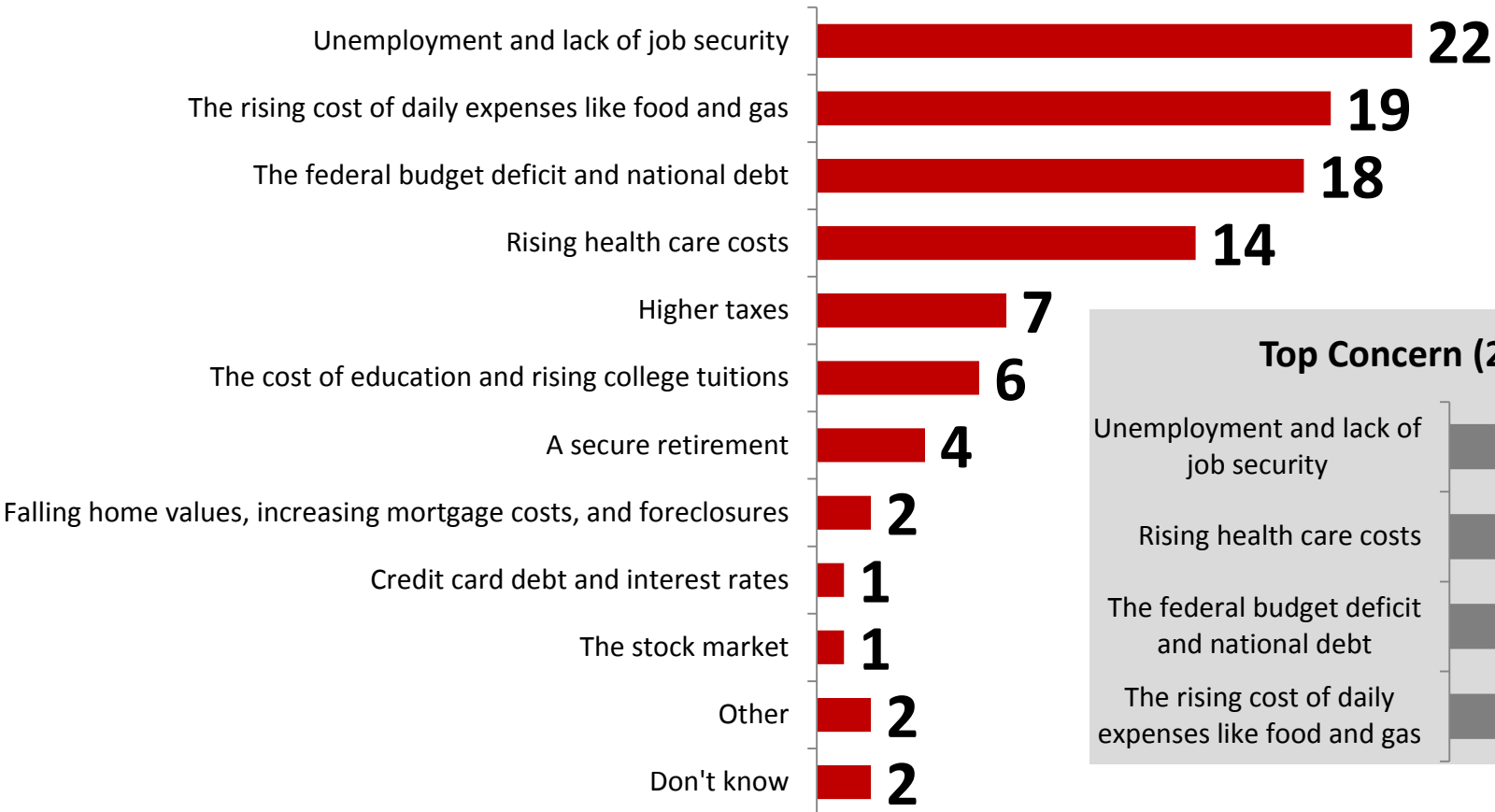
This survey was conducted between October 18th and October 24th, 2012. The survey reached 1,416 adults in Missouri, all of whom were registered and likely to vote in the 2012 General Election. The margin of error for the sample is +/- 2.6%.

Key Findings

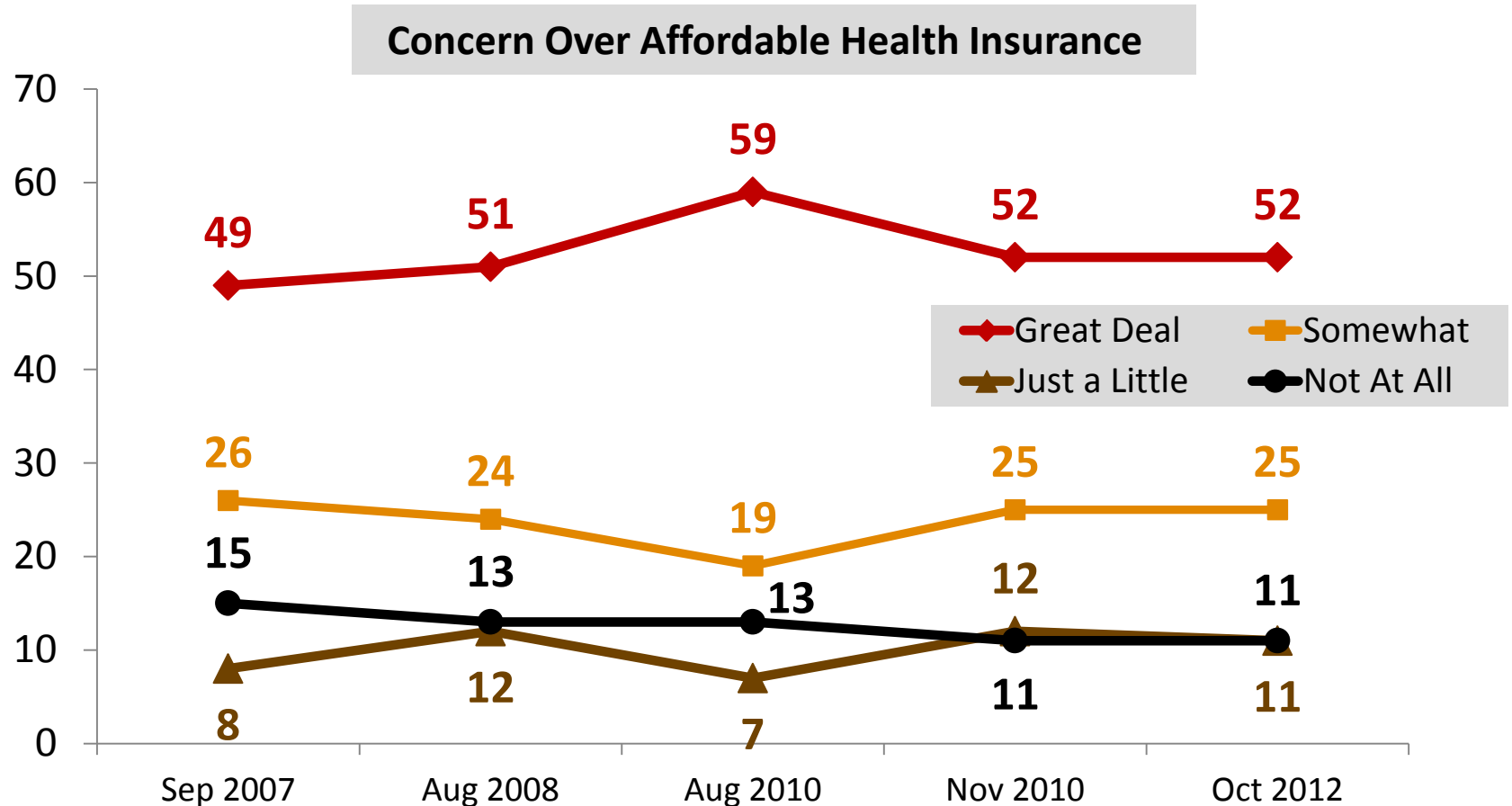
- **Missourians are more knowledgeable of and positive about Medicaid than voters in many other states.** In other states, the program often requires defining in order to elicit an impression; in Missouri, that is not the case. Over 71% favor “Medicaid” without any description. “Medicaid” is far better known and regarded than “MO HealthNet.”
- **Missouri voters want action to ensure access to affordable health care, and believe state government should take a leading role in this endeavor – even if this requires a tax increase.**
- **Most Missourians support Medicaid expansion: 52% favor and 18% oppose.** Not only is this a majority position, but 40% of voters indicate strong support.
- Missouri voters are unfamiliar with health insurance exchanges—six in ten say they have not heard or seen anything about them recently. However, when a brief description is provided, **voters favor implementing an exchange 53% to 14%; a majority (66%) want Missouri to move ahead on implementation of the exchanges instead of waiting on the federal government.**

Job security, daily expenses, the national debt, and health care costs form the clear top tier of economic concerns for most Missourians. Democrats (20%) and independents (19%) are likely to cite health care costs as their top concern, while just 8% of Republicans name it as a top concern.

Top Economic Concern (2012)

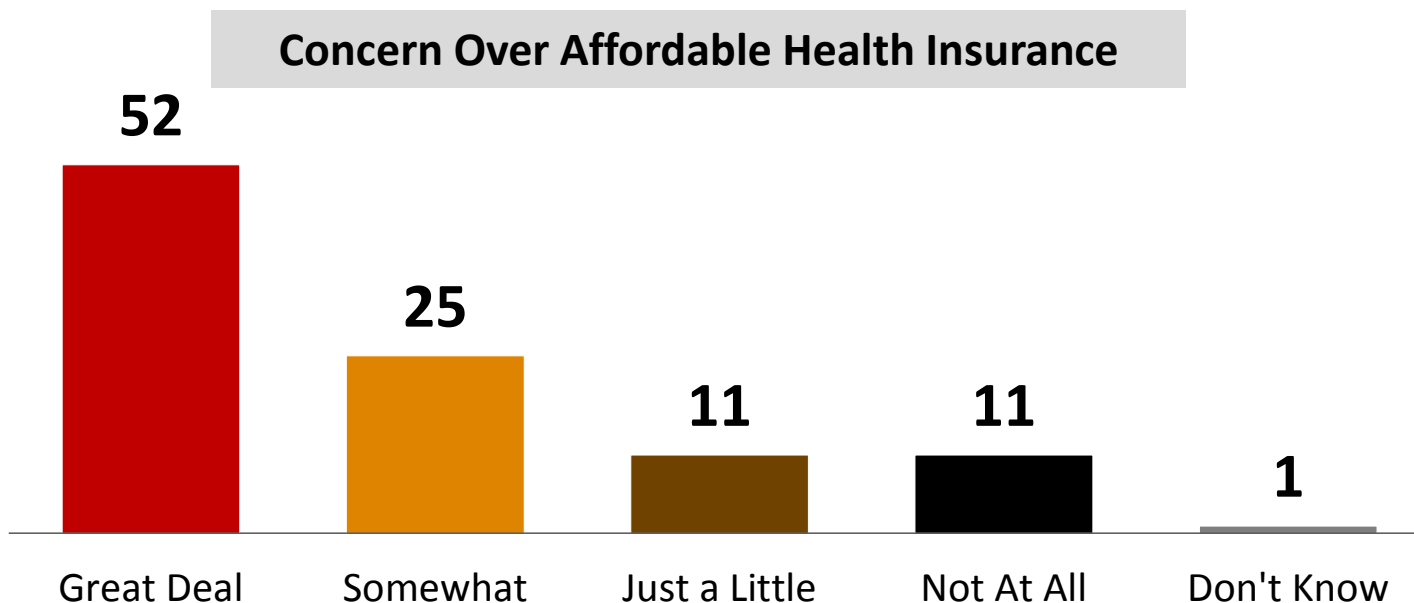


Serious concerns over affordable health insurance have remained steady among Missourians since 2007, with a noticeable peak after the ACA was signed in 2010. These concerns do not appear to be subsiding: 77% continue to say they are concerned either “a great deal” or “somewhat.”



QUESTION: How concerned would you say you are about affordable health insurance for you and your family? Would you say you are concerned a great deal, somewhat, just a little, or not at all?

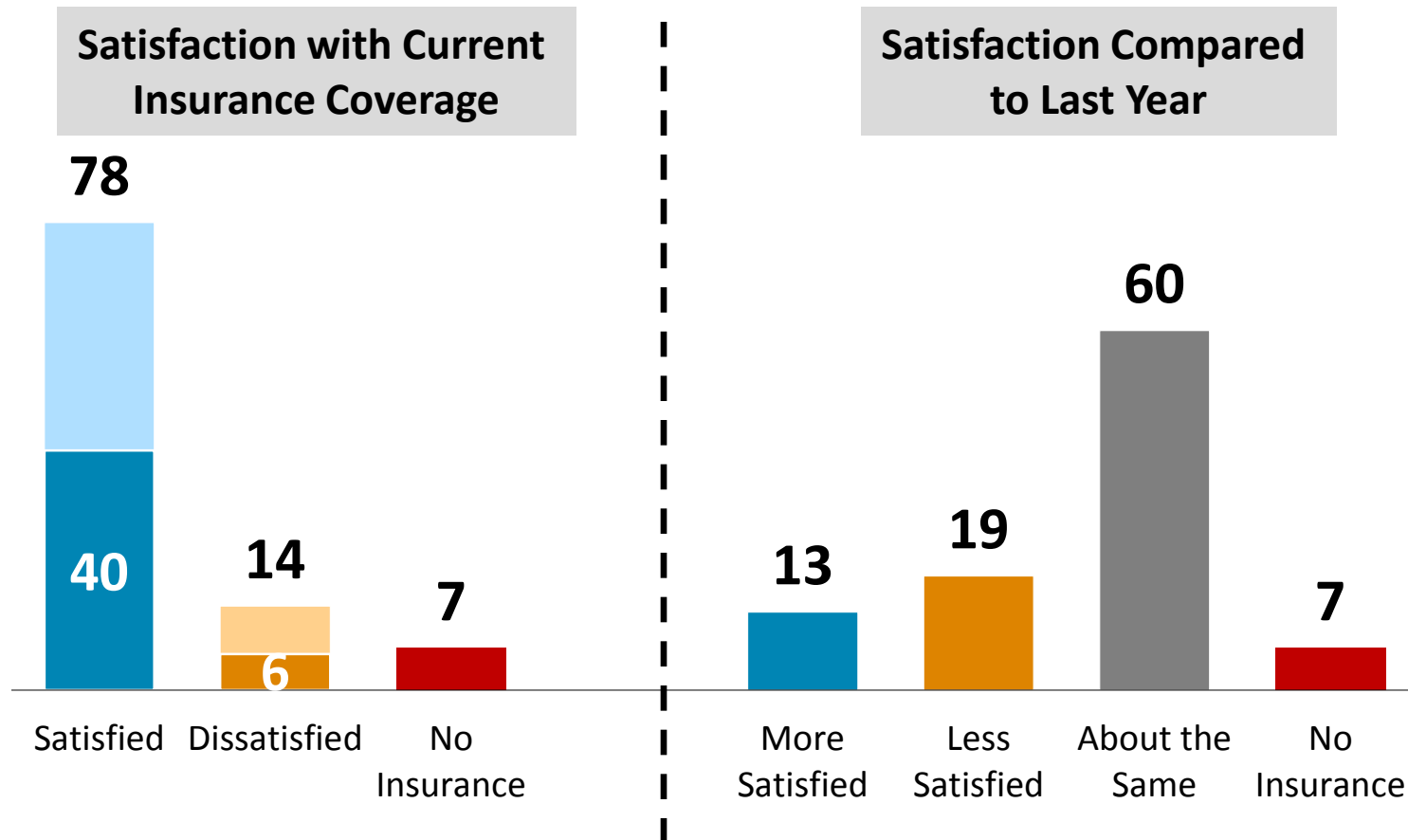
Concerns about affordable health insurance are prominent for most Missourians, with majorities concerned “a great deal” about affordable insurance for themselves and their families. This is particularly true for Independent women, mothers, younger Democrats, and those without health coverage.



Most Concerned	% Great Deal
No health coverage	66
Democrats under 50	64
Independent/DK women	63
Mothers	63

QUESTION: How concerned would you say you are about affordable health insurance for you and your family? Would you say you are concerned a great deal, somewhat, just a little, or not at all?

While most voters report satisfaction with their current coverage, the level of satisfaction has declined slightly since last year.



Darker colors indicate intensity.

QUESTION: Thinking about your current health insurance coverage, how satisfied are you with it: very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied?

How has your level of satisfaction with your health insurance coverage changed since last year? Would you say you are more satisfied, less satisfied, or about the same?

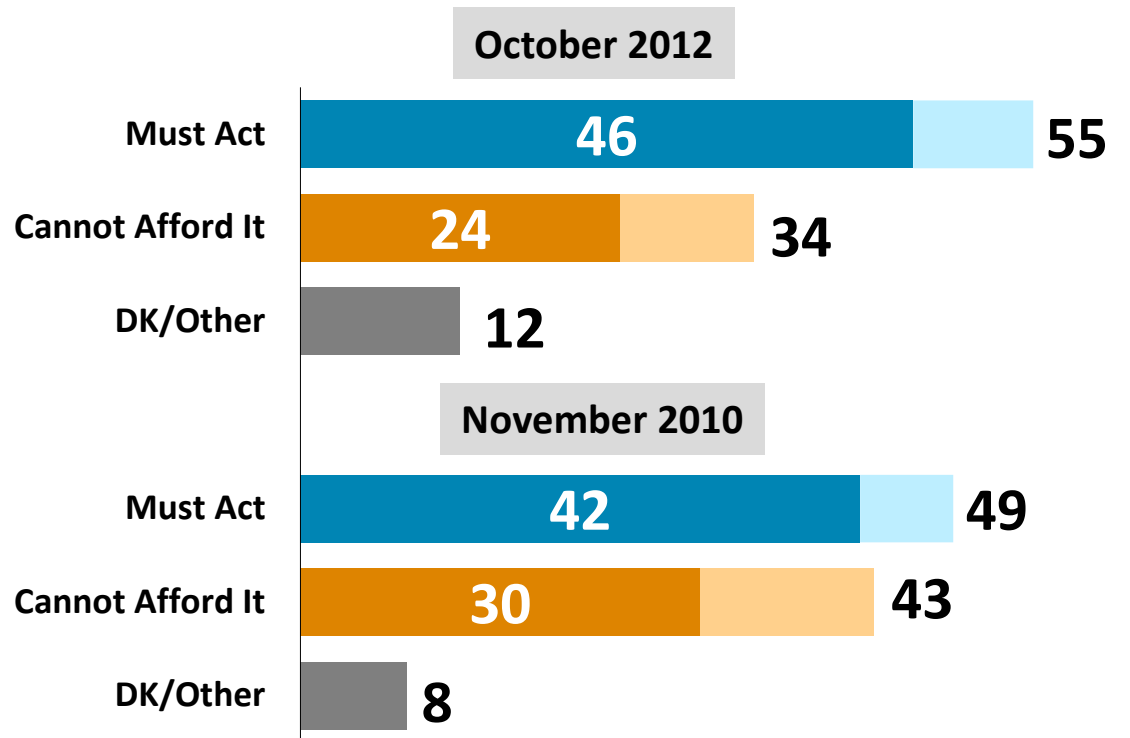
Missourians believe their state government bears responsibility for ensuring access to affordable health care and that it should act in its next session—even if that requires raising taxes.

QUESTION: *Now, thinking about the upcoming legislative session in Missouri state government, which of the following statements comes closest to your view?*

Must Act: *Missouri state government must act to help Missouri families get guaranteed access to affordable health care and get insurance costs under control, even if it raises taxes.*

Cannot Afford It: *Missouri state government cannot afford to raise taxes or cut programs even for something important like making sure all Missouri families have access to health care.*

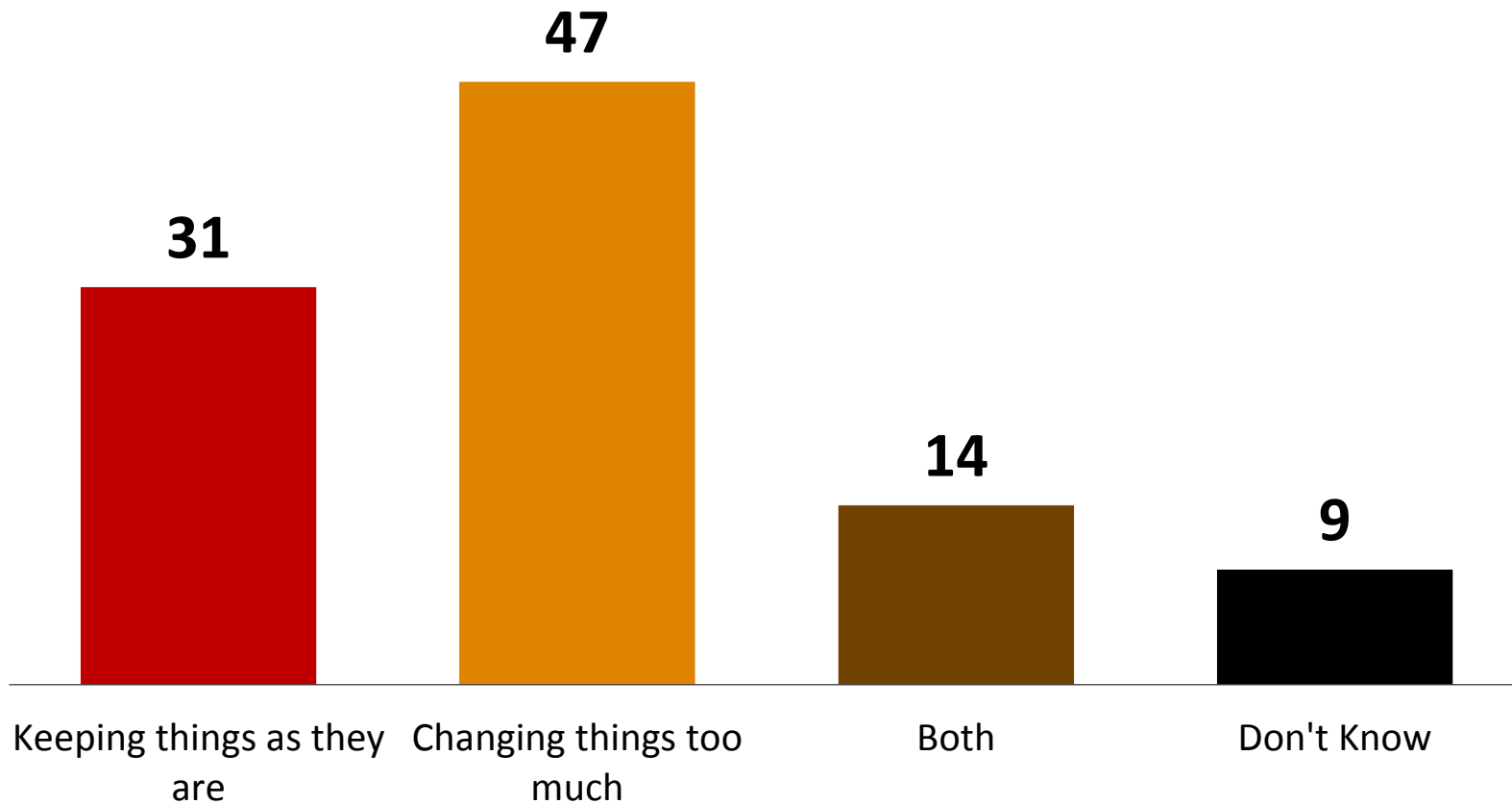
Should Missouri Help Families Get Guaranteed Access to Affordable Health Care?



Darker colors indicate intensity.

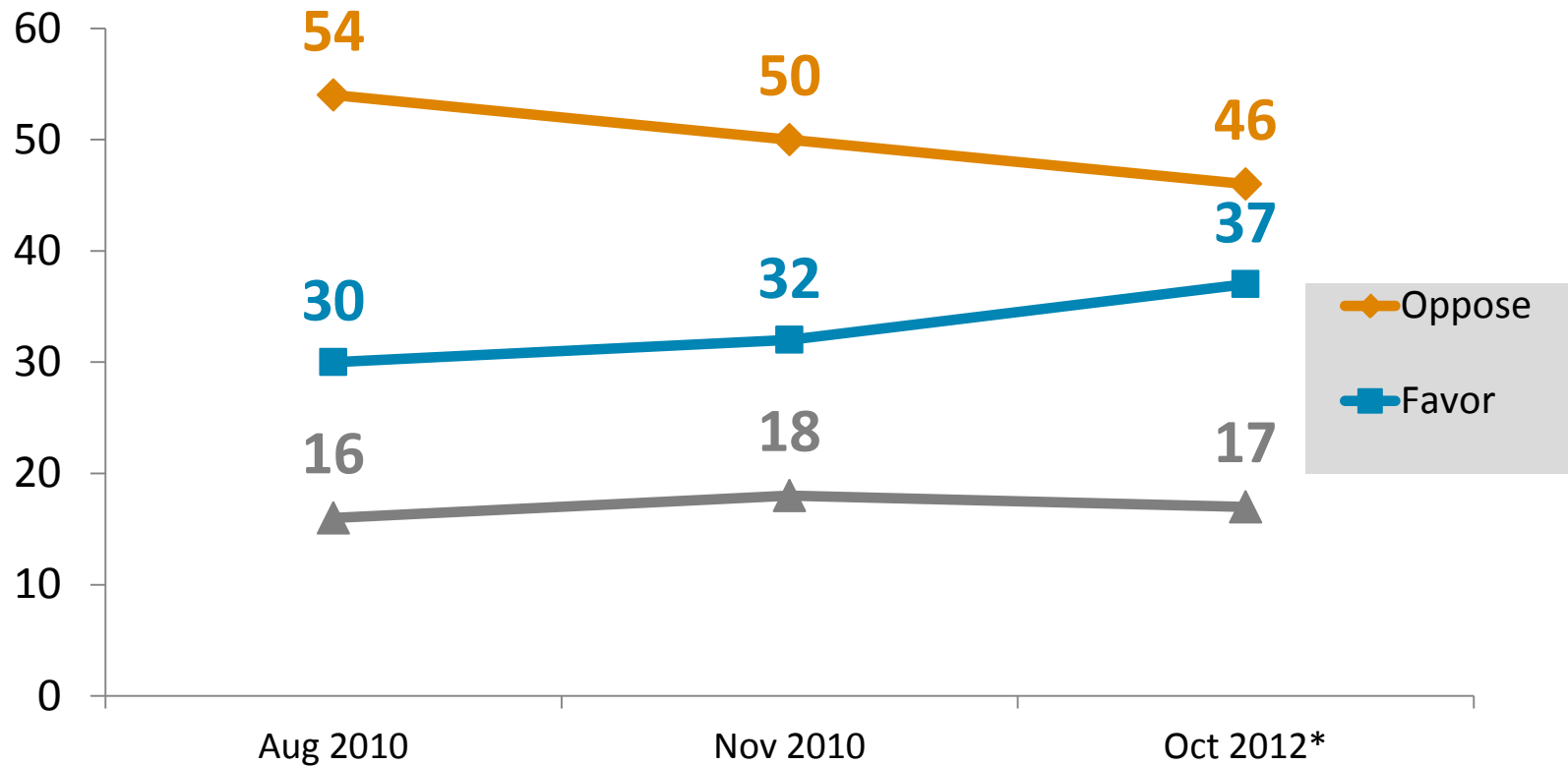
Despite their concerns about the state of health insurance and associated costs, Missouri voters have a desire for government action, but are wary of too much change at once.

Which Are You More Worried About?



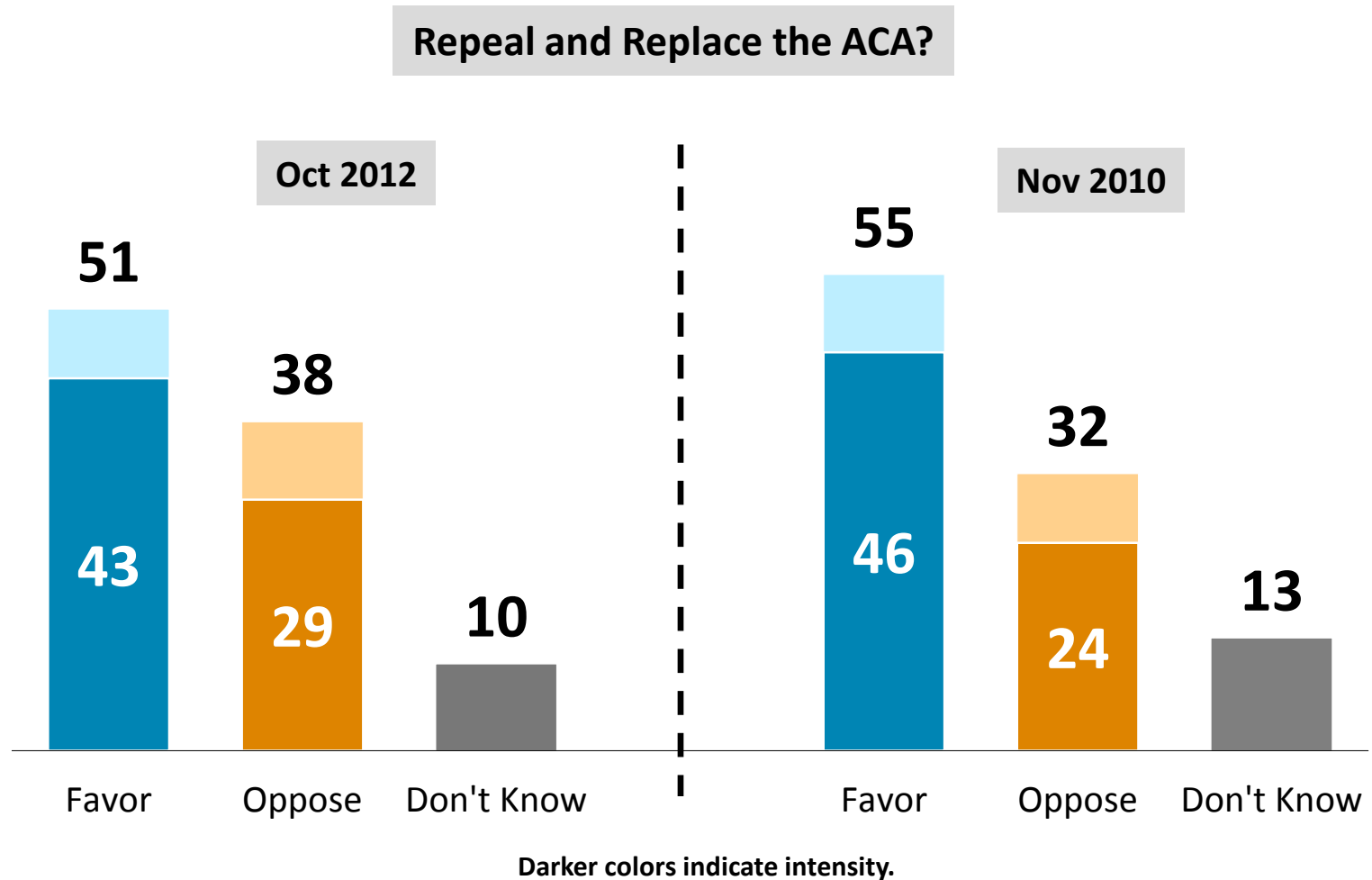
While more Missouri voters still oppose the ACA than support it, opposition has dropped below 50% for the first time since its passage, while support has climbed five points since the 2010 midterm elections.

Support for National Health Care Reform Law



*Split sampled question.

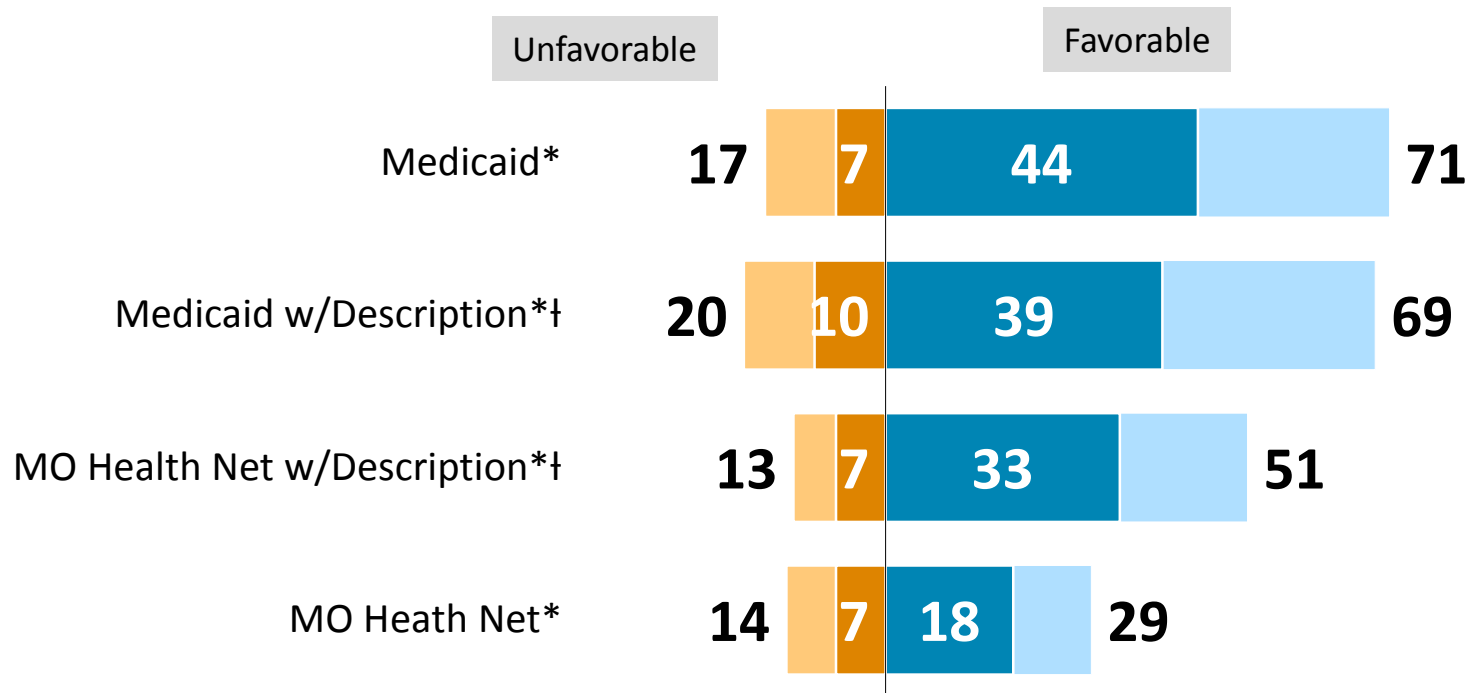
There is slightly less support for repealing and replacing the ACA since this time in 2010. The margin separating support and opposition to repeal has been nearly halved.



QUESTION: *And do you favor or oppose repealing and replacing the national health care reform law?*

Missouri voters hold Medicaid in high regard; the opposite is true for the term MO HealthNet, given its relative obscurity compared to Medicaid.

Favorability (2012)



Darker colors indicate intensity.

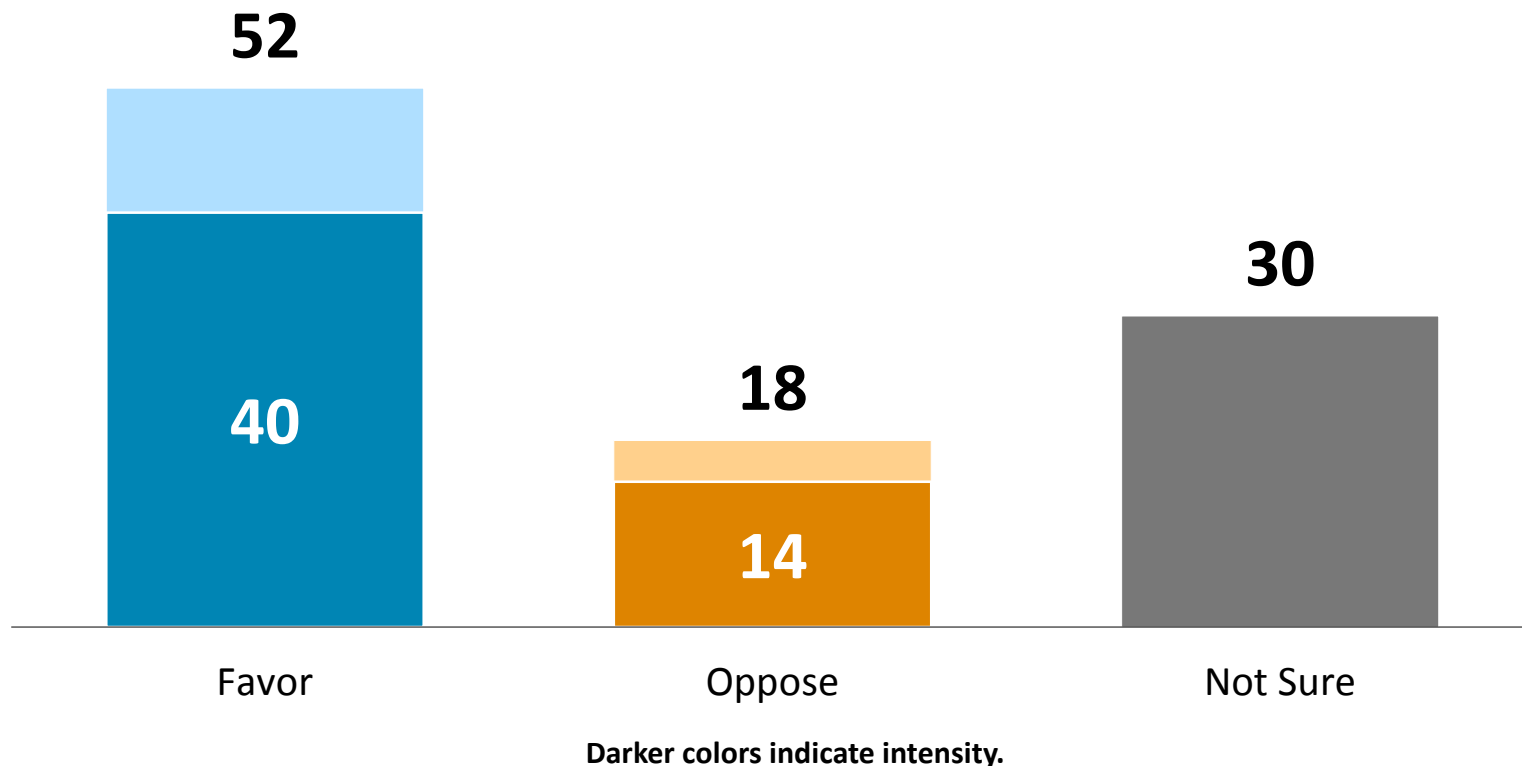
*Split sampled question.

† Description: the program that provides health insurance to low-income families.

QUESTION: First, I'd like to ask you about some public figures and institutions. For each one, please tell me whether you have a VERY favorable, SOMEWHAT favorable, somewhat UNFAVORABLE, or VERY unfavorable impression. If you haven't heard of the person or institution [6], or if you don't know enough about them to have an impression [5], just say so and we will move on. 12

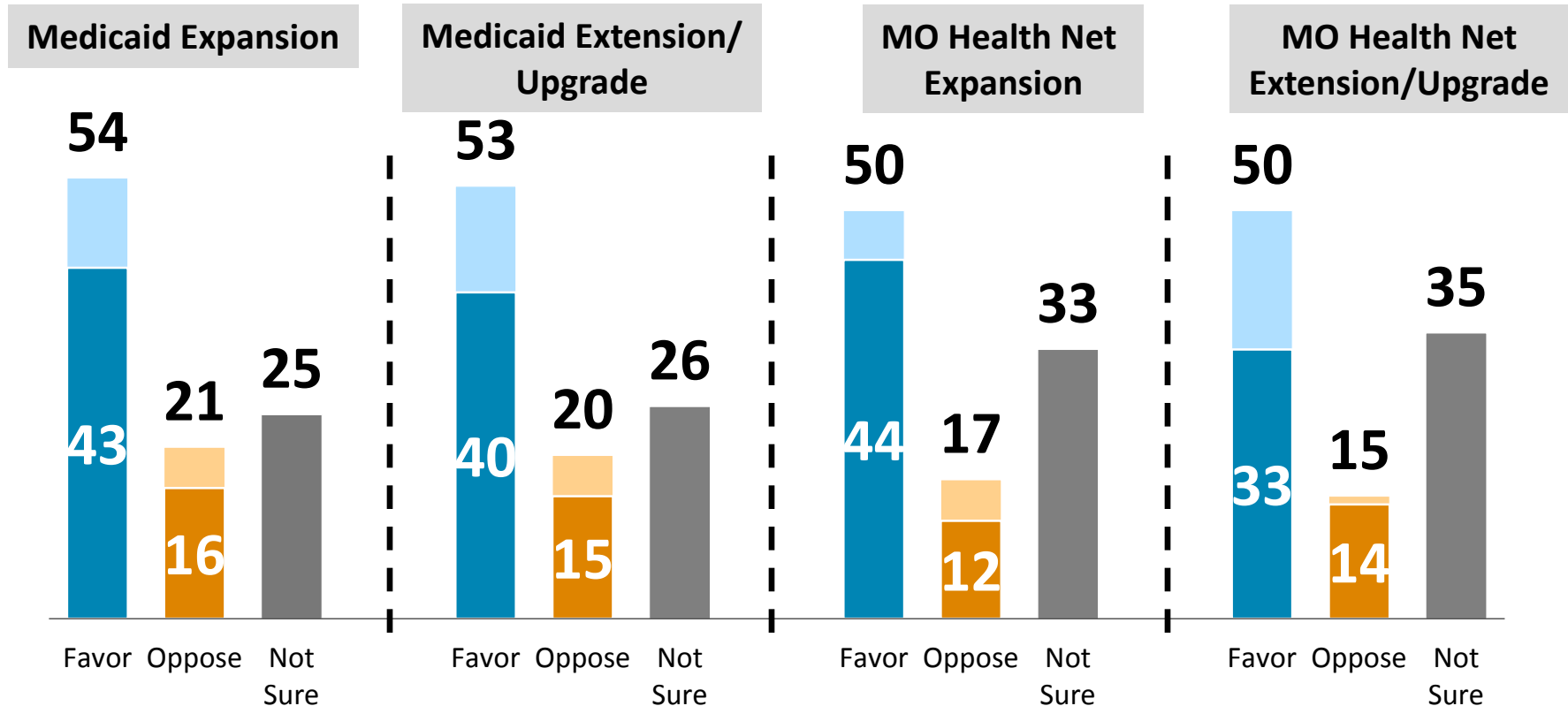
After hearing a very brief description of Medicaid/MO HealthNet, Missouri voters generally favor expansion. However, a large segment of the population remains unsure.

Combined Initial Medicaid Ballot (2012)



QUESTION: *[Medicaid / MO Health Net] is a program designed to provide health care for low-income Americans. Some people have proposed [expanding / extending] the program in Missouri so that it also includes single parents and childless adults who earn up to 133% of the federal poverty level, or about \$25,000 for a family of three. Do you favor or oppose [expanding / upgrading] [Medicaid in Missouri / MO Health Net], or are you undecided?*

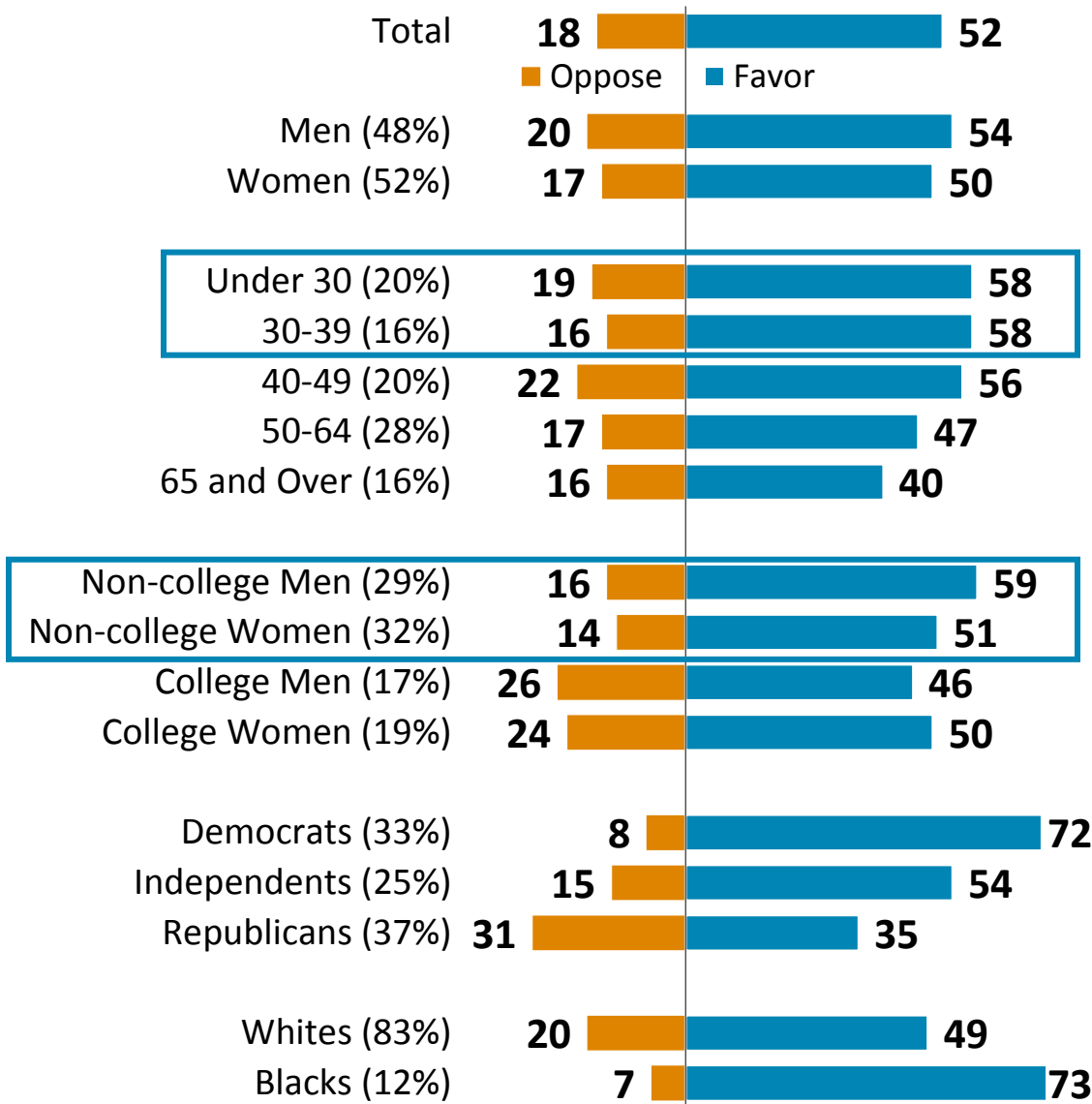
When breaking out the question wording individually, “expanding Medicaid” attracts the most support (as well as opposition) and performs slightly better than referring to “MO Health Net” or describing reform as a program “extension” or “upgrade.” Voters are largely unaware of the existence of MO HealthNet and are far more favorable to Medicaid.



***Split sampled question.
Darker colors indicate intensity.**

QUESTION: [Medicaid / MO Health Net] is a program designed to provide health care for low-income Americans. Some people have proposed [expanding / extending] the program in Missouri so that it also includes single parents and childless adults who earn up to 133% of the federal poverty level, or about \$25,000 for a family of three. Do you favor or oppose [expanding / upgrading] [Medicaid in Missouri / MO Health Net], or are you undecided?

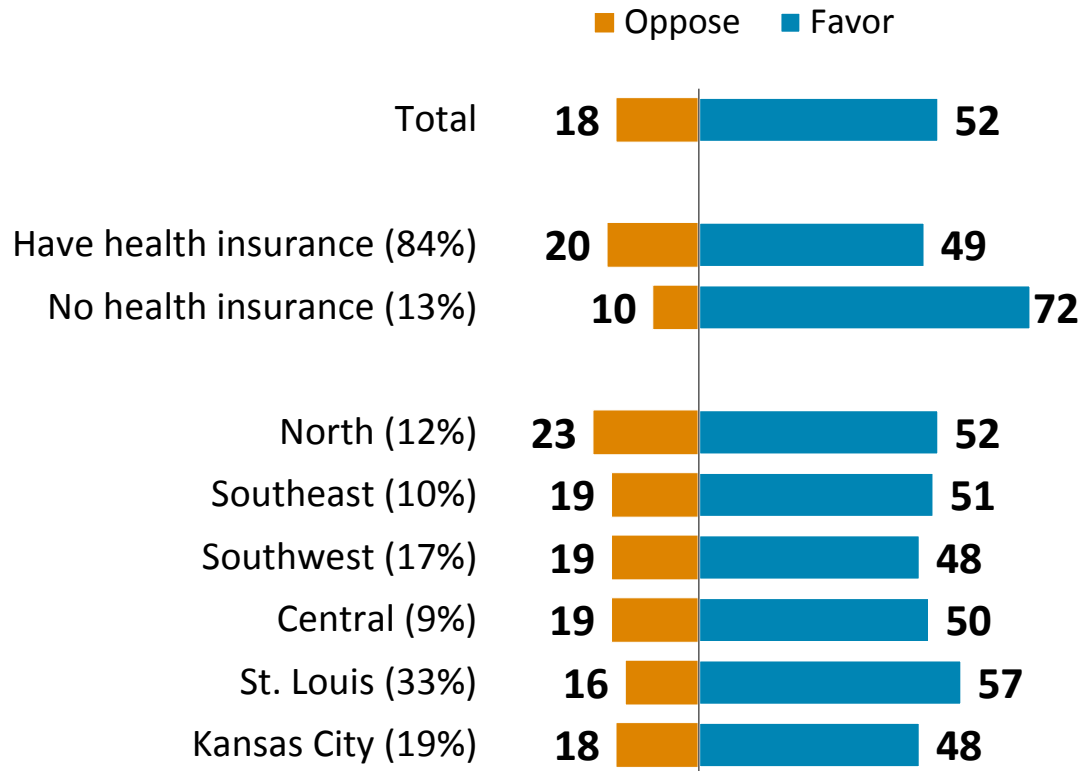
Contours of Support for Expansion (2012)



Expanding Medicaid coverage is popular across most subgroups.

The strongest cohorts of support are voters under 40, non-college educated, Democrats, Independents, and African Americans. Republicans are not united on this issue.

Contours of Support for Expansion (2012)



Not surprisingly, Missourians who lack health insurance disproportionately favor expansion, as do St. Louis residents.

Support is weaker in Kansas City and southwestern Missouri.

Democrats form the base for Medicaid expansion, especially younger Democrats, Democratic men, and strong Democrats.

Disproportionate Support for Expansion (2012)	% Strong Favor
Democratic men	64
Strong Democrats	63
Democrats under 50	62
Blacks	62
Democrats	58
Congressional District-1	55
Under 50 – no insurance coverage	52
Single	51
Congressional District-2	51
<i>Average Across All Groups</i>	<i>40</i>

Republicans, especially strong Republicans and younger Republicans, anchor the opposition to Medicaid expansion.

Disproportionate Opposition to Expansion (2012)	% Strong Oppose
Republicans under 50	28
Strong Republicans	27
Republicans	25
North, 50 and over	24
Congressional District-3	23
Mothers	21
College graduates and post-graduates	20
<i>Average Across All Groups</i>	<i>14</i>

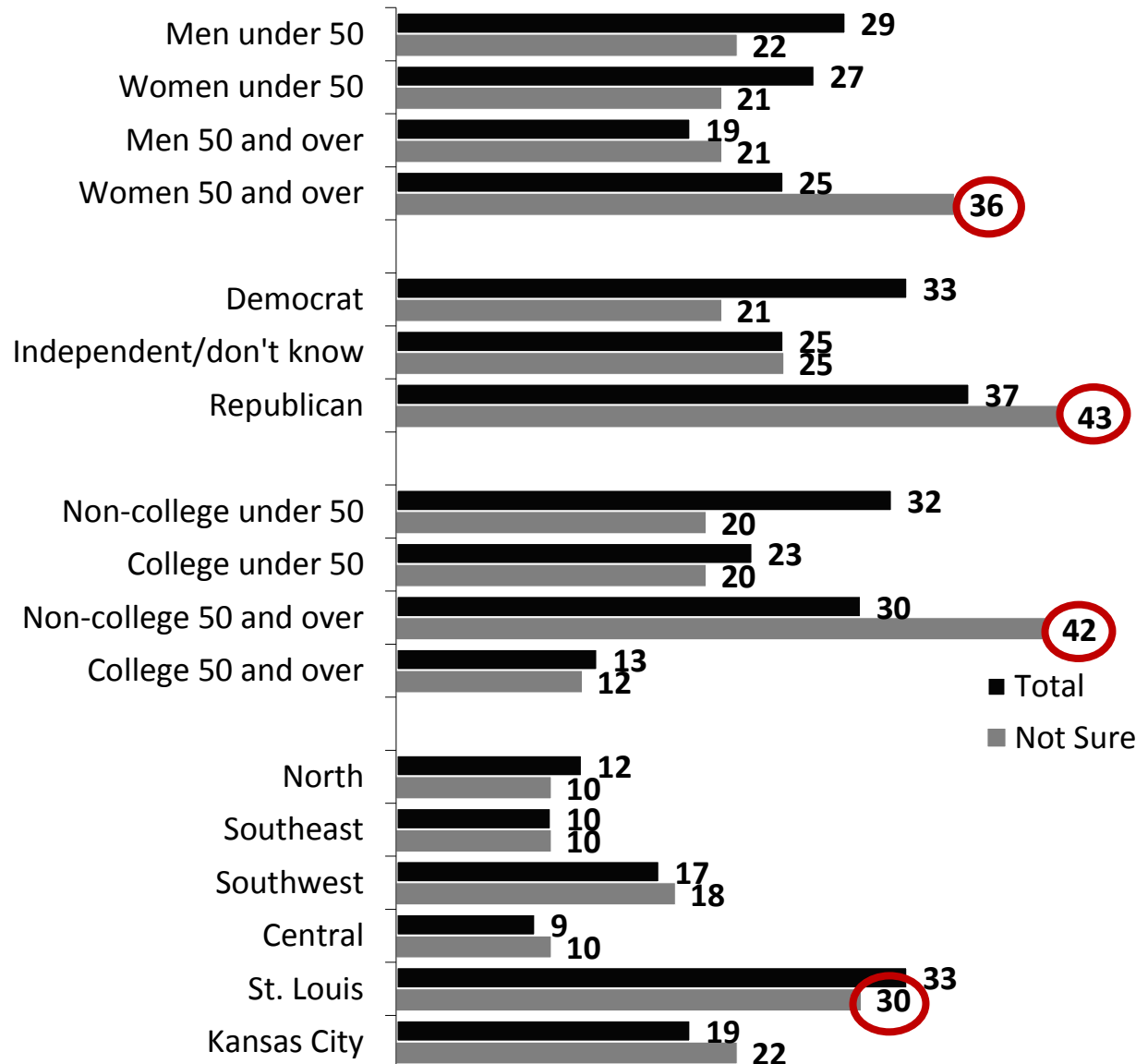
Older voters dominate the list of subgroups who are most undecided.

Despite favoring reform by 24 and 30 points, respectively, seniors and pre-retirement voters are also among the least supportive age cohorts.

Disproportionately Undecided on Expansion	% Not Sure
Kansas City 50 and over	46
Republicans 50 and over	46
65 and over	44
Southwest 50 and over	44
Women 50 and over	43
Republican women	43
Non-college 50 and over	42
Southeast women	42
<i>Average Across All Groups</i>	<i>30</i>

Profile of the Undecided (“Not Sure”) Voter

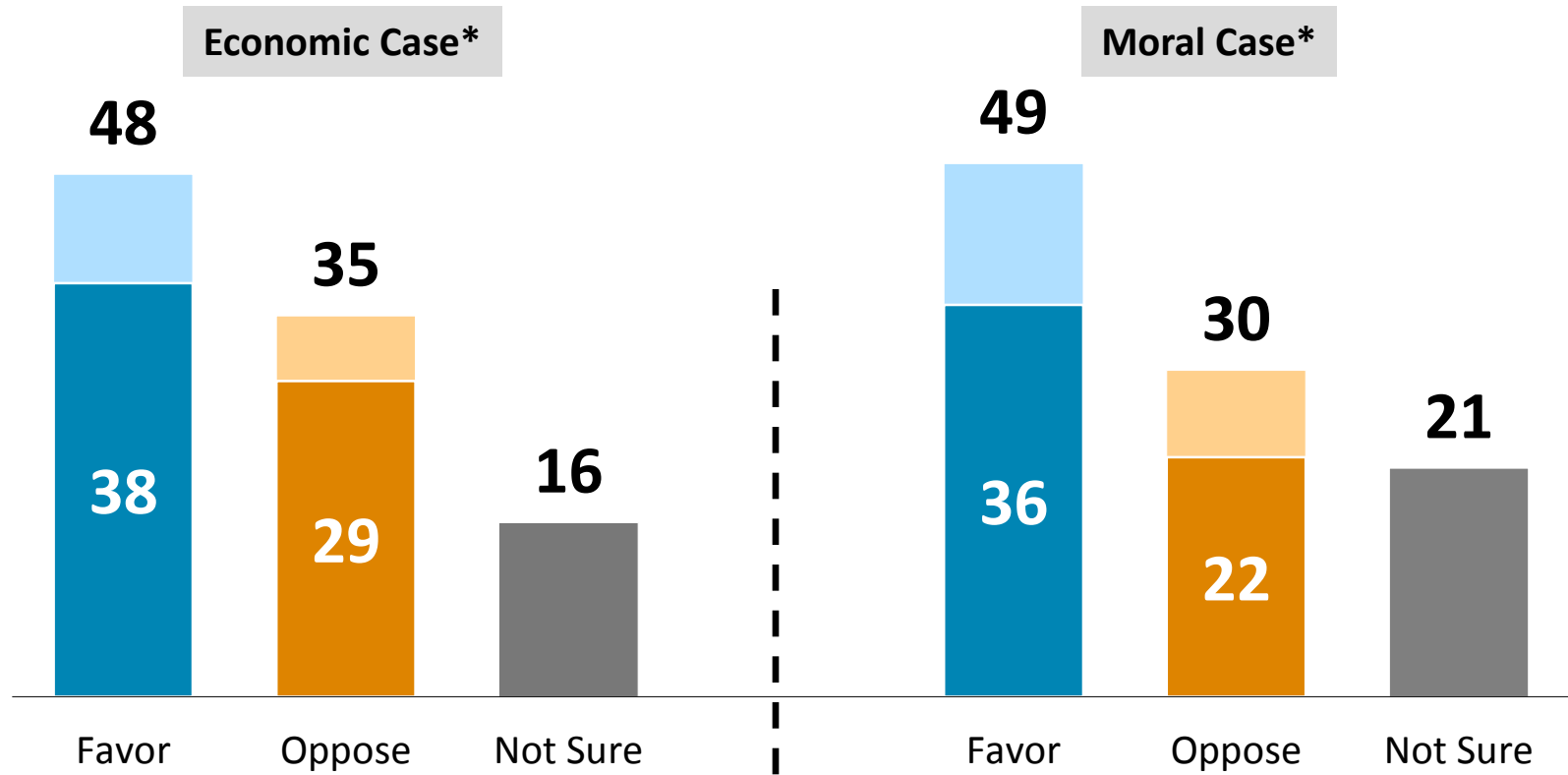
The profile of the voter who is not sure about expanding Medicaid/MO HealthNet is an older, non-college-educated woman from St. Louis or Kansas City.



The undecided (not sure) respondent says they are not sure whether they favor or oppose expanding Medicaid on the initial ballot.

The moral argument for Medicaid expansion outperforms an economic argument for expansion.

Medicaid Expansion: Engaged Debate Ballots



***Split sampled question.
Darker colors indicate intensity.**

QUESTION: Sometimes over the course of a survey like this, people change their minds. Do you FAVOR or OPPOSE Medicaid expansion in Missouri, or are you undecided?

Text of Engaged Debate Ballots

Economic Case*	Moral Case*
<p>[Some people / other people] say we need to expand Medicaid in Missouri. Independent studies in Arizona, Arkansas, and Oklahoma show the potential to save as much as \$1.2 billion over four years—money we desperately need to balance our budget and put Missouri back to work. There are now more than 877,000 uninsured in our state, which puts a huge burden on our economy and our health care system. Expanding Medicaid will cut that number in half, saving money for other vital priorities like education and public safety. In this tough economy, more Missourians than ever are out of jobs and many are single working parents making barely enough to survive, let alone support a family. We can't let the narrow political agenda of a few radical legislators get in the way of doing what's best for our state.</p>	<p>[Some people / other people] say we need to expand Medicaid in Missouri. In this tough economy, more Missourians than ever are out of jobs and many are single parents making barely enough to survive, let alone support a family. Under today's rules, a single mother of two is only eligible if she earns LESS than \$3,504 per year—just 18% of the poverty line. That's just wrong. There are now more than 877,000 uninsured in our state, overburdening our hospitals and weakening our communities. If Missouri can afford hundreds of millions on tax breaks for big corporations that are making record profits, then we've got the money to make a serious investment in making sure all Missourians have access to health care—especially the single working parents and low-income working families who need it most.</p>

Opposition Profile

Missourians have made it clear they oppose Washington, D.C.'s takeover of health care, and expanding Medicaid takes that wasteful, big government approach even further. The President and his allies say expanding Medicaid is a great deal for Missouri. But they don't talk about the \$2.7 billion that Missouri taxpayers and providers already spend on Medicaid every year. This expansion would put us on the path to socialized medicine, causing one in five Missourians to be dependent on government health care and making our budget situation even worse, forcing us to sacrifice police, firefighters, and our children's education. We need to put Missourians back to work so they can get health insurance of their own—not throw more money at bloated social programs and Washington bureaucrats.

*Asked of ½ the sample

Methodology

- Telephone numbers for the sample were generated from a file of registered voters. The sample was stratified geographically to reflect the expected turnout of voters in the 2012 General Election. The data were weighted slightly by party identification, gender, age, education, race, region, and congressional district.
- In interpreting survey results, all sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error — that is, the results of a survey may differ from those that would be obtained if the entire population were interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of responses to a particular question. For example, if a response to a given question which all respondents answered was 50%, we could be 95% confident that the true percentage would fall within plus or minus 2.6% of this percentage, or between 47.4% and 52.6%.

Questions?

For further information, please contact:

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