

## THE TARRANCE GROUP

To: American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network  
Fr: Lake Research Partners and the Tarrance Group  
Re: Election Eve/Night Survey<sup>i</sup>  
Date: November 27, 2018

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The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) commissioned Lake Research Partners and The Tarrance Group to include questions on voter attitudes around health care coverage for pre-existing conditions as part of an omnibus survey fielded from November 4-6, 2018. Key takeaways from that survey follow.

In the 2018 Congressional election, issues of personal importance drove voters to the polls. For the first time since the economic downturn of 2008, the economy was not the dominant issue concerning voters. Health care was the leading issue for voters, (27%), followed by immigration (25%). The economy and jobs (19%) and dysfunction in government (19%) round out the top tier of concerns, followed by education (15%), Social Security (11%), taxes (10%), the environment and climate change (9%), terrorism and national security (9%), and Medicare (9%).

- Health care (37%) dominated the issue agenda for self-identified Democrats, followed by dysfunction in government (22%) and education (21%).
- The top issues among self-identified Independents were health care (28%) and immigration (25%), followed by dysfunction in government (21%).
- Among self-identified Republicans, the top issue was immigration (38%), followed by the economy and jobs (29%). In a third tier, Republicans had terrorism and national security (16%), health care (15%), taxes (15%), and dysfunction in government (14%).
- Women were primarily motivated by health care (30%) and immigration (24%). The economy and jobs were in a second tier for women (15%), along with education (17%). Men had a more diffuse issue agenda with immigration (27%), the economy and jobs (24%), and health care (23%) leading their priority list, with dysfunction in government (20%) not far behind.

### **Experiences with Cancer and Pre-existing Conditions**

Over half of voters say that they have personal experience with cancer. One-in-ten (10%) have been diagnosed with cancer, and over two-in-five (44%) have a family member who has been diagnosed.

- As voters age, they are more likely to say they have been diagnosed with cancer: only 3% of voters under 50 have been diagnosed; 9% of voters ages 50 to 64; and 22% of voters ages 65 and older.

- African Americans ages 50 and over<sup>1</sup> (58%), Non-college educated women (50%), weak Republicans<sup>2</sup> (50%), voters who live in a union household with a current member (50%), Northeast voters (50%), Midwest women (50%), and rural white voters (50%) are slightly more likely than other subgroups to say a family member has been diagnosed.

Similarly, over half of voters say they or an immediate family member have a pre-existing condition. Over a quarter (28%) of voters have a pre-existing condition, and a third (33%) have a family member who has a pre-existing condition.

### Attitudes toward Health Care Policy

With health care as one of the most important issues voters considered in deciding for whom to vote, it is no surprise that voters expect a lot out of their health insurance. Over half (57%) of voters say it is **extremely important** that health insurance include coverage for pre-existing conditions. At least **two-thirds of every demographic and attitudinal subgroup** says it is important that health insurance include coverage for pre-existing conditions.

- Voters who are most likely to say it is extremely important for health insurance to include coverage for pre-existing conditions include: voters ages 65-69 (66%), Democrats (68%), African American women (71%) and African Americans ages 50 and older<sup>3</sup> (69%), college-educated women of color<sup>4</sup> (69%), and women in the Northeast (67%) and Midwest (69%).

Over half of voters say it is **extremely important** that they can get the kind of services they or their families need (59%) and that it is easy for them or their families to access care (55%). Nearly half (48%) say their out of pocket costs are extremely important.

- Women are more likely than men to say each of these components of health care are extremely important.
- Self-identified Democrats and self-identified Independents are more likely than self-identified Republicans to say these components are extremely important, although across party identification, at least three-quarters of voters say that every element is important.
- Similarly, voters who voted for the Democrat for Congress are more likely than those who voted for the Republican for Congress to say these components of health insurance are extremely important. About three-quarters of those who voted for the Republican candidate and those who voted for the Democratic candidate say every item is important.

When given a choice about what defines insurance covering pre-existing conditions, two-thirds (68%) of voters say it means that people have coverage for pre-existing conditions without paying more. Fewer than one-in-five (18%) say it means people pay more for coverage because of a pre-existing condition.

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<sup>1</sup> Note small sample size

<sup>2</sup> Weak Republican are defined as those who say they are not-so-strong Republicans or Independents who lean Republican

<sup>3</sup> Note small sample size

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

One-in-twenty (5%) say it means people have coverage that does not provide coverage for pre-existing health conditions.

While a solid majority of voters across party agree that it means people have coverage for pre-existing conditions without paying more, self-identified Democrats are more likely than self-identified Republicans to say it means that people have coverage for pre-existing conditions without paying more.

| What do you think it means if insurance covers pre-existing conditions?         | Democrats | Republicans | Independents |
|---|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| have coverage for pre-existing conditions without paying more                   | 75        | 58          | 71           |
| pay more for coverage because of a pre-existing condition                       | 13        | 25          | 16           |
| have coverage that does not provide coverage for pre-existing health conditions | 5         | 4           | 5            |

- Over half of Republican men (55%) and Republican women (62%) say that it means that people have coverage for pre-existing conditions without paying more.
- A solid majority of those who voted for the Republican for Congress (59%) and three-quarters of those who voted for the Democrat for Congress (75%) say coverage for pre-existing conditions means that people have coverage for pre-existing conditions without paying more.

### Concerns about Coverage

A plurality of voters who have not been personally diagnosed with cancer are very confident that if they found out they had cancer, their current health insurance policy would cover the medical care recommended by their doctor to treat their cancer (45% very confident, 77% confident overall).

Three-quarters (78%) of voters would be very concerned if care for pre-existing conditions was no longer covered, and nine-in-ten (90%) would be concerned. Concern crosses party lines, with 92% of self-identified Democrats, 79% of Independents, and 62% of Republicans who would feel very concerned. Both those who voted for a Republican candidate (60%) and those who voted for a Democratic candidate (92%) feel very concerned.

- Voters who are most likely to say they would be very concerned if care for pre-existing conditions was no longer covered include Democrats (92%), Independent women<sup>5</sup> (87%), African American women (92%) and African Americans who are 50 and over<sup>6</sup> (92%), women of color who are not college-educated (90%), and New England voters<sup>7</sup> (91%).

<sup>5</sup> Note small sample size

<sup>6</sup> Note small sample size

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

## Policy statements

Voters across every demographic and attitudinal subgroup strongly agree with statements that marry the concepts of comprehensive care that is also affordable and accessible.

Over four-in-five voters (82%) strongly agree with the statement “I want health insurance that is both more affordable and is required to provide comprehensive coverage.”

- Men and women strongly agree: 78% of men and 86% of women.
- Both non-college educated and college-educated voters strongly agree: 84% and 79%, respectively.
- Voters across party strongly agree: 93% of self-identified Democrats, 78% of Independents, and 72% of Republicans.
- Over nine-in-ten (91%) of those who voted for a Democrat and seven-in-ten (71%) of those who voted for a Republican strongly agree.
- White (80%), African American (94%), and Latino (87%) voters also strongly agree.

Four-in-five (80%) strongly agree that “Just having health insurance isn't enough. People need their plan to cover treatment when they have a medical need.”

- Both men (79%) and women (82%) strongly agree.
- Non-college (81%) and college-educated (79%) voters strongly agree.
- Voters across party strongly agree: 90% of self-identified Democrats, 76% of Independents, and 72% of Republicans.
- Whether they voted for a Democrat (89%) or a Republican (70%), voters strongly agree.
- African American voters strongly agree with particular intensity (90%), and 79% of both white and Latino voters strongly agree.

Voters strongly disagree (73%) that “health insurance companies should be able to charge higher prices to sicker customers.”

- Two-thirds (67%) of men, and 79% of women strongly disagree.
- Three-quarters (76%) of non-college educated voters, and over two-thirds (69%) of college-educated voters strongly disagree.
- 85% of self-identified Democrats, 74% of Independents, and 60% of Republicans strongly disagree.

- Similarly, 85% of those who voted for a Democrat and 60% of those who voted for a Republican strongly disagree.
- Voters across race also strongly disagree: 72% of white voters, 83% of African Americans, and 77% of Latinos.

Voters agree but with less intensity (68% agree, 52% strongly agree) with a statement that says that “things are better than they used to be, but I'm worried some proposed changes may make coverage for pre-existing conditions out of reach.”

- About half of men (49%) and a majority of women (55%) strongly agree.
- Just over half of non-college (52%) and college-educated voters (51%) strongly agree.
- While two-thirds (69%) of self-identified Democrats strongly agree, about half (49%) of Independents strongly agree. Republican voters agree overall, but only a third (33%) strongly agree.
- About half (49%) agree and a third of those who voted for a Republican strongly agree (33%), as do over two-thirds of those who voted for a Democrat (69%).
- Half of white (50%) and Latino voters (52%) strongly agree, as do two-thirds (64%) of African American voters.

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<sup>i</sup> Lake Research Partners and the Tarrance Group designed and administered this survey which was conducted using professional interviewers from November 4-6, 2018. The questions about voting and the demographics reached a total of 2,400 registered voters nationwide who voted in the 2018 elections – 1,358 interviews among voters who were reached on landlines and 1,042 interviews among voters who were reached on cell phones. Issue questions reached a total of 1,200 registered voters nationwide who voted in the 2018 elections (margin of error of +/-2.8%).

Telephone numbers were drawn from the Catalist voter file. The sample was stratified geographically based on the proportion of likely voters in each region. The data were weighted to reflect the aggregated Congressional vote as reported in the 2018 exit polls, as well as by gender, age, race, party identification, education, marital status, union household, and census region to reflect the actual proportions of the electorate. The margin of error for the likely voter sample is +/-2.0%.