

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** INTERESTED PARTIES  
**FROM:** ELIZABETH HARRINGTON, PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES  
JEFF HORWITT, HART RESEARCH  
**CC:** AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY CANCER ACTION NETWORK  
**DATE:** AUGUST 27, 2024  
**SUBJECT:** KEY FINDINGS – MONTANA STATEWIDE SURVEY

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### KEY FINDINGS

1. **A majority of Montana voters (55%) say their state has gotten off on the wrong track.** This is a bit more negative than voters nationally (49% wrong track) when asked about their state.
2. **The most important issue to voters in Montana is consistent with what is most important to voters nationally – inflation and the cost of living (34% first choice / 53% combined 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> choices).** Across demographic audiences in Montana, voters most consistently rank as top issues – the cost of living, immigration/border security, and protecting democracy.

Access to affordable, comprehensive health coverage is a top 3 issue for voters of color (12% first choice / 22% combined 1st/2nd choices) and Medicaid beneficiaries (15% first choice / 24% combined 1st/2nd choices).

3. **Roughly 8 in 10 voters (79%) in Montana say a candidate's position on access to affordable, comprehensive health coverage is important to them when deciding who to vote for, including 43% who say a candidate's position is very important to them.** Majorities of Republicans (70%), Independents (73%) and Democrats (97%) say a candidate's position on access to affordable comprehensive health care is an important factor in their vote decision.
4. **A majority of Montana voters (57%) do not believe the health care system is meeting the needs of most Montana residents.** Conversely though, a majority of voters (67%) say the health care system is meeting the needs of their family.
5. **Addressing health care costs and coverage, particularly out-of-pocket costs is the most important health care issue in Montana, followed by providing health cover to all residents: 1) Out-of-pocket health insurance costs, such as copays & deductibles (25% first choice / 50% combined 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> choices), 2) Providing health coverage to all Montana residents (23% first choice / 34% combined 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> choices), and 3) The cost of monthly health insurance premiums (22% first choice / 43% combined 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> choices).** Lowering out-of-pocket costs is the top health care issue for voters of color (30% first choice), voters ages 18-44 (29% first choice) and voters ages 45-64 (29% first choice).

6. **Majorities of voters across party say these should be high or very high priorities to improve the health care system at the state level:**
  - a. Making sure all health insurance plans cover medical tests, screenings, preventive care and treatments recommended by a patient's doctor (74% very high/high priority all voters, 62% Republicans, 73% Independents, 93% Democrats).
  - b. Lowering the cost of what residents pay monthly and out-of-pocket for health insurance premiums, copays, and deductibles (69% very high/high priority all voters, 59% Republicans, 69% Independents, 86% Democrats).
  - c. Ensuring all residents have access to affordable, comprehensive health insurance coverage (67% very high/high priority all voters, 52% Republicans, 65% Independents, 93% Democrats).
7. **Medical debt is prevalent in Montana. Majorities (61%) of voters report they or an immediate family member currently have or have had medical debt.** Virtually all voters (99%) believe medical debt is experienced by at least a few people in Montana, including 71% who say it is experienced by many.
8. **More than 7 in 10 Montana voters (73%) believe access to medical care is a problem where they live. This includes 30% saying it is a “major problem” where they live.**
9. **Access to affordable health coverage in the communities where they live is an even bigger problem for voters in Montana (88% total problem/42% major problem).**
10. **Overall, there is overwhelming support for each of the health care policy proposals we tested. Majorities of voters across parties in Montana support each of the health care policy proposals we tested.**

<i>Ranked by %Total Support – All Voters</i>	<b>All Voters</b>	<b>GOP</b>	<b>Ind</b>	<b>Dem</b>
Increasing and expanding patient access to services and programs that address medical debt	<b>86%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>98%</b>
Ensuring patients who qualify receive the full benefits from financial assistance or drug discount programs	<b>85%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>97%</b>
Increasing federal funding for cancer research for the discovery of new treatments, therapies, and cures	<b>82%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>97%</b>
Increasing federal funding to make cancer screenings and diagnostic tests free for patients	<b>79%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>98%</b>
Making permanent the enhanced premium tax credits the federal government provides to help working adults who qualify purchase an Affordable Care Act Marketplace health insurance plan	<b>75%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>99%</b>

**11. Majorities of Montana voters say they would be more likely (51%) to vote for a political candidate who supports this proposal to make permanent the ACA enhanced premium tax credits. Only 19% say they would be less likely to vote for a candidate who supports this proposal and 30% say it would not impact their vote one way or the other.**

- Majorities of Democrats (84%), women (58%), caregivers (58%), voters ages 65+ (57%), and those with a college and above education (56%) say they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supports a proposal to make permanent the ACA enhanced premium tax credits.
- Independent voters are a double-digit net positive on this measure (47% more likely, 19% less likely, 33% no impact) while Republicans are more divided on how a candidate's support for the proposal would impact their vote (31% more likely, 29% less likely, 39% no impact).

## **METHODOLOGY**

*On behalf of American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Public Opinion Strategies and Hart Research conducted a Montana statewide mixed mode survey (phone and text-to-web) of N=600 registered voters. This survey was conducted as a statewide survey in Montana with regional and demographic statewide quotas based on the Census and voter file population statistics. This survey includes N=3 interviews that were conducted July 11-16, 2024 in the state as part of ACS CAN's national telephone survey of registered voters, with the remaining N=597 interviews conducted July 17-21, 2024 via a mix of phone interviewing and text-to-web interviewing. The statewide survey results have a margin of error of +/- 4.0 percentage points.*