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**HALF OF ILLINOISANS WANT TO KEEP OBAMACARE
Almost 40% Blame the Government for Poverty**

Since the landmark Affordable Care Act (ACA), known as Obamacare, was enacted in 2010, many Congressional Republican members have vowed to repeal and replace the program. Under President Trump's administration, Congress is now debating the American Health Care Act (AHCA), the House Republicans' bill to "repeal and replace" the existing system.

According to a new poll by the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Illinois voters are divided on whether or not to repeal and replace the existing health care system. The poll, conducted Saturday, March 4 through Saturday, March 11, 2017, asked whether respondents agreed to repeal and or replace the current health care system. The sample included 1,000 registered voters in Illinois with a margin for error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points. Sixty percent of the interviews were conducted on cell phones.

Overall, when asked the question "*Do you think Congress should vote to repeal the 2010 health care law, or should they not vote to repeal it?*," responses were varied. Just over one-third of those asked supported repeal (35 percent), half were in favor of retaining the current ACA (50 percent), and 15 percent had no opinion. Within the 35 percent (N = 353) who supported a repeal, 29 percent wanted Congress to vote to repeal the legislation immediately, 68 percent supported repeal once an alternative was in place, and 3 percent either didn't know or refused to answer.

Voters in Chicago were the most supportive (60 percent) of the ACA, with those in suburban Chicago and the Collar Counties the second most supportive (52 percent); and the lowest levels of support (39 percent) were in the Downstate areas of Illinois. Chicago residents were only 25 percent in support of repealing the law, while 34 percent of suburban residents and 44 percent of Downstate residents responded yes to repealing. The disparity was even more marked among those identifying with a specific political party. Only 13 percent of Democrats supported repealing the ACA; 31 percent of Independents and 66 percent of Republicans supported repeal.

"The ultimate future of Obamacare, while unpopular with many people, has dramatic implications for the state of Illinois," said Linda Baker, university professor at the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute. "As a state that added more than 650,000 people to its Medicaid program through the ACA, if the Act is repealed and the state is expected to assume costs currently being

borne by the federal government for those recipients, there will be enormous consequences for the state and for those who may lose coverage.”

The current health care reform debate is occurring at a time when Illinois legislators have the Herculean task of solving an increasing structural deficit in the midst of almost a two-year budget stalemate. With Republican Governor Bruce Rauner and Democrat leadership in the General Assembly at odds with how to deal with that deficit and ultimately enact a budget, respondents to the Paul Simon Institute survey were also asked how the budget stalemate was impacting their lives.

Respondents were also asked, “Have you or someone in your immediate family been affected by the Illinois budget stalemate?” 33 percent said it had affected them, with 62 percent responding that it had not. Of those affected by the budget crisis, the largest groups of respondents argued that it had resulted in K-12 funding cuts, job loss and cuts to needed social services. Finally, the respondents were asked if families living in poverty are more or less affected by the impasse. Over half (56 percent) said families in poverty had been more impacted, with 22 percent saying that families in poverty had been impacted less and another 22 percent saying they did not know.

Realizing there is a divide in the nation’s ideology on poverty, manifested in the debate on affordable and accessible health care coverage, the Paul Simon Institute also asked the same 1,000 Illinois voters about their opinions on causes of poverty. When asked “*Thinking about the causes of poverty in your area, please tell me one major reason that people are poor,*” a plurality (41.4 percent) of respondents blamed the government. About one-fourth (23.3 percent) blamed social or cultural factors, and 16 percent viewed a lack of employment as the cause. The remaining respondents placed blame on medical factors (10.4 percent), educational factors (2.5 percent), and other factors (6.3 percent).

Asking for a secondary cause of poverty, respondents cited, in descending order, employment, social/cultural, education, government, medical and other. About 27 percent of respondents indicated employment as the secondary cause of poverty; 15.1 percent social/cultural factors as the secondary factor; 13.2 percent as education or relative lack of it; 12.5 percent government; 7.1 percent medical issues; and 24.9 percent with some other secondary cause.

In both the initial and secondary questions, there were subcategories associated with the key causes. Under the cause of employment, job shortages and wage levels were the primary causes listed. There was no singularly significant factor mentioned in the social/cultural category, while in the education category, the poor quality of public schools was cited as the most significant factor.

The survey next asked respondents what types of government interventions would best alleviate poverty. Respondents offered a variety of answers, in the topical areas of employment, education, social services, and social/cultural. As with prior questions, each response had several subcategories. With respect to the area of employment, the most significant responses were in support of government intervention to create jobs/prevent outsourcing and to increase funding for jobs programs, at 8.8 percent and 8 percent, respectively. Under the heading of education,

the two most significant responses were at 13.9 percent for increased funding for job training programs and 12.8 percent in favor of improving the quality of education.

The survey next asked if respondents would be willing to pay more in taxes for poverty alleviation measures. Slightly over 59 percent said they would be in support, with 35 percent opposed with 6% undecided.

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The margin of error for the entire sample of 1,000 voters is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points. This means that if we conducted the survey 100 times, in 95 of those instances, the population proportion would be within plus or minus the reported margin of error for each subsample. For subsamples, the margin of error increases as the sample size goes down. The margin of error was not adjusted for design effects.

Live telephone interviews were conducted by Customer Research International of San Marcos, Texas using the random digit dialing method. The telephone sample was provided to Customer Research International by Scientific Telephone Samples. Potential interviewees were screened based on whether they were registered voters and quotas based on area code and sex (<60 percent female). The sample obtained 51 percent male and 49 percent female respondents. Interviewers asked to speak to the youngest registered voter at home at the time of the call. Cell phone interviews accounted for 60 percent of the sample. A Spanish language version of the questionnaire and a Spanish-speaking interviewer were made available.

Field work was conducted from March 4 through March 11. No auto-dial or “robo” polling is included. Customer Research International reports no Illinois political clients. The survey was paid for with non-tax dollars from the Institute’s endowment fund. The data were not weighted in any way. Crosstabs for the referenced questions will be on the Institute’s polling web site, simonpoll.org.

The Paul Simon Public Policy Institute is a member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research’s (AAPOR) Transparency Initiative. AAPOR works to encourage objective survey standards for practice and disclosure. Membership in the Transparency Initiative reflects a pledge to practice transparency in reporting survey-based findings.

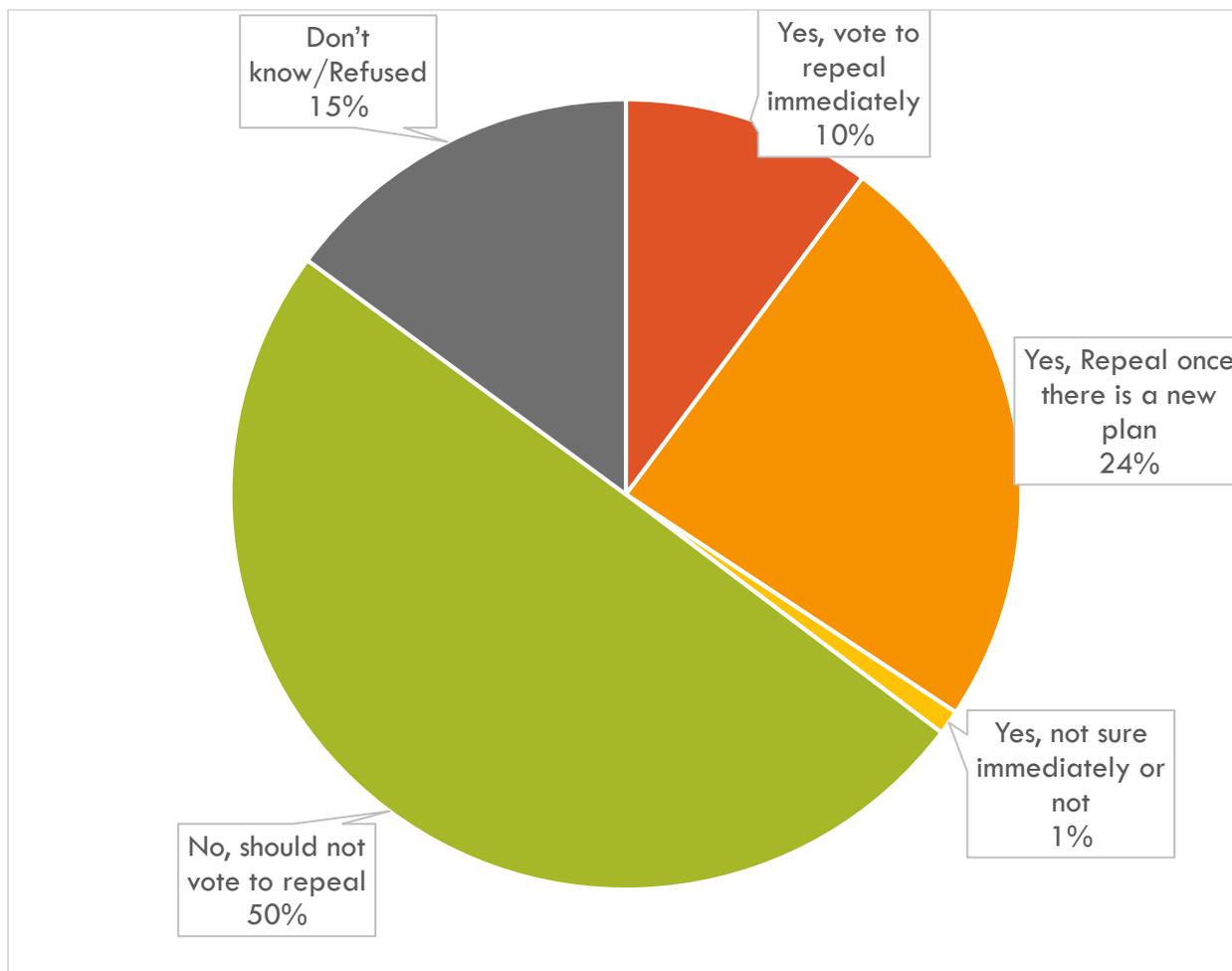
The Institute’s polling data are also archived by four academic institutions for use by scholars and the public. The four open source data repositories are: The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research (<http://ropercenter.cornell.edu/polls/>), The University of Michigan’s Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (<http://openicpsr.org>), the University of North Carolina’s Odum Institute Dataverse Network (<http://arc.irss.unc.edu/dvn/dv/PSPPI>), and the Simon Institute Collection at OpenSIUC (<http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/ppi/>).

Note: The “Simon Poll” and the “Southern Illinois Poll” are the copyrighted trademarks of the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University. Use and publication of these polls is encouraged- but only with credit to the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at SIU Carbondale.

Frequency Tables¹
AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Do you think Congress should vote to repeal the 2010 health care law, or should they not vote to repeal it?

Response	Percent (n=1000)
Yes, should vote to repeal	35.3%
<i>Vote to repeal immediately</i>	10.2%
<i>Repeal once there is a new plan</i>	24.1%
<i>Don't know/Refused</i>	1.0%
No, should not vote to repeal	49.8%
Don't know/Refused	14.9%



¹ Values are rounded and may not sum to 100 percent.

POVERTY

Major Cause

Thinking about the causes of poverty in your area, please tell me one major reason that people are poor?

Response	Percent (n=1000)
Government	41.4%
<i>The welfare system</i>	34.9%
<i>Taxes</i>	2.9%
<i>General (e.g. Democrats, regulations, not enough support)</i>	2.3%
<i>Cost of living (housing, general)</i>	1.3%
Social/Culture	23.3%
<i>Too many immigrants</i>	15.0%
<i>Poor people lacking motivation/waste money</i>	3.1%
<i>Structural, cycle of poverty</i>	2.5%
<i>Decline of moral values</i>	1.6%
<i>Too many single-parent families</i>	0.6%
<i>Poverty doesn't exist</i>	0.5%
Employment	16.1%
<i>Too many low paying jobs, low wages</i>	12.3%
<i>Shortage of jobs</i>	2.5%
<i>Too many part-time jobs</i>	1.3%
Medical	10.4%
<i>Drug abuse</i>	5.8%
<i>Mental health</i>	3.2%
<i>Medical bills</i>	1.4%
Education	2.5%
<i>Poor quality of public schools</i>	0.8%
<i>Lack of job training/knowledge</i>	1.7%
Other/DK/NA	6.3%

Second Major Cause

Can you think of another major reason that people are poor in your area?

Response	Percent (n=1000)
Employment	27.2%
<i>Shortage of jobs</i>	12.9%
<i>Too many low paying jobs, low wages</i>	10.1%
<i>Too many part-time jobs</i>	4.2%
Social/Culture	15.1%
<i>Too many immigrants</i>	0.8%
<i>Poor people lacking motivation/waste money</i>	4.7%
<i>Structural, cycle of poverty</i>	4.5%
<i>Decline of moral values</i>	3.4%
<i>Too many single-parent families</i>	1.5%
<i>Poverty doesn't exist</i>	0.2%
Education	13.2%
<i>Poor quality of public schools</i>	11.2%
<i>Lack of job training/knowledge</i>	2.0%
Government	12.5%
<i>The welfare system</i>	3.4%
<i>Taxes</i>	2.3%
<i>General (e.g. Democrats, regulations, not enough support)</i>	1.7%
<i>Cost of living (housing, general)</i>	5.1%
Medical	7.1%
<i>Drug abuse</i>	3.5%
<i>Mental health</i>	1.4%
<i>Medical bills</i>	2.2%
Other/DK/NA	24.9%

Government Intervention

What is the most important thing that the government could do to alleviate the major cause of poverty in your area?

Response	Percent (n=1000)
Employment	28.7%
<i>Create jobs, stop outsourcing</i>	8.8%
<i>Expand public employment programs</i>	8.0%
<i>Increase minimum wage</i>	5.8%
<i>Grow business/promote small business</i>	4.9%
<i>Increase tax credits for low income workers</i>	1.2%
Education	27.4%
<i>Expand job training programs</i>	13.8%
<i>Improve public education (including higher education affordability)</i>	12.9%
<i>Expand subsidized day care</i>	0.7%
Government	12.8%
<i>Do nothing or less</i>	3.8%
<i>Get rid of politicians/reduce salaries (general frustration)</i>	2.3%
<i>Work together (including fix Illinois budget)</i>	2.2%
<i>Lower taxes</i>	2.2%
<i>Increase taxes on rich</i>	1.5%
<i>Improve infrastructure</i>	0.5%
<i>More regulation on businesses</i>	0.3%
Social Services	7.1%
<i>Expand social services/welfare generally</i>	2.8%
<i>Spend more on housing for poor (including rent control, etc.)</i>	1.6%
<i>Guarantee everyone a minimum income</i>	0.9%
<i>Increase cash assistance for families</i>	0.7%
<i>Put more police in low-income areas</i>	0.7%
<i>Make food stamps more available</i>	0.4%
Social/Culture	4.7%
<i>Require public schools to teach about moral values/work ethic</i>	2.5%
<i>Social change for the poor (blaming the poor)</i>	1.6%

<i>Reduce discrimination (race, gender)</i>	0.6%
Medical	3.2%
<i>Spend more on medical care for the poor</i>	2.6%
<i>Legalize marijuana</i>	0.6%
Other/Don't know	16.1%

Pay More Taxes

Would you be willing to pay more in taxes for solutions like that to help the poor?

Response	Percent (n=1000)
Yes	59.3%
No	34.7%
Other/Don't know	6.0%

BUDGET IMPASSE

Affected

Have you or someone in your immediate family been affected by the Illinois budget stalemate?

Response	Percent (n=1000)
Yes	33.3%
No	61.9%
Other/Don't know	4.8%

How Affected

How has your family been impacted by the lack of a state budget?

Response	Percent (n=333)
K-12 education	14.4%
Job lost/threatened	12.0%
Social services (generally)	9.6%
Unpaid contracts, benefits, wage issues, other charges	9.3%
Higher education (including MAP grants)	7.5%
City government cuts	6.6%
Housing (affordability/quality, market generally)	3.9%
Local economy	3.6%
Child care costs/services	3.3%
Mental health care	3.3%
Pensions	3.0%
Transportation and Infrastructure construction/maintenance	2.7%
Health care costs	2.1%
Drug treatment costs/services	1.8%
Illinois' reputation	1.5%
State facility closure	1.2%
State parks	0.9%
Utility assistance program cuts	0.6%
Other/don't know	12.6%

Families in Poverty Affected

Thinking about families in poverty in your area, are these families more affected by the Illinois budget stalemate or less affected?

Response	Percent (n=1000)
More	55.8%
Less	22.0%
Other/Don't know	22.0%

Demographic Crosstabs and Historical Trends

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

By AREA

	Chicago City	Chicago Suburbs	Downstate
Yes, should vote to repeal	25%	34%	44%
<i>Vote to repeal immediately</i>	6%	9%	15%
<i>Repeal once there is a new plan</i>	19%	24%	27%
No, should not vote to repeal	60%	52%	39%
Don't know/Refused	16%	3%	17%

By PARTY

	Democrat	Independent	Republican
Yes, should vote to repeal	13%	31%	66%
<i>Vote to repeal immediately</i>	4%	9%	19%
<i>Repeal once there is a new plan</i>	8%	21%	46%
No, should not vote to repeal	74%	50%	21%
Don't know/Refused	13%	20%	13%