



Poll: 45 Percent of Voters Believe US Has Free Market Healthcare

Scott Rasmussen

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Forty-five percent (45%) of voters nationwide believe the United States has a free market healthcare system. A Scott Rasmussen national survey found that 34% disagree and believe we have a government-run system.[1]

Most voters with a college degree believe we have a free market system. However, those without a degree are more evenly divided. Most voters over 55 believe we have a free market system, while younger voters are evenly divided.[1]

While a plurality believes we have a free market system, a Cato Institute analysis of data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services concluded that government sources control 83% of all healthcare spending.[2] Specifically, the study found that:

- 46% of all healthcare spending comes directly from government sources. That's far more than any other source of funding for the industry.[2]
- Another 37% of funding comes from spending supported through tax preferences. Broadly speaking, this includes all employer-provided health insurance. The only way to get the tax break is to provide the insurance mandated by the government. Cato calls this "spending subject to government coercion." [2]

Data released earlier shows 48% rate the U.S. healthcare system as good or excellent.[3]

However, results from other questions suggest a fair amount of confusion on this topic. On the negative side, 67% of all voters say the system is badly broken. More positively, 71% are happy with the medical care they receive.[3]

As for the politics of healthcare, the fact that most are happy with the care they receive is a major obstacle to reform. For these voters, a solid majority, there is little upside to reform and plenty of

downside. No matter how bad some people feel the healthcare system is today, there is a concern that Congress could make it worse.[2]

A previous Number of the Day showed that 22% believe that having affordable health insurance guarantees access to quality healthcare.[1]