

**THURSDAY, April 10, 2014**

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**NEW JERSEYANS SPLIT ON OBAMACARE:  
BUT 24 PERCENT OF OPPONENTS THINK 'LAW DOES NOT GO FAR ENOUGH'**

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. – More New Jerseyans now support the Affordable Care Act (ACA), also known as Obamacare, than are opposed, according to the latest Rutgers-Eagleton Poll. With the first open enrollment period now ended, 26 percent strongly support the ACA, while another 29 percent somewhat support it. Detractors are more intense in their opposition: 28 percent strongly oppose the law while 12 percent are somewhat opposed.

Opposition is not monolithic; 24 percent of opponents believe the law “does not go far enough” in ensuring health care access for all while 71 percent oppose the ACA because they think it “goes too far” in involving government in health care decisions.

“Polls examining support for Obamacare tend not to ask why opponents feel that way,” said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science at Rutgers University. “When we do, we find that a substantial share of opponents want more, not less, from a government health care program. Only about 30 percent of all New Jersey residents actually object to the law because it goes too far, suggesting a strong base for the goals of Obamacare, even if for some the current law fails to reach those goals.”

Most New Jerseyans, including half of strong Obamacare opponents, think the March 31 open enrollment deadline should have been extended to allow for more enrollments: 74 percent would have liked more time, while 22 percent say an extension was not needed.

Perhaps reflecting a combination of political opposition and a lack of awareness of its details, most respondents said they have personally seen little to no effect from the new health care law.

At the same time, the number who reported having no health insurance has declined from 14 percent to 6 percent since a January Rutgers-Eagleton Poll. Still, only 3 percent of respondents said they have bought their health insurance from the online Health Care Exchange.

Results are from a statewide poll of 816 New Jersey adults with a margin of error of +/- 3.9 percentage points, contacted by live callers on landlines and cell phones from March 31 to April 6.

## **Partisanship, race divide support for Affordable Care Act**

Mirroring the longstanding, bitter partisan battle in Congress over the ACA, the law generates polar opposite views from Democrats and Republicans. Eighty-four percent of Democrats back Obamacare at some level, with half saying they strongly support it. Fourteen percent of Democrats oppose the law, split between somewhat and strongly opposed. Republicans, on the other hand, are almost wholly in the opposite camp. Reflecting GOP opposition to Obamacare in Congress, 79 percent of Republicans are against the law, with 63 percent strongly opposed.

About half of independents support Obamacare, but that support is lukewarm; only 16 percent are strong supporters, while 33 percent are somewhat supportive. Opponents are more intense in their distaste: 30 percent strongly oppose the law and 14 percent somewhat oppose it.

Support for Obamacare also shows a significant racial divide. Half of whites they oppose the act, with 35 percent strongly opposed. Only 19 percent strongly support the law, while 27 percent somewhat support it. In contrast, nearly all black New Jerseyans offer some support: 57 percent are strong supporters and 35 percent are somewhat supportive.

Education also makes a difference in ACA support. Respondents with graduate level work are 16 to 18 points more likely to support the law than those with a high school education or some college. They are also nine points more likely than those with a college degree to support the ACA.

Senior citizens oppose the law, 50 percent to 44 percent who support it. While those 18-34 years old are more supportive of President Obama in general, they are less passionate proponents of the law: just 19 percent give it strong support, compared to 28 percent of seniors. But 40 percent of these millennials somewhat support Obamacare, bringing their overall level of support to 59 percent.

Attitudes towards President Obama also play a large role in ACA acceptance. Eighty-three percent of the president's supporters favor the law, but the opposite is true is among Obama's detractors, 65 percent of whom strongly oppose Obamacare. Those favorable toward Obama are more evenly split between somewhat and strongly supporting the law.

But whether for or against the ACA, most say the enrollment deadline should have been extended past March 31: 84 percent of Democrats, 73 percent of independents, and 57 percent of Republicans feel an extension was called for. Even more than half of the law's strongest opponents agree that individuals should have been given more time to apply.

## **Obamacare detractors split on why they are opposed**

While the media focuses on Obamacare opponents who see the law as an example of government overreach, in New Jersey 24 percent of opponents actually want more from a health care program, including 21 percent of independents and 14 percent of Republicans.

While there is no gender gap in general support of the ACA, women opponents are more likely

than men (28 percent to 21 percent) to think the law does not do enough to ensure healthcare access for all, while men (77 percent to 66 percent) are more likely to say the law goes too far. Also, better educated respondents are more likely to support Obamacare in general, but less educated opponents think the law does not do enough.

“The widespread belief that the public does not want health care reform fails to account for the many opponents who are actually unhappy because Obamacare doesn’t go far enough,” noted Redlawsk. “I suspect many supporters would also like to see more, but are willing to take what is available as a first step. Together, these two groups – opponents who want more and supporters of the current law – make up a broad-based majority of New Jersey residents.”

**New Jerseyans see little effect so far**

Supporters and opponents alike say they have so far personally experienced few, if any, effects from the new health care law. Only 9 percent of New Jerseyans say the Affordable Care Act has mostly helped them so far and 17 percent say the law has hurt them. Most, 71 percent, say the law has not made much of a difference in their lives.

This finding cuts across partisan lines, Redlawsk said; 76 percent of Democrats and 71 percent of independents say they have experienced little difference. Sixty percent of Republicans say the same, but a sizeable portion, 31 percent, also says the law has hurt them thus far.

While virtually no white residents say Obamacare has thus far made a positive difference in their lives, black residents are five times more likely to report positive effects. Even so, only a quarter of blacks have been positively affected, while the majority of both blacks and whites say they have seen little change. While the consensus is that the ACA has had little effect, lower income and urban residents are more likely to say the law has helped. While all age groups mostly say the ACA has made no difference, senior citizens are most likely to feel this way, at 80 percent.

The president’s backers, unsurprisingly, are more likely to say the ACA has helped (15 percent), while his detractors are more likely to say it has been a detriment (38 percent). “Obamacare remains a polarizing law, even as most people say they’ve seen few effects from it so far,” said Redlawsk. “Opposition is not tied to personal experience. Rather, it is clearly an ideological litmus test for many. Even though the law carries both benefits and costs, most New Jerseyans so far seem to think Obamacare has relatively little to do with them personally, even as they stake out a position on either side.”

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**QUESTIONS AND TABLES BEGIN ON THE FOLLOW PAGE**

**Questions and Tables**

The questions in the release of April 10, 2014 are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Respondents are New Jersey Adults unless otherwise indicated; percentages are of weighted results.

**Q. First, I'd like to ask about some people and groups. Please tell me if your general impression of each one is favorable or unfavorable, or if you do not have an opinion. If you do not know the name, just say so.**

**PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA**

	<b>ALL ADULTS</b>	<b>REGISTERED VOTERS</b>
Favorable	58%	55%
Unfavorable	34%	37%
No opn/don't know person	8%	7%
Unwgt N=	805	722

**ALL ADULTS**

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Race		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	White	Black	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Favorable	87%	48%	20%	85%	55%	21%	59%	57%	44%	91%	66%	60%	53%	48%
Unfavorable	8%	39%	74%	10%	35%	70%	34%	34%	48%	2%	21%	31%	42%	47%
DK/No Opn	5%	13%	6%	5%	10%	9%	7%	10%	8%	7%	13%	9%	5%	5%
Unwt N=	273	349	161	201	419	159	419	386	571	92	134	166	272	233

	Income				Education				Region				
	<50K	50K-100K	100K-150K	150K+	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore
Favorable	61%	63%	56%	59%	57%	57%	53%	64%	72%	63%	39%	66%	41%
Unfavorable	29%	30%	37%	31%	31%	37%	39%	29%	19%	26%	54%	30%	52%
DK/No Opn	10%	7%	7%	10%	12%	6%	9%	7%	9%	11%	7%	4%	8%
Unwt N=	146	222	134	131	198	195	203	208	114	277	130	134	150

	Affordable Care Act Support			
	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
Favorable	95%	79%	32%	13%
Unfavorable	3%	12%	55%	81%
DK/No Opn	2%	9%	13%	6%
Unwt N=	216	208	100	243

**[NOTE: QUESTIONS ABOUT EVALUATIONS OF NJ GOV. CHRIS CHRISTIE WERE ASKED AT THIS POINT; RELEASED APRIL 8, 2014]**

**Q. Please rate how Barack Obama is handling his job as President, using a grading scale from A to F. You can give him any full letter grade, A, B, C, D, or F.**

A	14%
B	32%
C	24%
D	14%
F	16%
DK	0%
Unwt N=	814

**ALL ADULTS**

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Race		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	White	Black	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
A	28%	7%	3%	23%	13%	5%	14%	14%	7%	38%	14%	19%	12%	10%
B	44%	32%	7%	45%	32%	12%	33%	31%	26%	41%	46%	31%	27%	21%
C	19%	26%	25%	20%	27%	16%	22%	25%	26%	18%	22%	23%	25%	25%
D	7%	17%	23%	8%	15%	22%	15%	14%	18%	2%	12%	15%	14%	17%
F	2%	17%	42%	3%	14%	43%	16%	16%	24%	0%	7%	12%	21%	27%
DK	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Unwt N=	275	354	162	203	422	163	423	391	578	92	134	168	274	238

	Income				Education				Region				
	<50K	50K- <100K	100K- <150K	150K+	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore
A	21%	12%	15%	11%	13%	13%	12%	18%	22%	16%	7%	14%	6%
B	33%	36%	34%	31%	30%	30%	32%	37%	40%	36%	24%	30%	25%
C	19%	21%	21%	31%	24%	25%	25%	20%	19%	25%	22%	26%	24%
D	13%	13%	17%	14%	14%	17%	14%	12%	11%	12%	21%	12%	18%
F	13%	18%	13%	13%	18%	15%	17%	13%	8%	10%	26%	18%	27%
DK	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Unwt N=	149	225	134	132	201	196	208	208	114	281	131	136	152

	Affordable Care Act Support			
	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
A	38%	11%	4%	1%
B	44%	48%	10%	11%
C	14%	33%	43%	13%
D	4%	5%	29%	27%
F	0%	2%	13%	48%
DK	0%	0%	1%	0%
Unwt N=	215	210	101	250

**[NOTE: QUESTIONS ABOUT OTHER STATEWIDE POLITICAL ISSUES WERE ASKED AT THIS POINT IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE. RESERVED FOR LATER RELEASE.]**

**Q. Now let's talk about health care. From what you have seen or heard about the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, do you strongly support it, somewhat support it, somewhat oppose it, or strongly oppose it?**

**ALL ADULTS**

		Obama						
		Favorability		Obama Job Grade				
		Fav	Unfav	A	B	C	D	F
Strongly support	26%	43%	3%	70%	36%	15%	7%	1%
Somewhat support	29%	40%	10%	22%	44%	41%	10%	3%
Somewhat oppose	12%	7%	20%	4%	4%	22%	26%	10%
Strongly oppose	28%	6%	65%	3%	9%	15%	54%	84%
Don't know	5%	4%	3%	2%	7%	7%	3%	2%
Unwgt N=	813	428	317	102	227	197	120	163

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Race		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	White	Black	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
	Strongly support	50%	16%	5%	45%	21%	12%	26%	26%	19%	57%	19%	33%	25%
Somewhat support	34%	33%	12%	32%	33%	9%	28%	30%	27%	35%	40%	24%	30%	16%
Somewhat oppose	6%	14%	16%	8%	13%	18%	13%	12%	15%	3%	16%	11%	10%	12%
Strongly oppose	8%	30%	63%	12%	26%	59%	29%	27%	35%	2%	21%	25%	31%	38%
Don't know	3%	7%	4%	3%	7%	2%	4%	6%	3%	3%	4%	6%	4%	6%
Unwt N=	273	355	163	204	420	163	421	392	579	90	132	168	273	240

	Income				Education				Region				
	<50K	50K-100K	100K-150K	150K+	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore
	Strongly support	25%	27%	29%	31%	23%	23%	21%	37%	33%	30%	14%	31%
Somewhat support	30%	33%	27%	29%	24%	26%	36%	28%	30%	34%	22%	27%	25%
Somewhat oppose	12%	10%	10%	10%	13%	17%	12%	8%	13%	11%	12%	10%	17%
Strongly oppose	22%	29%	30%	27%	32%	31%	26%	23%	20%	19%	49%	29%	36%
Don't know	11%	0%	4%	3%	7%	4%	5%	4%	4%	7%	4%	3%	4%
Unwt N=	148	226	133	132	200	196	207	209	113	281	132	135	152

	Primary Health Insurance		
	Medicare/Medicaid	Through job	Purchased
	Strongly support	29%	25%
Somewhat support	25%	32%	20%
Somewhat oppose	12%	11%	13%
Strongly oppose	30%	27%	36%
Don't know	5%	5%	2%
Unwt N=	196	443	77*

\* Caution, small N

**Q. And do you oppose the Affordable Care Act because you think it goes too far involving government in health care issues or because it does not go far enough ensuring health care access for all?**

**ALL ADULTS**

Goes too far	71%
Does not go far enough	24%
Don't know	5%
Unwgt N=	339

	Party ID			Ideology		Gender		Race	Education		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Mod	Con	Male	Female	White	HS or Less	Some Coll	College Grad +
Goes too far	-	74%	82%	66%	90%	77%	66%	77%	60%	73%	76%
Not far enough	-	21%	14%	27%	9%	21%	28%	19%	37%	22%	18%
Don't know	-	5%	4%	7%	1%	3%	7%	4%	3%	5%	6%
Unwt N=	35*	165	130	173	127	190	149	288	87	91	160

\* N is too small to report

**Q From what you have experienced so far, has the new health care law mostly helped you, hurt you, or has it had little or no effect so far?**

**ALL ADULTS**

		Obama Fav		Obama Job Grade				
		Fav	Unfav	A	B	C	D	F
Helped	9%	15%	1%	25%	11%	7%	2%	1%
Hurt	17%	6%	38%	5%	6%	13%	28%	46%
Little or no effect	71%	76%	59%	69%	78%	76%	67%	52%
Too soon to tell (vol)	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Unwgt N=	811	426	317	101	227	195	121	163

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Race		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	White	Black	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Helped	13%	7%	5%	14%	8%	6%	9%	10%	5%	25%	12%	9%	9%	7%
Hurt	8%	19%	31%	9%	17%	29%	18%	16%	20%	5%	14%	22%	21%	10%
Little or no effect	76%	71%	60%	75%	72%	63%	71%	70%	74%	67%	72%	67%	67%	80%
Too soon to tell	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%	1%	3%	2%	2%
Don't know	0%	1%	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	2%
Unwt N=	272	353	163	201	421	164	421	390	577	92	132	167	274	238

	Income				Education				Region				
	<50K	50K-100K	100K-150K	150K+	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore
Helped	14%	10%	4%	7%	12%	10%	6%	9%	13%	10%	6%	10%	6%
Hurt	14%	13%	22%	19%	13%	17%	16%	21%	18%	11%	30%	14%	20%
Little or no effect	70%	75%	71%	72%	72%	69%	74%	69%	62%	75%	63%	74%	72%
Too soon to tell	1%	2%	3%	0%	2%	3%	2%	1%	5%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Don't know	2%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%
Unwt N=	148	222	134	132	200	196	206	208	113	280	131	136	151

	Primary Health Insurance			Affordable Care Act Support			
	Medicare/ Medicaid	Through job	Purchased	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
Helped	15%	4%	27%	25%	9%	2%	0%
Hurt	9%	17%	26%	0%	9%	21%	41%
Little or no effect	74%	76%	43%	72%	80%	73%	57%
Too soon to tell	1%	1%	4%	2%	2%	0%	2%
Don't know	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	3%	0%
Unwt N=	193	445	77*	216	207	101	249

\* Caution, small N

**Q. At least 74,000 New Jersey residents have enrolled in private health insurance plans through the healthcare.gov website. The sign up deadline was March 31, but the Obama administration has extended it to mid-April for some people. Do you believe the deadline should have been extended for everyone to allow more people to enroll, or not?**

**ALL ADULTS**

		Obama Favorability		Obama Job Grade				
		Fav	Unfav	A	B	C	D	F
Yes	74%	83%	57%	75%	83%	82%	69%	46%
No	22%	14%	38%	20%	15%	11%	29%	48%
Don't know	4%	3%	5%	5%	3%	7%	2%	6%
Unwgt N=	807	425	312	101	227	196	120	159

	Party ID			Ideology			Gender		Race		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Lib	Mod	Con	Male	Female	White	Black	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Yes	84%	73%	57%	82%	76%	57%	74%	74%	72%	79%	77%	72%	70%	77%
No	14%	23%	34%	15%	19%	40%	22%	21%	23%	16%	21%	21%	25%	19%
Don't know	3%	4%	8%	4%	5%	3%	4%	5%	5%	5%	2%	8%	5%	4%
Unwt N=	274	352	160	202	418	162	419	388	572	91	132	167	270	238

	Income				Education				Region				
	<50K	50K-100K	100K-150K	150K+	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore
Yes	77%	80%	69%	70%	76%	75%	75%	69%	69%	81%	61%	72%	74%
No	19%	16%	26%	23%	22%	21%	20%	24%	28%	14%	34%	23%	22%
Don't know	4%	4%	5%	7%	2%	4%	5%	7%	2%	5%	5%	5%	4%
Unwt N=	149	223	132	130	201	193	207	205	114	279	130	133	151

	Primary Health Insurance			Affordable Care Act Support			
	Medicare/ Medicaid	Through job	Purchased	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
Yes	19%	21%	31%	85%	84%	74%	52%
No	78%	74%	59%	11%	13%	21%	42%
Don't know	3%	5%	10%	4%	3%	4%	5%
Unwt N=	195	440	76*	213	210	102	246

\* Caution, small N



**Q. And which of the following best describes your MAIN source of health insurance coverage?**

**ALL ADULTS**

A plan through you or your spouse's job	56%
Medicare	16%
A plan you purchased yourself, NOT from the new healthcare exchange	8%
A plan through your parent or guardian (vol)	3%
Medicaid	3%
A plan you purchased yourself from the new healthcare exchange	3%
Some other government program	2%
Something else	1%
None of these (vol)	1%
No insurance at all	6%
Don't know	1%
Unwgt N=	807

**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll March 31 – April 6, 2014**

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone using live callers March 31 – April 6, 2014 with a scientifically selected random sample of 816 New Jersey adults. Data are weighted to represent known parameters in the New Jersey adult population, using gender, age, race, and Hispanic ethnicity matching to US Census Bureau data. All results are reported with these weighted data. This telephone poll included 576 landline and 240 cell phone adults, all acquired through random digit dialing.

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. Sampling error should be adjusted to recognize the effect of weighting the data to better match the population. In this poll, the simple sampling error for the 816 adults is +/-3.4 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval. The adult sample weighting design effect is 1.29, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 3.9 percentage points for the adult sample.

Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey adults in this sample favor a particular position, we would be 95 percent sure that the true figure is between 46.1 and 53.9 percent (50 +/-3.9) if all New Jersey adults had been interviewed, rather than just a sample.

Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. Sampling error does not take into account other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording or context effects.

This Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was fielded in house by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling. The questionnaire was developed and all data analyses were completed in house. The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll is paid for and sponsored by the Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, a non-partisan academic center for the study of politics and the political process.

<b>Weighted Sample Characteristics 816 New Jersey Adults</b>			
37% Democrat	49% Male	17% 18-29	61% White
44% Independent	51% Female	37% 30-49	13% Black
19% Republican		28% 50-64	17% Hispanic
		18% 65+	9% Asian/Other/Multi