THE PUBLIC AND THE CRITICAL ISSUES BEFORE CONGRESS IN THE SUMMER AND FALL OF 2017

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INTRODUCTION

At the time this poll's results are being released, the Congress is engaged in a number of debates about the future of critical national issues. Some of these issues are so important that they may impact the outcome of the 2018 Congressional election. Some are about to be voted on by Congress in the coming months, and an understanding of public opinion is likely to play an important role.

This report reflects both of these concerns. The first section deals with the possible role of a number of key issues in the 2018 Congressional election. The second section relates to current public opinion on issues being debated by Congress.

PART 1: A LOOK AHEAD TO THE 2018 CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS: VOTERS' VIEWS ON THE POTENTIAL ISSUES

In recent months the extraordinary level of visible conflict in Washington and around the country over the future direction of the nation has led to speculation that the Congressional elections in 2018 could be of substantial importance in resolving these deep divisions. Though the election is months away, the attention given this pending event has led *Politico* and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health to produce a special polling section focused on the upcoming election.

Using data from a June 2017 national poll, we analyze the views today of three groups of voters about critical issues in the 2018 election. These groups are (1) all registered voters, (2) registered voters who say they intend to vote for the Republican candidate in their congressional district, and (3) registered voters who say they intend to vote for the Democratic candidate. These registered voters were given eleven priority choices and asked how important each would be in deciding their congressional vote. Presenting the results for each of these groups individually allows us to examine what might happen if different scenarios were to arise depending on the actual election turnout of each group in 2018.

Table 1 shows how each of the three groups of voters responded when asked to rate the importance to their vote of a range of potential election issues. Each of the issues is currently very visible in Washington debates and the national news. Prior research suggests that the mid-term elections in a president's first term in office are often seen as a referendum on the new president's policy decision-making.[1,2] Thus all of the items listed reflect President Trump's initiatives, as well as his overall job performance.

Table 1 shows substantial variation among the three groups of voters on what they see as their top issues, those they consider to be extremely important in their 2018 voting decision. The top three issues for registered voters as a whole are: the President's effort to prevent domestic terrorism, his effort to repeal and replace the ACA/Obamacare, and his proposed budgetary spending priorities. For voters intending to vote for a Republican for Congress in 2018, the top issues likewise include terrorism and the ACA/Obamacare replacement. But in addition, the President's effort to keep out unauthorized immigrants is among the top three issues. Potential voters for Democratic House candidates have somewhat different priorities. They are the possible improper White House involvement with the Russian government, President Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris climate change agreement, and his efforts to repeal and replace the ACA/Obamacare.

Given the extraordinary recent focus on the ACA/Obamacare debate, it is important to note that there are other issues that could have a more important impact on voters' choices for Congressional races than this one. Likewise, President Trump's efforts to cut federal income taxes for individuals and businesses is not seen as a top-ranking voting issue by any of the three groups, though it is of interest among the current majority party in Congress.

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[1] McGhee, Eric. 2014. "How the 'Midterm Penalty' is Hurting Democrats." *The Washington Post*. February 11, 2014. http://wapo.st/1kytsJn?tid=ss_tw&utm_term=.3703bec7f7a9

[2] See literature review on this topic in Folke, O. and Snyder, J. M. 2012. Gubernatorial Midterm Slumps. *American Journal of Political Science* 56: 931–948. doi:10.1111/j.1540-5907.2012.00599.x

Table 1: Top Political Issues, by Vote Intent in the 2018 Congressional Election

Issue	*% saying extremely important to vote decision*		
	All registered voters	Intend to vote **Rep** candidate	Intend to vote **Dem** candidate
President Trump's effort to prevent terrorist attacks in the U.S.	39	47	34
President Trump's effort to repeal and replace the ACA	37	31	46
President Trump's proposed federal budget	34	27	44
Allegations about White House involvement with Russian government	31	12	49
President Trump's effort to keep out unauthorized or illegal immigrants	31	32	36
President Trump's ban on travelers from some Middle Eastern countries	31	28	35
President Trump's decision to withdraw the U.S. from Paris climate change agreement	30	12	49
President Trump's overall job as President	29	23	38
President Trump's defense policies	29	29	32
President Trump's effort to cut federal income taxes for individuals and businesses	28	28	29
President Trump's trade policies	24	20	30

POLITICO/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, The Public and the Critical Issues Before Congress in the Summer and Fall of 2017, June 14 – 18, 2017. Base: registered voters.

Lastly, of note, the President's overall job performance rating is not seen as a top voting issue by any of the three groups. If this holds true, then his general public rating on this measure (generally quite low in other recent polls)[3] may not play as decisive a role in the Congressional election outcome as it has in prior mid-term elections. The takeaway from this preview is that voters' ultimate choice may be based on a wider range of issues than has been currently recognized.

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[3] HuffPost Pollster, Trump Job Approval. http://elections.huffingtonpost.com/pollster/trump-job-approval

PART 2: THE PUBLIC AND THE ISSUES UNDER DEBATE IN CONGRESS

The non-budgetary debates in Washington during the summer and early fall are likely to focus on three broad and controversial issues: (1) the possible repeal and replacement of the ACA/Obamacare, (2) the debate over President Trump's proposals to substantially cut federal income taxes for individuals and businesses, and (3) the appropriate response to President Trump's decision to withdraw the U.S. from the international Paris climate change agreement. The national opinion poll results from *Politico* and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health focus on these critical questions.

In interpreting these findings it is important to take into account the political situation facing the U.S. today. As shown in numerous reports and studies, the voting public has become increasingly polarized along partisan lines on many issues today.[4,5] As a result, the behavior of elected figures more often reflects the views of those who identify with their party than those of the general public as a whole.

The results presented here show the views of the general public, as well as those who identify themselves as Republicans, Democrats and political Independents. A point of importance throughout our report is the extent of the wide gap between Republicans (the majority party in Washington today) and Democrats (the minority party).

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[4] Abramowitz, Alan I. 2014. "Partisan Nation: The Rise of Affective Partisanship in the American Electorate." In *The State of the Parties*: *The Changing Role of Contemporary American Parties*, 7th ed., edited by John C. Green, Daniel J. Coffey, and David B. Cohen. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, pp. 21-36.
[5] Campbell, James E. 2016. *Polarized: Making Sense of a Divided America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapters 6, 7, 8.

I.   THE ACA/OBAMACARE

Much of the current controversial debate in Congress over the need to repeal and replace the ACA/Obamacare centers on the view by Republican leaders that the law is directly hurting many Americans and the position of Democratic leaders that the law needs to be maintained because it is directly helping so many Americans today.

As portrayed in Table 2, neither of these positions reflects the point of view of the general public as a whole. More report being helped by the law than hurt. These individuals who were impacted represent millions of people. However, the majority of both Republicans and Democrats believe that the law has not had a direct impact on them. Republicans are more likely to report being hurt by the law (31%) than helped, while more Democrats report being helped (36%). An issue raised in the current debate is whether President Trump's voters see themselves being hurt or helped by this law. The poll asked those individuals who voted for the current President their views on this question. About six in ten (61%) reported the law had no direct impact on them, 36% said it has hurt them, and 3% said the law has helped them.

Table 2: Views on Whether the ACA (Obamacare) Has Directly Helped or Hurt Them, by Trump Voters and Party Identification

	Total adults	Trump voters	Rep	Dem	Ind
Helped	24	3	8	36	23
Hurt	16	36	31	2	21
No difference	58	61	60	60	54
Don't know/ Refused	2	*	1	2	2

POLITICO/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, The Public and the Critical Issues Before Congress in the Summer and Fall of 2017, June 14 – 18, 2017. Base: U.S. adults.

The current debate in Congress over replacing the ACA/Obamacare involves a number of complex issues. Three that have received much of the attention in the media are: (1) providing financial assistance to fewer individuals to purchase their health insurance than the current law while lowering forecasted government spending and taxes, (2) lowering the number of people to be covered by Medicaid in the years ahead and reducing government spending and taxes, and (3) changing the law so private insurers can charge those with pre-existing medical conditions higher premiums and at the same time allowing them to charge lower rates to those without these health conditions.

As Tables 3 and 4 show, most of the general public does not approve of either providing financial assistance to fewer individuals to purchase their health insurance or lowering the number of people to be covered by Medicaid. In contrast, the majority of Republicans do support the former and they are more divided on the issues of Medicaid.

Table 3: Attitudes Toward the Extent of Coverage Provided by a Replacement Plan for the ACA (Obamacare), by Party Identification

	Total adults	Rep	Dem	Ind
That the replacement plan would provide financial assistance to purchase insurance to the same number of people as the ACA or Obamacare does now	57	27	79	54
That it would provide assistance to somewhat fewer people but save taxpayer money	22	42	11	22
That it would provide assistance to a lot fewer people, saving even more money	12	20	5	13
Don't know/ Refused	9	11	5	11

POLITICO/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, The Public and the Critical Issues Before Congress in the Summer and Fall of 2017, June 14 – 18, 2017. Base: U.S. adults.

Table 4: Views on Whether President Trump's Proposal to Replace the ACA (Obamacare) Should Reduce the Number of People on Medicaid and as a Result Reduce Government Spending and Taxes or Keep the Same Number Currently Covered and Same Spending and Taxes, by Party Identification

	Total adults	Rep	Dem	Ind
Keep the number of people covered under Medicaid as it is today	72	52	90	69
Reduce the number of people on Medicaid	22	46	8	23
Don't know/ Refused	6	2	2	8

POLITICO/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, The Public and the Critical Issues Before Congress in the Summer and Fall of 2017, June 14 – 18, 2017. Base: U.S. adults.

As to the third issue, ending health insurance regulatory protections for those who have pre-existing medical conditions, Table 5 shows all groups regardless of party oppose changing this policy in any new legislation. Thus, the core of much of the House and Senate repeal and replace bills remains unpopular with most of the general public, and on two of the three measures, even with Republicans.

Table 5: Attitudes Toward a Proposal That Would Charge Those With Pre-Existing Medical Conditions More for Health Insurance, by Party Identification

	Total adults	Rep	Dem	Ind
Favor	22	35	16	21
Oppose	71	59	81	70
Don't know/ Refused	7	6	3	9

POLITICO/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, The Public and the Critical Issues Before Congress in the Summer and Fall of 2017, June 14 – 18, 2017. Base: U.S. adults.

II.   CUTTING FEDERAL INCOME TAXES FOR INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES

The Congress will be considering President Trump's proposal to substantially reduce the federal tax rate that individuals and businesses currently pay in exchange for reducing or eliminating some tax deductions and credits that are available to those filing taxes today. The President has made this issue one of his top priorities and has suggested that these significant tax changes will help the overall economy and individuals. As discussed in the first section of this report, this issue is not seen as a particularly salient voting issue by most registered voters today.

The poll examines the general public's views about the tax reduction issue along five dimensions: (1) whether the President's general policies are currently helping the economy, (2) support for his overall tax policy changes, (3) whether his tax proposal will help the economy in the future, (4) whether they see themselves as individuals benefiting if these tax changes are enacted, and (5) support for reducing or eliminating some specific tax deductions as part of a plan that would lower overall tax rates.

The poll findings for these five tax-related issues are presented in Tables 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.

Table 6: Views on the Impact of President Trump's Policies on the Economy, by Party Identification

	Total adults	Rep	Dem	Ind
Helped	26	56	4	23
Hurt	34	5	57	32
No difference	38	38	38	42
Don't know/ Refused	2	1	1	3

POLITICO/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, The Public and the Critical Issues Before Congress in the Summer and Fall of 2017, June 14 – 18, 2017. Base: U.S. adults.

Table 7: Attitudes Toward President Trump's Tax Cut Proposal, by Party Identification

	Total adults	Rep	Dem	Ind
Favor	24	40	9	27
Oppose	62	41	85	60
Don't know/ Refused	14	19	6	13

POLITICO/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, The Public and the Critical Issues Before Congress in the Summer and Fall of 2017, June 14 – 18, 2017. Base: U.S. adults.

Table 8: Views on Whether President Trump's Tax Cut Proposal Will Improve the Economy and Create More Jobs or Not, by Party Identification

	Total adults	Rep	Dem	Ind
Improve	34	62	8	38
Not improve	57	27	85	56
Don't know/ Refused	9	11	7	6

POLITICO/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, The Public and the Critical Issues Before Congress in the Summer and Fall of 2017, June 14 – 18, 2017. Base: U.S. adults.

Table 9: Views on Whether President Trump's Tax Cut Proposal Would Help or Hurt Them, by Party Identification

	Total adults	Rep	Dem	Ind
Help	20	35	7	21
Hurt	33	12	50	33
No difference	42	45	40	46
Don't know/ Refused	5	8	3	*

POLITICO/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, The Public and the Critical Issues Before Congress in the Summer and Fall of 2017, June 14 – 18, 2017. Base: U.S. adults.

Table 10: Views on Proposals to Change the Federal Income Tax System so It Would Lower the Overall Rate Paid in Exchange for Also Reducing or Eliminating Some Tax Deductions and Credits, by Party Identification

	% favoring			
	Total adults	Rep	Dem	Ind
The deduction for education expenses	56	66	43	61
The deduction for mortgage interest	56	63	48	60
The deduction for childcare expenses	54	63	43	58
The federal deduction for state and local taxes Americans pay	53	62	35	64
Tax breaks for retirement accounts like 401(k)	53	55	45	59
The deduction for charitable contributions	52	56	49	51
The exclusion of employer-paid health insurance premiums from your taxable income	43	56	33	45

POLITICO/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, The Public and the Critical Issues Before Congress in the Summer and Fall of 2017, June 14 – 18, 2017. Base: U.S. adults.

As shown in Table 6, the public has divided views about the impact to date of the President's general economic policies. But these aggregate views hide the significant polarization by party around this issue. While 56% of Republicans believe his policies have helped the economy, 57% of Democrats believe that his policies have hurt the economy.

As shown in Table 7, the majority (62%) of the general public opposes the President's current tax proposals. Only about one in four (24%) support them. Even among Republicans views are equally divided about this major presidential initiative, with 40% in favor, 41% opposed.

The rationale for these findings can be seen in Tables 8 and 9. Most do not believe that the economy will improve as a result of the enactment of the President's tax proposals. However, once again, the extraordinary level of partisan polarization can be seen here. Although most Republicans do not support these tax proposals (Table 7), the majority (62%) do believe they will help the economy. Democrats, on the other hand, overwhelmingly (85%) think these tax proposals will not improve the U.S. economy.

As to the impact on individuals (Table 9), only one in five see themselves being personally helped by the tax change proposal. Only 35% of Republicans see themselves helped, while that figure is 7% for Democrats.

However, as shown in Table 10, there is much more support in the abstract for proposals that would lower the overall tax rate while reducing or eliminating specific tax deductions and credits. Slightly over half support six of the seven proposed specific deduction and tax trade-off proposals. It is only the tax deduction (exclusion) for employer-paid health insurance premiums that garners less than majority support (43%). Once more, reflecting conflicting views by party in the Congress, the majority of Republicans support limiting this exclusion (56%), compared to 33% of Democrats. The other major tax policy division between the parties is over the federal deduction for state and local taxes paid by individuals. More than six in ten Republicans (62%) would limit this deduction, compared with only 35% of Democrats.

Of historic note, public support for eliminating tax deductions and credits declines substantially if its purpose is to reduce the federal deficit vs. lowering individuals' federal tax rates.[6]

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[6] CBS News Poll, December 2012; McClatchy-Marist Poll, December 2012.

III. U.S. CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

The final issue addressed in our latest poll relates to President Trump's decision to withdraw the U.S. government's involvement from the international Paris climate change agreement. We asked respondents (1) if they approved or disapproved of this decision, (2) their support for more U.S. involvement with other countries on climate change issues, (3) their support for greater financial aid to lower-income countries trying to deal with problems related to climate change, and (4) if they agreed with one of President Trump's stated rationales for leaving the Paris climate change agreement. These results are reflected in Tables 11, 12, 13, and 14.

Table 11: Views of President Trump's Decision to Withdraw the U.S. from the Paris Climate Change Agreement, by Party Identification

	Total adults	Rep	Dem	Ind
Approve	30	65	9	30
Disapprove	53	12	81	54
Don't know/ Refused	17	23	10	16

POLITICO/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, The Public and the Critical Issues Before Congress in the Summer and Fall of 2017, June 14 – 18, 2017. Base: U.S. adults.

Table 12: Views of Whether in the Future the U.S. Should Put More Effort, Less Effort, or About the Same Effort into Working with Other Countries to Address Climate Change, by Party Identification

	Total adults	Rep	Dem	Ind
More effort	59	39	75	60
Less effort	12	26	2	10
About the same effort	26	35	21	25
Don't know/ Refused	3	*	2	5

POLITICO/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, The Public and the Critical Issues Before Congress in the Summer and Fall of 2017, June 14 – 18, 2017. Base: U.S. adults.

Table 13: Views of U.S. Spending on Assisting Poorer Countries in Addressing the Effects of Climate Change, by Party Identification

	Total adults	Rep	Dem	Ind
Spend more	36	12	49	40
Spend less	26	53	6	25
Spend about the same	34	29	42	32
Don't know/ Refused	4	6	3	3

POLITICO/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, The Public and the Critical Issues Before Congress in the Summer and Fall of 2017, June 14 – 18, 2017. Base: U.S. adults.

Table 14: Views Toward President Trump's Statement That 'the Paris Climate Change Agreement Is Less About Climate and More About Other Countries Gaining a Financial Advantage over the United States', by Party Identification

	Total adults	Rep	Dem	Ind
Strongly agree	18	39	5	17
Somewhat agree	24	34	13	28
Somewhat disagree	16	15	14	19
Strongly disagree	36	6	63	33
Don't know/ Refused	6	6	5	3

POLITICO/Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, The Public and the Critical Issues Before Congress in the Summer and Fall of 2017, June 14 – 18, 2017. Base: U.S. adults.

The majority (53%) of the U.S. public disapproves of the President's decision to exit the Paris climate change agreement, while 30% approve (Table 11). However, the partisan division is once again clear. The majority of Republicans approve of his decision (65%) and the majority of Democrats disapprove of it (81%).

As shown in Table 12, broader and more extensive international cooperation on climate change is supported by the majority (59%) of the general public. But once again, this is not the case for Republicans, only 39% of whom support putting more effort into working with other countries to address climate change.

Public support is weaker on the question of providing more financial assistance to poorer countries in responding to these climate change issues (Table 13). Only slightly more than one in three (36%) support more funding here, with the highest support level being 49% by Democrats vs. 12% among Republicans.

One of President Trump's stated rationales for leaving the Paris climate change agreement was that the agreement was less about climate change and more about other countries gaining a financial advantage over the U.S. Overall, 42% of the public agrees with this rationale, whereas 52% disagrees. Once again, deep divisions are present. While 73% of Republicans agree with this rationale, only 18% of Democrats agree.

PART 2 CONCLUSION

Taken together, on three key issues being debated this summer and fall in Congress – the future of the ACA, the President's vision for tax reform, and his broad decisions on the U.S.'s future global role in responding to climate change – the general public at this time is not supportive of President Trump's general policy positions, but the members of his own political party are. Currently, all the disagreements appear centered on the contentious health care debate. But this poll suggests these political divisions will present themselves on a number of other important issues likely to surface in the near future and all the way through the 2018 Congressional elections.

METHODOLOGY

The results are based on polling conducted by *Politico* and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Representatives of the two organizations worked closely to develop the survey questionnaires and analyze the results of the polls. *Politico* and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health paid for the surveys and related expenses.

The project team was led by Robert J. Blendon, Sc.D., Richard L. Menschel Professor of Health Policy and Political Analysis at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, and Joanne Kenen, Executive Editor, Health Care at *Politico/Politico Pro*. Harvard research team also included John M. Benson, Logan S. Casey, and Justin M. Sayde.

Interviews were conducted with a nationally representative sample of 1,011 randomly selected adults, ages 18 and older, via telephone (including cell phones and landlines) by SSRS of Glen Mills, Pennsylvania. The interviewing period was June 14 – 18, 2017. The data were weighted to reflect the demographics of the national adult population as described by the U.S. Census.

When interpreting these findings, one should recognize that all surveys are subject to sampling error. Results may differ from what would be obtained if the whole U.S. adult population had been interviewed. The margin of error for the full sample is ±3.7 percentage points. Some questions were asked of registered voters and/or half-samples:

	Number of Interviews (unweighted n)	Margin of Error (percentage points)
Total U.S. adults	1,011	±3.7
Half-samples of U.S. adults	501-510	±5.3
Total registered voters	827	±4.1
Half-samples of registered voters	411-416	±5.9

Possible sources of non-sampling error include non-response bias, as well as question wording and ordering effects. Non-response in telephone surveys produces some known biases in survey-derived estimates because participation tends to vary for different subgroups of the population. To compensate for these known biases and for variations in probability of selection within and across households, sample data are weighted by household size, cell phone/landline use and demographics (sex, age, race/ethnicity, education, and region) to reflect the true population. Other techniques, including random-digit dialing, replicate subsamples, and systematic respondent selection within households, are used to ensure that the sample is representative.

Politico/**Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Poll**

THE PUBLIC AND THE CRITICAL ISSUES BEFORE CONGRESS IN THE SUMMER AND FALL OF 2017

This survey was conducted for *Politico* and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health via telephone by SSRS, an independent research company. Interviews were conducted via telephone (cell phone and landline) **June 14 – 18, 2017,** among a nationally representative sample of **1,011 U.S. adults**. The margin of error for total respondents is ±3.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. More information about SSRS can be obtained by visiting www.ssrs.com

Part 1: A Look Ahead to the 2018 Congressional Elections: Voters' Views on the Potential Issues (Responses of Registered Voters, by 2018 Congressional Voting Intent)

PO-02. I'm going to read you a list of several things Donald Trump has done as president. Looking ahead to the 2018 election for Congress, please tell me how important each of these will be when you decide who to vote for in the congressional election. How about (INSERT ITEM)? Will that be extremely important in your vote, very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?

(Asked of registered voters; n=827)
    a.   President Trump's overall job as President

	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know/ Refused
Total registered voters	29	32	16	7	14	2
House vote intent 2018: Rep	23	36	21	8	12	*
House vote intent 2018: Dem	38	31	10	5	15	1

(Asked of registered voters in half-sample A; n=411)
    b.   His effort to cut federal income taxes for individuals and businesses

	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know/ Refused
Total registered voters	28	31	26	7	6	2
House vote intent 2018: Rep	28	40	22	7	3	*
House vote intent 2018: Dem	29	27	28	7	7	2

(Asked of registered voters in half-sample A; n=411)
c.   His trade policies

	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know/ Refused
Total registered voters	24	34	26	7	5	4
House vote intent 2018: Rep	20	38	27	6	6	3
House vote intent 2018: Dem	30	30	25	6	4	5

(Asked of registered voters in half-sample A; n=411)
d.   His defense policies

	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know/ Refused
Total registered voters	29	33	24	5	7	2
House vote intent 2018: Rep	29	35	19	5	9	3
House vote intent 2018: Dem	32	31	25	5	5	2

(Asked of registered voters in half-sample A; n=411)
e.   Allegations about White House involvement with the Russian government

	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know/ Refused
Total registered voters	31	22	15	12	19	1
House vote intent 2018: Rep	12	10	21	21	35	1
House vote intent 2018: Dem	49	32	11	1	7	*

(Asked of registered voters in half-sample A; n=411)
f.   His ban on travelers from some Middle Eastern countries

	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know/ Refused
Total registered voters	31	29	23	6	9	2
House vote intent 2018: Rep	28	30	21	8	12	1
House vote intent 2018: Dem	35	32	22	4	5	2

(Asked of registered voters in half-sample B; n=416)

g. His effort to keep out unauthorized or illegal immigrants

	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know/ Refused
Total registered voters	31	28	21	5	12	3
House vote intent 2018: Rep	32	37	17	5	8	1
House vote intent 2018: Dem	36	21	22	6	13	2

(Asked of registered voters in half-sample B; n=416)

h. His effort to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare

	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know/ Refused
Total registered voters	37	29	14	8	9	3
House vote intent 2018: Rep	31	34	18	8	7	2
House vote intent 2018: Dem	46	25	14	5	9	1

(Asked of registered voters in half-sample B; n=416)

i. His decision to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris climate change agreement

	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know/ Refused
Total registered voters	30	22	19	9	13	7
House vote intent 2018: Rep	12	23	30	13	17	5
House vote intent 2018: Dem	49	22	11	6	9	3

(Asked of registered voters in half-sample B; n=416)

j. His proposed federal budget, which would reduce many items of domestic spending and increase spending for national defense

	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know/ Refused
Total registered voters	34	33	18	6	7	2
House vote intent 2018: Rep	27	39	22	6	5	1
House vote intent 2018: Dem	44	28	15	5	8	-

(Asked of registered voters in half-sample B; n=416)
k. His effort to prevent terrorist attacks in the U.S.

	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know/ Refused
Total registered voters	39	33	10	7	9	2
House vote intent 2018: Rep	47	37	6	5	4	1
House vote intent 2018: Dem	34	30	14	10	10	2

Part 2: The Public and the Issues Under Debate in Congress
(Responses of U.S. adults, by Party identification)

ɪ. The ACA/Obamacare

(Asked of half-sample B; n=501)
PO-08. So far, would you say the Affordable Care Act, also called Obamacare, has directly helped you, directly hurt you, or has it not had a direct impact?

	Helped	Hurt	No difference	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	24	16	58	2
Republican	8	31	60	1
Democrat	36	2	60	2
Independent	23	21	54	2

(Asked of half-sample B; n=501)
PO-08a. President Trump and Republicans in Congress are working on a replacement law for the Affordable Care Act, also known as the ACA or Obamacare. One of their goals is to reduce the taxes that currently support this program and to lower future government spending. Currently the ACA or Obamacare is providing financial assistance to millions of people to help them pay for health insurance. Which of the following would you prefer?

	Total U.S. adults	Republican	Democrat	Independent
That the replacement plan would provide financial assistance to purchase insurance to the same number of people as the ACA or Obamacare does now	57	27	79	54
That it would provide assistance to somewhat fewer people but save taxpayer money	22	42	11	22
That it would provide assistance to a lot fewer people, saving even more money	12	20	5	13
Don't know/Refused	9	11	5	11

(Asked of half-sample B; n=501
PO-9. One proposal being considered in the replacement is for the federal government to allow insurers to provide health care plans that would charge those with pre-existing medical conditions substantially more for their health insurance. This would mean higher premiums for people who have pre-existing medical conditions. In many cases these may be older people. But it would mean lower premiums for those without pre-existing medical conditions. In many cases these may be younger people. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

	Favor	Oppose	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	22	71	7
Republican	35	59	6
Democrat	16	81	3
Independent	21	70	9

(Asked of half-sample B; n=501)
PO-10a. President Trump and Republicans in Congress are also proposing to cut back the number of people enrolled in Medicaid, the government program that provides health insurance and long term care to certain low-income adults and children and disabled people, to the same number it was before the ACA or Obamacare was passed. This proposal would reduce the number of people on Medicaid by millions, but would also reduce government spending and taxes. Would you prefer to keep the number of people covered under Medicaid as it is today, or to reduce the number of people on Medicaid by millions, but reduce government spending and taxes?

	Keep the number of people covered under Medicaid as it is today	Reduce the number of people on Medicaid	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	72	22	6
Republican	52	46	2
Democrat	90	8	2
Independent	69	23	8

II. Cutting Federal Income Taxes for Individuals and Businesses

(Asked of half-sample A; n=510)
PO-03. Do you think President Trump's policies so far have helped or hurt the U.S. economy, or haven't they made much difference?

	Helped	Hurt	No difference	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	26	34	38	2
Republican	56	5	38	1
Democrat	4	57	38	1
Independent	23	32	42	3

(Asked of half-sample A; n=510)
PO-04. President Trump has proposed a tax plan that would lower tax rates for individuals and families, reduce the number of tax brackets, and lower rates for all businesses. It would double the standard deduction that individuals can take without having to itemize on their tax forms. In addition, Trump's plan would eliminate all income tax deductions except mortgage interest and charitable contributions. That means people could no longer deduct state and local taxes, work-related deductions for the self-employed, and tax credits for retirement accounts like 401(k)s. In addition, their employer-paid health insurance premiums would be taxed. Do you favor or oppose this new tax proposal?

	Favor	Oppose	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	24	62	14
Republican	40	41	19
Democrat	9	85	6
Independent	27	60	13

(Asked of half-sample A; n=510)
PO-05. If it is enacted, do you think President Trump's tax proposal will improve the economy and create more jobs or not?

	Improve	Not improve	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	34	57	9
Republican	62	27	11
Democrat	8	85	7
Independent	38	56	6

(Asked of half-sample A; n=510)
PO-06. If it is enacted, do you think President Trump's tax proposal will help you or hurt you, or don't you think it will make much difference?

	Help	Hurt	No difference	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	20	33	42	5
Republican	35	12	45	8
Democrat	7	50	40	3
Independent	21	33	46	*

PO-07. Proposals to change the federal income tax system would lower the overall rate you pay in exchange for also reducing or eliminating some tax deductions and credits. For each, please tell me if you would favor or oppose eliminating or reducing the deduction in order to lower the overall tax rate.

a.   The deduction for mortgage interest

	Favor	Oppose	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	56	36	8
Republican	63	32	5
Democrat	48	43	9
Independent	60	34	6

b.   The deduction for education expenses

	Favor	Oppose	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	56	39	5
Republican	66	27	7
Democrat	43	55	2
Independent	61	35	4

c.   The deduction for charitable contributions

	Favor	Oppose	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	52	42	6
Republican	56	40	4
Democrat	49	46	5
Independent	51	44	5

d.   The deduction for childcare expenses

	Favor	Oppose	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	54	40	6
Republican	63	34	3
Democrat	43	53	4
Independent	58	36	6

e.   The exclusion of employer-paid health insurance premiums from your taxable income

	Favor	Oppose	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	43	45	12
Republican	56	34	10
Democrat	33	57	10
Independent	45	43	12

f. Tax breaks for retirement accounts like 401(k)s

	Favor	Oppose	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	53	39	8
Republican	55	39	6
Democrat	45	48	7
Independent	59	32	9

g. The federal deduction for state and local taxes Americans pay

	Favor	Oppose	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	53	38	9
Republican	62	28	10
Democrat	35	58	7
Independent	64	31	5

PO-07 Favor Summary Table (% Favor)
Base: Half-sample A (n=510)

	Total U.S. adults	Republican	Democrat	Independent
The deduction for education expenses	56	66	43	61
The deduction for mortgage interest	56	63	48	60
The deduction for childcare expenses	54	63	43	58
The federal deduction for state and local taxes Americans pay	53	62	35	64
Tax breaks for retirement accounts like 401(k)	53	55	45	59
The deduction for charitable contributions	52	56	49	51
The exclusion of employer-paid health insurance premiums from your taxable income	43	56	33	45

III. U.S. Climate Change Policy

(Asked of half-sample B; n=501)
PO-10b. Do you approve or disapprove of President Trump's decision to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris climate change agreement?

	Approve	Disapprove	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	30	53	17
Republican	65	12	23
Democrat	9	81	10
Independent	30	54	16

(Asked of half-sample B; n=501)
PO-11. In the future, do you think the U.S. should put more effort, less effort, or about the same effort into working with other countries to address climate change?

	More effort	Less effort	About the same effort	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	59	12	26	3
Republican	39	26	35	*
Democrat	75	2	21	2
Independent	60	10	25	5

(Asked of half-sample B; n=501)
PO-12. Do you think the U.S. should spend more, less, or about the same as it does now on assisting poorer countries in addressing the effects of climate change?

	Spend more	Spend less	Spend about the same	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	36	26	34	4
Republican	12	53	29	6
Democrat	49	6	42	3
Independent	40	25	32	3

PO-13. President Trump has said that the Paris climate change agreement is less about the climate and more about other countries gaining a financial advantage over the United States. Do you strongly agree with the President's statement, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	18	24	16	36	6
Republican	39	34	15	6	6
Democrat	5	13	14	63	5
Independent	17	28	19	33	3

Collapsed Agree/Disagree

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/ Refused
Total U.S. adults	42	52	6
Republican	73	21	6
Democrat	18	77	5
Independent	45	52	3

Sample Sizes and Margins of Error

	Number of Interviews (unweighted n)	Margin of Error (percentage points)
Total U.S. adults	1,011	±3.7
Half-samples of U.S. adults	501-510	±5.3
Total registered voters	827	±4.1
Half-samples of registered voters	411-416	±5.9