



Hearing from the American People: Preliminary Overview of Sources and Reports

March 2006

*Caution: Preliminary Data
Do not cite or distribute*



Sources of Information

- Community Meetings
- Internet web site
 - Open-ended Questions
 - Poll Questions
 - Experiences
 - Concerns
- Mail correspondence (open-ended questions, letters)

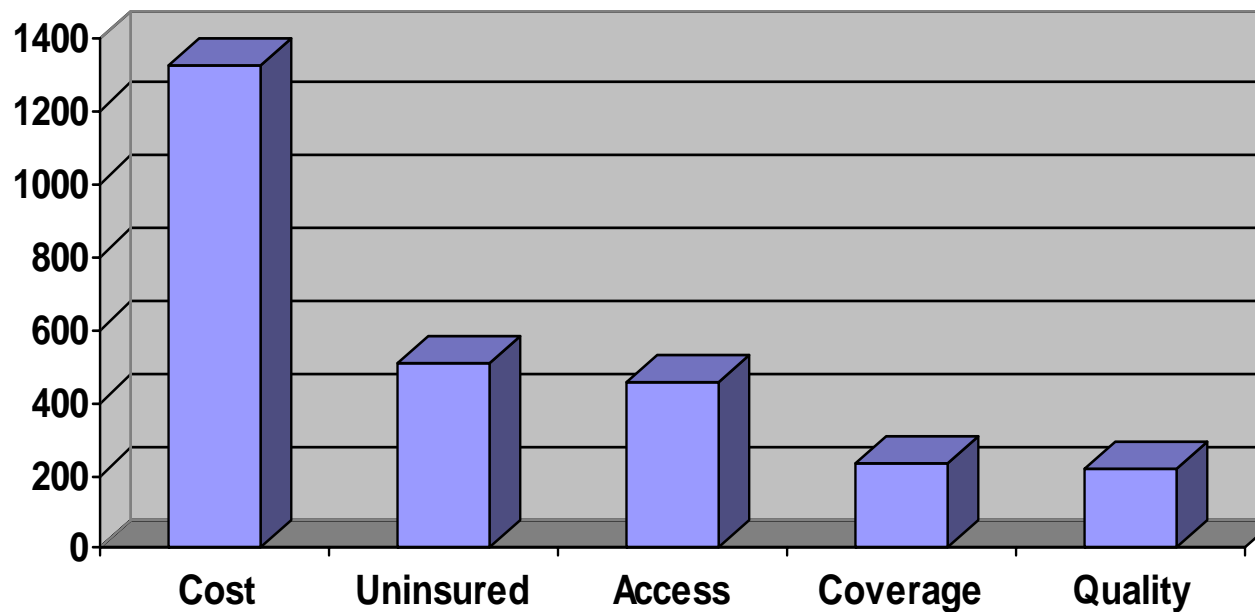


www.citizenshealth.gov: Open-ended questions

- 3,000 people have shared their thoughts on 4 broad topics
 - Concerns about health care in America
 - Changes in how we pay for health care
 - Trade-off they would be willing to make to ensure access to high-quality care for all
 - Their single most important recommendation to improve health care for all
- Demographics:
 - Disproportionately female, over age 45, white, with college or graduate education

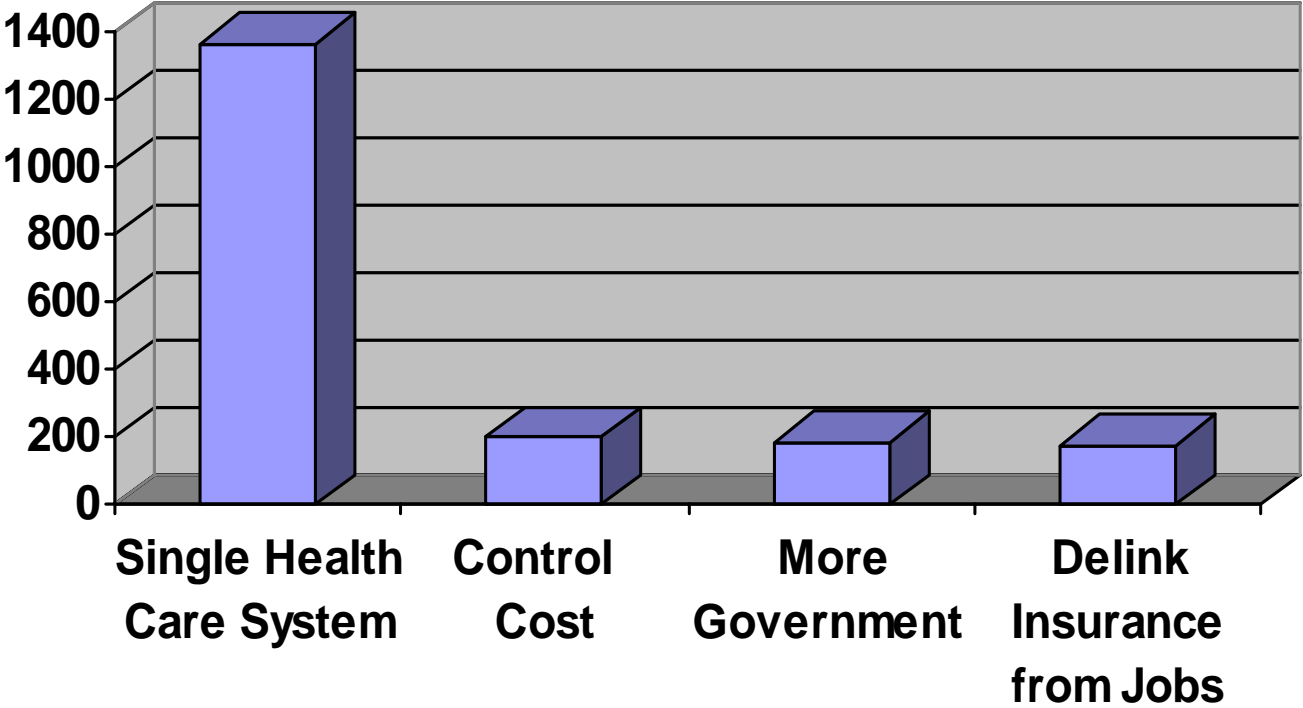


What concerns you most about health care in America today?



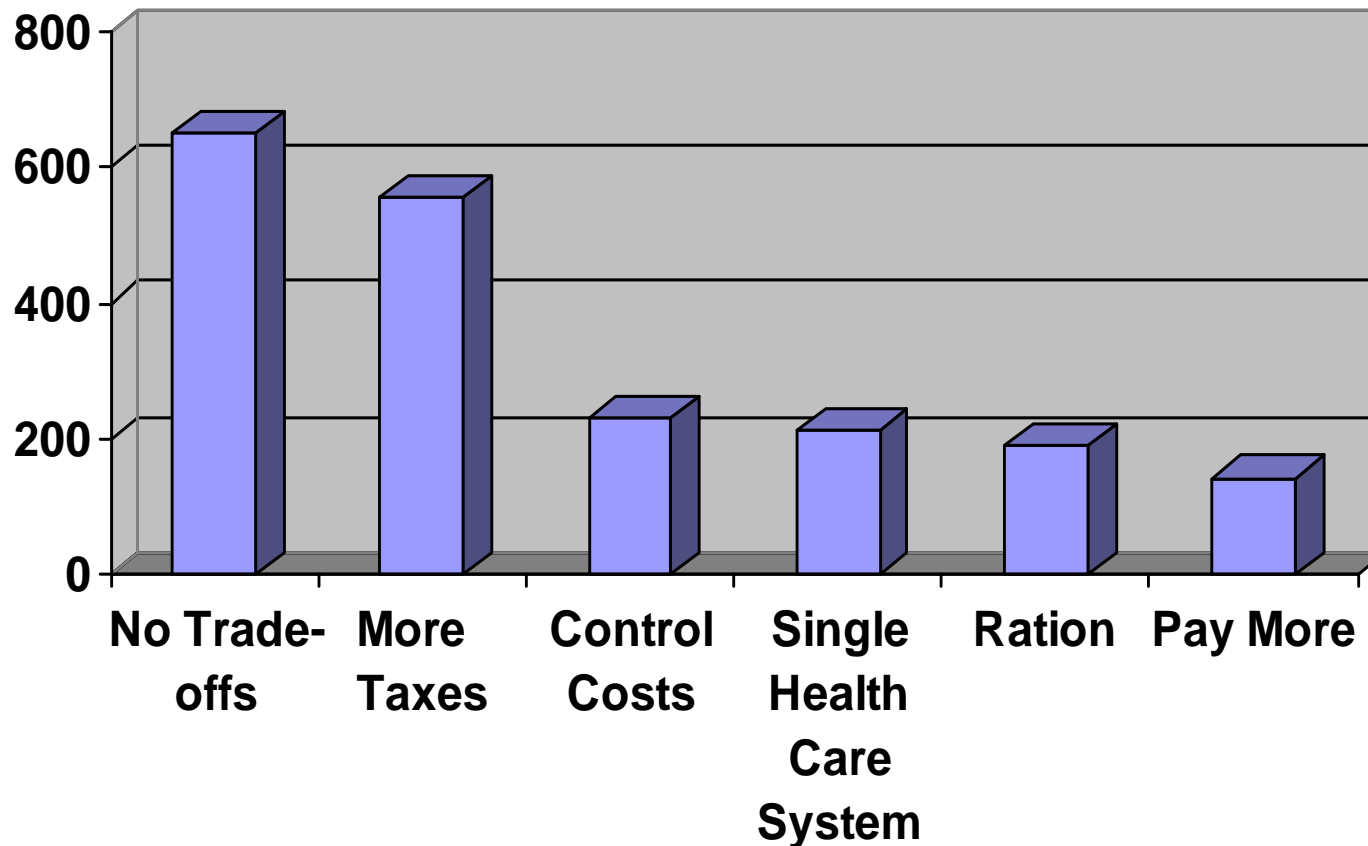


Our current way of paying for health care includes payments by individuals, employers, and government. Are there any changes you think should be made to this system?





What trade-offs do you think the American public is willing to make in either benefits or financing to ensure access to affordable, high quality health care?

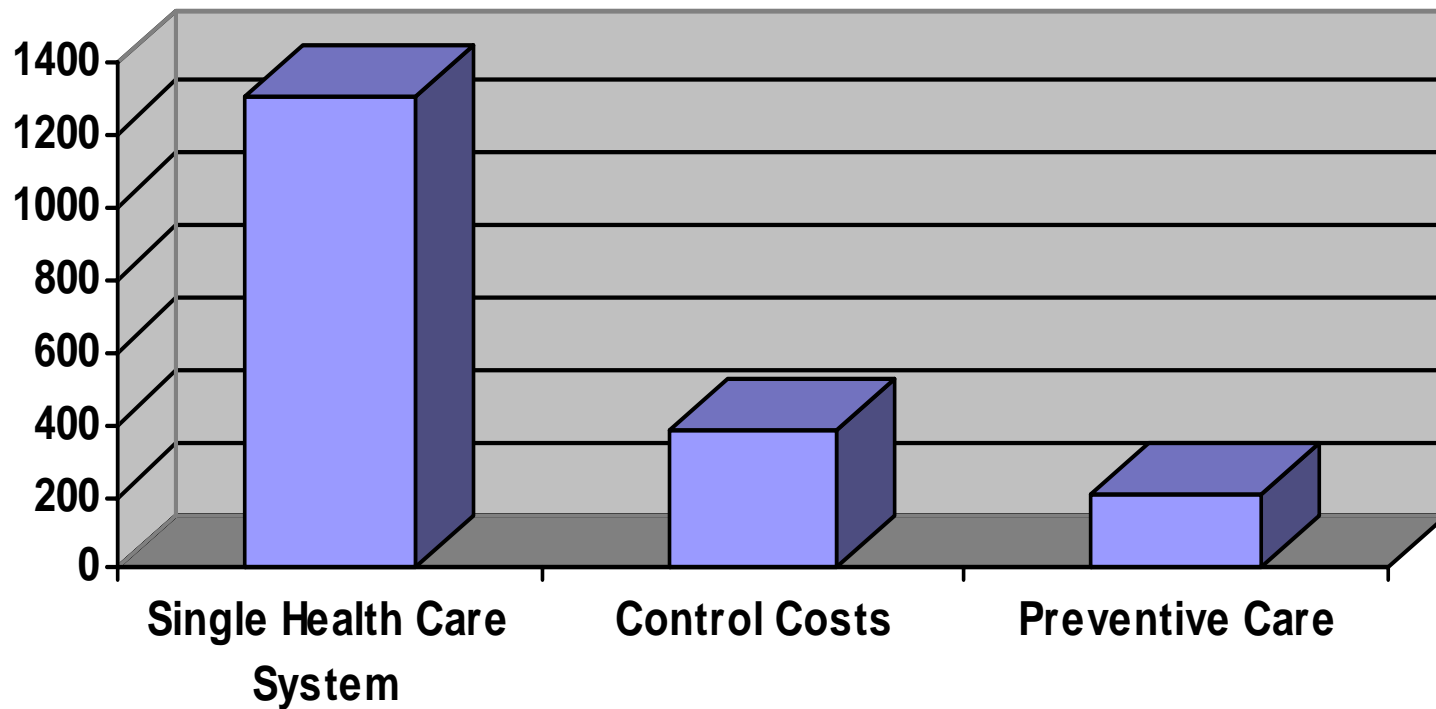




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What is your single most important recommendation to make to improve health care for all Americans?



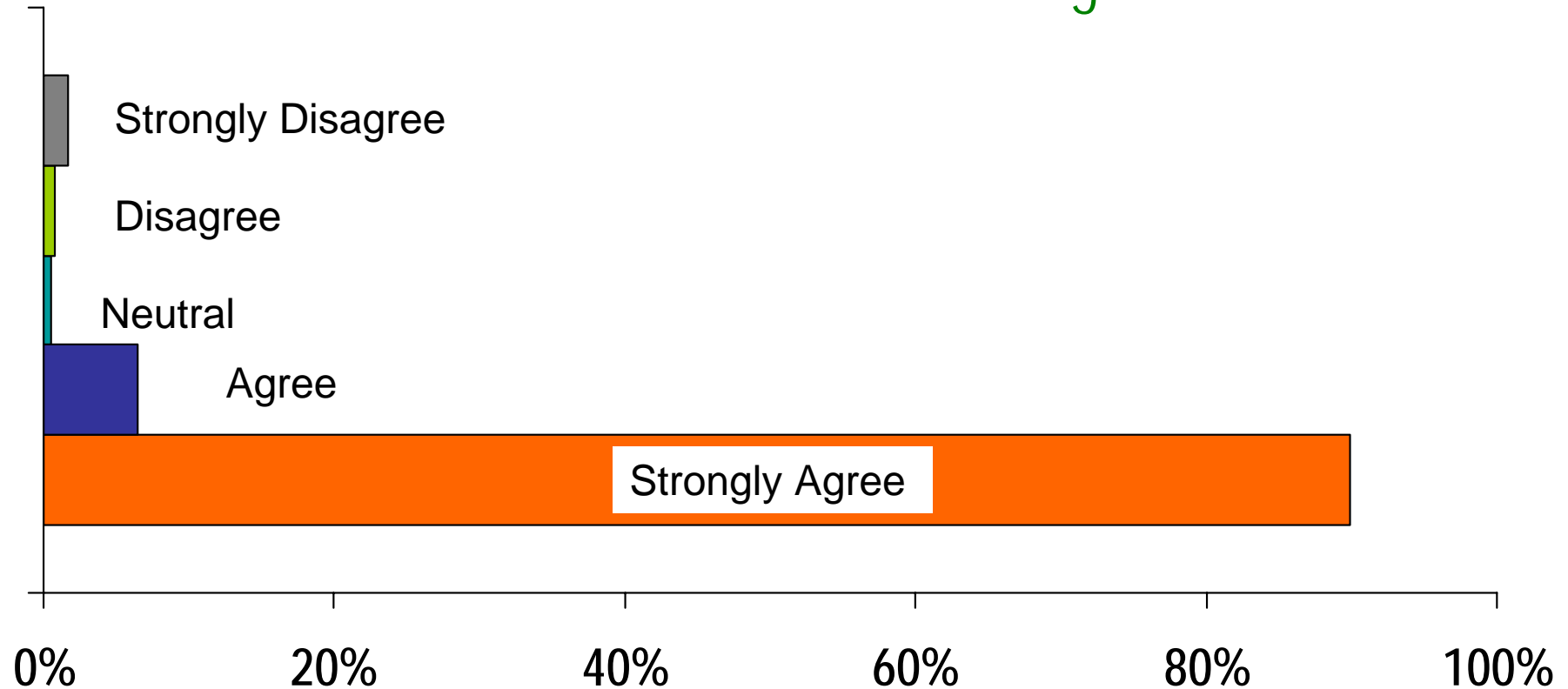


www.citizenshealth.gov: Structured questions

- Preliminary analysis of first 10 days of “final” version of Health Care Poll
 - About 1,770 responses
 - February 10-20, 2006
- Demographics:
 - Disproportionately over age 45, white, with college or graduate education



“It should be public policy (that is, a public goal set out in federal or state law) that all Americans have affordable health care insurance or other coverage.”

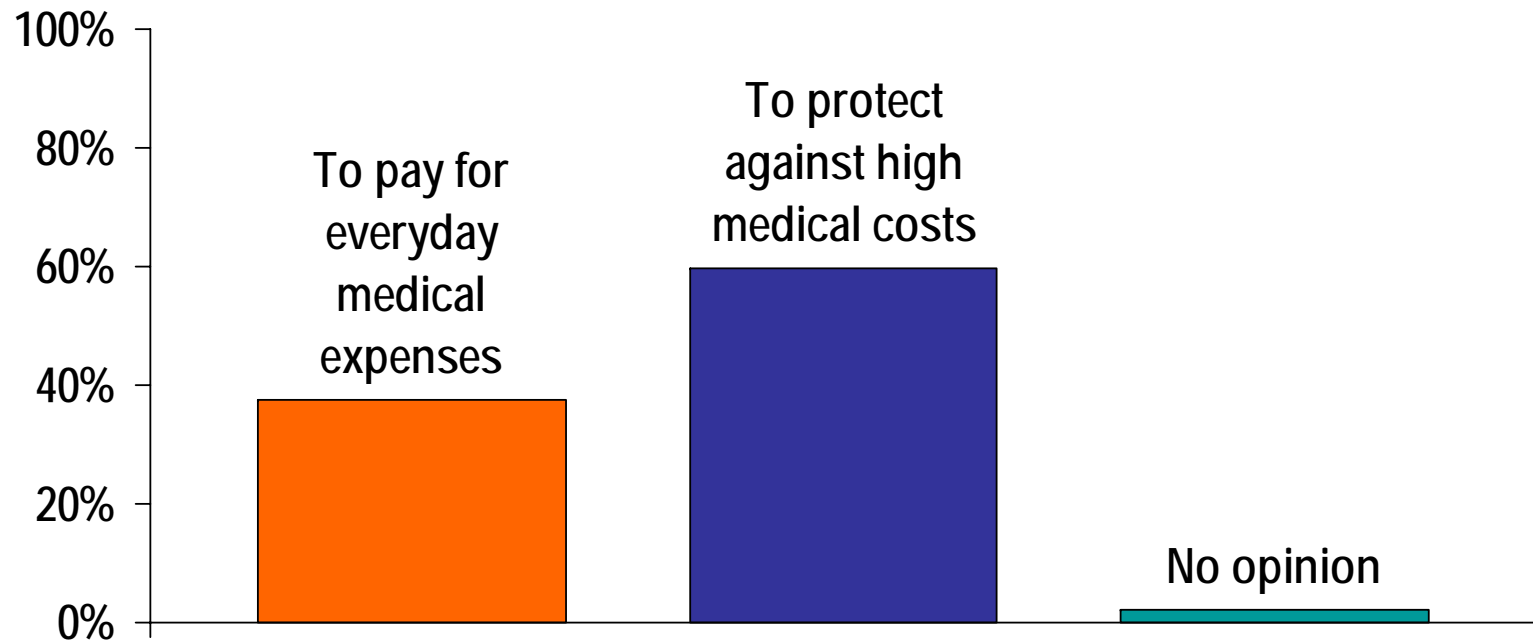




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Which one of the following do you think is the MOST important reason to have health insurance?

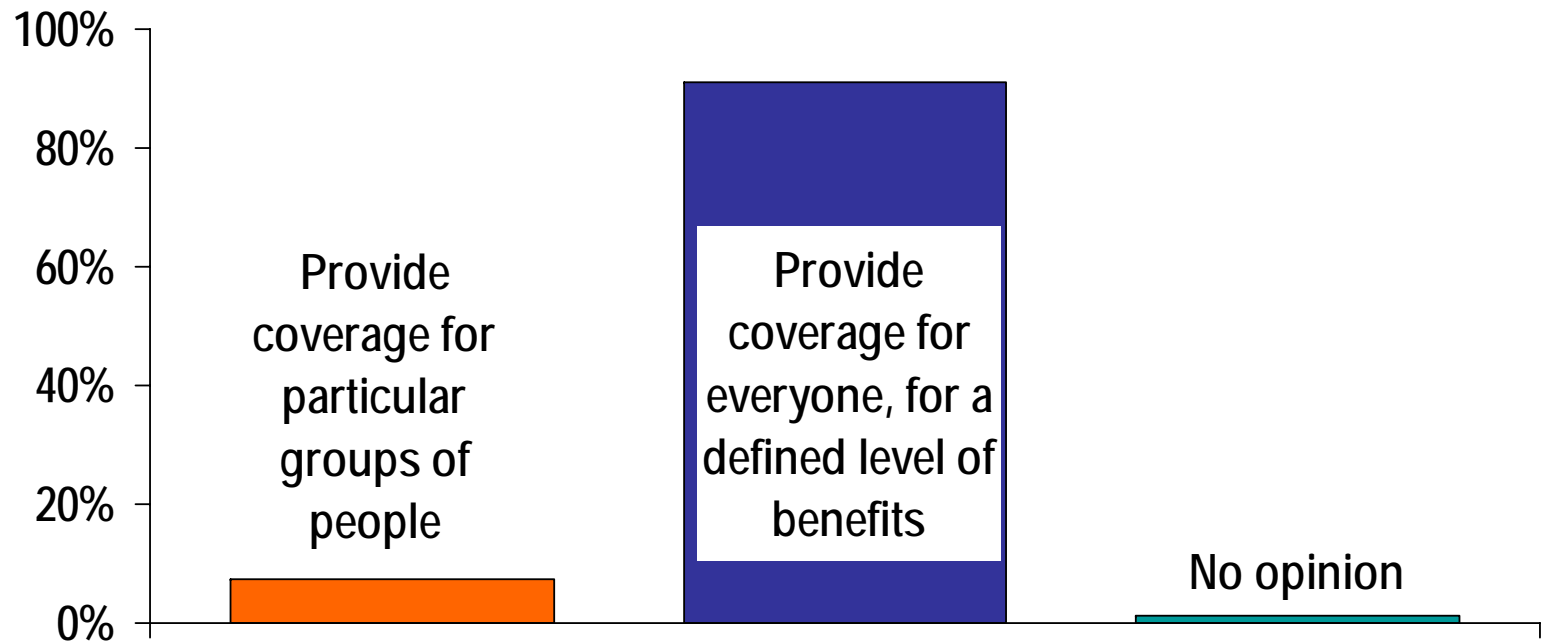




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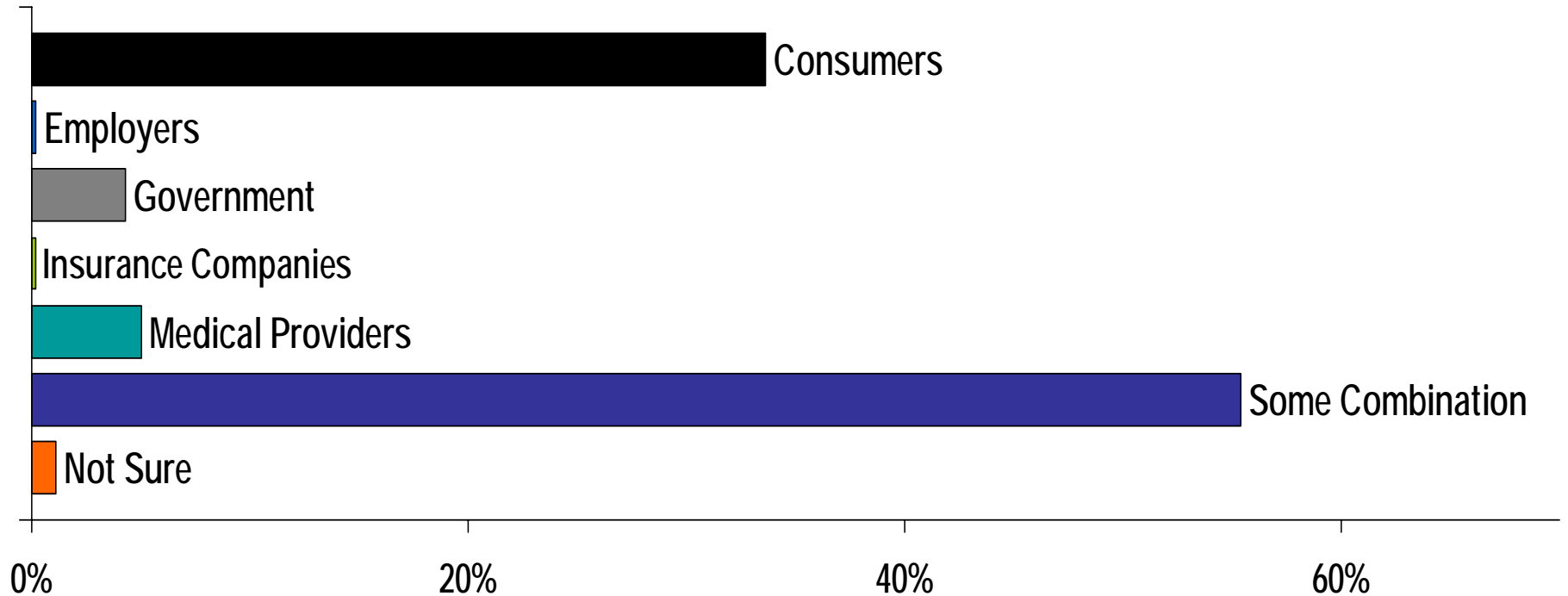


Which statement best describes your views on how health care coverage should be organized?



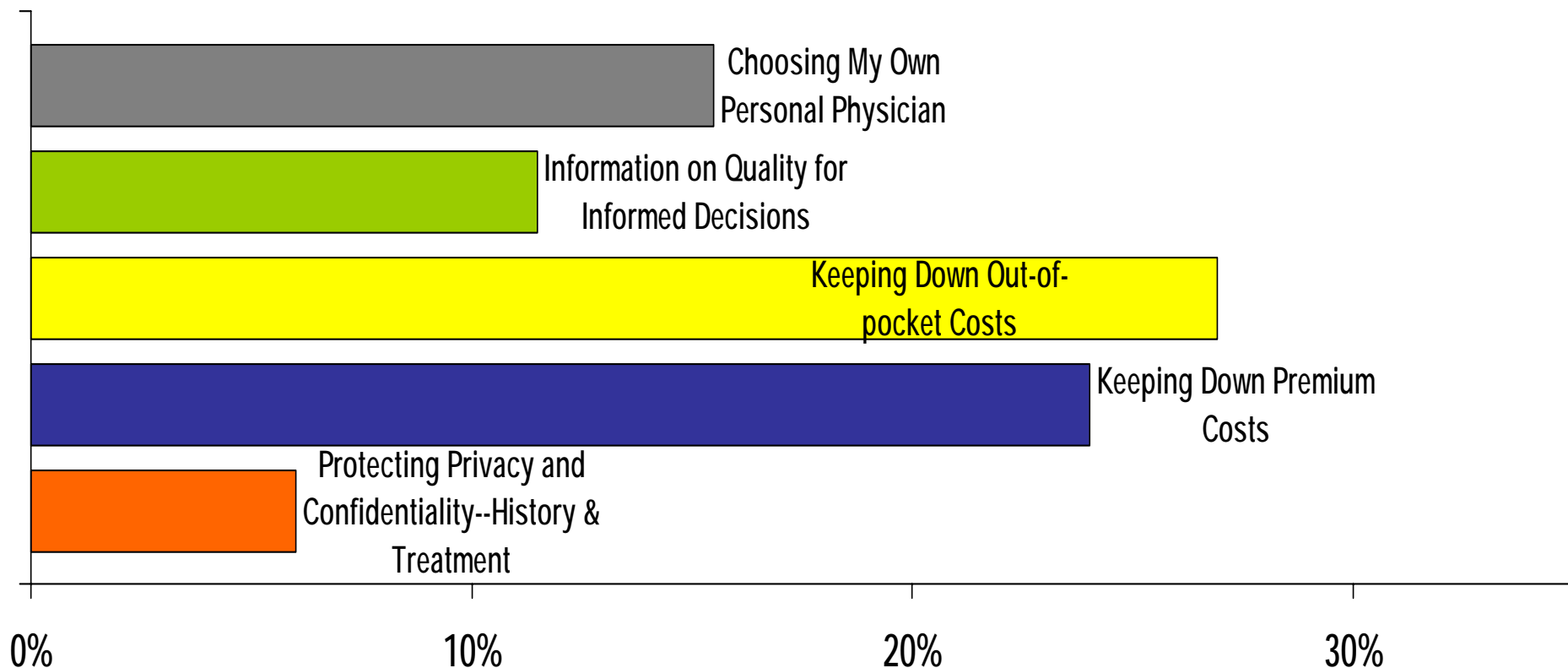


Who should decide what services are covered in "basic" health insurance?





Which of the following would be MOST important to you and your family if you have an opportunity to choose health care coverage?



Options selected by fewer than 5% of respondents are not shown.



How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about paying for health care?

% who "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"

We should all be responsible for setting aside enough money to pay for most of our health care expenses. 14.0%

We should all pay for part of our health care costs so we will be more careful about how we use health care services. 47.0%

People with health problems, who use more health services, should have to pay higher insurance premiums. 11.2%

People with higher incomes should pay higher premiums for employer-sponsored health insurance. 44.4%

People with higher incomes should pay more for health insurance they buy for themselves from insurance companies. 41.5%

Everyone should pay the same amount for health insurance. 41.4%



How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about controlling the rising costs of health care in America? (Part I)

% who "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"

Health plans/insurers should use financial incentives (such as higher payments) to hospitals and doctors that provide efficient, high-quality care. 53.1%

Health plans/insurers should not pay for high-cost technologies or treatments that have not been proven to be safe and medically effective. 44.2%

Health plans/insurers should not pay for high-cost technologies or treatments even if they have been proven to be safe and medically effective if less expensive yet equally safe and medically effective technologies or treatments are available. 47.3%

Health plans/insurers should use financial incentives (such as adjusting premiums and copayments) to encourage consumers to use more efficient and high-quality providers. 50.8%

Governments should set limits on prices for health care products, such as prescription drugs or medical devices. 78.8%



How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about controlling the rising costs of health care in America? (Part II)

% who "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"

Governments should make it harder to qualify for enrollment in their programs that provide health coverage or health care services.

5.4%

Governments should improve the administration and efficiency of their health care programs.

89.4%

The private sector should increase efforts to improve the efficiency of health care providers that are paid through private insurance.

74.5%

Doctors, hospitals, and other health care providers should invest more in computerized information systems to monitor and improve health care quality, reduce errors, and improve administrative efficiencies.

69.5%



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How much MORE would you be willing to pay (taxes, premiums, copayments, or deductibles) in a year to support efforts that would result in every American having access to affordable, high quality health care coverage and services?





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Considering the rising cost of health care, which of the following should be the MOST important priorities for public spending on health and health care in America? (Part I)

% in Respondents' Top 3 Priorities

Guaranteeing that there are enough health care providers, especially in areas such as inner cities and rural areas	26.1%
Investing in public health programs to prevent disease, promote healthy lifestyles, and protect the public during epidemics or disasters	47.3%
Guaranteeing that all Americans have health insurance	73.6%
Funding the development of computerized health information to improve the quality and efficiency of health care	9.2%



Considering the rising cost of health care, which of the following should be the MOST important priorities for public spending on health and health care in America? (Part II)

	% in Respondents' Top 3 Priorities
Funding medical education to ensure that we have enough high-quality medical professionals and health care workers	14.8%
Funding programs that help eliminate problems in access to or quality of care for minorities	13.3%
Funding biomedical and technological research	11.9%
Guaranteeing that all Americans get health care when they need it, through some form of private or public program, including "safety net" programs for those who cannot afford care otherwise	72.1%



How much do you agree or disagree with the following possible trade-offs?

% who "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"

Accepting a significant waiting time for non-critical care to get a 10% reduction in health care costs 47.0%

Paying a higher deductible in your insurance for more choice of doctors and hospitals 29.4%

Paying more in taxes to have basic health insurance coverage for all 75.4%

Expanding federal programs to cover more people, but provide fewer services to persons currently covered by those programs 13.4%

Limiting coverage for certain end-of-life care services of questionable value in order to provide more at-home and comfort care for the dying 58.4%



How much do you agree or disagree with the following options to assure coverage for all Americans? (Part I)

% who "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"

Offer uninsured Americans income tax deductions, credits, or other financial assistance to help them purchase private health insurance on their own 38.2%

Expand state government programs for low-income people, such as Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program, to provide coverage for more people without health insurance 77.2%

Rely on free market competition among doctors, hospitals, other health care providers and insurance companies, rather than having government define benefits and set prices 15.3%

Open up enrollment in national federal programs like Medicare or the federal employees' health benefit program 72.3%

Require businesses to offer health insurance to their employees 65.8%



How much do you agree or disagree with the following options to assure coverage for all Americans? (Part II)

	% who "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"
Expand neighborhood health clinics	78.3%
Create a national health plan, financed by taxpayers, in which all Americans would get their health insurance	82.1%
Require that all Americans enroll in basic health care coverage, either private or public	41.1%
Increase flexibility given states in how they use federal funds (such as Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program) to maximize coverage	55.6%
Expand current tax incentives available to employers and their employees to encourage them to offer insurance to more workers and their families	70.0%



Paper Open-ended Question Responses

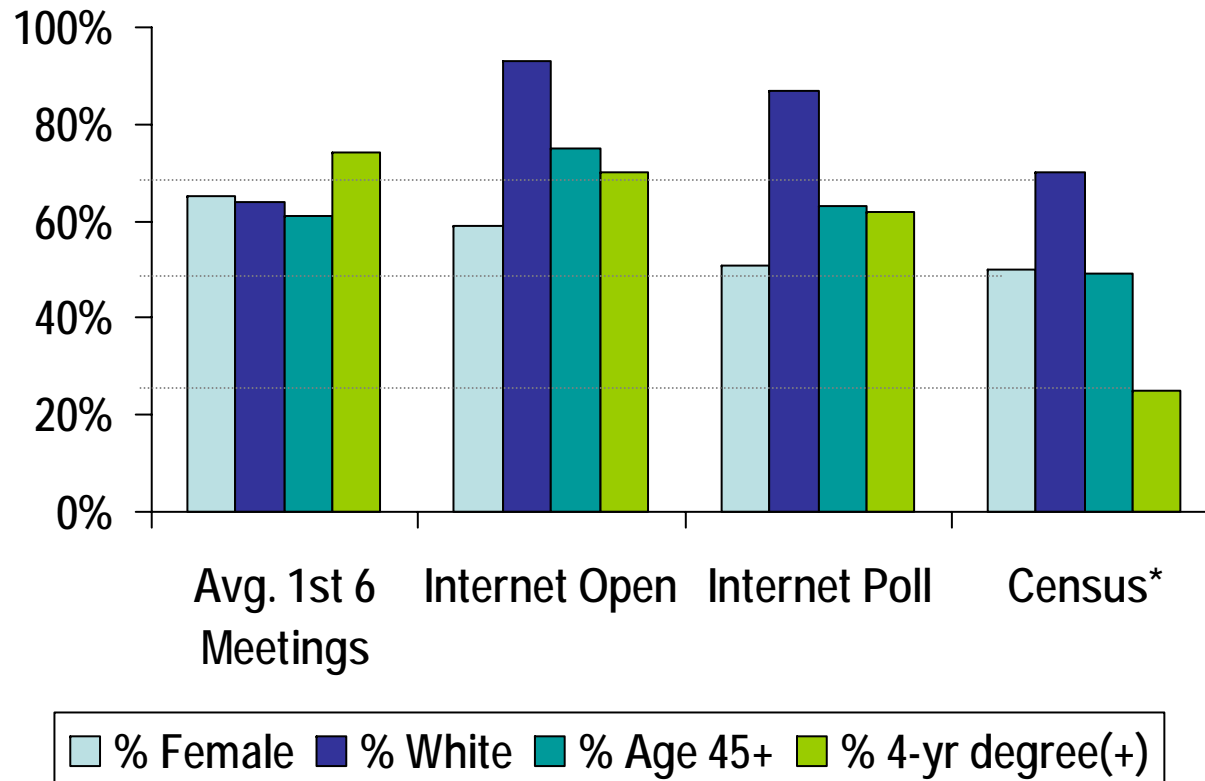
- 46 responses evaluated
- Older respondents
 - 29 age 65+, and 11 age 45-64 (2 did not respond)
- Mostly women (38 women vs. 6 men)
- Primarily highly educated
 - 15 have graduate or professional degrees, 17 Bachelor's Degrees
- All but one who answered are white, and all but one insured
- Concerned most with cost, coverage, access (some efficiency)
- Changes and recommendations focused in large part on health care for all (e.g., universal health care, single payer)
- Note: Some responses generated by religious advocacy group



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Demographics of Different Sources of Citizen Input



*Source: 2004 Census data for persons age 18 and older. White does not include persons identifying themselves as Hispanic or Latino who also identified themselves as White in Census data.