

ABORTION

Americans Split on Covering Abortion in Insurance Plans that Use Federal Subsidies

While three-in-four respondents want abortion to remain legal, only 16% personally endorse the current status quo.

[SAN FRANCISCO – Jan. 14, 2010] – People in the United States are divided on the idea of allowing abortion coverage in any health insurance plan that relies on federal subsidies, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

The online survey of a representative national sample of 1,002 American adults sought to review the opinion of respondents on a wide range of topics related to abortion.

Personal Feeling

When asked what their personal feeling about abortion is, only 16 per cent of respondents agree with the status-quo: allowing the procedure with the same restrictions that are currently in place.

Three-in-ten Americans (30%) would permit abortion only in cases of rape, incest and to save the woman's life, while 13 per cent would only consent to the procedure to save the woman's life.

One-in-five Americans (19%) think abortion should be permitted in all cases, and nine per cent would allow the procedure, but subject to greater restrictions than now.

KEY FINDINGS

- **30% say abortion should be permitted only in cases of rape, incest, or to save the woman's life**
- **44% agree with banning abortion coverage through insurance companies subsidized by the government; 42% disagree**
- **31% claim pregnant women don't have enough information about alternatives to abortion**
- Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From January 8 to January 10, 2009, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,002 American adults who are Springboard America panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of the United States.

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Legality

While 14 per cent of Americans say abortion should be deemed illegal in all circumstances, 49 per cent say it should remain legal in certain cases, and 27 per cent say it should always be allowed under the law. While only about one-in-ten Democrats and Independents call for an outright ban on abortion, the proportion reaches 23 per cent among Republicans.

Funding

An amendment to the proposed health care reform bill would ban abortion coverage in any health insurance plan using federal subsidies. This issue has proven divisive, with 44 per cent of Americans supporting the proposed ban, and 42 per cent opposing it. Two-in-five Republicans (40%) “strongly agree” with the ban.

Information for Pregnant Women

A majority of respondents (55%) consider that pregnant women have wide access to information about alternatives to abortion such as adoption and counseling. But three-in-ten Americans (31%) disagree, saying that women lack enough information on these alternatives.

Women Under the Age of 18

About three quarters of Americans (74%) of U.S. respondents think women under the age of 18 should be required parental consent, or consent by their legal guardians, in order to access an abortion procedure.

Re-opening the Abortion Debate

However different the opinions of Americans are on the legality of abortion, half of respondents (49%) say there is no point in re-opening the debate on this subject, whereas 35 per cent believe a debate about abortion in the U.S. is long overdue. Republicans are evenly divided on this question, while a majority of Democrats believe that no debate on abortion is necessary at this point.

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Abortion						
What is your personal feeling about abortion?						
	Gender			Political Affiliation		
	Total	Male	Female	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Abortion should be permitted in all cases	19%	14%	24%	26%	9%	18%
Abortion should be permitted, but subject to greater restrictions than now	9%	10%	8%	10%	8%	9%
Abortion should be permitted only in cases such as rape, incest and to save the woman's life	30%	32%	28%	27%	36%	27%
Abortion should only be permitted to save the woman's life	13%	12%	13%	9%	22%	10%
Abortion should be permitted, but with the same restrictions that are currently in place	16%	19%	13%	17%	14%	21%
Not sure	13%	13%	13%	11%	11%	15%

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Abortion						
Do you think abortion should be legal under any circumstances, legal only under certain circumstances, or illegal in all circumstances?						
		Gender		Political Affiliation		
	Total	Male	Female	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Legal under any circumstances	27%	23%	31%	32%	18%	33%
Legal only under certain circumstances	49%	54%	44%	48%	53%	46%
Illegal in all circumstances	14%	12%	16%	11%	23%	10%
Not sure	10%	11%	9%	9%	6%	12%

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Abortion

As you may know, there have been a lot of discussions lately about health care reform in the United States. An amendment to the proposed health care reform bill would ban abortion coverage in any health insurance plan using federal subsidies. Overall, do you agree or disagree with banning abortion coverage in any health insurance plan using federal subsidies?

	Gender			Political Affiliation		
	Total	Male	Female	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Strongly agree	25%	28%	23%	19%	40%	26%
Moderately agree	19%	21%	18%	24%	15%	15%
Moderately disagree	17%	21%	14%	16%	18%	18%
Strongly disagree	25%	20%	28%	26%	18%	31%
Not sure	14%	10%	17%	14%	9%	10%

Abortion

In your view, should women under the age of 18 require the consent of their parents or legal guardians in order to have an abortion?

	Gender			Political Affiliation		
	Total	Male	Female	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Yes	74%	76%	72%	69%	84%	68%
No	16%	14%	18%	20%	11%	19%
Not sure	10%	10%	10%	11%	5%	14%

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Abortion						
From what you have seen, read or heard, would you say that pregnant women in the United States have access to enough information about alternatives to abortion, such as adoption, counseling for pregnant women, etc.?						
	Gender			Political Affiliation		
	Total	Male	Female	Democrat	Republican	Independent
They DO have enough access to information about alternatives	55%	56%	54%	59%	59%	52%
They DO NOT have enough access to information about alternatives	31%	27%	34%	27%	33%	35%
Not sure	14%	17%	12%	15%	8%	14%

Abortion						
Finally, which of the following statements comes closest to your own point of view?						
	Gender			Political Affiliation		
	Total	Male	Female	Democrat	Republican	Independent
There is no point in re-opening a debate about abortion in the U.S. right now	49%	50%	49%	53%	43%	48%
A debate about abortion is long overdue in the U.S., and the discussion should be re-opened	35%	34%	36%	34%	41%	37%
Not sure	16%	16%	15%	14%	16%	14%

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Angus Reid Public Opinion is a practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995

Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum (www.angusreidforum.com), Springboard America (www.springboardamerica.com) and Springboard UK (www.springboarduk.com) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.

Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election.

<http://bit.ly/4zxf1S>

Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.

More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at <http://bit.ly/3z0u1l>

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

Copies of this poll are available on our website:

<http://www.visioncritical.com/category/global-opinions-and-trends>

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