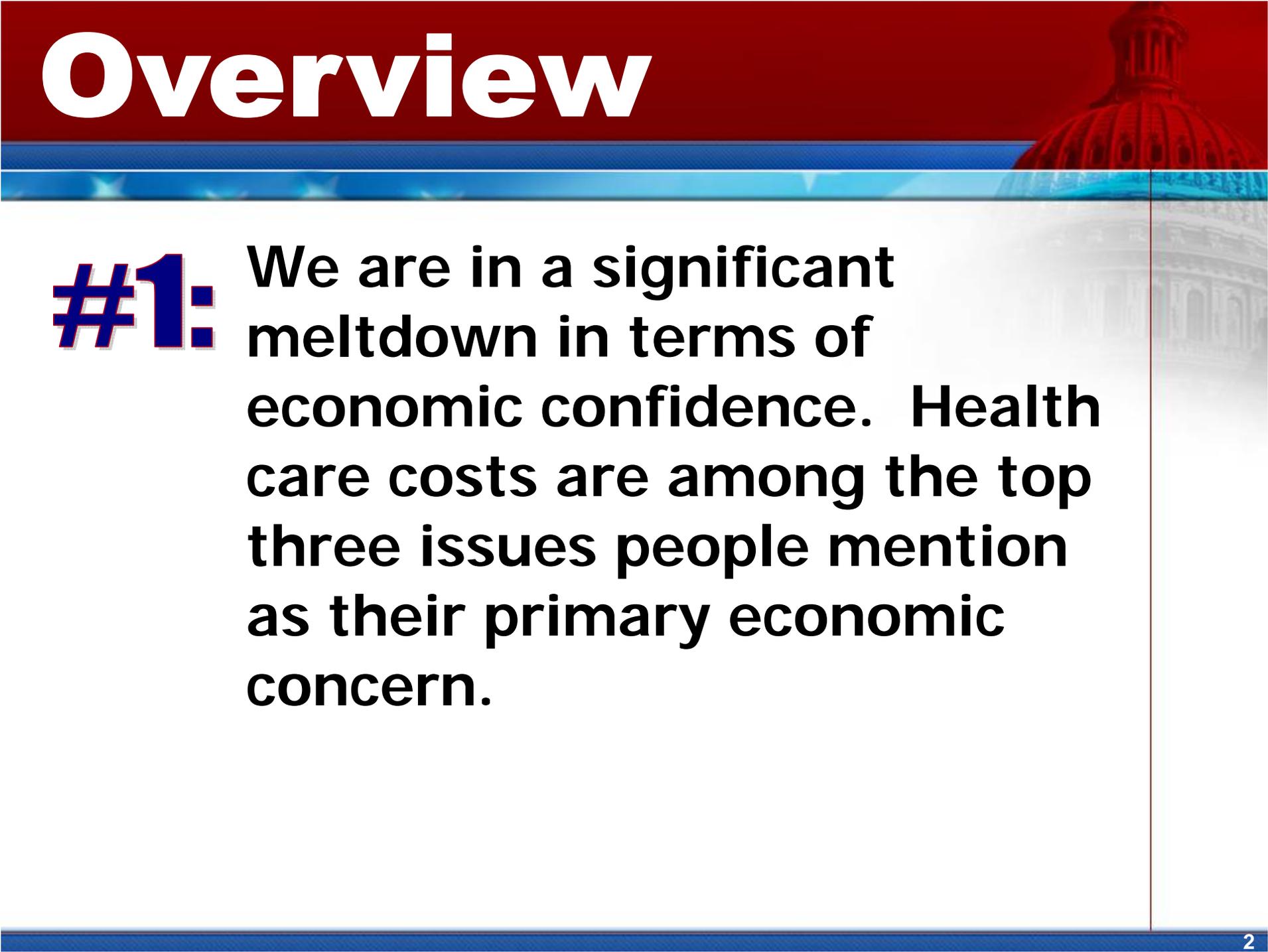


The background is a composite image. On the left, there is a stylized American flag with a grid overlay, showing stars and stripes in shades of blue and red. On the right, there is a classical building dome, likely the U.S. Capitol, with a statue on top. The text "Talking About Health Care" is centered in white, bold, sans-serif font.

Talking About Health Care

Overview



#1: We are in a significant meltdown in terms of economic confidence. Health care costs are among the top three issues people mention as their primary economic concern.

Overview

#2:

More directly, three out of ten people say the current health care system is not meeting their needs. Since 1992, when this percentage has been at 30% or higher, it has been a harbinger of a significant health care debate.

Overview



#3: Voters say Congress should work first to make health care more affordable rather than the first priority being covering more of the uninsured.

Overview

- ✓ **Start by connecting to how people feel about the current health care system and acknowledge their concerns about getting/keeping affordable coverage.**
- ✓ **Talk about cost in terms of its impact on people and families.**
- ✓ **Talk about poor quality care caused by overuse, misuse, waste, fraud, and doctors having to practice defensive medicine which drives up health care costs.**
- ✓ **Take advantage of the strong belief a health system that puts its emphasis on keeping people healthy would be less expensive.**
- ✓ **Have an aspirational goal about the reason controlling cost is so important. People easily believe there is a link between high cost and the inability to cover more people.**

Overview

#4: Something beats nothing.

When we test only the Democrats' positions and the GOP rebuttal, this was **not** effective.

Republicans have to have a plan.

After rating each individual element of the plan, overall, 68% favor/27% oppose a Republican health plan.

The Republican Health Care Plan Ranked By % Favor

Parts Of Health Care Plan	% Favor	% Oppose
Portability	84%	12%
Health insurance industry cannot refuse or deny coverage	77%	19%
National Marketplace / AHPs	75%	20%
Medical Liability Reform	69%	26%
Health Savings Accounts	67%	28%

Focus group research and other surveys suggest there are two elements that test well across every audience:

Requiring health insurance companies to cover pre-existing conditions.

Providing small businesses with tax credits to help provide health coverage to their employees.

Overview

#5: Don't confuse "universal" and "national" health care

National health care means government run. That's bad. Universal health care means everyone is covered. That's good. We should be for what's good -- but in a way consistent with GOP values.

Universal health care won't happen overnight -- but a goal should be to provide more options for coverage.

The background is a composite image. The top portion shows a blue field with white stars, resembling the American flag. The middle portion features a red and white wireframe globe. The bottom portion shows the white dome and columns of the US Capitol building. The text is centered over the globe and flag sections.

The Role of Government in Health Care

**Do you think it is the responsibility of the
Federal government to...**

**Provide universal
government-run health care
coverage to all Americans**

28%

**Assist those Americans who
can least afford health care
coverage to purchase it**

32%

**It is not the Federal
government's responsibility**

36%

Top Sub-Groups

Provide government-run health care coverage

Democrat men	53%
Strong Democrats	50%
Total Democrats	48%
White Democrats	47%
African Americans	46%
Soft Democrats	44%
Obama voters	44%
Democrats women	43%
Mid-Atlantic region	38%
Northeast region	37%
Urban women	36%
Retired voters	36%
Age 18-34	35%
Men age 18-34	35%
Women age 18-34	35%
Other ethnicities	35%
Post Grad education	35%
Retired men age 60+	34%
White Northeast	34%
Pacific region	34%
Urban voters	34%
Retired women age 60+	33%
Men college+	33%
Not married voters	33%

Assist those Americans who can least afford health care coverage

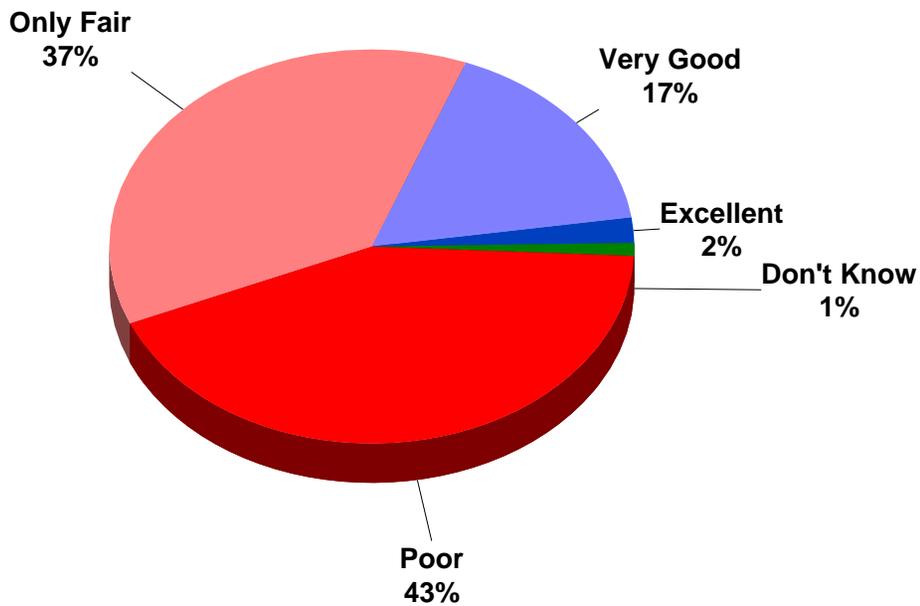
New England region	46%
Women at home	44%
Age 35-44	43%
Rural women	43%
Farm Belt region	42%
Women age 35-54	40%
Other ethnicities	40%
Democrat women	40%
Women less than college	39%
HH income under \$20K	39%
White Northeast	38%
Working women	37%
White Democrats	37%
Strong Democrats	37%
Obama voters	37%
Women	36%
"13th" Generation (age 26-49)	36%
Men age 35-54	36%
Northeast region	36%
Mountain	36%
Suburban women	36%
Rural voters	36%
Women under \$60K	36%
Women \$60K+	36%

It is not the Federal government's responsibility

Strong Republicans	66%
Republican men	62%
All Republicans	61%
Republican women	60%
McCain Voters	60%
Soft Republicans	56%
White South	52%
Men age 55+	49%
Men age 65+	46%
White men	45%
White West	44%
Outer South	44%
South region	43%
HH income \$100K+	43%
Age 55-64	42%
Deep South	42%
Independent men	42%
Men less than college degree	42%
HH income \$80K-\$100K	42%
Rural men	42%
"Baby Boomers" (age 47-64)	41%
College graduates	41%
Men \$60K+	41%

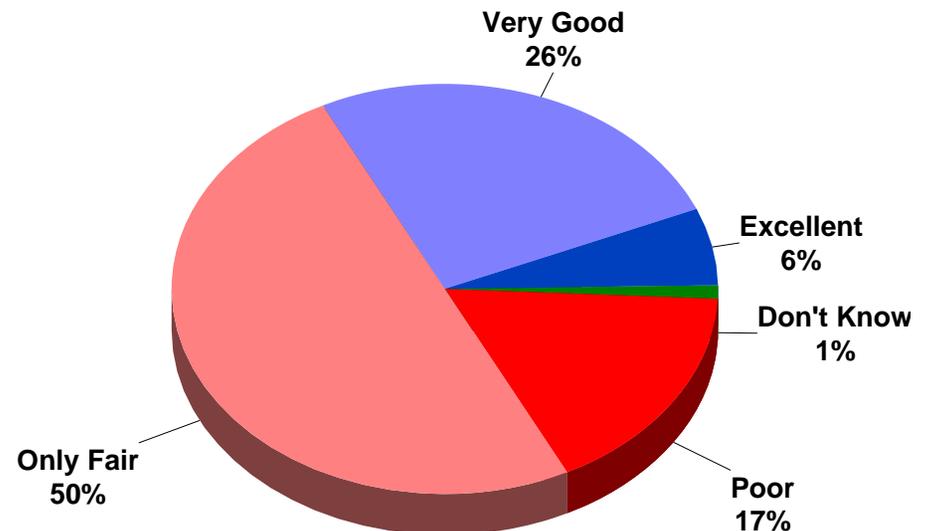
How good a job do you think the **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT** would do if given the responsibility of implementing and actually running the health care system?

Total Excellent / Very Good 19%
Total Fair / Poor 80%



How good a job do you think the **PRIVATE SECTOR**, that is the doctors, hospitals and insurance companies do in actually running the current health care system?

Total Excellent / Very Good 32%
Total Fair / Poor 67%

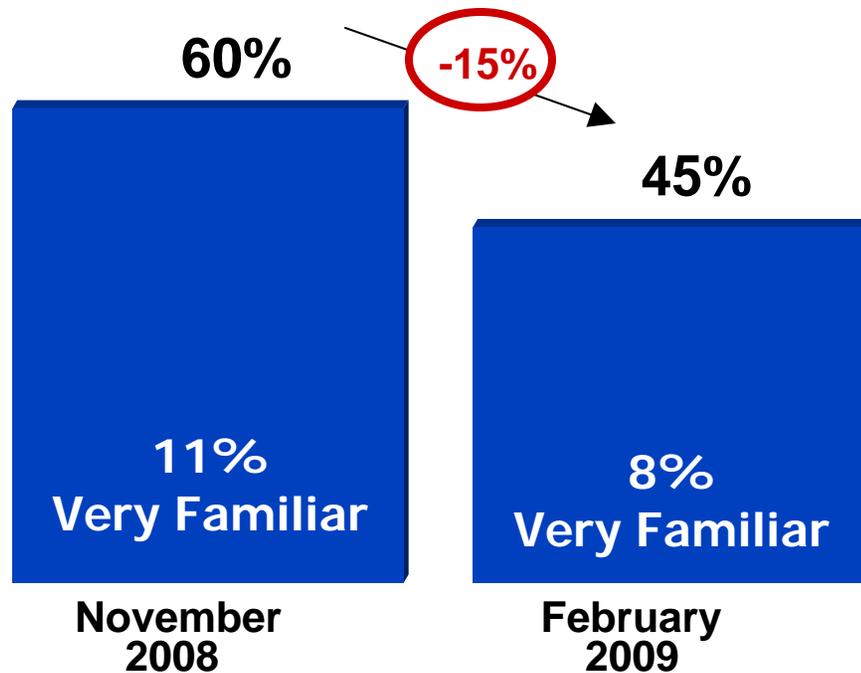




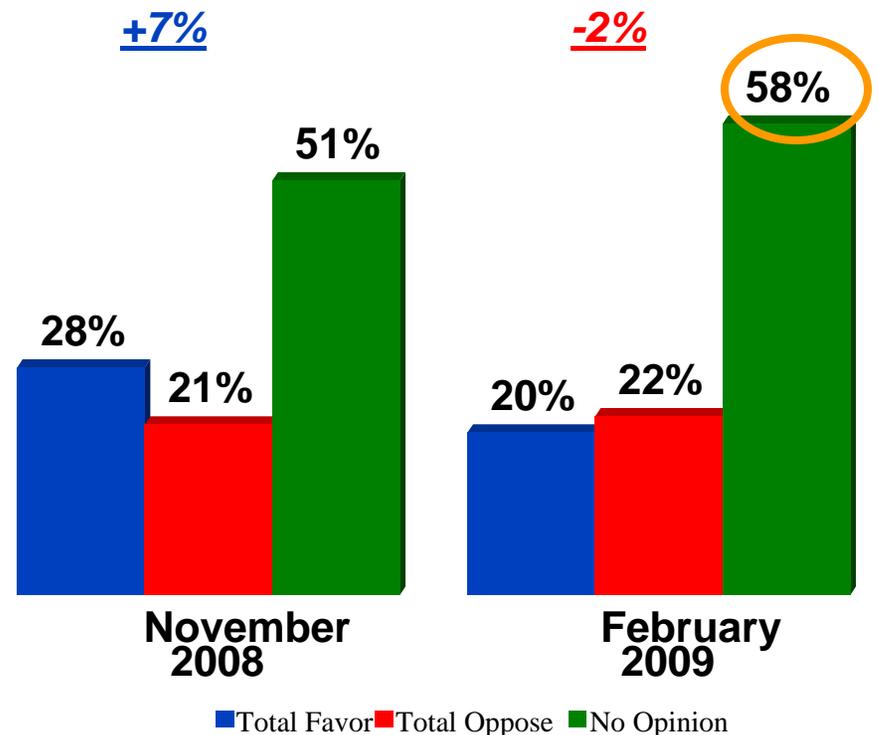
President Obama's Proposed Health Care Plan

There has been a sharp drop in the percentage of voters saying they are familiar with President Obama's proposed health care plan since November. More than half of voters do not yet have an opinion about Obama's plan which provides an opportunity to shape opinion.

Familiarity With Obama's Proposed Health Care Plan



Obama's Proposed Health Care Plan Ballot

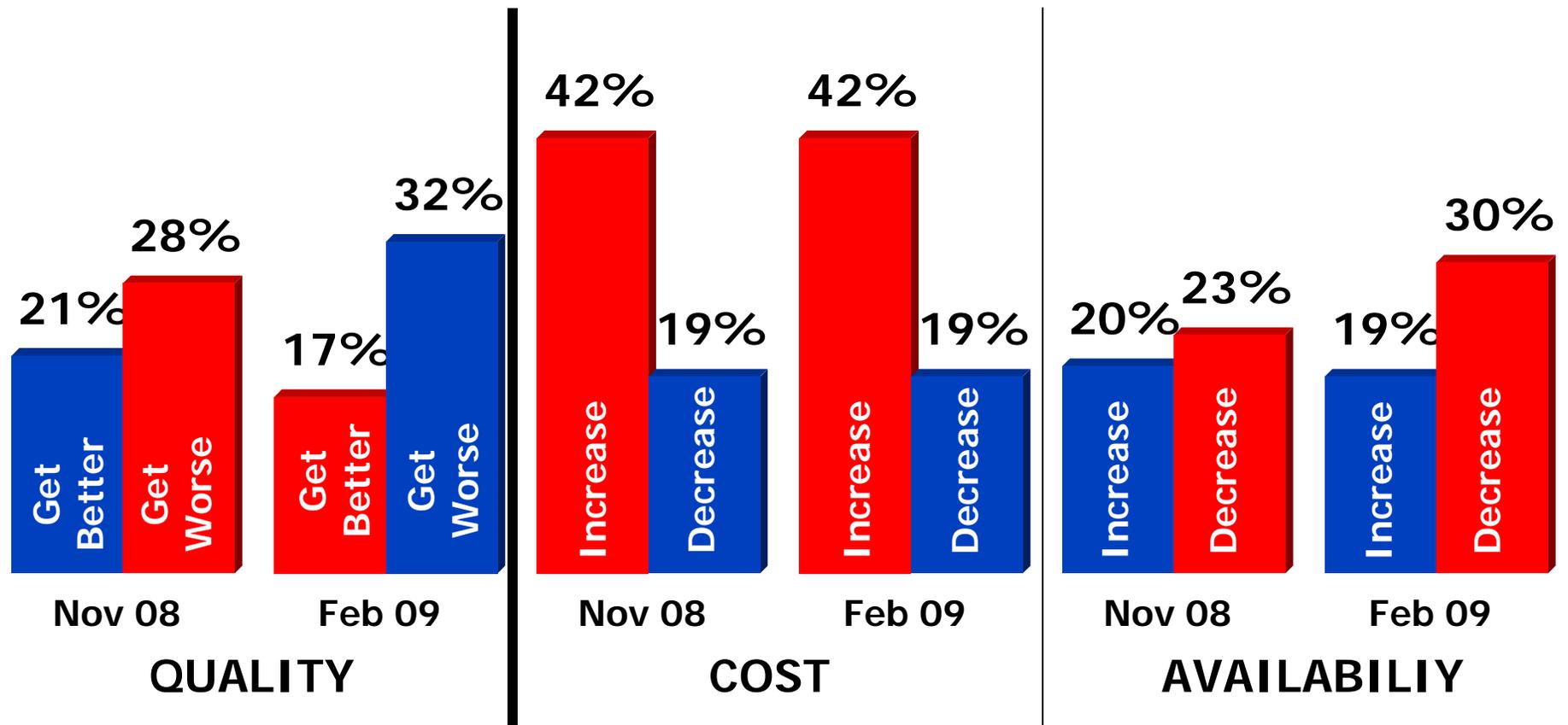


Thinking now about President Obama's proposed health care plan... how familiar would you say you are with President Obama's proposed health care plan?

Based on what you know, do you favor or oppose President Obama's proposed health care plan, or do you not yet have an opinion?

There is currently no strongly perceived benefit to President Obama's health care plan related to your quality, cost, or availability of healthcare.

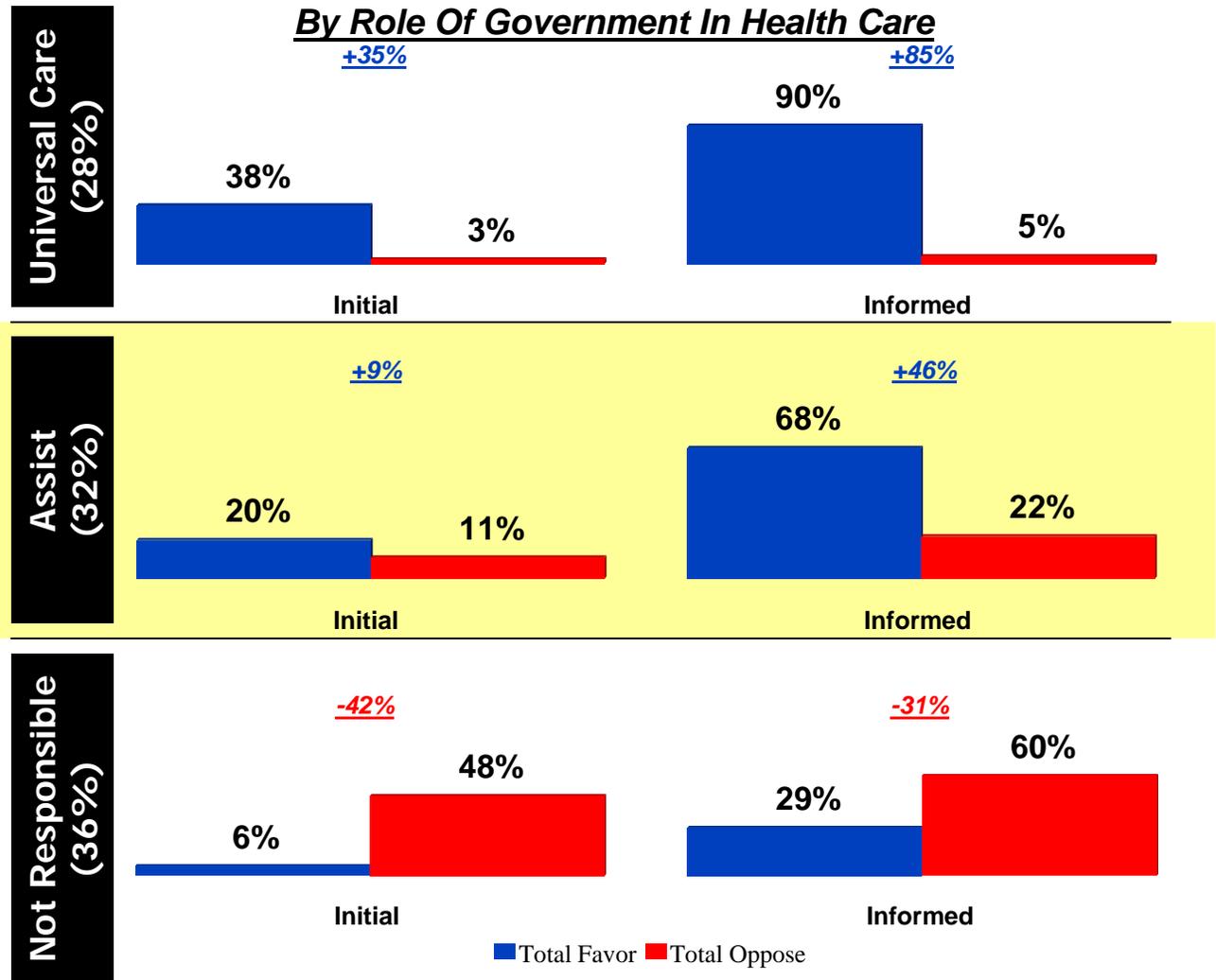
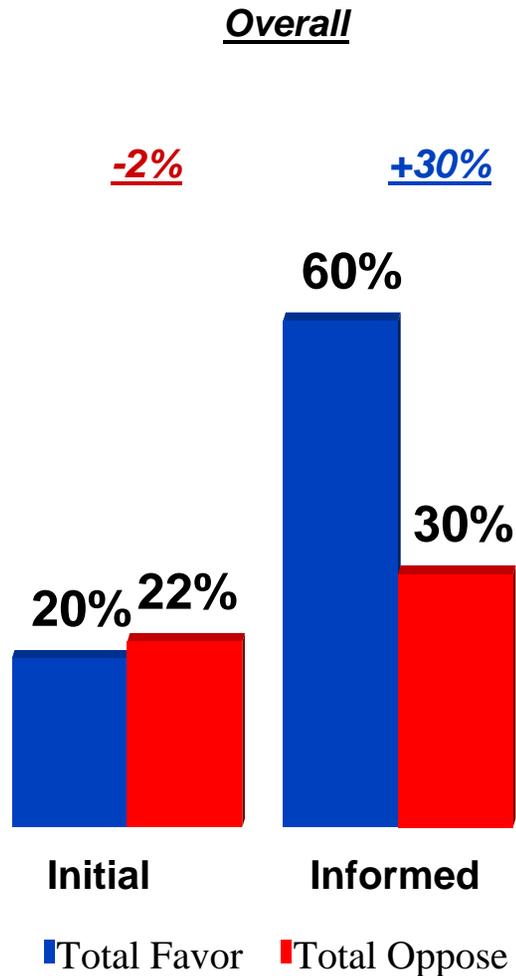
Perceived Change In Your Health Care If Obama's Health Care Reform Bill Passes



Now, if President Obama and Congress agree and pass a health care reform bill, do you think that the quality/cost/availability of health care you receive will...

Support for Obama's health care plan increases, even among swing voter groups, after hearing the basic elements of Obama's plan, but with no negative information about the proposed plan.

Initial Versus Informed Ballot



Now having heard more about President Obama's proposed health care plan, do you favor or oppose it?

Among the **30%** of voters who oppose Obama's plan, the top reason for opposing it was...

- It will establish a new government health care plan.



The Public Plan

Let's be clear...



The Democrats are using *OUR* language of choice, competition and cost control as a means to sell a vast expansion of the government's role in health care!

The most compelling arguments for supporters of the creation of a public plan the Democrats have tested so far include:



A public health insurance plan will provide people the choice of an affordable plan that includes a standard, comprehensive package of benefits at least the same as the benefits Members of Congress get, including a wide choice of doctors.



Private health insurers will always find ways to put profits before people. That's why we need an independent non-profit public health insurance plan that is not driven by making higher profits, in order to control costs and guarantee access to quality affordable health care.



A public health insurance plan will increase competition and rein in costs because the private and public plans will have to play by the same set of rules.

The most compelling argument across all initial focus groups for opponents of the creation of a public plan was:

- ✘ A new government health plan would encourage employers to stop offering private health care coverage. According to an independent research firm, this would mean more than 18.6 million employees would lose their private coverage and be forced to join the new federal government run health plan.**

Looking at some of the other top messages we tested for opponents of the creation of a public plan, we would suggest using the following:

- ✘ By setting up a new government health plan to compete with private plans, the government would become the referee and a player in the same game. The government could determine when it wasn't getting the results it wanted and create rules to change the results of the game, unfairly handcuffing private plans from being able to adequately serve their customers.
- ✘ A new government health plan will only be able to control costs by offering a one-size-fits-all benefits package. This type of plan would limit your choices of doctors and treatment options. This plan would be designed and run by Congress. Because it's managed by the government, it will be slow to add benefits that cover new, more cost-effective treatments and would mean patients don't receive the appropriate, high quality care they need.
- ✘ Independent analysts estimate that as many as 48 million people would be placed in the new government health insurance plan which would add hundreds of billions of dollars in new government spending. Creating new government health programs is a bad idea as Medicare is already facing a very serious financial crisis. According to the Medicare trustees, Medicare is expected to start running a deficit within the next decade. How can we afford to keep our promise to seniors if we put more and more people on government health care?

We briefly tested some different words and phrases to describe to describe the public plan in some initial focus groups. Of the names we tested, the most negative were:

Name	Number of Respondents Saying This Phrase is Negative Out of 33 Respondents
A government-run health insurance plan	30
A government-run health care plan	30
A federal health care plan created by Congress	28
A public health insurance plan like Medicare	27
A socialized health care plan	24
A federal health insurance plan	13
A public health insurance plan	8