



POLL BRIEF

February 2026

New statewide poll shows that California voters support major health care reform and a state-single payer system

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the last year, we've seen unprecedented federal funding cuts to essential health care programs like Medicaid, Medicare, and the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Last July, Trump and the Republicans in Congress passed over \$1 trillion in cuts to Medicaid which puts as many as 17 million people at risk of losing their health care and will result in an average of 51,000 more deaths each year. In California, up to 3.4 million people could lose their health care coverage if no action is taken. Republicans in Congress also refused to extend ACA subsidies in December, causing premiums to more than double on average for the 24 million people in the US that rely on it.

Our health care system is in a worsening crisis. In California, legislators have an opportunity to lead the way and guarantee health care to all residents by enacting a single-payer health care system at the state level, also called CalCare. A new statewide poll, commissioned by the California Nurses Association with David Binder Research, shows that voters across the state and across many backgrounds have a strong desire for major health care reform, and support the implementation of a state single-payer system.



CALCARE

California Guaranteed Health Care for All

KEY FINDINGS

- » Nearly two-thirds of all voters (64 percent) say California's health care system needs major reforms
- » 42 percent of voters say it's gotten harder to afford health care in the past several years, and 33 percent have skipped or delayed care due to cost
- » A supermajority of Democratic voters (86 percent) support a proposal for a single-payer health care system in California
- » Half of all voters and 76 percent of Democrats would be more likely to support a candidate for Governor if they were to run on creating a single-payer system

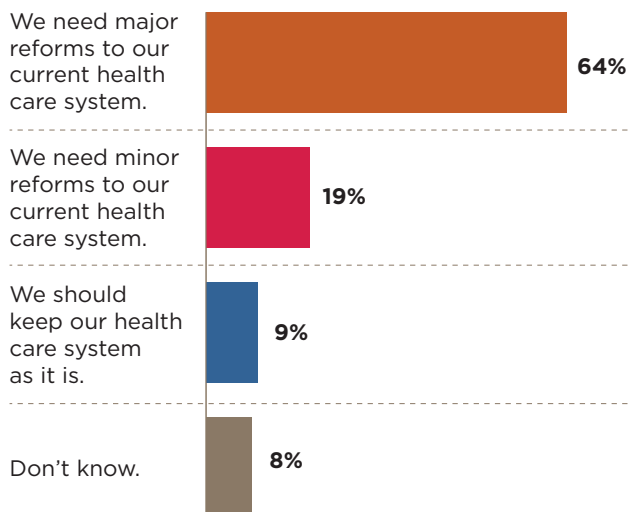
OUR PATIENTS. OUR UNION. OUR VOICE.



California
Nurses
Association

Nearly two-thirds of all voters (64 percent) say California's health care system needs major reforms

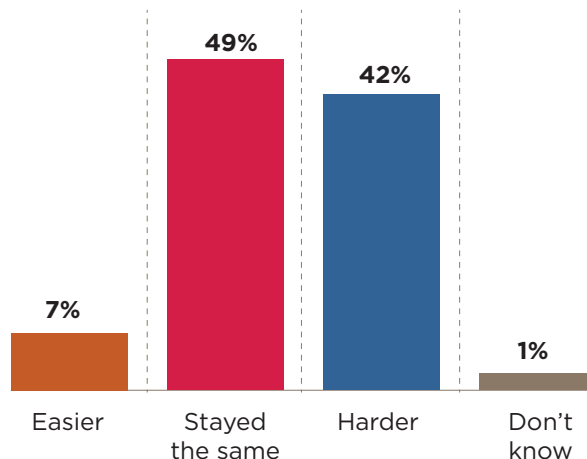
Thinking about California's health care system, which of the following statements comes closest to your view?



Across demographics, voters in California agree that major reform to our health care system is needed. Voters surveyed were three times more likely to say they supported major reforms as opposed to minor reforms.

42 percent of voters say it's gotten harder to afford health care in the past several years

In the past several years, has it gotten easier or harder for you and your family to afford the health care that you need, or has it stayed about the same?



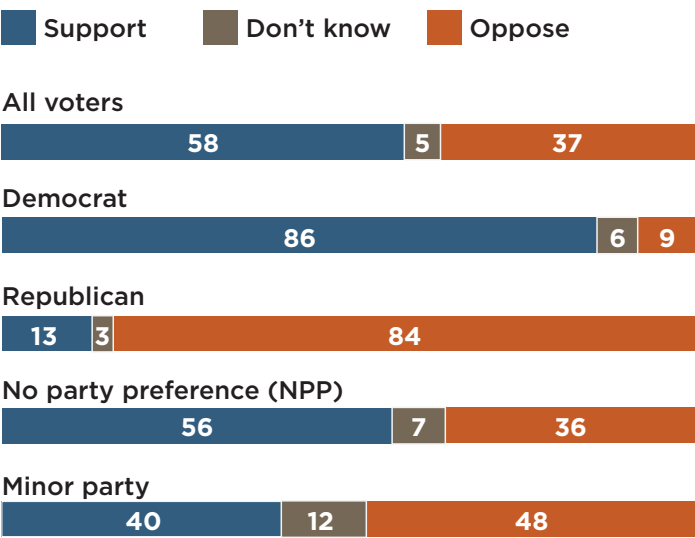
When asked about affordability, 42 percent of voters reported that health care had become harder for them and their families to afford over the last few years. 49 percent reported that affordability had remained about the same for them. One-third said that they or a family member delayed seeking health care due to costs in the past year, with 63 percent of them saying it made the health condition worse.



A supermajority of Democratic voters (86 percent) support a proposal for a single-payer health care system in California

There is a proposal to transition to a single-payer health care system, commonly called Medicare for All nationally, in California for all residents. This would replace all Medicare, Medi-Cal, Covered California, and private job-based insurance plans with a single statewide, government-run program that would provide health care at no cost at the point of service for all people who live in California, regardless of income or immigration status. The system would cover the full range of health care services: physical health, mental health, dental, vision, hearing, and more.

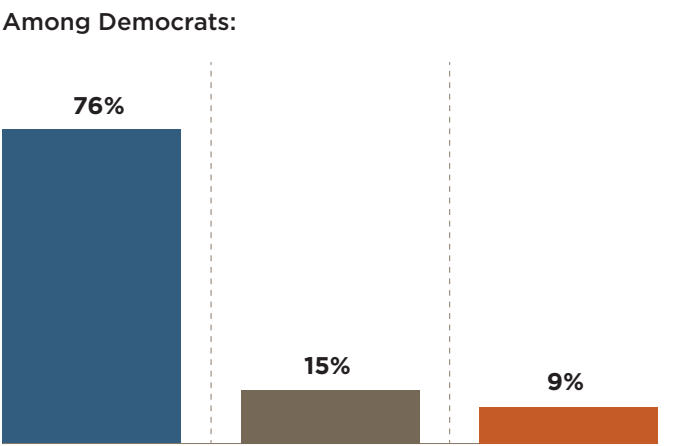
Do you support or oppose this proposal for a single-payer health care system?



Among likely Democratic voters surveyed, an overwhelming majority (86 percent) support a state single-payer system. Even after hearing a battery of opposition arguments, 74 percent of Democrats supported the proposal, as did a majority of all voters surveyed. Support was also particularly high among Medi-Cal recipients, voters of color, urban voters, and renters.

Half of all voters and 76 percent of Democrats would be more likely to support a candidate for Governor if they were to run on creating a single-payer system

If a candidate for Governor of California were to run on creating a single-payer health care system in California, would you be more or less likely to support that candidate, or would it make a difference to you?



This figure includes a net margin of +15 with NPP voters, +32 with female voters, +40 with urban voters, +27 with Latino voters, and +65 with Black voters.



CONCLUSION

Faced with federal health care cuts that will increase the number of people without health insurance by millions, threaten hospitals with closure or reduction in services, and exacerbate rising health care costs, Californians are sending a clear message that they are ready for major reforms to the health care system.

In a state governed by a super-majority of Democrats in the legislature, an overwhelming number of likely Democratic voters support the state transitioning to a single-payer health care system. Correspondingly, in a fluid race for Governor, a majority of likely voters report being more likely to support a candidate if they were to run on creating a single-payer system.

This year, legislators will have the opportunity to act on this public mandate by passing CalCare, the California Guaranteed Health Care for All Act, to begin the process of transitioning to a single-payer health care system. At the same time, candidates for Governor will have the opportunity to champion single-payer as they go before voters in the June primary.

Union nurses with the California Nurses Association, in coalition with a number of other major unions and 200+ organizations across our state, demand that state leaders step up to the plate and pass CalCare now.

METHODOLOGY

This statewide survey was conducted by phone (cell phone and landline) and online (recruited by text message or email using voter file information) between January 6 to 11, 2026. The survey was conducted among 1,000 voters who are likely to vote in November 2026, with a base sample of 800 and an oversample of 200 voters in rural areas in the following counties: Alpine, Mariposa, Trinity, Amador, Calaveras, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama, Inyo, Mono, Madera, and Tulare. The margin of error for the base sample is +/- 3.5 percent, and it is larger for subgroups.

