

## MEMORANDUM

**To: Interested Parties**  
**From: Bennett, Petts & Normington**  
**Date: September 15, 2010**  
**Re: Health Care Messages – Above Median Income Women Voters Survey Results**

*The findings are based on a nationwide poll of 1001 women who are registered voters with household incomes of \$50,000 or more. The survey was conducted online from August 23-31, 2010, on behalf of the National Women's Law Center.*

### **Summary**

- A majority of these women start out opposed to the health care plan and want the law repealed.
- Most believe they already understand the impact of the new law on themselves and their families.
- However, when presented with factual elements about aspects of the new law, a significant portion change their opinions so that a majority both favor the law and oppose repeal.
- More also come to believe that the law helps them and the country.

The lesson here is simple: if these women better understand the provisions in the law, they can become supporters of the law—and opponents of repeal.

### **Findings**

These findings build upon, and are mostly consistent with the research conducted by GQRR and Lake Research partners on behalf of the Herndon Group this summer. Those data showed that opinions on health care reform are somewhat malleable. That research showed that while they were able to increase support for reform, they made only marginal gains against repeal. While previous research was designed to assess the back and forth dialogue on the issue of health reform, this instrument focused on measuring reaction to specific aspects of the new law, without discourse, and subsequent movement in opinion regarding the law.

This round of research showed movement among women voters, increasing both support for the law, and opposition to repeal. Similar to prior research, the women in this survey start off opposed to the health care law and favor repeal. Initially, among these women, opposition to the law can be connected to the sense that the law helps other people, but not these women themselves, or the country as a whole. Simply put, they do not relate to what they see as they point of the new law. However, a significant number change their opinion after hearing about aspects of the health care law. Importantly, the change we measured was both in increasing support for the law – as well as decreasing support for repeal.

Before hearing about the aspects of the law, 40% support the law and 59% favor repeal. But after hearing about some of the law's aspects, a majority – 53% - support the law, and 50% oppose repeal—significant movement. The most convincing aspects of the law among the women who become opposed to repealing the law are:

- Requiring insurance to cover preventative screening like mammograms
- Making it illegal for insurance companies to drop people once they get sick
- Making it illegal for insurance to charge women higher premiums than men for the same policy
- Prohibiting insurers from denying coverage to kids with pre-existing conditions

Not only do these women change their opinion about the law and its repeal, they also alter their perceptions of who the law helps. Initially, just 15% think they and their family will be better off under the law but after hearing the aspects of the law, 28% think they will be better off. The same pattern holds true when we ask about impact on the country as a whole (38% better off to 48% better off) as well as seniors (32% to 41%). The last finding is of particular interest because none of the aspects of the law we presented specifically impacted senior citizens.

The women who can be persuaded to change their opinion about repealing the health care reform law share some characteristics:

	<b>Persuadable</b>	<b>Strong Opponents of Repeal</b>
Age	<b>59% 18-44</b> 31% 45-59 10% 60+	<b>48% 18-44</b> 37% 45-59 16% 60+
Ethnicity	<b>77% White</b> 3% Black 11% Hispanic	<b>70% White</b> 19% Black 6% Hispanic
Education	19% HS or less 26% Some college <b>54% College degree</b>	10% HS or less 26% Some college <b>64% College degree</b>
Area	<b>46% Suburban</b>	<b>51% Suburban</b>
Income	<b>52% \$50-75k</b> 25% \$75-100k 23% \$100k+	<b>38% \$50-75k</b> 32% \$75-100k 24% \$100k+
Ideology	21% Liberal 50% Moderate 29% Conservative	67% Liberal 28% Moderate 5% Conservative
Party Identification	44% Democrat 28% Independent 28% Republican	72% Democrat 22% Independent 6% Republican
Have Kids Under 18	49%	41%
Region	25% Northeast 19% Midwest 21% South 35% West	21% Northeast 25% Midwest 30% South 23% West

Similarly, there is overlap between the most convincing aspects of the law to these “persuadables” and those who strongly oppose repeal. Both these groups of women voters respond most favorably to the same aspects of the law.

Interestingly, there is little to no demographic variation in which aspects of the law are most convincing. Among women of color, the low number of black women identified as “persuadable” is not because they are not moveable but, rather, because they already start off with high levels of support for the law.