TWO IN THREE NJ RESIDENTS SAY STATE SHOULD CONTINUE ACA EVEN IF IT'S REPEALED IN WASHINGTON

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. – Two-thirds of New Jerseyans would want state lawmakers to continue the Affordable Care Act (ACA), also known as Obamacare, if the U.S. Congress and President Trump repeal the law, according to recently released poll results. But like the nation, views about the ACA in New Jersey are polarized. Nine-in-ten self-identified Democrats in New Jersey reported favoring the state continuing the ACA if it is repealed in Washington, while only 29% of New Jersey Republicans felt the same way. Poll respondents who are young adults, minorities, or lower income were disproportionately likely to support New Jersey continuing the ACA compared to others.

The New Jersey Health and Well-Being Poll, conducted in the fall of 2017, also showed strong support for increasing state funding for Medicaid (67%) rather than cutting program benefits or enrollment (23%) if the U.S. Congress reduces what it pays for the program. About two-thirds of respondents also supported taxing employers that do not provide health insurance coverage to their workers.

Two-in-five respondents would want to require New Jerseyans to have health insurance or pay a tax penalty. Last year, Congress repealed a similar federal provision, known as the “individual mandate”. A national poll, conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation, had a similar result. But support for the individual mandate rose to about 60% when the Kaiser poll respondents were told that the mandate repeal would lead to higher insurance premiums or more uninsured people.

Just over two-in-five (44%) New Jersey poll respondents said they would be willing to pay higher taxes so that no one loses health insurance in the State if Congress reduces funding for the ACA. Like other views about the health reform law, Democrats reported being more willing than Republicans to pay higher taxes (60% compared to 21%) to sustain coverage in the Garden State.

The New Jersey Health and Well-Being Poll was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (www.rwjf.org) and designed and analyzed by researchers at the Rutgers Center for State Health Policy (www.cshp.rutgers.edu). The poll was conducted in English and Spanish from October 12 through November 19, 2017, with a sample of
1,052 respondents. Interviews were conducted by landline (n=452) and cell phone (n=600). The sample is designed to be representative of New Jersey adults, and is weighted to match population demographic and telephone status distributions. The margin of sampling error for weighted estimates based on the full sample is plus or minus 3.7% (subgroup results have higher margins of error). Additional details about the poll are available in a methodology report.