

From: Tom Jensen, Director of Public Policy Polling
To: Interested Parties
Subject: Americans Support Obama on Prescription Birth Control Benefit
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A new Public Policy Polling survey, conducted nationally on behalf of Planned Parenthood, finds strong support for providing women with prescription birth control without a co-pay. Beyond that the poll finds that a majority of voters, including a majority of Catholics, don't believe Catholic hospitals and universities should be exempted from providing the benefit.

Key findings from the survey include:

-A solid **56 percent majority of voters support** the decision to require health plans to cover prescription birth control with no additional out-of-pocket fees, while only 37 percent are opposed. It's particularly noteworthy that pivotal independent voters support this benefit by a 55/36 margin; in fact, a majority of voters in every racial, age, and religious category that we track express support. In particular, a **53 percent majority of Catholic voters**, who were oversampled as part of this poll, favor the benefit, including fully **62 percent of Catholics who identify themselves as independents**. Here are the full numbers by party and religion:

	Overall	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
All Voters	56/37	75/20	55/36	36/58
Catholics	53/44	73/23	62/34	26/73

-A **similarly strong majority (57 percent) of voters think that women employed by Catholic hospitals and universities should have the same rights to contraceptive coverage as other women**, while only 39 percent say these institutions should be exempted from the requirement that health plans cover prescription birth control with no additional out-of-pocket costs because contraception runs counter to Catholic teachings. Notably, a **53 percent majority of Catholics agree** with this sentiment, including **60 percent of independents**. Here are the full numbers by party and religion on that question:¹

	Overall	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
All Voters	57/39	76/23	56/39	38/58
Catholics	53/45	73/24	60/39	27/72

This issue could be potent in this fall's election. Fully 58 percent of voters say they oppose Republicans in Congress trying to take away the birth control benefit that saves women hundreds of dollars a year, including 56 percent of independents.



Public Policy Polling conducted a national survey of 1,085 registered voters from February 3 to 5. The margin of error is +/-3.0 percent. Additionally an oversample of 359 Catholic voters was conducted and the margin of error for that group is +/-5.2 percent.

ⁱ The exact question wording is as follows: *Some people say that institutions such as Catholic hospitals and universities should be exempted from the requirement that health plans cover prescription birth control with no additional out of pocket costs, because contraception runs counter to Catholic teachings. Other people say that women of all faiths who are employed by Catholic hospitals and universities should have the same rights to contraceptive coverage as other women. Which view do you agree with -- Catholic hospitals and universities should be exempted from covering prescription birth control, or that women who are employed by Catholic hospitals and universities should have the same rights to contraceptive coverage as other women?*

