

***Boston Globe*/Harvard School of Public Health**

**PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS HEALTH  
INSURANCE LAW**

**May 27 – June 2, 2014**

**Research Team:**

**Robert J. Blendon, Harvard School of Public Health, Project Co-Director**

**Gideon Gil, *Boston Globe*, Project Co-Director**

**John M. Benson, Harvard School of Public Health**

**Kathleen J. Weldon, Harvard School of Public Health**

**Contact:**

**Robert J. Blendon, 617-432-4502**

**BOSTON GLOBE/HARVARD SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**  
**PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS HEALTH**  
**INSURANCE LAW**

*The poll was conducted for Boston Globe and Harvard School of Public Health via telephone by SSRS, an independent research company. Interviews were conducted May 27 – June 2, 2014, among a sample of 506 Massachusetts adults. The margin of error for total respondents is +/- 5.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Trend data are from a Boston Globe/Harvard School of Public Health poll of 537 Massachusetts adults conducted May 24-26, 2011.*

- Q1 As you may know, Massachusetts has a law that is aimed at assuring that virtually all Massachusetts residents have health insurance. How much have you heard or read about this Massachusetts law? Would you say a great deal, quite a bit, just some, only a little, or nothing at all?

	A great deal/Quite a bit			Just some/Only a little			Nothing at all	Don't know/Refused
	NET	A great deal	Quite a bit	NET	Just some	Only a little		
2014	56	34	22	32	16	16	12	*
2011	54	26	28	37	22	15	9	--

**(ASK IF HEARD OR READ OF MA LAW)**

- Q2 Given what you know about it, in general, do you support or oppose the Massachusetts Universal Health Insurance Law?

**Combo Table Q1/Q2**

**Base: Total Respondents**

	Have heard/read about MA Universal Health Ins. Law				Have not heard/read about MA Universal Health Ins. Law	Don't know/Refused
	NET	Support the law	Oppose the law	DK/Ref if support/oppose		
2014	88	63	18	7	12	*
2011	91	63	21	7	9	--

**(ASK EVERYONE)**

- Q3. The law requires that all uninsured Massachusetts residents either purchase health insurance or pay a fine. If a state agency determines that a person can't afford a policy, they would not be required to buy one or they would receive help paying part or all of their insurance premiums. Do you support or oppose state government requiring uninsured residents to purchase health insurance?

	Support	Oppose	Don't know/Refused
2014	55	36	9
2011	51	44	5

**(ASK IF HEARD OR READ OF MA LAW)**

- Q4. Based on what you know about the Massachusetts Health Insurance Reform Law, how successful do you think the law has been at reducing the number of uninsured in Massachusetts? Would you say very successful, somewhat successful, not very successful, or not successful at all?

**Combo Table Q1/Q4****Base: Total Respondents**

	2011	2014
Have heard/read about MA Universal Health Insurance Law	91	88
Law is successful	68	58
Very	21	23
Somewhat	47	35
Law is not successful	14	19
Not very	8	15
Not at all	6	4
Don't know/Refused whether or not law is successful	9	11
Have not heard/read about MA Universal Health Insurance Law	9	12

**(ASK IF HEARD OR READ OF MA LAW)**

- Q5 Generally speaking, do you think this Health Insurance Law is helping, hurting, or not having much of an impact on...

- a. The quality of your health care

**Combo Table Q1/Q5a****Base: Total Respondents**

	2011	2014
Have heard/read about MA Universal Health Insurance Law	91	88
Law is helping the quality of your health care	22	23
Law is hurting the quality of your health care	14	16
Law is not having much of an impact on the quality of your health care	52	45
Don't know/Ref whether law is helping or hurting the quality of your health care	3	4
Have not heard/read about MA Universal Health Insurance Law	9	12

- b. The cost of your health care

**Combo Table Q1/Q5b****Base: Total Respondents**

	2011	2014
Have heard/read about MA Universal Health Insurance Law	91	88
Law is helping the cost of your health care	23	22
Law is hurting the cost of your health care	30	25
Law is not having much of an impact on the cost of your health care	33	35
Don't know/Ref whether law is helping or hurting the cost of your health care	5	6
Have not heard/read about MA Universal Health Insurance Law	9	12

- c. Your ability to pay medical bills if you were to get sick

**Combo Table Q1/Q5c**

**Base: Total Respondents**

	2011	2014
Have heard/read about MA Universal Health Insurance Law	91	88
Law is helping your ability to pay medical bills if you were to get sick	27	25
Law is hurting your ability to pay medical bills if you were to get sick	12	15
Law is not having much of an impact on your ability to pay medical bills if you were to get sick	47	43
Don't know/Ref whether law is helping or hurting your ability to pay medical bills if you were to get sick	4	5
Have not heard/read about MA Universal Health Insurance Law	9	12

- d. Your ability to see a doctor when you think you need to

**Combo Table Q1/Q5d**

**Base: Total Respondents**

	2014
Have heard/read about MA Universal Health Insurance Law	88
Law is helping your ability to see a doctor when you think you need to	25
Law is hurting your ability to see a doctor when you think you need to	10
Law is not having much of an impact on your ability to see a doctor when you think you need to	47
Don't know/Ref whether law is helping or hurting your ability to see a doctor when you think you need to	6
Have not heard/read about MA Universal Health Insurance Law	12

**(ASK IF HEARD OR READ OF MA LAW)**

- Q6. In the long run, how do you think the Massachusetts Universal Health Insurance Law will affect the healthcare situation in Massachusetts? Will it--make things better, not make much difference, or will it make things worse?

**Combo Table Q1/Q6**

**Base: Total Respondents**

	2014
Have heard/read about MA Universal Health Insurance Law	88
Massachusetts Universal Health Insurance Law will make things better	44
Massachusetts Universal Health Insurance Law will not make much of a difference	16
Massachusetts Universal Health Insurance Law will make things worse	21
Don't know/Ref how it will affect healthcare situation	7
Have not heard/read about MA Universal Health Insurance Law	12

**(ASK IF HEARD OR READ OF MA LAW)**

Q7 Has what you have heard or read over the past year about the Massachusetts Universal Health Insurance Law made you feel more confident or less confident about the law or has your opinion of the law not changed?

**Combo Table Q1/Q7**

Base: Total Respondents

	2014
Have heard/read about MA Universal Health Insurance Law	88
Feel more confident about the law	18
Feel less confident about the law	20
My opinion of the law has not changed	46
Don't know/Ref effect on confidence	4
Have not heard/read about MA Universal Health Insurance Law	12

**(ASK EVERYONE)**

Q8 Have you heard or read anything about some people having a problem using the Massachusetts state government website where people who do not have health insurance can choose among various health insurance plans, or haven't you heard or read about that?

(IF 'R' refers to the federal website healthcare.gov please say: "We're referring to the Massachusetts state website, NOT the federal website, healthcare.gov.")

	Yes, has heard or read about people having a problem	No, has not heard or read about people having a problem	Don't know/Refused
2014	46	50	4

**(ASK IF HEARD OR READ ABOUT STATE WEBSITE PROBLEM)**

Q9 In response to these problems, Governor Patrick's administration has said that it expects to have the website working properly by this fall. How likely do you think it is that the website will be working properly by then: very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely?

**Combo Table Q8/Q9**

	2014
Yes, has heard or read about people having a problem	46
Likely website will be working properly by this fall (NET)	24
Very likely	8
Somewhat likely	16
Unlikely website will be working properly by this fall (NET)	20
Somewhat unlikely	10
Very unlikely	10
Don't know/Ref how likely	2
No, has not heard or read about people having a problem	50
Don't know/Ref if heard read about problem	4

**(ASK EVERYONE)**

Q13. Do you approve or disapprove of the health care law passed by Barack Obama and Congress in 2010?

(IF APPROVE ASK: Do you approve very strongly, or not so strongly?)

(IF DISAPPROVE ASK: Do you disapprove very strongly, or not so strongly?)

	<b>Massachusetts 5/27-6/2/14</b>	<b>U.S. 4/23-27/14 (Pew Research Center/USA Today)</b>
Approve	<b>57</b>	41
Strongly approve	<b>36</b>	26
Not so strongly approve	<b>21</b>	13
Don't know/Ref how strongly approve	--	2
Disapprove	<b>34</b>	55
Strongly disapprove	<b>24</b>	43
Not so strongly disapprove	<b>10</b>	11
Don't know/Ref how strongly disapprove	--	1
Don't know/Ref whether approve or disapprove	<b>9</b>	4

D22. In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent?

	<b>Republican</b>	<b>Democrat</b>	<b>Independent</b>	<b>Don't know/ Refused</b>
2014 (Massachusetts)	10	34	49	7