

Gallup: Americans Want Socialized Healthcare

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Poverty & Social Inequality](#)

Most Americans want Obamacare to be replaced by what Presidential candidate Bernie Sanders proposes and what both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump oppose: “Replacing the ACA [Affordable Care Act — Obamacare] with a federally funded healthcare program providing insurance for all Americans.” That’s 58% of Americans in [the survey](#). Only 37% were opposed. 5% had “No opinion.”

Clinton proposes to build upon Obama’s ACA, but 51% in this Gallup survey say they want it repealed; only 45% want it to continue in any form (other than, presumably, socialized medicine, which, as was just noted, 58% of Americans *want*). Consequently, one of the, if not *the*, main, reason(s), why Americans want ACA repealed, is in order to obtain socialized healthcare (a possibility that candidate Obama had promised as a possibility in his ‘public option’, which he never even tried to include in his actual healthcare law, the ACA).

Donald Trump proposes to repeal ACA and simply go back to the old system, but in a form which requires all insurers to provide plans in all states.

On 19 August 2008, shortly after Obama had won the Democratic Presidential nomination, the *Wall Street Journal* bannered “Obama Touts Single-Payer System for Health Care,” and reported: “‘If I were designing a system from scratch, I would probably go ahead with a single-payer system,’ Obama told some 1,800 people at a town-hall style meeting on the economy,” which was held as a campaign-event in Albuquerque. This statement by Obama was bold; he was at that time appealing for votes not just in a Democratic primary, but now in the general Presidential race, where he had to appeal not merely to liberals, but to a broader cross-section of voters. But he also promised there a ‘public option’ to be included in his plan, and yet even that promise was abandoned by him the very moment he entered the White House — he never pushed for it, and he selected Max Baucus in the Senate to draft his plan: Baucus was firmly *opposed* to including any “public option”; that’s one of the reasons why Obama picked him.

Britain’s *Independent* offered the scientific evidence about this policy-issue, when it bannered, on 15 August 2009, “The Brutal Truth About America’s Healthcare,” and presented actual statistics from WHO and OECD in 2009:

Health spending as share of GDP: US 16%; UK 8.4%

Public spending on healthcare (% of total spending on healthcare): US 45%; UK 82%.

Per-capita healthcare spending [including both public & private]: US \$7,290; UK \$2,992.

Practising physicians per 1,000 people: US: 2.4; UK 2.5.

Nurses per 1,000 people: US 10.6; UK 10.0.

Acute care hospital beds per 1,000 people: US 2.7; UK 2.6.

Life expectancy: US 78; UK 80.

Infant mortality per 1,000 live births: US 6.7; UK 4.8.

On 26 October 2009, Reuters headlined “Healthcare System Wastes Up To \$800 Billion a Year,” and reported: “The U.S. healthcare system is just as wasteful as President Barack Obama says it is, and proposed reforms could be paid for by fixing some of the most obvious inefficiencies,” such as “fraud,” “duplicate tests,” and “redundant paperwork.” Moreover, “The average U.S. hospital spends one-quarter of its budget on billing and administration, nearly twice the average in Canada [which has comprehensive socialized health insurance].” And yet Republicans were accusing the new Democratic President of threatening to bankrupt the country by pressing to change the U.S. system of health insurance; and opinion polls showed that lots of Americans were terrified of such change.

Just a week later, *The New York Times* bannered on November 5th, “Costs Surge for Medical Devices, but Benefits Are Opaque,” and Barry Meier reported how the major medical device manufacturers had blocked an attempt by the Federal Government to measure the effectiveness of stents, artificial hips, and other medical devices; and how these manufacturers managed to achieve phenomenal profit margins, ranging from a low of 23% to a high of 30%: the combination of kickbacks to doctors, plus a lack of objective measures of effectiveness, was the “invisible hand” at work — Adam Smith’s economics in the real world, where the top pickpockets are actually the aristocracy. ([Smith’s patron](#) happened to be the Duke of Buccleuch — [Henry Scott](#).)

Reuters headlined on 14 March 2012, “Factbox: Healthcare by the Numbers,” and reported the latest “Health at a Glance 2011 – OECD Indicators.” The U.S was “1st in Spending ... 17.9 percent of U.S. annual gross domestic product, or \$8,402” per person. Though we had the highest medical costs, the U.S. was at or near the bottom in terms of healthcare delivered: 25th in Preventing Death from Heart Disease, 27th in Life Expectancy, 29th in Number of Practicing Doctors (per 1,000 population), 29th in Doctor Consultations, 30th in Hospital Beds, 30th in Medical Graduates, 31st in Health Coverage (insurance), 31st in Infant Mortality, and 31st in Preventing Premature Death.

In other words: The U.S. paid the most, but got the least. And it’s true even now, three years after the ACA went into effect.

A CBS/NYT poll taken 4-7 December 2014 [asked](#) “Would you favor or oppose a single-payer health care system, in which all Americans would get their health insurance from one government plan that is financed by taxes?” 50% opposed it; only 43% favored it then.

But, a year later, on 1-7 December 2015, the Kaiser Family Foundation poll [asked](#) “Now, please tell me if you favor or oppose having a national health plan in which all Americans would get their insurance through an expanded, universal form of Medicare-for-all.” And 58% favored that; only 34% opposed it.

The wording of such polls is important, because many Americans, especially older ones, have been taught and deeply ingrained to think that the word “socialist” means “communist,” and even some who know that many countries in Europe are democratic socialist nations and aren’t *at all* communist, retain that trained negative mental association,

which was promulgated by the U.S. aristocracy during the Cold War but was never true: democratic socialists were just as opposed to communism as were democratic capitalists. The distinction isn't between communism versus capitalism but between democracy versus dictatorship (rule by an aristocracy). It was always American propaganda. The Kaiser poll avoided that propaganda-indoctrination, by using the phrase "Medicare-for-all."

In fact, the same CBS/NYT poll taken 4-7 December 2014 had also [asked](#) "Would you favor or oppose the government offering everyone a government-administered health insurance plan — something like the Medicare coverage that people 65 and older get — that would compete with private health insurance plans?" And, 59% said yes, only 34% said no. Moreover, this question had a history in that poll: the question had actually been asked nine times in 2009 (while Obamacare was being drafted), and the percentages favoring that option *ranged between 60% at the low end to 72% at the high end, who wanted it*; so, the *only* reason why President Obama assigned his Obamacare to be drawn up by Max Baucus (instead of to Ted Kennedy who wanted to draft it in his committee and who strongly favored the public option, which Baucus strongly opposed) is that Obama had been lying throughout his 2008 campaign, when he said he would include a public option in his plan. Hillary Clinton now is likewise promising to include a public option, so as to gain votes.

It's not because the U.S. is a democracy that the U.S. is *the only developed country* that lacks healthcare as a right, not merely as a privilege for those who are healthy or otherwise can pay for the healthcare they need in order to be productive citizens. It's instead because the U.S. [isn't a democracy](#), that *only* the U.S. builds its healthcare system upon the private-profit and private-charity model. Like the study that's linked-to there shows (based upon a detailed analysis of 1,779 public-policy issues since 1980), "Multivariate analysis indicates that economic elites and organized groups representing business interests have substantial independent impacts on U.S. government policy, while average citizens and mass-based interest groups have little or no independent influence." The study found that the only influence the public has is when parts of what a public majority want, get taken up by this or that wing of the oligarchy, which then hires lobbyists and politicians, to get it passed into law, because they've figured out some way they can personally profit from it. At least on healthcare, it's extremely inefficient, from the standpoint of providing maximum benefit to the public at a minimum cost to the public.

This is not opinion, it is fact; it is news-reporting not news-commentary: Basically, the privatized system rips off the public for the benefit of the elite, at least on healthcare, if not perhaps also on education and other *products and services that are essential in order to be able to have a maximally productive economy*.

On 9 February 2016, CNN headlined, ["Why Americans Don't Live as Long as Europeans"](#), and reported, "'it seems staggering that we get two fewer years of life just for living here,'" said Andrew Fenelon, a senior service fellow at the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics and senior author of the study, which was published on Tuesday in the Journal of the American Medical Association."

Because the U.S. is falling behind in those types of products and services, the U.S. is declining. "Nationwide, the median income of U.S. households in 2014 stood at 8% less than in 1999, a reminder that the economy has yet to fully recover from the effects of the Great Recession of 2007-09. The decline was pervasive, with median incomes falling in 190 of 229 metropolitan areas examined." That's from a study released by the Pew Research Center, on 11 May 2016, which was titled, ["America's Shrinking Middle Class: A Close Look at](#)

[Changes Within Metropolitan Areas.](#) The sub-title was “The middle class lost ground in nearly nine-in-ten U.S. metropolitan areas examined.”

Investigative historian Eric Zuesse is the author, most recently, of [They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).

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