



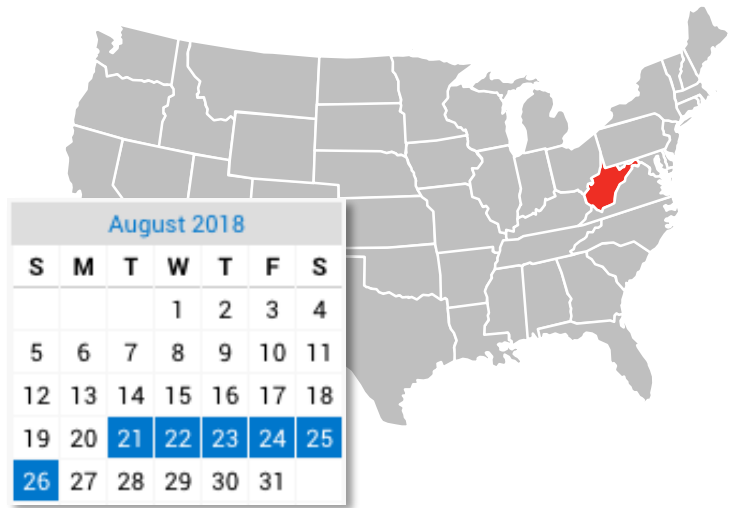
West Virginia
THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE AND 50+ VOTER MINDSET



Benenson Strategy Group and GS Strategy Group conducted 950 interviews – by phone, using registered voter lists – with likely 2018 voters in West Virginia from August 21st through 26th 2018.

This included an oversample of 50+ voters for additional analysis.

Data was weighed to ensure it was representative of the likely voting universe.



The margin of error for the entire data set is $\pm 3.10\%$ at the 95% confidence level.

- Among likely voters over the age of 50, the margin of error is $\pm 3.58\%$ at the 95% confidence level.

Due to rounding, answer choices may not always add up to 100%.

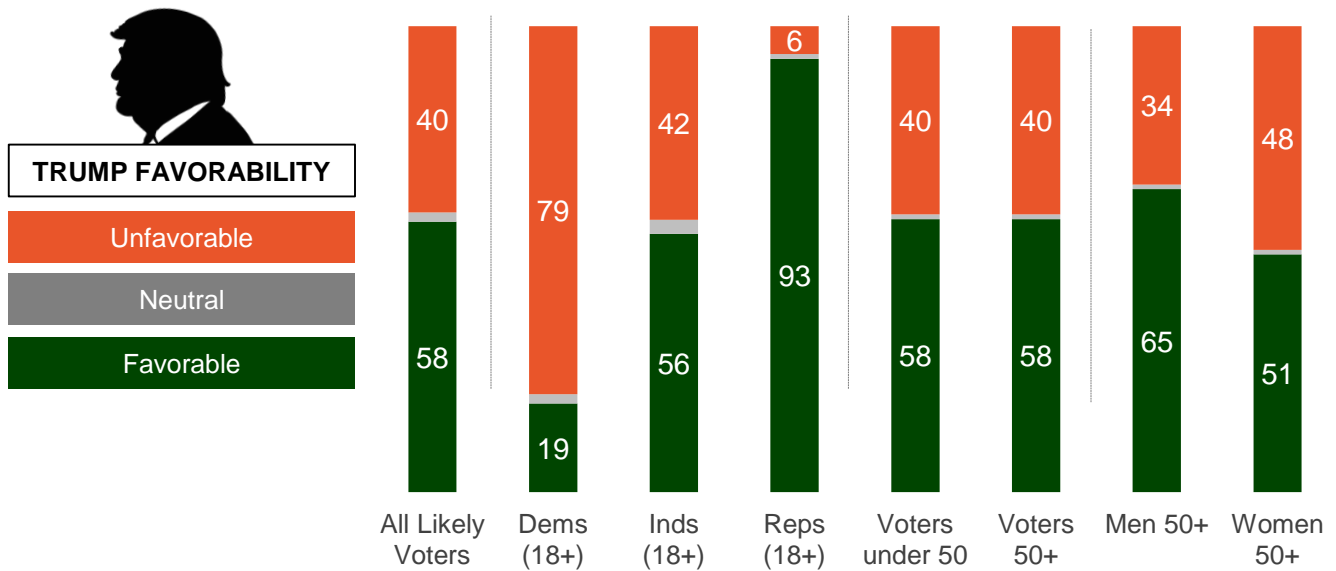
Note: All reported data is among 50+ voters except when otherwise specified.

Partisan crosstabs in this report represent how people identify themselves when asked, not how they are registered.

For more information, contact Kate Bridges at kbridges@aarp.org



Trump Is Strong With Independents, While a Big Gender Gap Persists



62% of all voters support Trump’s policies, but far fewer support his leadership style

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING COMES CLOSEST TO YOUR OPINION?
Among all Likely Voters

43% overall
and 73% of Republicans

Support Trump’s policies
+
Like his leadership style

19% overall
and 23% of Republicans

Support Trump’s policies
+
Dislike his leadership style

35% overall
and 3% of Republicans

Don’t support Trump’s policies
+
Dislike his leadership style

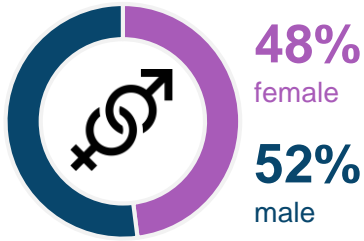


The 50+ Voter Mindset

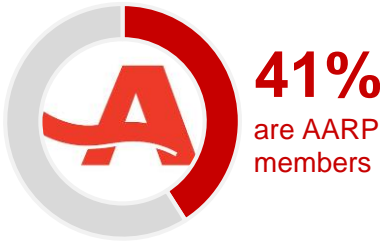
Profile Of West Virginian 50+ Likely Voters



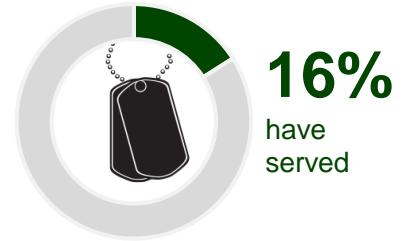
GENDER



AARP



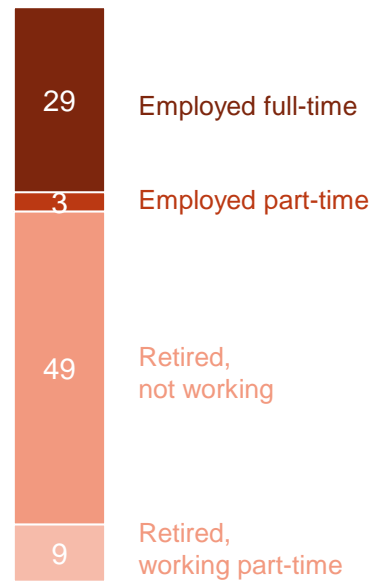
MILITARY SERVICE



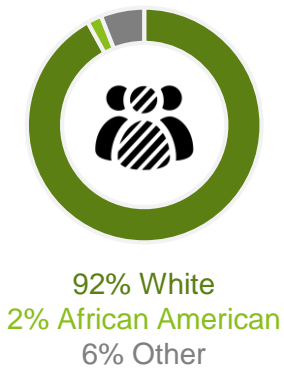
EDUCATION



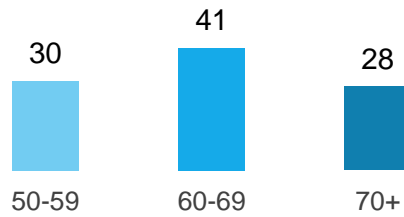
EMPLOYMENT



RACE



AGE



PARTY ID

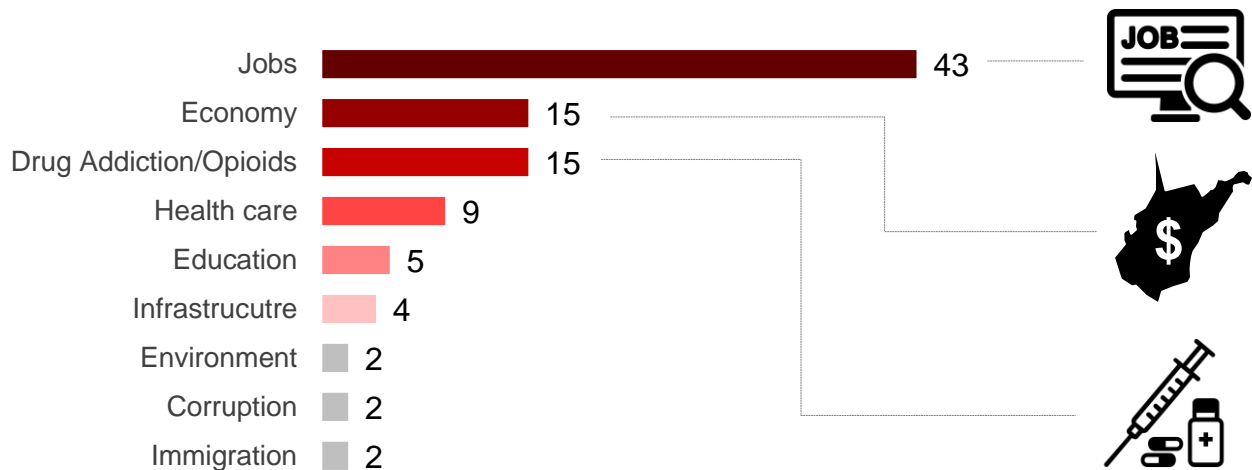


The 50+ Voter Mindset: Issues & The Economy



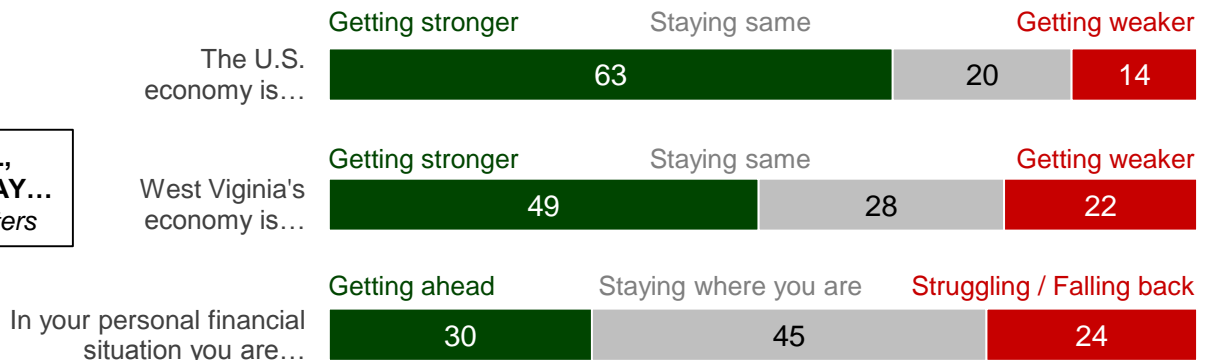
Jobs are top-of-mind among West Virginia's 50+ voters – far out-pacing concerns about the opioid crisis, health care and education.
 Even among voters 65+, jobs are the top response.

WHAT IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE FACING WEST VIRGINIA TODAY?
Open-ended responses among 50+ Voters



While two-thirds of West Virginia's 50+ voters say the national economy is growing and half say West Virginia's economy is growing, few are feeling these benefits materialize in their own lives.

IN GENERAL, WOULD YOU SAY...
Among 50+ Voters

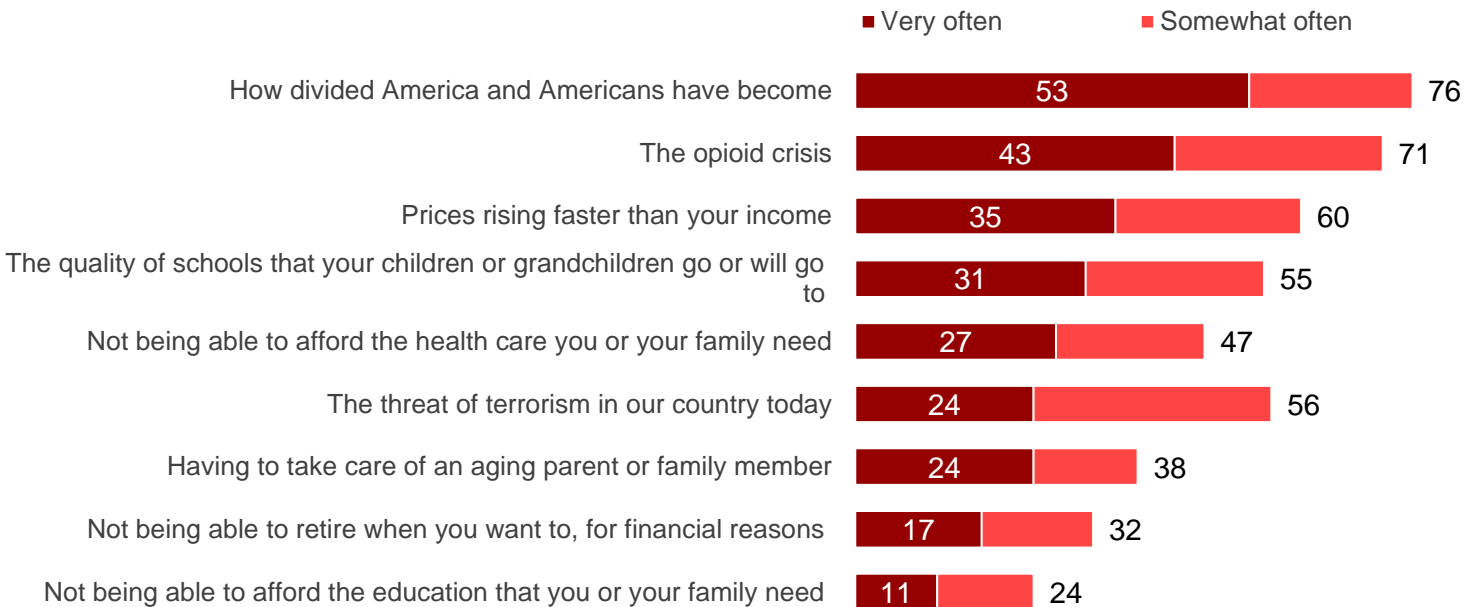


Occupying Their Minds

On an open-ended basis, **health care costs are keeping West Virginians up at night**, followed by job issues and the mess in Washington. When asked directly, partisanship and division in the national discourse are the number one concern. **A majority of West Virginia's 50+ voters say they very often worry about how divided their country has become.** Closely following, they very often worry about the opioid crisis, rising prices and stagnant wages.



HOW OFTEN DO YOU PERSONALLY WORRY ABOUT...
Among 50+ Voters



The 50+ Voter Mindset: Opioids



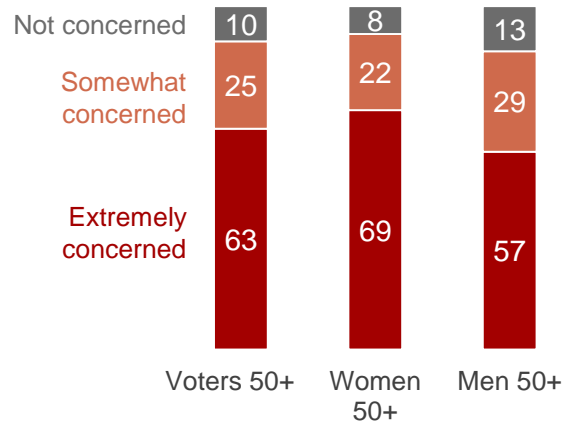
AT A GLANCE



Nearly two-thirds of 50+ voters are **extremely concerned** about heroin and opioid abuse in West Virginia— nearly 9 in 10 are at least **somewhat concerned**.

53% know someone who has struggled with opioid addiction

How concerned are you about heroin and opioid abuse in West Virginia?



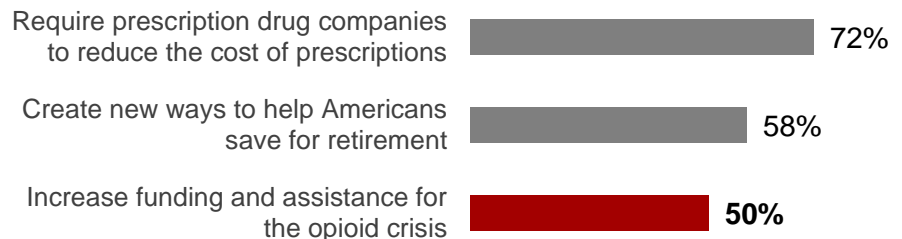
But the solution isn't always straightforward...
Among 50+ Voters



Compared to prescription drug pricing, Social Security and retirement, opioids are not as strong a factor in driving election choice this November.

% WOULD VOTE FOR A CANDIDATE RUNNING FOR OFFICE THIS NOVEMBER WHO WANTED TO...

Among 50+ Voters



The 50+ Voter Mindset: Prescription Drugs



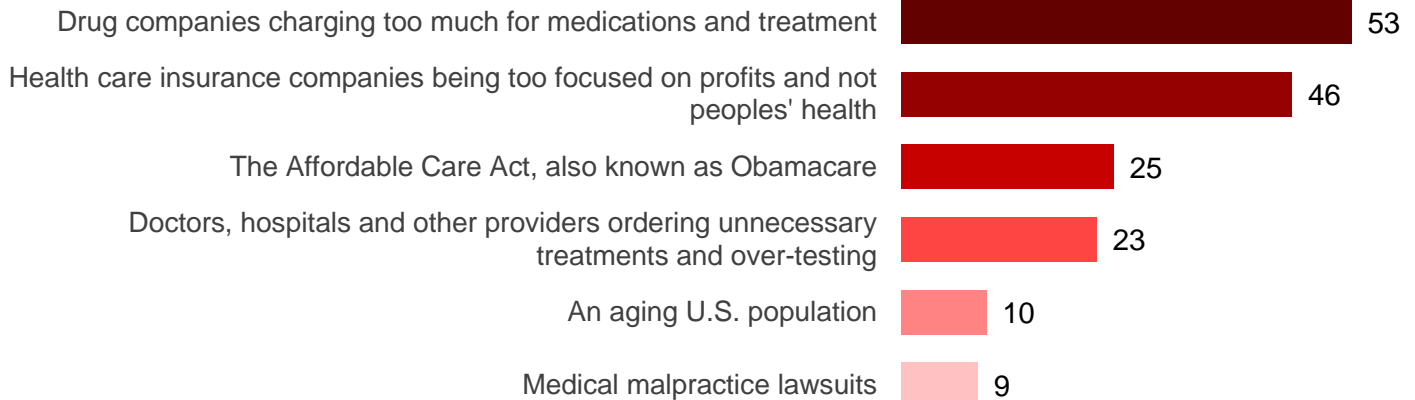
AT A GLANCE

While West Virginia's 50+ voters say multiple factors are driving up the cost of health care, rising prescription drug prices are the most commonly cited cause.

Importantly, 50+ voters don't believe these profits are a function of the cost of research and development. Rather, they overwhelmingly believe health care costs are rising because drug companies "charge as much as possible."

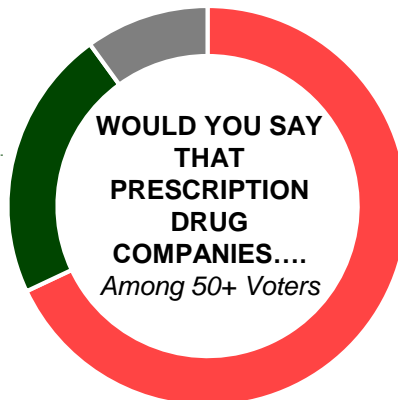
WHAT IS MOST RESPONSIBLE FOR RISING HEALTH CARE COSTS?

50+ voters chose up to two factors



22%

Charge as much as they need to for drugs because research and development is expensive and many drugs fail to reach market



68%

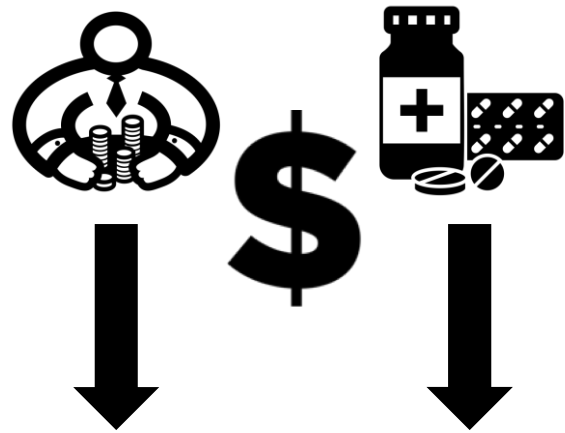
Charge as much as possible for drugs because they know that people who are sick, have a health condition or are in pain will pay for it

West Virginia’s 50+ voters strongly back proposals that would rein in pharmaceutical profits and lower costs for patients.

Remarkably, in an era of hyper partisanship, support for letting Medicare negotiate directly with drug companies gets nearly unanimous support among West Virginia’s 50+ voters.

Fully three-quarters of 50+ voters in the state want to limit the profits pharmaceutical companies are allowed to make.

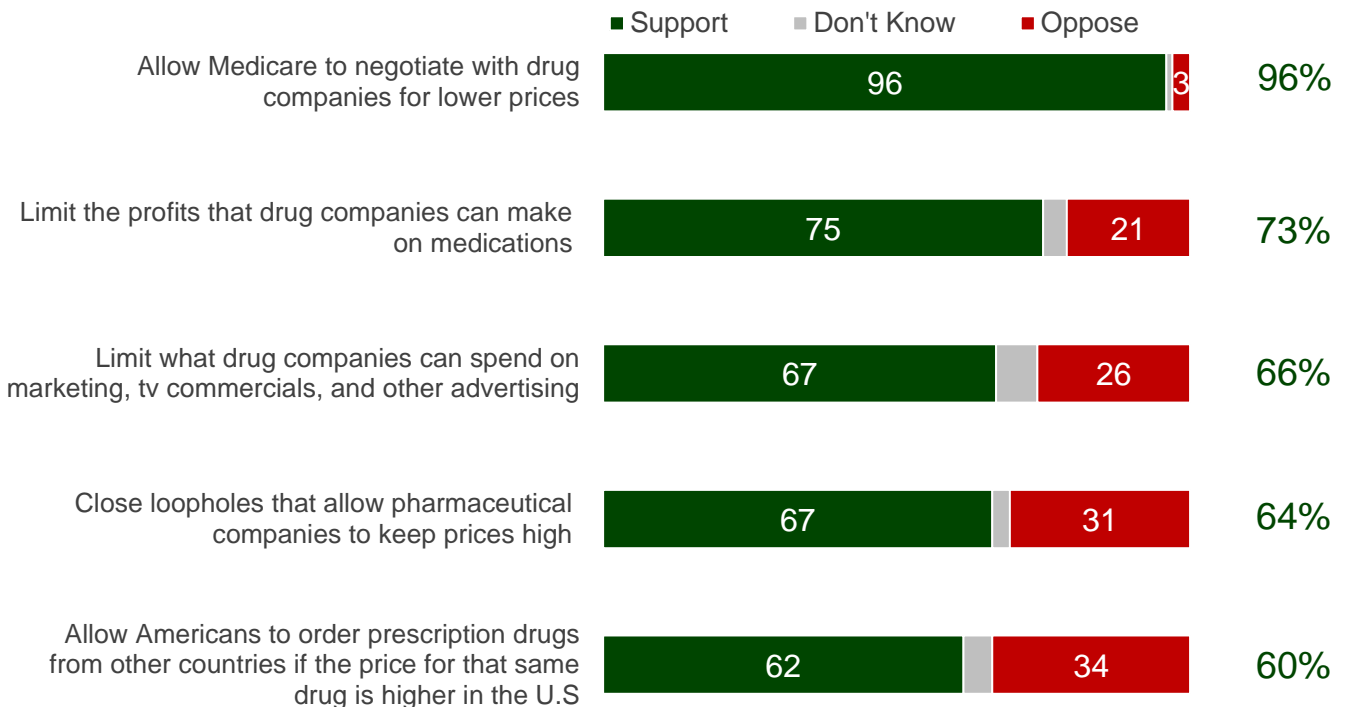
It’s clear that 50+ voters think it’s high time the government did something to bring down out-of-control drug costs.



Support for policy proposals to lower the cost of prescription drugs

Among 50+ Voters

Support Among Republicans



The 50+ Voter Mindset: Social Security



AT A GLANCE

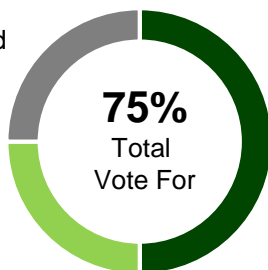
Social Security is one of the most important issues to 50+ voters.

They want to see immediate action to shore it up, but they want to do so in a way that expands benefits to the most vulnerable and they are on guard against Congressional reforms that would harm seniors.

50+ voters want Social Security to be stable and improved for the most vulnerable...

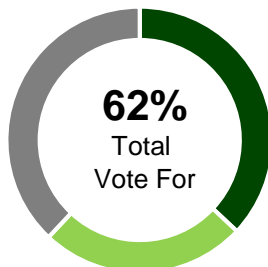
% WOULD VOTE FOR A...

Candidate who would strengthen Social Security and Medicare to make them financially stable **and improve benefits to the most vulnerable**



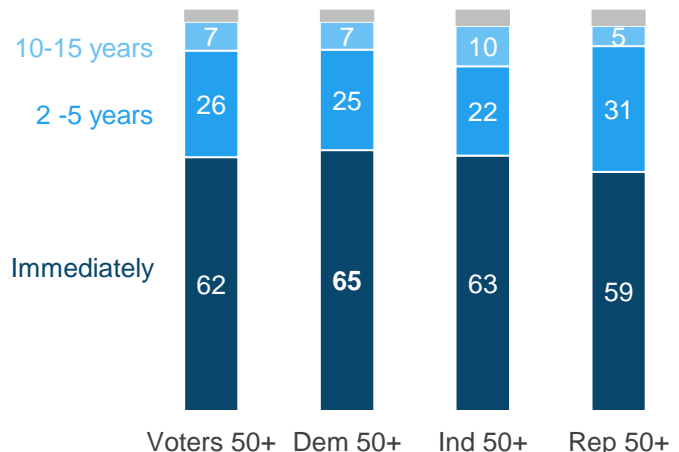
13 points more appealing than...

Candidate who would reform Social Security and Medicare to make them financially stable



According to projections in the latest Social Security Trustees' report, **Social Security can pay full benefits for 16 more years, but if nothing is done to make the program financially sound for the long term, benefits will be cut by nearly 25% starting in 2034.**

HOW SOON, IF AT ALL, DO YOU THINK THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO SOMETHING TO STRENGTHEN SOCIAL SECURITY FOR THE FUTURE?



...But they worry that reforms, if not done right, could jeopardize seniors' well being.

WHICH CONCERNS YOU MORE?
Among 50+ Voters

47%
Congress will make changes to Social Security that will harm seniors

9%
Both

33%
Congress won't make changes to Social Security and the program will go bankrupt

The 50+ Voter Mindset: Medicare



AT A GLANCE

Premium Support is wildly unpopular among West Virginia's 50+ voters – even across party lines.

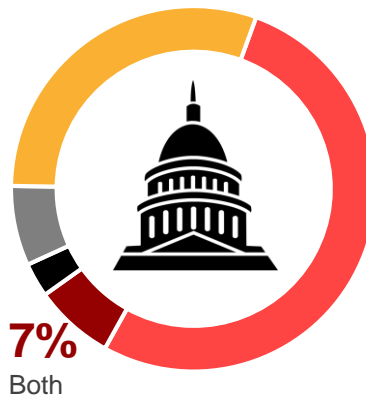
A majority fear reform of any kind may actually harm seniors more than it would help.

WHICH CONCERNS YOU MORE? *Among 50+ Voters*

30%
Congress **won't make any changes to Medicare** and future retirees and our kids will pay the price

7%
Don't Know

3%
Neither

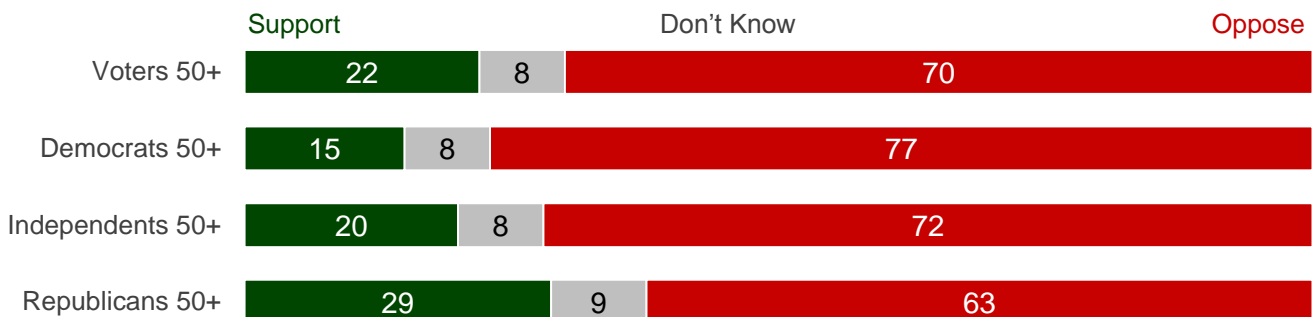


52%
Congress **will make changes to Medicare** that would hurt seniors and near-retirees

7%
Both

There is a proposal in Congress which says that for future seniors, Medicare would no longer pay for health care services directly but instead would provide each senior with a set amount of money to help purchase an insurance plan in the private marketplace.

DO YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE THIS PROPOSAL, WHICH IS SOMETIMES CALLED PREMIUM SUPPORT?



The 50+ Voter Mindset: Medicaid

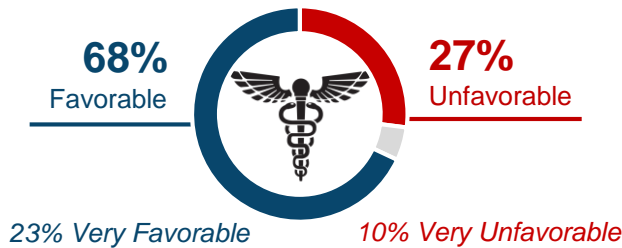
AT A GLANCE

Medicaid is popular among West Virginia's 50+ voters.

Relatedly, the proposal to reform Medicaid's long-term care budget in West Virginia so that it would re-allocate resources away from institutional care, such as nursing homes, towards home care is supported by a majority, irrespective of party.

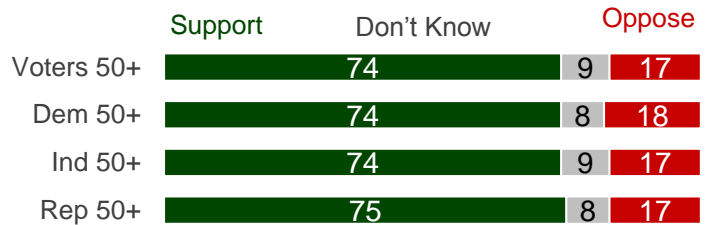
Would you say you have a favorable or unfavorable view of Medicaid?

Among 50+ Voters



West Virginia spends about 30% of its Medicaid budget for long-term care on services provided in the home and about 70% on institutional care, such as nursing home care.

DO YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE SHIFTING SOME OF WEST VIRGINIA'S LONG-TERM CARE FUNDS SO THAT MORE MONEY IS SPENT ON HOME CARE AND LESS ON INSTITUTIONAL CARE?



The 50+ Voter Mindset: Caregiving

AT A GLANCE

A family caregiver is someone who provides unpaid care for an adult loved one who is ill, frail, elderly, or has a physical, mental, or emotional disability.

This unpaid care may include assisting with personal needs like bathing and dressing, household chores, meals, shopping, transportation, or managing finances or medical care.

WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE AN INCOME TAX CREDIT FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS WHO TAKE CARE OF AN OLDER FAMILY MEMBER IN THEIR HOME?

