



What Kentuckians Think About

Important Issues for the 2008 Presidential Election

Results From The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati and the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky



Healthcare and healthcare reform are among the popular topics discussed in the campaigns for the 2008 Presidential election. The *Kentucky Health Issues Poll* asked Kentuckians questions related to healthcare and its influence on their vote.

Important Issues in Deciding the Vote for President

Over the last few months, national polls have shown a slight shift in the issues that would affect people's choice for president. Through 2007, the *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: Election 2008*¹ found that the single most important issue in people's choice for president was the war in Iraq, followed by healthcare and the economy. These priorities changed in early 2008 to (in order):

1. the economy (39%)
2. the war in Iraq (30%)
3. healthcare (18%)

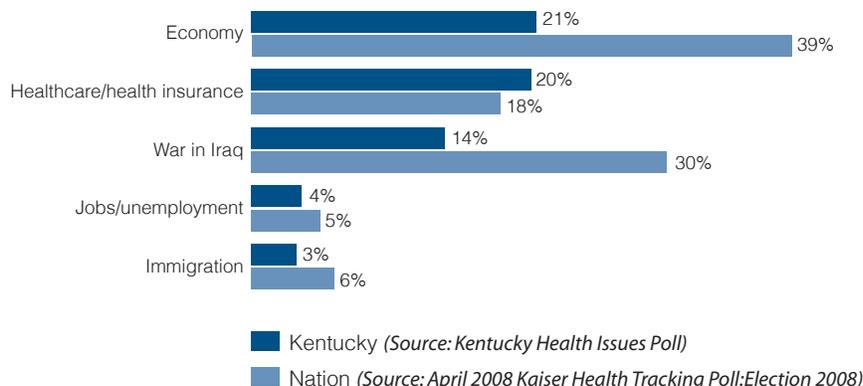
Kentuckians have slightly different priorities for what would affect their choice for president. The single most important issue in Kentuckians' choice for president was (in order):

1. the economy (21%)
2. healthcare (20%)
3. the war in Iraq (14%)

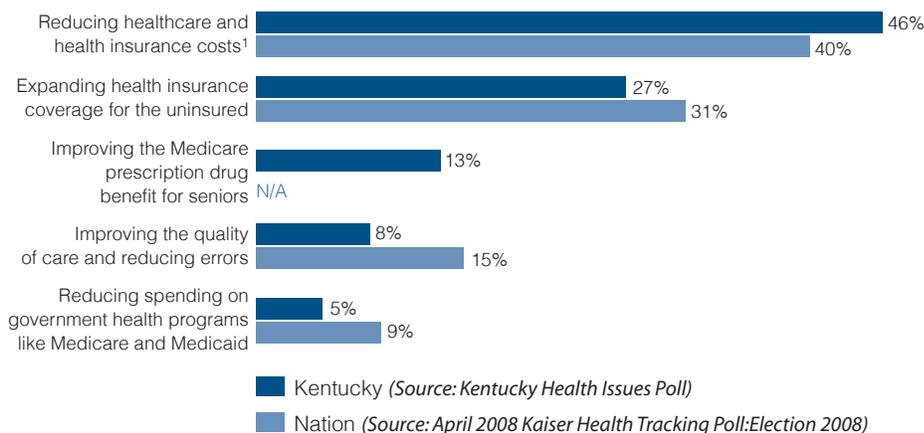
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¹ Results of the Kaiser Health Tracking Poll can be found online at www.kff.org/kaiserpolls/elections2008.cfm.

Suppose the 2008 election for President was held today. If the presidential election were held today, what do you think would be the MOST important issue in deciding your vote for President? (Only the top five responses from the Kentucky Health Issues Poll are shown here.)



Which one of the following healthcare issues would you MOST like to hear the 2008 presidential candidates talk about over the next two years and focus on in any health reform plan they may develop?



¹ The Kentucky Health Issues Poll had "reducing healthcare costs" and "reducing health insurance costs" as two separate choices, while the Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: Election 2008 had them as one choice. We combined Kentucky responses here for the sake of comparison to the national data. As separate items, "reducing healthcare costs" was chosen by 25% of Kentuckians, and "reducing health insurance costs" was chosen by 21% of Kentuckians.

Kentuckians most likely to consider the economy as the most important issue included those:

- who are college graduates (36%)
- living in Northern Kentucky (30%)
- living above 200% of the federal poverty guidelines² (FPG; 28%)

Kentuckians most likely to consider healthcare as the most important included those:

- who are African American (39%)
- living below 100% FPG (27%)
- living in Louisville (25%)

Health Issues Kentuckians Would Like to Hear about

When asked which health issues they would MOST like to hear candidates talk about and focus on in a health reform plan, Kentuckians favored reducing healthcare and health insurance costs (45%) and expanding health insurance for the uninsured (27%). These were similar to the national results of the *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: Election 2008* for April 2008.

Unlike the *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll*, the *Kentucky Health Issues Poll* included “reducing healthcare costs” and “reducing health insurance costs” as two separate items. When these two items are considered separately, the rankings for Kentuckians change.

Kentuckians would MOST like to hear the candidates talk about and focus on (in order):

1. expanding health insurance coverage for the uninsured (27%)
2. reducing healthcare costs (25%)
3. reducing health insurance costs (21%)
4. improving the Medicare prescription drug benefit for seniors (13%)
5. improving the quality of care and reducing errors (8%)
6. reducing spending on government health programs like Medicare and Medicaid (5%)

Kentuckians most likely to favor expanding coverage for the uninsured included those:

- who are African American (44%)
- ages 18–29 (35%)

There were no major differences among demographic groups of Kentuckians most likely to favor reducing healthcare costs.

Kentuckians most likely to favor reducing health insurance costs included those:

- who are college graduates (29%)
- living in the Louisville area (28%)
- living above 200% FPG (26%)

² 200% of the federal poverty guidelines (FPG) in 2007 was an annual income of \$41,300 for a family of 4.