



CBS NEWS/NEW YORK TIMES POLL
 For release: Thursday, June 7, 2012
 6:30 pm (ET)

The Supreme Court, Health Care, and Immigration
 May 31- June 3, 2012

The U.S. Supreme Court is expected to rule on the 2010 health care law later this month, and 41% of Americans think the entire law should be overturned. Another 27% would like the high court to strike down only the requirement that nearly all Americans obtain health insurance, while a quarter would like the whole law to stay in place. The percentage that wants to see the entire law abolished is up slightly since April.

Two-thirds of Republicans want the whole health care law thrown out, while 42% of Democrats want the entire law to stand. Another 28% of Democrats would prefer just the mandate be overturned. Tea Party supporters are especially likely to want the entire law to be overturned -- 70% support that.

**What Should the Supreme Court Do
 about the 2010 Health Care Law?**

	Now	4/2012	3/2012
Keep the entire law	24%	23%	26%
Overturn mandate, but keep rest of law	27	29	29
Overturn entire law	41	37	38

Most Americans think politics will play a role in the Supreme Court's decision on the health care law. 55% think the justices will decide the case mainly based on their own personal or political views; while a third think the decision will be mostly based on legal analysis. Americans across all partisan stripes think the justices' ruling on the case will be based mainly on their personal and political views.

Supreme Court Justices Will Decide the Health Care Case Based on...

	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Legal analysis	32%	33%	35%	30%
Personal or political views	55	48	56	57

As has been the case since it was enacted over two years ago, more Americans disapprove than approve of the health care law. 34% approve of it, while 48% disapprove, including 36% who disapprove strongly.

Views of the 2010 Health Care Law

	Now	4/2012	6/2011	5/2010	3/2010
Approve	34%	39%	37%	43%	32%
Disapprove	48	47	48	47	53
DK/NA	18	14	15	10	15

Eight in 10 Republicans and more than half of independents disapprove of the law, and while most Democrats approve, support among Democrats has dropped. Now, 56% of Democrats approve of the law, down from 67% in April.

37% of Americans think the 2010 health care law went too far in its attempt to change the health care system. 27% don't think the law went far enough, while another quarter think the law was about right. These numbers are similar to what they were in April.

Did the 2010 Health Care Law Go...?

	Now	4/2012
Too far	37%	39%
Not far enough	27	24
About right	25	24

70% of Americans who disapprove of the 2010 health care law say it went too far, and another 19% of these opponents think the law did not go far enough.

Though most Americans – 72% - say they know at least some of the details about the 2010 health care law, only 28% say they know a lot about it. Of that 28% who know a lot about the law, 62% disapprove of it, including 58% who disapprove strongly.

The Supreme Court

U.S. Supreme Court justices are appointed for life and six in ten Americans think that's a bad thing because it gives them too much power. A third says a life appointment is a good thing because it helps keep the justices independent from political pressures.

Appointing Supreme Court Justices for Life

Good thing, keeps them independent	33%
Bad thing, it gives them too much power	60

When asked more generally about what role the justices' own views play in their decisions (not the health care law specifically), three in four Americans say the current Supreme Court justices sometimes let their own personal or political views influence their decisions, while just 13% think they decide cases based solely on legal analysis. Here too, Republicans, Democrats, and independents agree.

Supreme Court Justices Decide their Cases...

	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Based on legal analysis	13%	12%	14%	12%
Sometimes influenced by own views	76	75	76	76

Overall, more Americans approve than disapprove of how the U.S. Supreme Court is handling its job, but one in five doesn't have an opinion. Currently, the nine-member court includes five justices appointed by Republican presidents, and four by Democrats, however, the Supreme Court receives more positive ratings from Americans who call themselves Democrats than from Republicans. Independents are split.

Supreme Court Job Rating

	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Approve	44%	42%	51%	39%
Disapprove	36	35	32	39
Don't know	20	23	17	22

Approval ratings of Congress are significantly lower than those of the Supreme Court— only 15% of Americans approve of the job Congress is doing; 77% disapprove. These views are similar to what they were in April, but up slightly from February. At 15%, Congress' approval rating is the highest it's been in a year.

	Congress Job Rating				
	Now	4/2012	2/012	10/2011	6/2011
Approve	15%	13%	10%	9%	20%
Disapprove	77	77	82	84	70

Illegal Immigration and the Arizona Law

In addition to the 2010 health care law, the Supreme Court has also been reviewing a 2010 Arizona law requiring Arizona's police officers to contact federal officials and check the immigration status of anyone who is lawfully stopped and appears to be an illegal immigrant. Most Americans - 52% - see Arizona's recent immigration law as about right, though 33% think it goes too far – an increase of seven points since August 2010. Another 11% think the law does not go far enough.

	New Arizona Law on Illegal Immigration		
	Now	8/2010	5/2010
Goes too far	33%	26%	28%
Doesn't go far enough	11	14	17
About right	52	59	52

The U.S. Department of Justice is challenging the law on the basis that it conflicts with what it says is the federal government's exclusive right to set immigration laws for the country. 62% of Americans, however – and majorities of Republicans, Democrats, and independents alike - think that both federal and state governments should be able to determine laws regarding illegal immigrants. 25% think such laws should only be determined by the federal government, and 11% think they should only be determined by state governments.

Who Should Determine the Laws Regarding Illegal Immigrants?

	Total	Reps	Dems	Inds
Federal government	25%	16%	30%	25%
State governments	11	15	4	14
Both	62	65	64	59

As to what Americans think should happen to illegal immigrants who are currently working in the U.S., 43% think they should be allowed to stay and apply for citizenship, 21% think they should be allowed only as guest workers, and 32% think they should be required to leave the country. These percentages have been generally consistent for the past three years.

What Should Happen to Illegal Immigrants Working in the U.S.?

	Now	2/2012	9/2011	4/2009
Stay and apply for citizenship	43%	42%	37%	44%
Stay as guest workers	21	22	20	21
Leave the U.S.	32	30	38	30

This poll was conducted by telephone from May 31-June 3, 2012 among 976 adults nationwide. Phone numbers were dialed from samples of both standard land-line and cell phones. The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus three percentage points. The error for subgroups may be higher. This poll release conforms to the Standards of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

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q1 Do you feel things in this country are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **				
	*** Party ID ***				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Apr12a
	%	%	%	%	%
Right direction	31	8	51	28	31
Wrong track	62	85	44	65	61
DK/NA	7	7	5	7	8

q2 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job?

Approve	15	8	21	13	13
Disapprove	77	87	71	76	77
DK/NA	8	5	8	11	10

q3 Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Supreme Court is handling its job?

Approve	44	42	51	39
Disapprove	36	35	32	39
DK/NA	20	23	17	22

q9 In general, do you think the current U.S. Supreme Court Justices decide their cases based on legal analysis without regard to their own personal or political views, or do you think they sometimes let their own personal or political views influence their decisions?

Legal analysis	13	12	14	12
Personal/political views	76	75	76	76
Some do/Depends(vol.)	4	5	3	3
DK/NA	7	8	7	9

q10 Which opinion comes closer to your own--appointing Supreme Court Justices for life is a good thing because it helps keep them independent from political pressures, or appointing Supreme Court Justices for life is a bad thing because it gives them too much power?

Good thing	33	29	35	34
Bad thing	60	62	57	61
DK/NA	7	9	8	5

q12 From what you've heard or read, do you approve or disapprove of the health care law that was enacted in 2010?

IF APPROVE, ASK: Do you strongly approve or somewhat approve?

IF DISAPPROVE, ASK: Do you somewhat disapprove or strongly disapprove?

	Apr12a				
	%				
Strongly approve	18	1	34	14	18
Somewhat approve	16	4	22	17	21
Somewhat disapprove	12	17	10	12	13
Strongly disapprove	36	64	13	40	34
Don't know/No answer	18	14	21	17	14

q13 Does the 2010 health care law go too far in changing the U.S. health care system, not far enough, or is it about right?

** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **

*** Party ID ***

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Apr12a*
	%	%	%	%	%
Too far	37	68	14	39	39
Not far enough	27	12	44	22	24
About right	25	14	32	25	24
DK/NA	11	6	10	14	13

*Wording change: "Does the 2010 health care law go too far in reforming..."

q14 The U.S. Supreme Court is expected to come out with a decision about the 2010 health care law in June. Which of the following would you like to see the Supreme Court do? 1. Keep the entire health care law in place, 2. Overturn the part of the law that requires Americans to obtain health insurance if they don't have it, but keep much of the law intact or 3. Overturn the entire health care law?

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Apr12a^
Keep entire law	24	6	42	20	23
Overturn mandate	27	20	28	30	29
Overturn entire law	41	67	20	42	37
Don't know/No answer	8	7	10	8	11

^Wording change: "...2. Overturn the part of the law that requires Americans to obtain health insurance if they don't have it, but keep the rest of the law intact ..."

q15 From what you know of the current U.S. Supreme Court Justices, how do you think they will rule on the health care law - mainly based on legal analysis or mainly based on their own personal or political views?

Legal analysis	32	33	35	30
Own personal or political	55	48	56	57
Both (vol.)	4	7	3	4
Don't know/No answer	9	12	6	9

q16 How much have you heard or read about the details of the 2010 health care law -- a lot, some, not much, or nothing at all?

A lot	28	31	28	27
Some	44	43	49	40
Not much	20	20	14	25
Nothing at all	6	4	6	8
Don't know/No answer	2	2	3	0

q17 BLANK

q18 Which comes closest to your view about illegal immigrants who are currently working in the U.S.? 1. They should be allowed to stay in their jobs and to eventually apply for U.S. citizenship, or 2. They should be allowed to stay in their jobs only as guest workers, but not to apply for U.S. citizenship, or 3. They should be required to leave their jobs and leave the U.S.?

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Feb12a
	%	%	%	%	%
Allowed to stay and apply	43	33	48	45	42
Stay as guest worker	21	30	20	17	22
Required to leave jobs and	32	34	27	35	30
DK/NA	4	3	5	3	6

q19 Do you think laws regarding illegal immigrants should be determined only by the federal government, only by state governments, or should laws regarding illegal immigrants be determined by both the federal government and state governments?

** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **

*** Party ID ***

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Federal government	25	16	30	25
State government	11	15	4	14
Both (vol.)	62	65	64	59
Don't know/No answer	2	4	2	2

q20 BLANK

q21 As you may know, the state of Arizona passed a law that gives the police the power to question someone they have already stopped, detained, or arrested, about their legal status in the country. The law requires people to produce documents verifying their status if asked, Do you think this law goes too far in dealing with the issue of ILLEGAL immigration, doesn't go far enough, or is about right?

					Aug10b
					%
Too far	33	14	49	29	26
Not far enough	11	14	7	14	14
About right	52	69	38	55	59
Don't know/No answer	4	3	6	2	1

	<u>UNWEIGHTED</u>	<u>WEIGHTED</u>
Total Respondents	976	
Total Republicans	259	226
Total Democrats	337	329
Total Independents	380	421