



September 10, 2012

Voter Guide 2012 Fact Sheet: Health Care

Key Facts

- **Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP:** Major federal health programs include **Medicare**, the health insurance program for elderly and disabled Americans; **Medicaid**, the health insurance program for low-income Americans; and the **State Children’s Health Insurance Program** (CHIP). Medicaid and CHIP are jointly funded by the federal government and the states.
- **High Cost of Health Care:** Spending for health programs will total 24 percent of the federal budget in fiscal 2013, or around \$897 billion.ⁱ **Health care is the fastest-growing kind of federal spending.** Controlling health care costs is a central challenge facing our elected officials. There are many proposals for how to do so – ranging from downsizing Medicaid to pay-for-performance.
- **Supreme Court Decision:** The Supreme Court upheld most of the Affordable Care Act – also known as Obamacare – but ruled that states can choose not to expand Medicaid to all residents below 133 percent of the poverty line.
- **Health Reform and the Deficit:** According to recent analysis by the Congressional Budget Office, the Affordable Care Act will reduce budget deficits by \$109 billion through 2022.ⁱⁱ

What Americans Say:

“[Medicare] has ... made it possible for me to continue living. I have had five stent operations.... So, literally, my life depends upon the fact that I am able to go to the doctor.”

-David (Austin, Texas)

What the Candidates Say:

“If you’re one of the 30 million Americans who don’t yet have health insurance, starting in 2014 this law will offer you an array of ... health insurance plans to choose from. Each state will take the lead in designing their own menu of options.... If you’re sick, you’ll finally have the same chance to get quality, affordable health care as everyone else.”

– Barack Obama, June 2012ⁱⁱⁱ

“If I’m president, I will repeal Obamacare for a lot of reasons. One, I don’t want to spend another trillion dollars.”

– Mitt Romney, February 2012^{iv}

What to Ask Your Congressional Candidates:

How do you propose containing the ongoing rise in health care costs?

ⁱ White House Office of Management and Budget, President's FY2013 Budget Request, Public Budget Database

ⁱⁱ Congressional Budget Office, [July 2012](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ [Remarks by the President](#) on Supreme Court Ruling on the Affordable Care Act, 28 June 2012.

^{iv} Arizona [GOP debate](#), 22 Feb. 2012.