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FAU Poll Shows Majority of Floridians Want to Keep or Expand Obamacare and Oppose New Healthcare Proposals

BOCA RATON, Fla. (March 16, 2017) – A majority of Floridians would like to expand the Affordable Care Act (commonly referred to as Obamacare) or keep the law as is, while nearly three-quarters of them are concerned that people would lose their health insurance if the law is repealed, according to a statewide survey by the Florida Atlantic University Business and Economics Polling Initiative ([FAU BEPI](#)).

When asked about the Affordable Care Act, 46 percent of respondents said they approve of the healthcare law, while 39 percent said they disapprove. Similarly, 39 percent of Floridians would like to expand Obamacare and 14 percent want to keep it as is, while 18 percent want to repeal the law and 29 percent said they would like to replace the law.

Overall, 73 percent were concerned that people would lose their health insurance if Obamacare were repealed. When asked if government should be responsible for ensuring all Americans have healthcare coverage, 64 percent said “yes” while 19 percent disagreed.

Respondents also were asked about six healthcare proposals put forth by Republican lawmakers. Only one of the proposals, lifting the \$2,600 cap on flexible spending accounts to allow workers to set aside more pretax money to pay out-of-pocket healthcare expenses, had net positive support with 43 percent approving and 29 percent opposing.

A proposal to repeal the 3.8 percent tax on investment income, which helps fund Obamacare and affects households making more than \$250,000, garnered 31 percent support compared with 40 percent opposition. Likewise, a proposal to replace healthcare subsidies with a refund tax credit of \$2,000-\$4,000 depending on an individual’s age and income had 26 percent support and 38 percent opposition.

Respondents strongly opposed other proposals as well, including reducing federal funding to the Medicaid program, which was opposed by 74 percent and supported by

only 16 percent. Only 15 percent of respondents support a proposal to increase premiums by 30 percent for a year for those who let their insurance lapse for at least 63 days, while 60 percent oppose. A proposal to allow insurers to increase what they charge older consumers was the least popular, with 76 percent opposing and only 8 percent supporting.

“It is evident that Floridians oppose the new healthcare proposals,” said Monica Escaleras, Ph.D., director of the BEPI. “These proposals are perceived to be hurting low-income and older people, while benefiting those with incomes higher than \$250,000.”

U.S. President Donald Trump’s approval rating among respondents was 36 percent, a slight uptick from February’s survey when it was 34 percent.

The online survey, which polled 500 Florida residents from March 10-13, was administered through Survey Sampling International (SSI), a Worldwide Leader in Survey Sampling and Data Collections. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.3 percentage points. Responses for the entire sample were weighted to reflect the statewide distribution of the Florida population by gender, race/ethnicity, region, education and age according to latest American Community Survey data. The polling results and full cross-tabulations are available at www.business.fau.edu/bepi.

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About FAU BEPI:

The Florida Atlantic University Business and Economic Polling Initiative conducts surveys on business, economic, political and social issues with a focus on Hispanic attitudes and opinions at regional, state and national levels via planned monthly national surveys. The initiative subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research and is a resource for public and private organizations, academic research and media outlets. In addition, the initiative is designed to contribute to the educational mission of the University by providing students with valuable opportunities to enhance their educational experience by designing and carrying out public opinion research.

About Florida Atlantic University

Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of \$6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. FAU’s world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of critical areas that form the basis of its strategic plan: Healthy aging, biotech, coastal and marine issues, neuroscience, regenerative medicine, informatics,

lifespan and the environment. These areas provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU's existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.