

Most Prefer Health Spending To a Cut in Income Taxes

Most Americans would prefer to have the federal government spend more on health care for the uninsured than to see it cut their own income taxes, another sign of the relatively low priority the public gives to tax reduction, given other options.

Fifty-two percent in an ABC News poll say they'd rather have the government spend more on health care for the uninsured than see it cut their taxes. And only 10 percent favor *reducing* these health services in order to pay for a tax cut.

	Don't cut taxes, spend more on health services	Cut taxes, keep health spending the same	Cut taxes, cut health spending
4/8/01	52%	30	10

George W. Bush's budget, released today, would cut a \$125 million grant program that coordinates the development of community health centers for the uninsured. At the same time, it would create a \$2,000 per-year tax credit to help uninsured people buy health insurance, even those who don't pay taxes.

The budget calls for a 10-year, \$1.6 trillion tax cut. Polling consistently has show that, while cutting taxes is not unpopular, many people have other priorities for federal spending, as well as suspicious about the fairness and impact of a big tax cut.

ALTRUISM? - There's some altruism in this poll's result, since only about 15 percent of adults lack health insurance. But there's also some self interest: Spending more on health care for the uninsured is most popular by far among low-income people, who are more likely to be uninsured and less likely to get a big tax cut. And it's least popular in top-income households, whose tax cut would be the fattest.

	Spend more on health care for the uninsured, rather than cutting my taxes
Family income:	
<\$25,000	67%
\$25-\$50,000	52
\$50-100,000	49
>\$100,000	37

There are similar big differences by race, with blacks much more likely than whites to favor more spending on health care for the uninsured.

And there's a huge difference among Democrats and Republicans: Seventy percent of Democrats favor spending more on health care for the uninsured rather than cutting taxes; this drops to 56 percent of independents, then dives to 30 percent of Republicans.

	Don't cut taxes, spend more on health services	Cut taxes, keep health spending the same	Cut taxes, cut health spending
Democrats	70%	19	6
Independents	56	30	9
Republicans	30	45	17

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News.com survey was conducted by telephone April 4-8, 2001, among a random national sample of 1,021 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS Intersearch of Horsham, Pa.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet at:

<http://www.abcnews.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

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Here are the full results:

84. Would you rather have the federal government (spend more to provide health care for uninsured people) or (cut the federal income taxes that you pay)?

	Spend more for the uninsured	Cut my taxes	No opin.
4/8/01	52	42	6

(If cut taxes) In order to provide a tax cut, do you think federal spending on health care for uninsured people should be (decreased), or (kept the same as it is now)?

	(Result is among those who don't want to spend more on health care for the uninsured)		
	Decreased	Kept same	No opin.
4/8/01	24	71	5

NET TABLE:

	Don't cut taxes, spend more on health services	Cut taxes, keep health spending the same	Cut taxes, cut health spending	No opin.
4/8/01	52	30	10	8