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## **Hawkeye Poll: Iowans concerned about health care, while political ideology remains biggest divider amongst voters**

According to a recent University of Iowa Hawkeye Poll—conducted by faculty and students between October 8 and 22—the issue Iowans reported as being their most important concern was health care (22.5%). Iowa voters also expressed concern regarding issues such as the economy (10.8%), education (9.8%), taxes (5.4%) and illegal immigration (4.3%).

When prompted about five specific issues that might influence how they vote in the upcoming 2018 midterm election – health care, women's rights, the economy, taxes, and immigration – respondents most often cited health care as “very important,” with 56.7%. The economy was second with 44.7% of voters rating it “very important.” Women’s rights was third (39.5%) with immigration (32.5%) and taxes (29.6%) following.

Poll results show age had little impact on Iowans regarding their rating of health care as important or very important. When asked specifically about the importance of health care 50.9% of Iowans between the ages of 18-34 and 57.8% of Iowans aged 70 and over responded it was “very important”. Democrats cited it as an important issue more often than Republicans, with rates of 73.7% and 44%, respectively. Independents fell in the middle at 52.9%.

Respondents also reacted to Iowa’s recent move to privatized Medicaid coverage. Nearly half responded that it had been working worse for recipients with disabilities and/or mental illnesses with only 6.5% saying it was working better. At the same time a plurality (40.6%) of respondents stated that they had the most confidence in the private market to provide health care coverage with smaller proportions favoring the state (22.4%) or Federal government (23.7%).

As for whom Iowans had confidence in providing their health care, divisions emerged across different groups. Liberals participating in the poll had more confidence in the federal government in providing health care coverage (44.7%), with only 12.1% of conservative support. In contrast, conservatives had more confidence in the private market (63.1%) compared to 17.8% support among liberals.

While Iowans seem to be of a similar mind on the most important issues facing Iowa, in the poll those who identify as conservative and liberal illustrate the largest divide. Liberals were more likely to consider health care as a very important issue when compared to conservatives (66.9% to 49.0%). Liberals also attached more importance to women’s rights (68.1% to 18.3%). Conservatives instead attached greater importance to taxes (40.1% to 16.3% rating it very important) and immigration (50.5% to 36.0%). For these key issues, political ideology plays a significant role in shaping the minds of Iowans and remains the biggest divider amongst voters.

Men and women in Iowa also have different perspectives on the importance of a few issues facing Iowa. Particularly, women emphasized the urgency of addressing the issue of women’s rights. While women and men agreed on the importance of women’s rights, 48.8% of women considered it as a very important issue, compared with 28.6% of men who attached the same

level of importance to the issue. While 62.9% of women considered healthcare as a very important issue, 50.1% of men shared the same view. As for the issue of taxes, women were less likely than men to consider it as a very important issue (26.5% to 32.8%).

In addition, the poll found religiosity affects people's view of different issues in Iowa. For example, Iowans who attend religious services more often also rated immigration as a more important issue than those who attend services less frequently, with 50.1% of Iowans who attended church more than once a week rating immigration as very important compared to the 32.9% who attend once a week or the 29.7% of those who never attend church services. Regarding women's rights, 66.5% of Iowans who never attend church reported it as being a very important issue, compared to 29.6% of those who attend once a week, and 17.4% of frequent church goers.

Turning to national politics that affect Iowans, respondents were also asked to evaluate the effect of recent tariffs imposed on a variety of products by the U.S. and other countries. A majority (57.6%) responded that those tariffs had hurt Iowa's economy while 12.9% thought they had helped it. 17.8% responded that the tariffs had had no effect. The longer-term prospects showed more optimism with 30.4% indicating that they thought the tariffs would help compared to 49.4% that thought they would hurt Iowa's economy. Just 10.3% said they thought there would be no long-term effect.

Respondents were evenly divided on the recent confirmation of Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court. 44.6% of respondents said they supported his confirmation while 43.4% opposed it. Responses broke down strongly along party lines, with 88.2% of Republicans supporting it compared to 12.3% of Democrats and 37.2% of independents. The division by gender was less stark, with 53.1% of men and 36.5% of women supporting Kavanaugh's nomination. Views on Senator Chuck Grassley's handling of the nomination process as chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee were also split. 41.8% either approved or strongly approved his handling of the nomination while 41.1% disapproved or strongly disapproved. Partisan division were again stark with 79.3% of Republicans approving or strongly approving his handling of the process and 77.9% of Democrats disapproving or strongly disapproving. Independents were split, with 36.2% saying the approved or strongly approved and 39.4% disapproved or strongly disapproved.

**Respondent Identification:** A random sample of registered voters was acquired with 57% household landline numbers and 43% mobile phone numbers. All respondents who stated they were over age 18 and willing to participate in the survey were included.

**Weighting:** Reported results are weighted by age, sex, and party registration.

### **About the Hawkeye Poll**

A total of 496 Iowans were surveyed by telephone from October 8-22, 2018. The margin of error on the poll is +/-4.5%.

The poll was conducted by the Hawkeye Poll Cooperative, comprised of UI faculty and graduate students in the Department of Political Science in the UI College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

The poll is a teaching, research, and service project, which uses the facilities of the Iowa Social Science Research Center directed by Frederick Boehmke, professor of political science and faculty advisor for the poll. The Department of Political Science, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development cooperatively support the poll.

Since 2007, the University of Iowa Department of Political Science has conducted the Hawkeye Poll, a series of national and state public opinion polls that constitute an important learning opportunity for interested undergraduates enrolled in select political science courses. About one thousand students have had the opportunity to directly participate in the research production process and to acquire valuable career-related knowledge about survey research and public polling in general.

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