



PRESS RELEASE

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New Poll: New Mexicans Overwhelmingly Support Medicare, Medicaid

ALBUQUERQUE—While the so-called super committee in our nation’s Capitol looks at slashing funding for the country’s two largest health care programs—Medicare and Medicaid—local advocates point out that the majority of New Mexico voters would disapprove of such a measure.

The poll, which was conducted by Research and Polling, Inc., for six advocacy groups, shows that the vast majority of voters (83 percent) believe Medicaid is important to residents in New Mexico with 66 percent saying Medicaid is *very important*. Medicaid is the health program for the disabled, seniors in nursing homes, low-income children, and impoverished families. The majority (59 percent) of voters do not believe there should be any reductions in Medicaid spending as a way to reduce the federal debt.

“Cutting Medicaid would have dire consequences for New Mexico. One in four New Mexicans relies on the program for health care and federal funds for Medicaid sustain more than 50,000 jobs in our state, mostly in the private health care sector,” said Sireesha Manne, health care attorney for the New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty, one of the groups that commissioned the poll.

Cuts to Medicare, the health program for seniors, scored even lower with likely voters as a way to reduce the federal debt. More than two-thirds (69 percent) of New Mexico voters do not believe there should be any reductions in Medicare, while 24 percent believe there should be minor reductions in spending. Just 5 percent feel there should be major reductions.

“New Mexicans strongly support Medicare,” said Mike Donnelly, State Director for AARP New Mexico, another of the groups that commissioned the poll. “We urge our congressional delegation to vote against any super committee plan to cut this vital health care program for our seniors,” he added.

“These programs are especially critical as health care coverage becomes increasingly unaffordable,” added Manne. The poll shows that 80 percent of New Mexicans believe that the costs of health care are a concern facing the state’s residents, with 57 percent listing costs as a “serious concern.”

The six groups that commissioned the poll are AARP New Mexico, AFSCME, AFT-NM, New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty, New Mexico Voices for Children, and St. Joseph Community Health.

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New Mexico Voices for Children is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization advocating for policies to improve the health and well-being of New Mexico's children, families and communities.

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