

TULCHIN RESEARCH

To: Southern Poverty Law Center Action Fund

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Poll Shows Mississippi Voters Strongly Support Restoring Ballot Initiative Process; Expanding Medicaid and Postpartum Benefits to Mothers

Tulchin Research recently conducted a survey among likely voters in Mississippi (MS) on behalf of the Southern Poverty Law Center Action Fund to gauge public opinion on a variety of policy issues. Specifically, our statewide survey finds strong support among voters for the State Legislature to **restore the state's ballot initiative process** to allow voters to once again be able to vote directly on measures. The survey also finds broad support for expanding key healthcare services statewide, including **strong majorities of voters supporting Medicaid expansion** and, specifically, **extending post-partum care for new moms from 60 days to one year** as nearly every other state in the country has done.

We present findings from the poll below.

Voters Support Restoring the Ballot Initiative Process in Mississippi

Nearly two-thirds of likely voters (65%) want the Mississippi State Legislature to restore the state ballot measure process, including 40% who *strongly* support it. Conversely, just 14 percent of voters oppose restoring these rights to voters while one-in-five voters (21%) have no opinion or are unsure.

Support for Restoring Ballot Measure Process in Mississippi

<i>Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose the Mississippi State Legislature restoring the state's ballot initiative process?</i>	
TOTAL SUPPORT	65%
Strongly Support	40%
TOTAL OPPOSE	14%
Strongly Oppose	9%
<i>Don't Know</i>	21%
Support - Oppose	+50

Voters Want to Expand Medicaid, Especially to Aid Rural Hospitals and New Mothers

Considering the impending closure of 38 rural hospitals across the state, a strong majority of voters agree with a statement describing how ***Mississippi should expand Medicaid (61%)***. Conversely, a quarter of voters believe *Mississippi should not expand Medicaid (25%)* and 14% of voters are undecided.

Strong Support for Medicaid Expansion

<i>As you may know, there are 38 rural hospitals in Mississippi that are on the brink of closure due to a lack of funding. Knowing this, please indicate which of the following statements you agree with more:</i>	
<i>(Some/Other) people say Mississippi should expand Medicaid, as 39 states have including Louisiana, which would bring in hundreds of millions of federal dollars to fund our rural hospitals and provide affordable healthcare to thousands of working families.</i>	61%
OR	
<i>(Some/Other) people say Mississippi should NOT accept Obamacare funds to improve rural hospitals because it would require the state to spend millions of dollars a year it doesn't have on socialized medicine.</i>	25%
Don't Know	14%
Accept Funds – Deny funds	+35

Additionally, there is strong support statewide (67% total support, 49% strongly support) for extending Medicaid coverage for mothers of newborn children from two months to a year while a little over a quarter of voters (27%) oppose expanding this benefit.

Support for Extending Medicaid Coverage for New Mothers

<i>As you may know, currently in Mississippi Medicaid health care coverage for mothers of newborn children, including maternal care, ends 60 days after birth. A bill has been proposed to extend this maternal healthcare coverage to a year.</i>	
Knowing this, do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose expanding this Medicaid coverage for moms from 60 days after birth to one year?	
TOTAL SUPPORT	67%
Strongly Support	49%
TOTAL OPOSE	27%
Strongly Oppose	16%
Don't Know	6%
Support - Oppose	+40

Conclusion

Voters in Mississippi have strong preferences for their state legislators to make progressive changes that will give power back to voters by restoring the statewide ballot measure process. Additionally, there is broad support for expanding key healthcare services statewide, including Medicaid expansion generally and expanding coverage for mothers of newborns from two months to a year, specifically.

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Survey Methodology: From January 21-25, 2023, Tulchin Research conducted a survey among 500 likely voters in Mississippi. The survey was conducted by contacting voters by landline and cell phone as well as online through email and text message. The margin of error for the survey is +/- 4.3 percentage points.