



Results from a Statewide Survey

# How New Yorkers Feel about Affordability and Healthcare Reform

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CONDUCTED FOR THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION  
PREPARED BY PERRYUNDEM

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# Methods.

The non-partisan research firm PerryUndem developed the survey, in conjunction with Betty&Smith, for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and state partners. The 18-minute survey was conducted by telephone (cell and landline) January 12<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022, using Braun Research, Inc.

The survey included n = 805 New Yorkers 18 and older and included oversamples of Black (n = 255) and Latino / Hispanic (n = 202) adults to ensure their views were included.

The margin of sampling error for total results:  $\pm$  3.5 percentage points.



# Key Findings:

**Many New Yorkers are delaying or skipping healthcare and facing financial hardship because of costs.**

- Half of New Yorkers (53%) say they aren't very confident they can pay for usual healthcare services.
- 4 in 10 New Yorkers (38%) say they or a family member are sacrificing healthcare because of costs. These sacrifices include delaying going to a doctor (19%), skipping a recommended test or treatment (15%), avoiding going to a doctor altogether (14%), and not filling prescriptions (12%).
- 31% of New Yorkers have appealed or questioned a healthcare bill. 1 in 5 (20%) have paid a healthcare bill they thought was wrong out of fear of being sued or harassed for not paying.
- One-third of New Yorkers (34%) have faced financial hardship as a result of medical bills. This includes being contacted by a collection agency (16%), being unable to pay for basic necessities (13%), and using up their savings (11%).

# Key Findings:

**New Yorkers see inequity in the healthcare system and agree someone's background shouldn't make it harder to get care.**

- Three-quarters of New Yorkers (74%) say systemic racism is a problem in the US healthcare system. Black adults, Latino / Hispanic adults, women, and Democrats are more likely than others to perceive systemic racism.
- 8 in 10 New Yorkers (82%) agree someone's gender, sex, language, and immigration status shouldn't make it harder to get quality healthcare in the U.S.
- 9 in 10 New Yorkers (91%) agree that healthcare needs to be made affordable for everyone, not just some people.

# Key Findings:

**New Yorkers blame government for high costs and support policies that offer financial protections and make healthcare more affordable.**

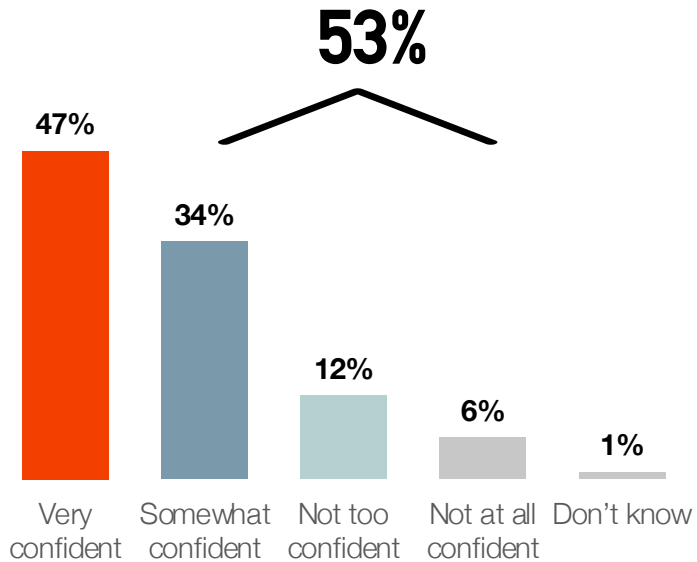
- When asked who's to blame for high costs, New Yorkers say the federal/state government, health insurance companies, and drug companies share the blame. When asked about who has the most responsibility to fix rising costs, a majority look to the federal/state government.
- New Yorkers want help addressing medical bills: 73% want the state to fund an independent consumer assistance program.
- They also support medical debt protections: 7 in 10 (70%) support a law that would stop providers from filing liens on people's homes or garnishing wages. And, 58% support a law that prevents non-profit charitable hospitals from pursuing extraordinary debt collection.
- Most New Yorkers also support requiring hospitals to disclose prices (84%), limiting what hospitals can charge for services (82%), eliminating or capping health insurance deductibles (82%), lowering premiums via tax credits (82%), creating a public option (80%), and moving to a Medicare-for-all system (65%).

# Detailed Findings.

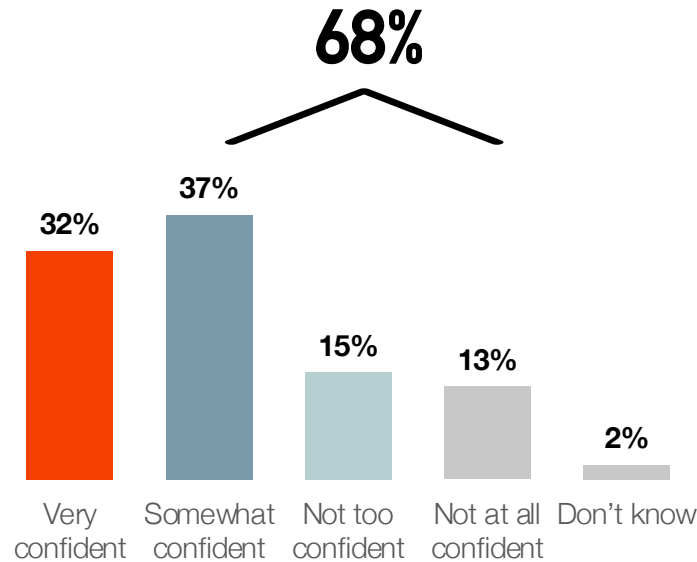
# Impacts of Costs.

# Half of New Yorkers express uncertainty about paying for usual healthcare services; 7 in 10 aren't very confident about paying for costs related to a major illness.

Q: Generally speaking, how confident are you that you have enough money or health insurance to pay the medical costs for the USUAL healthcare services that you or your family require?



Q: How confident are you that you have enough money or health insurance to pay the medical costs if you or a family member has a MAJOR ILLNESS?

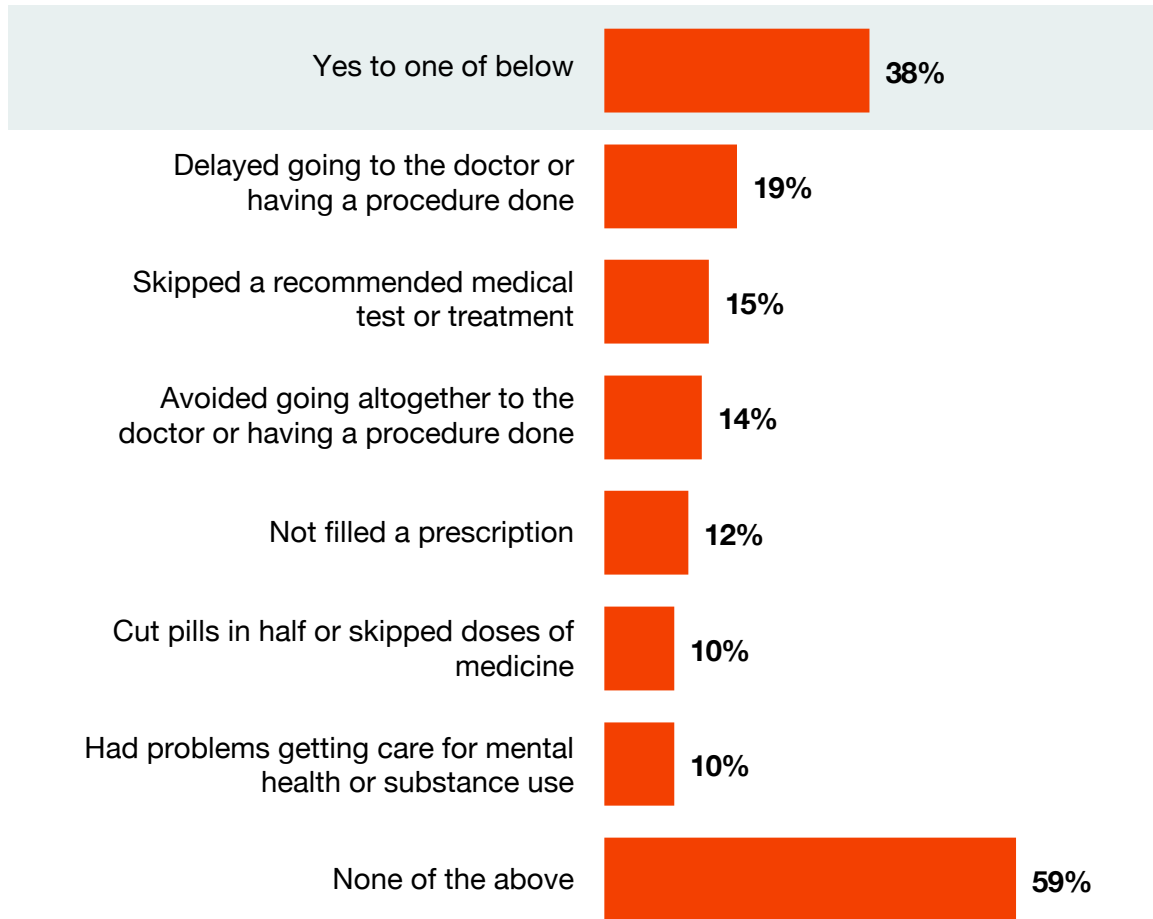


	USUAL SERVICES	MAJOR ILLNESS
<b>% NOT VERY CONFIDENT</b>	53%	68%
Women	54%	69%
Men	52%	67%
18 to 34	60%	74%
35 to 54	56%	71%
55 to 64	49%	64%
65+	44%	58%
Black	55%	71%
Latino/Hispanic	58%	76%
White	49%	66%
Less than \$30K	64%	78%
\$30K to \$50K	53%	73%
\$50K to \$75K	59%	66%
\$75K to \$100K	48%	62%
\$100K or more	40%	57%
Democrats	47%	63%
Independents	62%	75%
Republicans	48%	65%
Buffalo/Rochester*	51%	70%
Long Island	51%	66%
NYC 5 Boroughs	52%	68%
Westchester / Hudson Valley	59%	68%
Rest of NY State	58%	70%

\*See Appendix for details on counties by region.



Q: In the past year, have you (or a family member living with you) done any of the following because of the COST?



**4 in 10 New Yorkers say they or a family member have sacrificed needed healthcare due to costs.**

**A third of adults (31%) have appealed or questioned a bill.  
And, 20% say they have paid a bill they thought was  
wrong because they were afraid of being sued.**

**31%**

Of New Yorkers have fought a healthcare bill

Q: Have you ever appealed, questioned, or fought a healthcare bill you received?

**20%**

Of New Yorkers have paid a bill they thought was wrong to avoid being sued or harassed

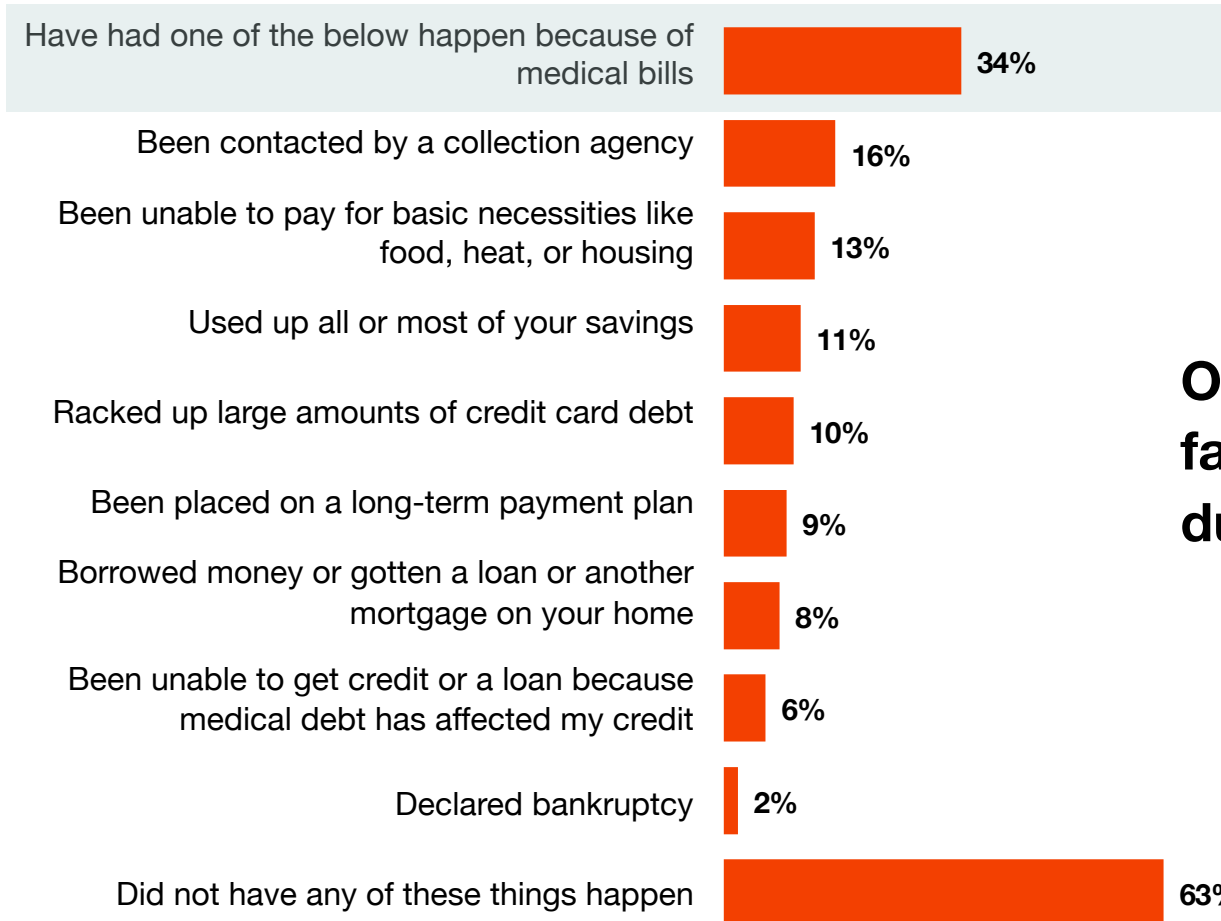
Q: Have you ever just paid a healthcare bill you thought was wrong because you feared being sued or harassed if you did not pay it?

**41%**

Of New Yorkers have either fought a healthcare bill or paid a bill they thought was wrong

	<b>FOUGHT A BILL</b>	<b>PAID WRONG BILL</b>
<b>% Yes</b>	31%	20%
Women	29%	18%
Men	33%	22%
18 to 34	25%	29%
35 to 54	38%	21%
55 to 64	34%	17%
65+	26%	8%
Black	26%	19%
Latino/Hispanic	24%	19%
White	33%	19%
Less than \$30K	20%	16%
\$30K to \$50K	33%	26%
\$50K to \$75K	29%	19%
\$75K to \$100K	43%	28%
\$100K or more	43%	21%
Democrats	33%	24%
Independents	29%	16%
Republicans	31%	20%
Buffalo/Rochester	38%	17%
Long Island	34%	33%
NYC 5 Boroughs	30%	19%
Westchester / Hudson Valley	30%	13%
Rest of NY State	26%	19%

Q: In the past 12 months, have you (or a family member living with you) had any of the following happen due to the cost of medical bills? Choose all that apply.

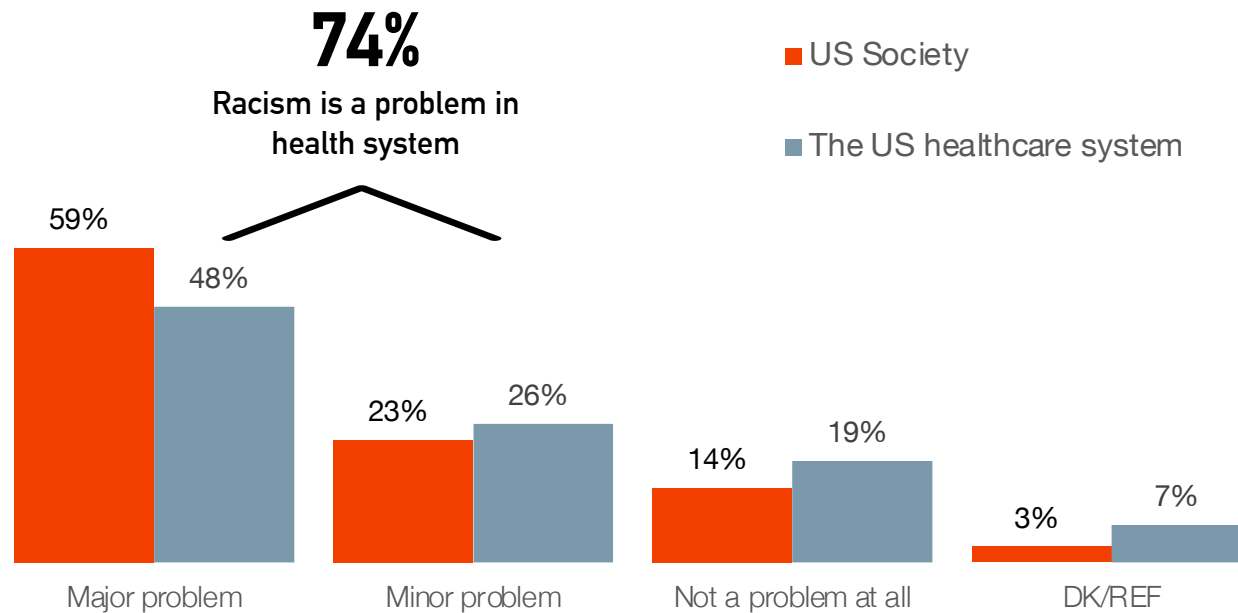


**One-third of New Yorkers have faced significant financial hardship due to medical bills.**

**Equity.**

# Three-quarters of New Yorkers say systemic racism is a problem in the US healthcare system.

Q: Do you think systemic racism is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem at all in...

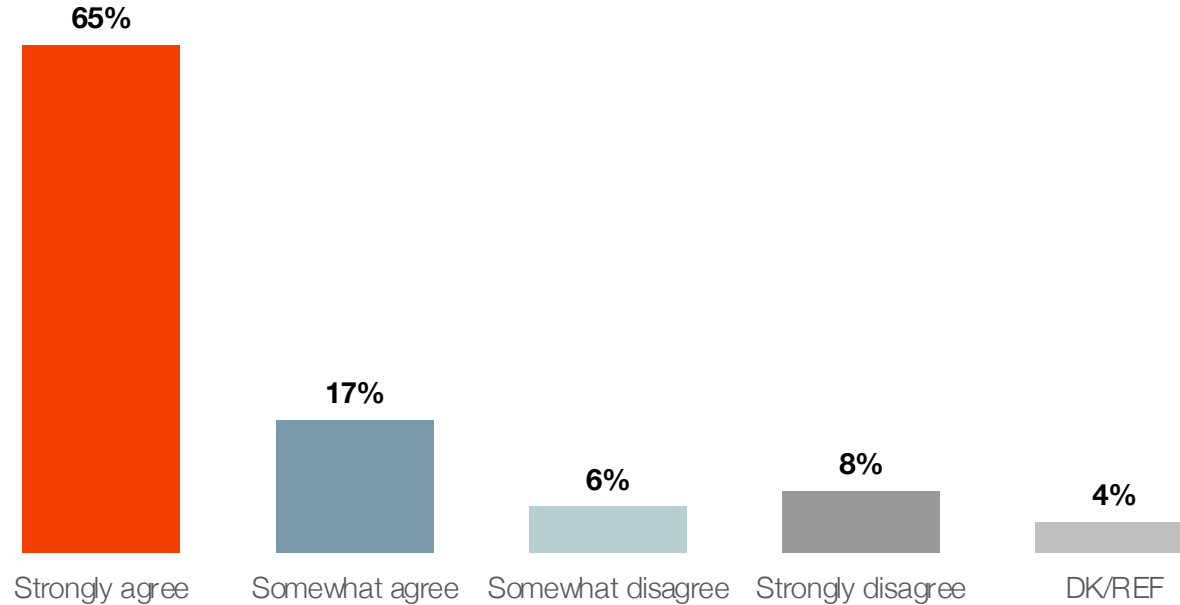


	IN U.S. SOCIETY	IN U.S. HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
<b>% MAJOR PROBLEM</b>	59%	48%
Women	66%	56%
Men	52%	40%
18 to 34	61%	49%
35 to 54	57%	50%
55 to 64	58%	49%
65+	62%	44%
Black	77%	66%
Latino/Hispanic	78%	60%
White	51%	43%
Less than \$30K	67%	53%
\$30K to \$50K	54%	43%
\$50K to \$75K	61%	56%
\$75K to \$100K	64%	51%
\$100K or more	53%	45%
Democrats	78%	65%
Independents	52%	42%
Republicans	35%	28%
Buffalo/Rochester	53%	44%
Long Island	56%	44%
NYC 5 Boroughs	68%	52%
Westchester / Hudson Valley	55%	49%
Rest of NY State	48%	46%

# 8 in 10 agree that someone's background – regardless of gender, age, immigration status – should not make it harder to get quality healthcare.

Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

People's background – their gender, sex, race, the language they speak, or immigration status – should not make it harder to get quality healthcare in the US health system.

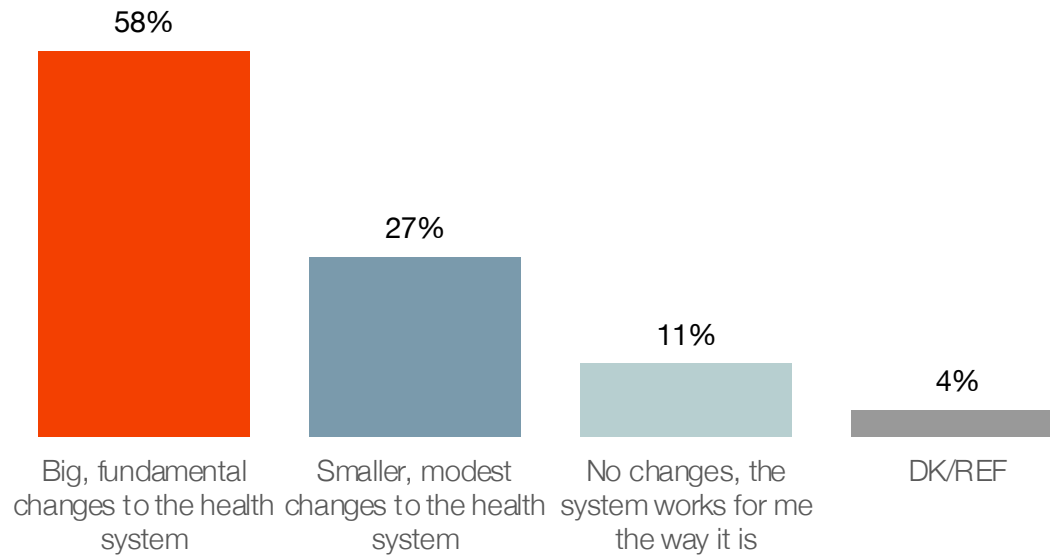


<b>% AGREE</b>	<b>82%</b>
Women	82%
Men	83%
18 to 34	88%
35 to 54	82%
55 to 64	91%
65+	70%
Black	84%
Latino/Hispanic	75%
White	84%
Less than \$30K	73%
\$30K to \$50K	84%
\$50K to \$75K	82%
\$75K to \$100K	89%
\$100K or more	90%
Democrats	90%
Independents	80%
Republicans	76%
Buffalo/Rochester	79%
Long Island	88%
NYC 5 Boroughs	84%
Westchester / Hudson Valley	80%
Rest of NY State	78%

# **Change and Responsibility.**

# 6 in 10 New Yorkers want big, fundamental changes to the health system.

Q: How much change, if any, do you want in our healthcare system in order to bring down healthcare costs?



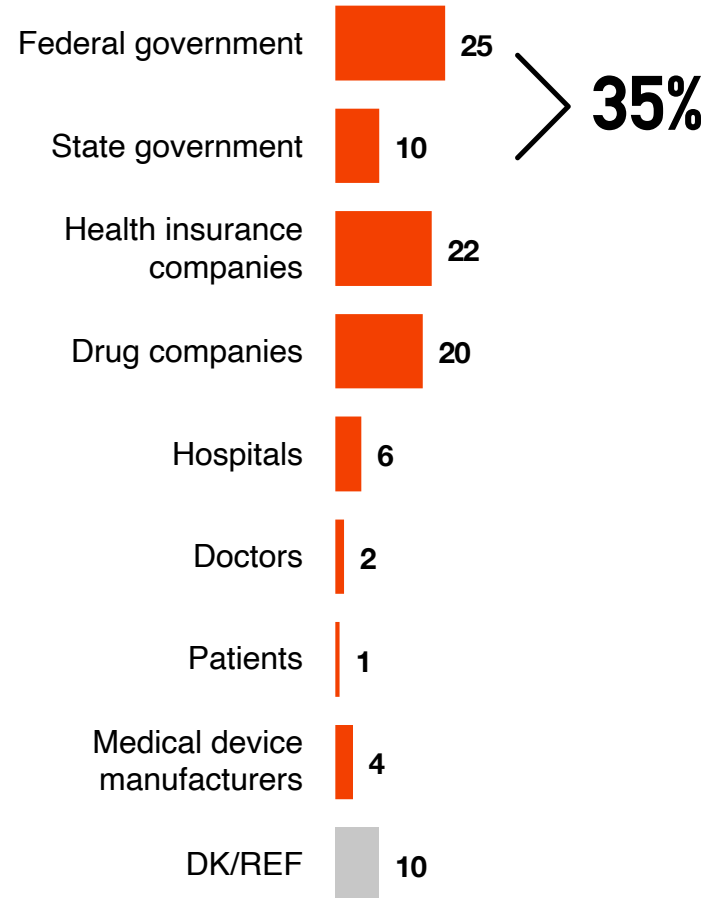
	BIG, FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES	SMALLER, MODEST CHANGES	NO CHANGES
<b>% MAJOR PROBLEM</b>	58%	27%	11%
Women	62%	24%	10%
Men	53%	31%	13%
18 to 34	57%	29%	12%
35 to 54	59%	29%	8%
55 to 64	65%	22%	12%
65+	52%	25%	17%
Black	69%	23%	7%
Latino/Hispanic	54%	31%	10%
White	56%	28%	12%
Less than \$30K	55%	29%	14%
\$30K to \$50K	62%	23%	13%
\$50K to \$75K	56%	27%	7%
\$75K to \$100K	58%	36%	5%
\$100K or more	62%	28%	9%
Democrats	70%	20%	8%
Independents	54%	29%	11%
Republicans	45%	34%	20%
Buffalo/Rochester	54%	30%	11%
Long Island	53%	33%	13%
NYC 5 Boroughs	62%	22%	13%
Westchester / Hudson Valley	53%	38%	5%
Rest of NY State	57%	27%	11%



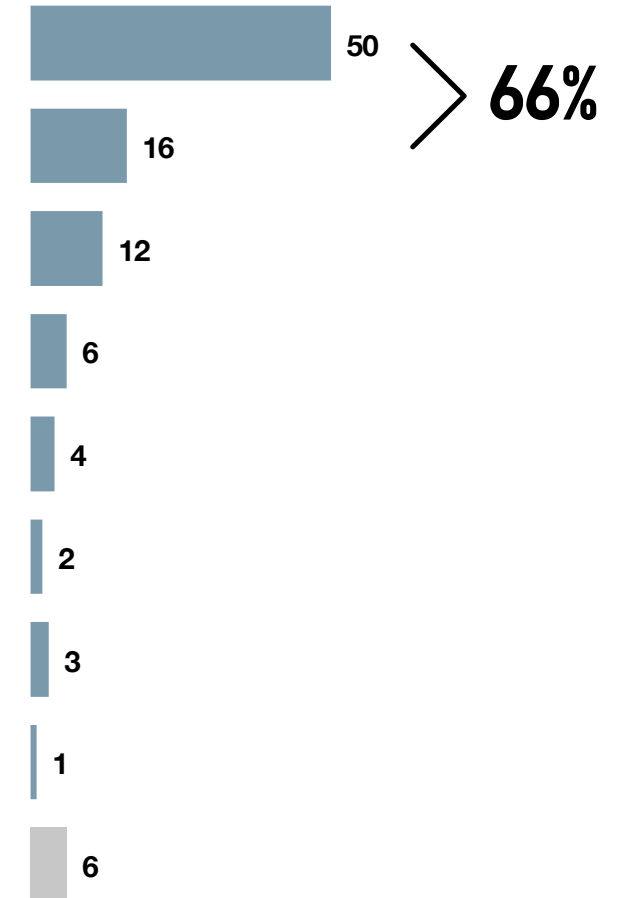
**New Yorkers split blame for high costs between the federal/state government, drug companies, and health insurance companies.**

**But most look to both the federal and state government to fix costs.**

Q: Who do you blame MOST for rising healthcare costs?



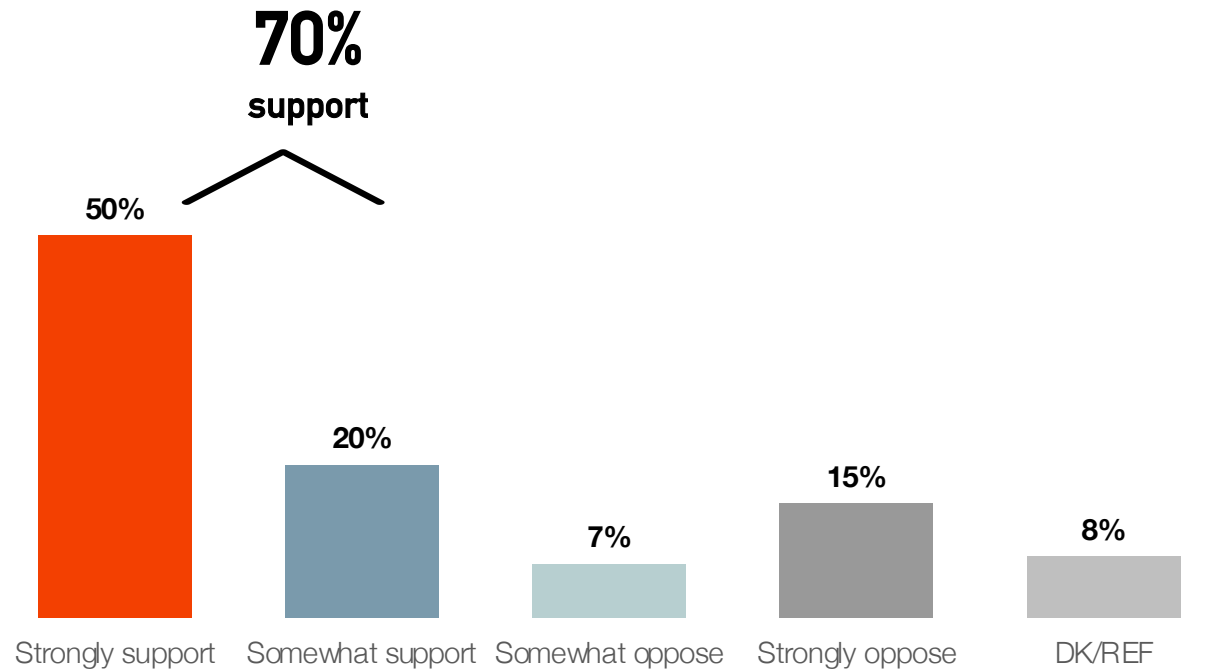
Q: Who should have the MOST responsibility for fixing rising healthcare costs?



# **Solutions and Values.**

# 7 in 10 New Yorkers support legislation that would prevent medical providers from putting liens on people's houses and garnishing their wages if they don't pay bills.

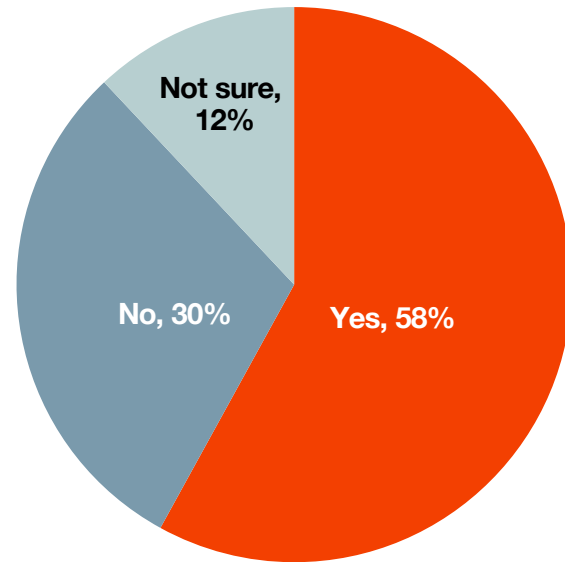
Q: Currently, non-profit hospitals in New York are using collection agencies that put liens on people's houses and garnish their wages if they do not pay their bills following a hospital stay. Would you support or oppose New York passing a law that would stop medical providers from filing liens on people's homes or garnishing their wages?



Demographic	% SUPPORT
Overall	70%
Women	68%
Men	72%
18 to 34	75%
35 to 54	69%
55 to 64	73%
65+	64%
Black	66%
Latino/Hispanic	59%
White	74%
Less than \$30K	61%
\$30K to \$50K	77%
\$50K to \$75K	73%
\$75K to \$100K	80%
\$100K or more	75%
Democrats	75%
Independents	64%
Republicans	73%
Buffalo/Rochester	77%
Long Island	68%
NYC 5 Boroughs	68%
Westchester / Hudson Valley	70%
Rest of NY State	73%

# 6 in 10 agree that New York should enact a law that prevents nonprofit charitable hospitals from going after extraordinary medical debt.

Q: Do you think state leaders should enact a law that prevents nonprofit charitable hospitals from pursuing extraordinary medical debt collection actions such as: suing patients, filing liens on their homes, and garnishing their wages.



<b>% YES</b>	<b>58%</b>
Women	57%
Men	59%
18 to 34	67%
35 to 54	59%
55 to 64	57%
65+	46%
Black	56%
Latino/Hispanic	53%
White	61%
Less than \$30K	52%
\$30K to \$50K	61%
\$50K to \$75K	57%
\$75K to \$100K	73%
\$100K or more	65%
Democrats	65%
Independents	50%
Republicans	61%
Buffalo/Rochester	50%
Long Island	71%
NYC 5 Boroughs	58%
Westchester / Hudson Valley	62%
Rest of NY State	53%

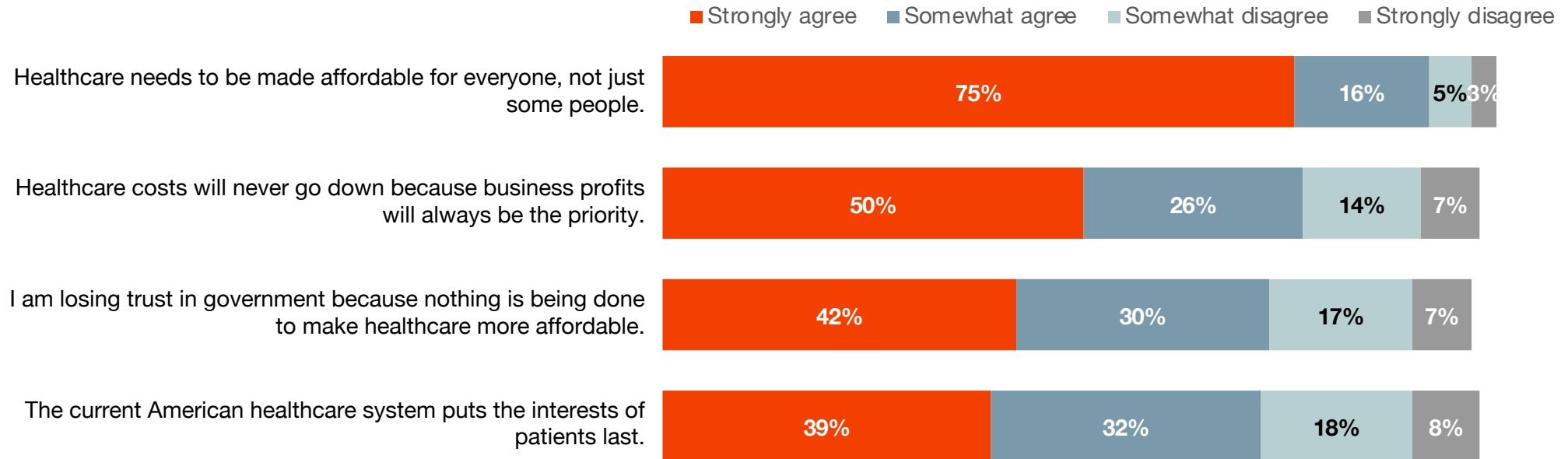
## Majorities support different ideas to bring down health costs.

Q: Here are ideas that some people have proposed to bring down healthcare costs. Please indicate how much you support or oppose each idea.

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	DK/REF
Require hospitals and insurance companies to disclose the prices they pay on a government website so patients can better shop for care.	58%	26%	7%	4%	5%
Put limits on the prices that hospitals can charge for services.	55%	27%	8%	7%	5%
Eliminate or cap health insurance deductibles and co-payments so that New Yorkers don't have to pay more to use their health insurance.	52%	30%	8%	5%	5%
Lower health insurance premiums for middle-class families by giving them tax credits or subsidies so they can afford to buy health insurance through New York's health insurance marketplace, called New York State of Health.	48%	34%	7%	5%	6%
Allow people to buy into a government-administered health plan, sometimes called a public option, that would be available to all New Yorkers. People would still have the choice of keeping their private or employer-sponsored health insurance, but now they could purchase a government-sponsored plan that would compete with private plans to lower costs.	47%	33%	7%	7%	7%
Establish a government health plan, sometimes called Medicare-for-all, in which all New Yorkers would get their insurance from a single government plan. This program would eliminate private health insurance – as everyone would be covered under one state-run program.	40%	25%	10%	18%	6%

# Majorities of New Yorkers agree more needs to be done on healthcare equity and affordability.

Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



**Appendix.**

Region	Counties
Buffalo and Rochester	Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates
Long Island	Nassau, Suffolk
NYC 5 Boroughs	Bronx, Kings, New York, Queens, Richmond
Westchester / Hudson Valley	Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester
Rest of New York State	Albany, Broome, Cayuga, Chemung, Chenango, Clinton, Columbia, Cortland, Delaware, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Montgomery, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, Otsego, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Schuyler, St. Lawrence, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins, Warren, Washington



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