

# AMERICAN VIEWPOINT

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**HART**  
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2010 Election Survey Results

Missouri Statewide

Prepared for  
AARP Strategic Issues Research

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# Introduction and Methodology

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AARP commissioned American Viewpoint, Inc. to conduct a series of election surveys in consultation with Hart Research Associates, Inc. Blinded telephone interviewing was conducted with AARP members who are likely voters in the 2010 federal elections. Respondents were selected from random samples of the membership provided by AARP and then screened for likelihood of voting and to confirm AARP membership. Eight surveys were conducted between September 9 and 21 including a national survey with an Hispanic oversample and seven statewide surveys as follows:

<b>Survey Population</b>	<b>Field Dates</b>
U.S. National, n=1,000 with an oversample of n=250 Hispanic voters	9/9-13/2010
Ohio Statewide, n=500	9/12-13/2010
Pennsylvania Statewide, n=500	9/12-14/2010
Nevada Statewide, n=500	9/13-15/2010
New Hampshire Statewide, n=500	9/14-15/2010
Colorado Statewide, n=500	9/14-15/2010
Florida Statewide, n=500	9/19-20/2010
<b>Missouri Statewide, n=500</b>	<b>9/20-21/2010</b>

Data were weighted to sex and age within region, party and race. Weights were based on population characteristics. All surveys are subject to errors caused by interviewing a sample of persons rather than the entire population. At 95 percent confidence, the margin of error for a simple random sample of n=1,000 is  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points; for n=500,  $\pm 4.4$ ; and for n=250,  $\pm 6.2$ . Some scores may not add to 100% due to rounding.

# Executive Summary

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- The Missouri AARP members interviewed are highly likely to vote. In all, 91% say they are definitely planning to vote and another 9% are likely to vote.
- Like many Americans, most Missouri AARP members say that things in the country have gotten off on the wrong track, are dissatisfied with current economic conditions and are concerned about the deficit. In all, 60% say the country is on the wrong track, 81% are dissatisfied with the current state of the economy, and 92% are concerned about the deficit. Fewer than four in ten (39%) think the national economy will get better over the course of the next year while 18% think it will get worse and 38% think it will stay about the same.
- As a result, they are concerned about the future. In addition to near-term misgivings about the economy, there is a widespread belief that conditions for their children's generation will be more difficult than they have experienced. Indeed, just 23% are confident that life for their children's generation will be better than it has been for them while 65% say they are not confident.
- At the same time, most are at least somewhat satisfied with their own economic situation. In fact, 69% are satisfied overall (22% very satisfied) while 30% of Missouri members are dissatisfied with their own economic situation. In addition, they are reasonably optimistic about their economic outlook in the near-term. Most (66%) indicate that their personal financial situation will remain about the same in the next year while 17% think it will get better and 14% worse.
- Part of this optimism may stem from their confidence in Social Security. More than six in ten (67%) Missouri members are confident that they will receive full Social Security benefits throughout their retirement while 27% are not confident. The inherent value of Social Security is underscored by the fact virtually all respondents (97%) – regardless of political affiliation, ideology, or demographic characteristics – say that it is important to them that Social Security is there for future generations.
- To that end, 95% of the AARP members interviewed in Missouri say it is important that a candidate in the 2010 election pledge their commitment to ensuring that Social Security remains a guaranteed life-long benefit.

# Executive Summary

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- With regard to the deficit, Missouri AARP members do not support reducing Social Security benefits for future retirees in order to control the deficit. The vast majority (67%) agree more with a hypothetical candidate who says that Social Security is essential for retirement security and that cutting the benefits of future retirees will place an unfair burden on them. Another 24% agree more with a candidate who says that Social Security is one of the biggest federal programs and we can't control the deficit without reducing Social Security benefits for future retirees.
- Furthermore, 62% say that they would be less likely to vote for a candidate who favors reducing the deficit by cutting Social Security benefits for future retirees. Opposition is strong across the state's subgroups and cuts across age, income and party affiliation. Indeed, a majority of Republicans (52%), Democrats (64%) and Independents (67%) would be less likely to vote for a candidate who favors this approach.
- Medicare fraud is perceived to be a major problem that adds substantially to the cost of the program (71%). Missouri members' reasoning for cracking down on Medicare fraud is focused more on maintaining the overall strength of the program than on the impact on their own health or finances. The top reason to crack down on Medicare fraud is to keep Medicare financially strong (49%), although a substantial number say the most important reason to fight fraud is that it will save consumers money (16%), protect seniors' health (12%) or help reduce the deficit (11%).
- Missouri members are very responsive to a number of bipartisan legislative proposals that have been offered in Congress to fight Medicare fraud. Most (89%) say that "significantly increasing penalties for criminals who commit fraud" would be at least somewhat helpful in helping minimize Medicare fraud and identity theft of Medicare patients, including 60% who say it would help to a great extent. Similarly, 86% say that "changing the way Medicare pays claims so that suspicious claims would have to be verified before they are paid" would help; 56% a great deal. Further, 65% say it would be helpful to "prevent Medicare from using a person's Social Security number as their Medicare number" (33% a great deal). Here again, a majority of AARP members (69%) are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports these proposals while just 5% are less likely.

## Executive Summary

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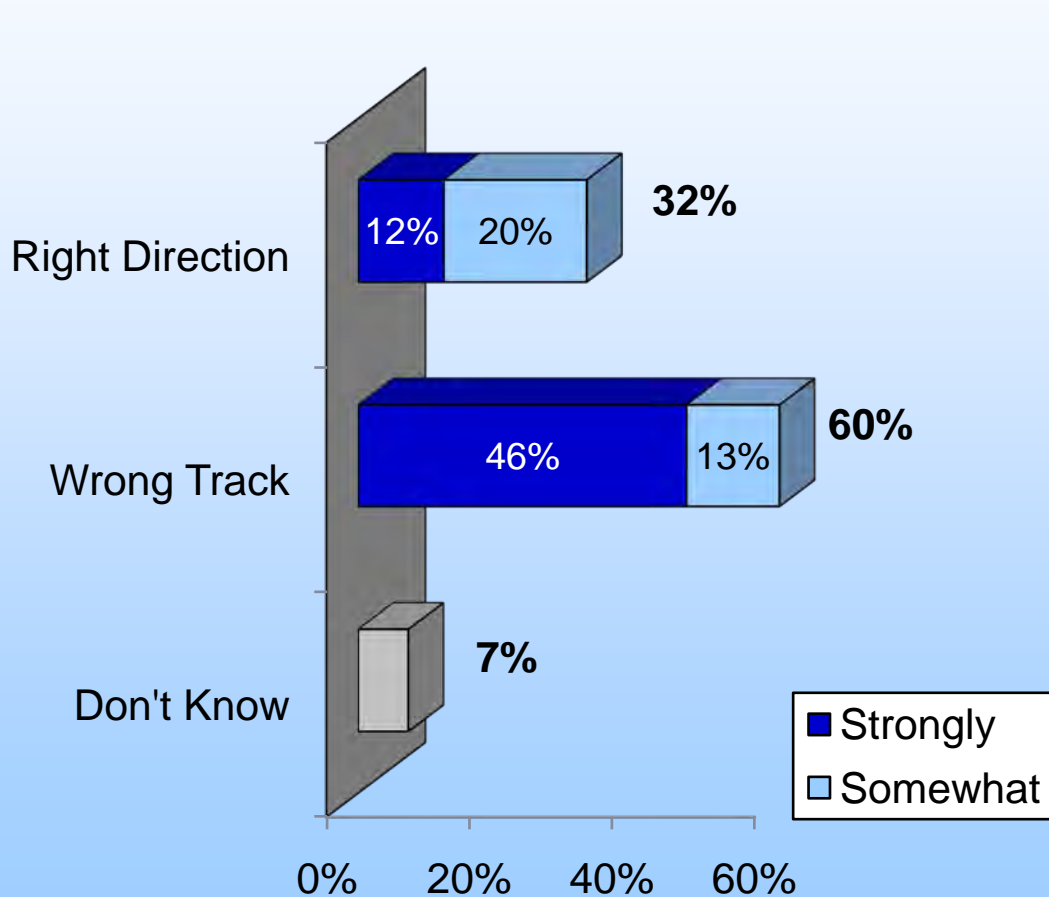
- Missouri members see the threat of annual reduction in reimbursement rates to Medicare doctors as a problem and support a permanent solution. In all, 86% of AARP Medicare beneficiaries say that they are concerned – and 50% are very concerned – that if the 23% cut in payments takes place in December as scheduled, their current doctors will stop accepting Medicare. Future retirees are also concerned; 87% of those not currently enrolled in Medicare say that they are concerned – 57% very – that if Congress fails to fix the doctor reimbursement problem, it will limit their access to doctors when they become Medicare eligible.
- As a result, a majority (60%) would be more likely to vote for a candidate who promises to fix the system to prevent future cuts in reimbursement rates to doctors. Just 5% are less likely.

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# *Political Environment*

**Mood of the Country:** Like other Americans, many Missouri AARP members are dissatisfied with the direction of the country – 60% say things are off on the wrong track. Majorities of most major subgroups hold this view while just 32% overall say things are going in the right direction. A more positive perspective is found among Democrats (59% right direction) and liberals (64%).

Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are going in the right direction or have they gotten off on the wrong track?

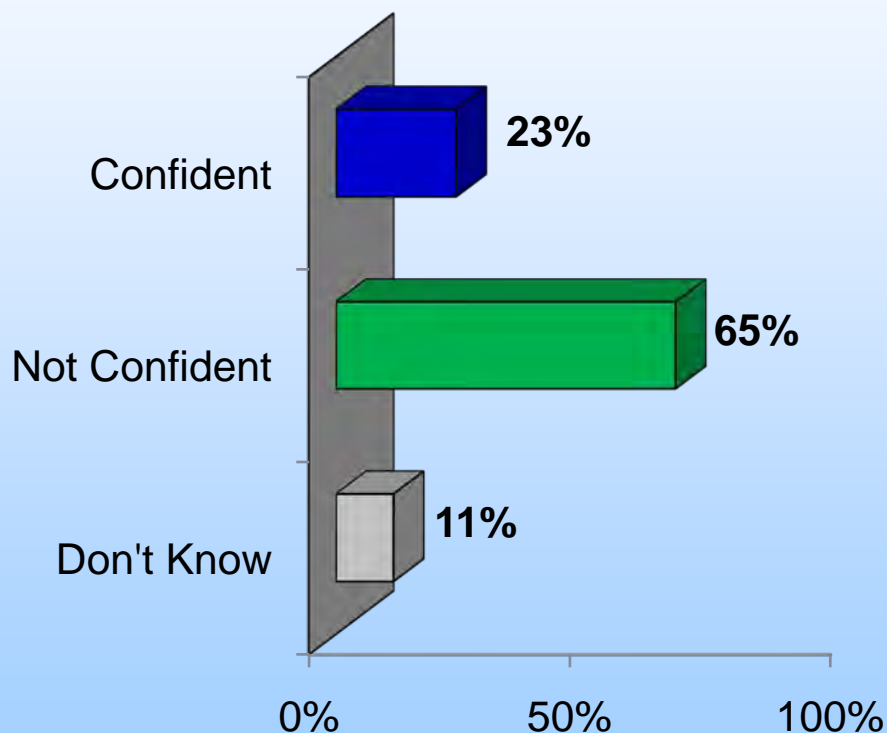


	Right Direction	Wrong Track
Kansas City	37%	58%
Springfield	23%	68%
St. Louis	32%	58%
Balance	31%	59%
Male 64 & under	31%	64%
Male 65+	26%	65%
Female 64 & under	38%	57%
Female 65+	33%	54%
Republican	7%	93%
Ticket Splitter	25%	65%
Democrat	59%	30%
Liberal	64%	27%
Moderate	39%	51%
Conservative	10%	85%



**Life for our Children's Generation:** Most Missouri members lack confidence that life will be better for their children's generation than it has been for them. Again, this sentiment is found across most of the population with few exceptions. Indeed, there is little difference between those with higher and lower income levels. Here, too, Democrats and liberals have a more positive outlook

Do you feel confident or not confident that life for our children's generation will be better than it has been for us?



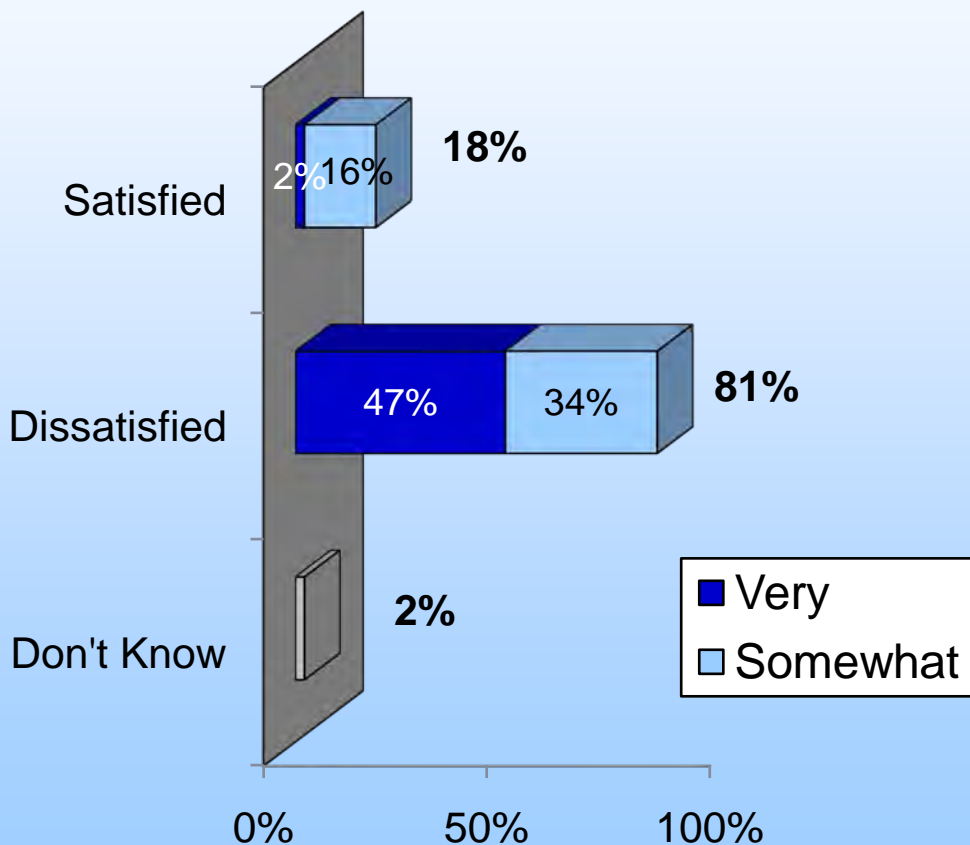
	Confident	Not Confident
Kansas City	23%	64%
Springfield	19%	65%
St. Louis	24%	66%
Balance	24%	66%
Male 64 & under	21%	73%
Male 65+	19%	70%
Female 64 & under	28%	64%
Female 65+	25%	58%
Republican	9%	88%
Ticket Splitter	18%	70%
Democrat	40%	43%
Liberal	38%	42%
Moderate	26%	61%
Conservative	13%	81%
Under \$30K	23%	66%
\$30K-\$49K	26%	59%
\$50K-\$74K	20%	71%
\$75K and Over	24%	64%

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# *The Economy*

**Dissatisfaction with the economy:** Most Missouri members are dissatisfied with the current state of the U.S. economy.

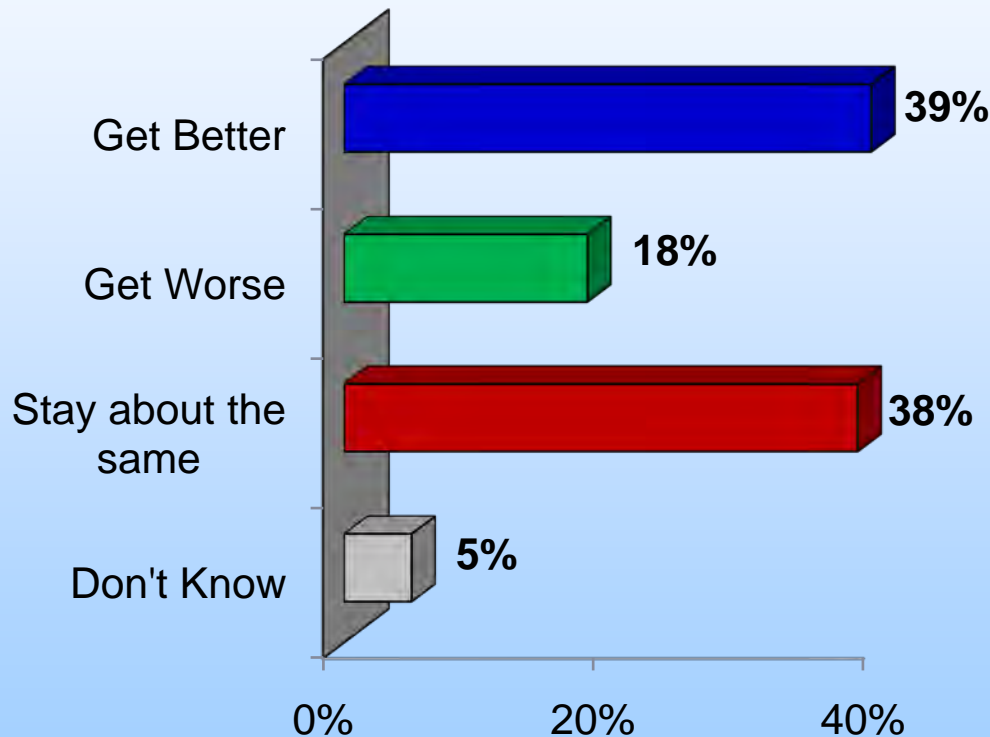
How satisfied are you with the state of the U.S. economy today – are you: very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the state of the economy?



	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Kansas City	15%	81%
Springfield	11%	85%
St. Louis	19%	81%
Balance	22%	77%
Male 64 & under	18%	82%
Male 65+	14%	84%
Female 64 & under	14%	84%
Female 65+	24%	73%
Republican	8%	92%
Ticket Splitter	16%	82%
Democrat	27%	71%
Liberal	26%	73%
Moderate	22%	76%
Conservative	8%	90%
S.S. Through Retire.		
Confident	22%	76%
Not Confident	6%	92%

**Economic outlook:** 39% think the economy will get better in the next year, 18% that it will get worse, and 38% that it will stay about the same. Democrats, liberals, moderates and those who are confident about Social Security are among the most optimistic about the economic outlook.

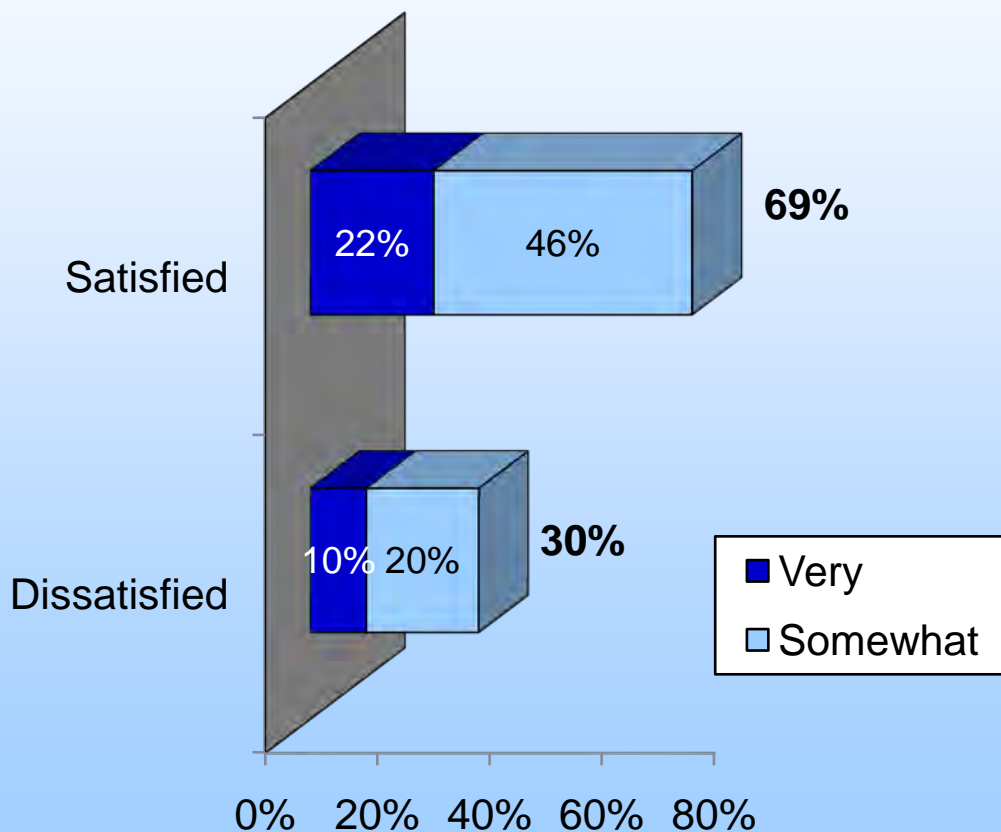
Thinking about a year from now, do you think the national economy will get better, get worse, or stay about the same as it is now?



	Better	Worse	Same
Kansas City	37%	17%	40%
Springfield	23%	28%	39%
St. Louis	45%	14%	36%
Balance	40%	20%	38%
Male 64 & under	34%	20%	40%
Male 65+	39%	20%	35%
Female 64 & under	37%	19%	41%
Female 65+	44%	14%	37%
Republican	12%	35%	47%
Ticket Splitter	39%	17%	39%
Democrat	58%	7%	31%
Liberal	57%	11%	29%
Moderate	47%	11%	37%
Conservative	22%	29%	44%
S.S. Through Retire.			
Confident	49%	13%	35%
Not Confident	16%	33%	42%

**Satisfaction with personal financial situation:** Most Missouri members are at least somewhat satisfied with their own financial situation. Satisfaction scores tend to increase with income and education. Those who lack confidence in Social Security are less satisfied than those who are confident that they will continue to receive benefits throughout retirement.

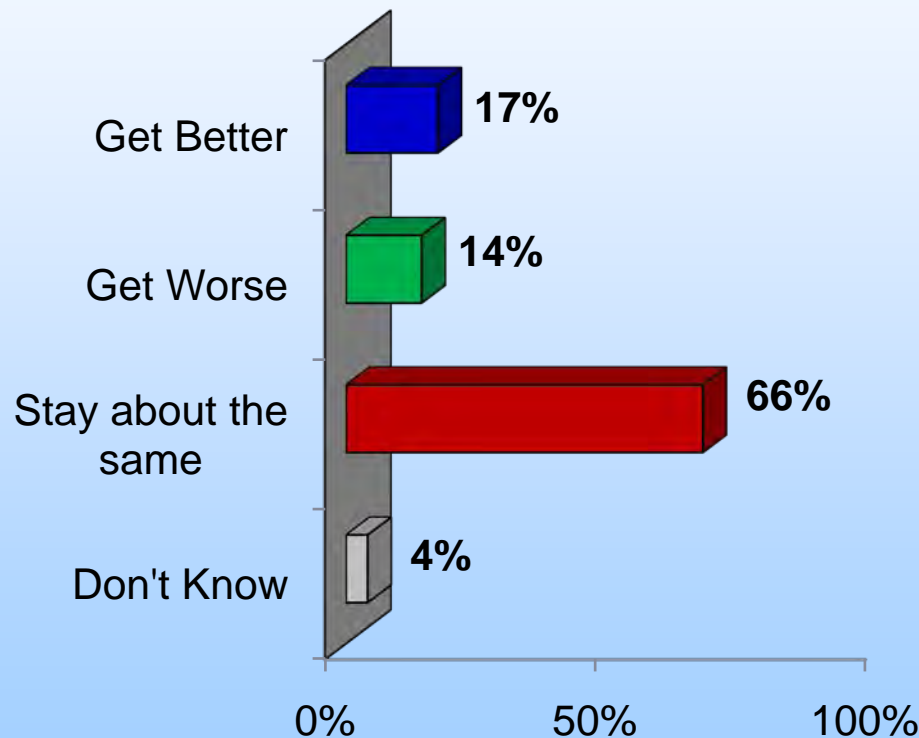
How satisfied are you with the state of your own financial situation today – are you: very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with your own financial situation?



	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Kansas City	60%	35%
Springfield	76%	24%
St. Louis	65%	35%
Balance	81%	17%
Male 64 & under	68%	32%
Male 65+	71%	26%
Female 64 & under	65%	35%
Female 65+	71%	27%
Republican	60%	40%
Ticket Splitter	73%	26%
Democrat	68%	29%
H.S. Grad.	60%	38%
Some Coll/V-Tech	71%	28%
College Grad+	73%	25%
Under \$30K	60%	38%
\$30K-\$49K	67%	33%
\$50K-\$74K	74%	23%
\$75K and Over	79%	20%
S.S. Through Retire.		
Confident	72%	26%
Not Confident	60%	40%

**Most Missouri members indicate that their personal financial situation will be stable in the next year.** Those earning less than \$30,000, Republicans, conservatives, and those who lack confidence in Social Security are more likely to say their situation will worsen over the next year.

Thinking about a year from now, do you think your personal financial situation will get better, get worse, or stay about the same as it is now?



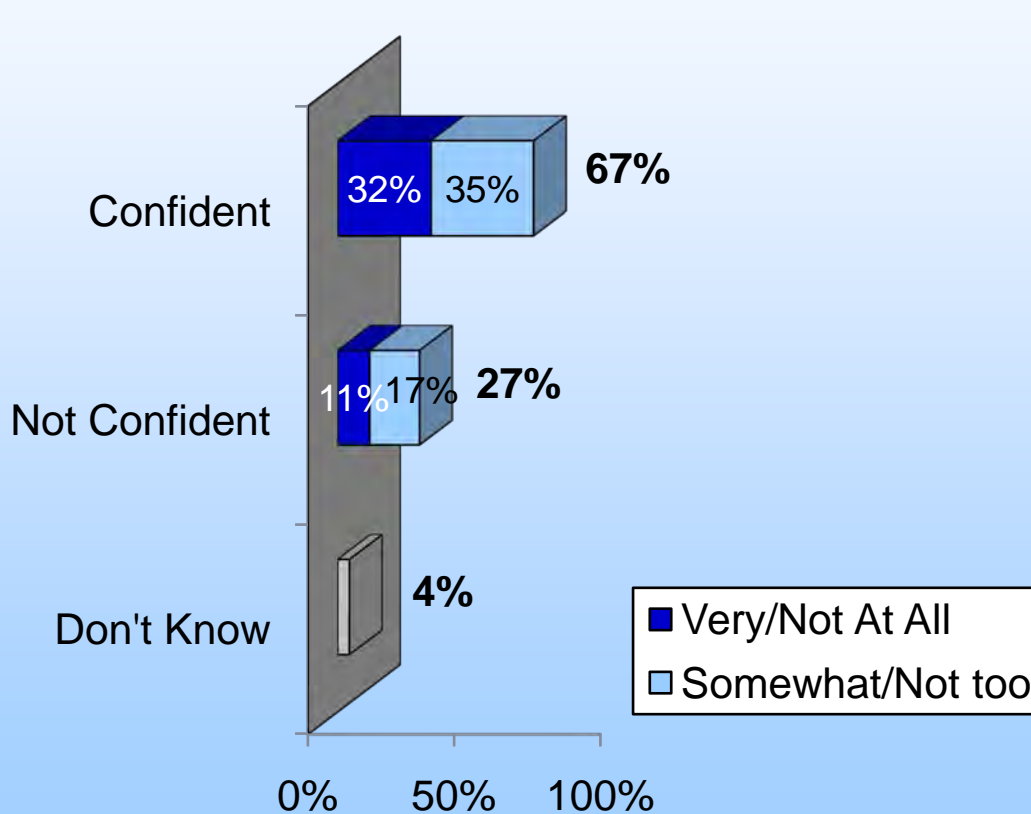
	Better	Worse	Same
Kansas City	15%	15%	70%
Springfield	15%	12%	69%
St. Louis	19%	14%	62%
Balance	16%	13%	68%
Male 64 & under	17%	10%	70%
Male 65+	16%	16%	64%
Female 64 & under	17%	15%	64%
Female 65+	16%	13%	67%
Republican	10%	23%	66%
Ticket Splitter	17%	14%	66%
Democrat	23%	5%	69%
Liberal	26%	8%	64%
Moderate	16%	10%	71%
Conservative	10%	20%	64%
Under \$30K	12%	22%	64%
\$30K-\$49K	16%	9%	72%
\$50K-\$74K	15%	14%	69%
\$75K and Over	20%	8%	67%
S.S. Through Retire.			
Confident	19%	8%	71%
Not Confident	10%	28%	55%

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# ***Social Security***

**Confidence in Social Security:** Two-thirds of Missouri AARP members say they are confident that they will receive full Social Security benefits throughout their retirement. However, fewer than three in ten respondents (27%) express high confidence. Not surprisingly, younger members are less confident than their older counterparts. Republicans are less confident than Democrats and conservatives less so than moderates or liberals.

How confident are you that you will receive full Social Security benefits throughout your retirement?

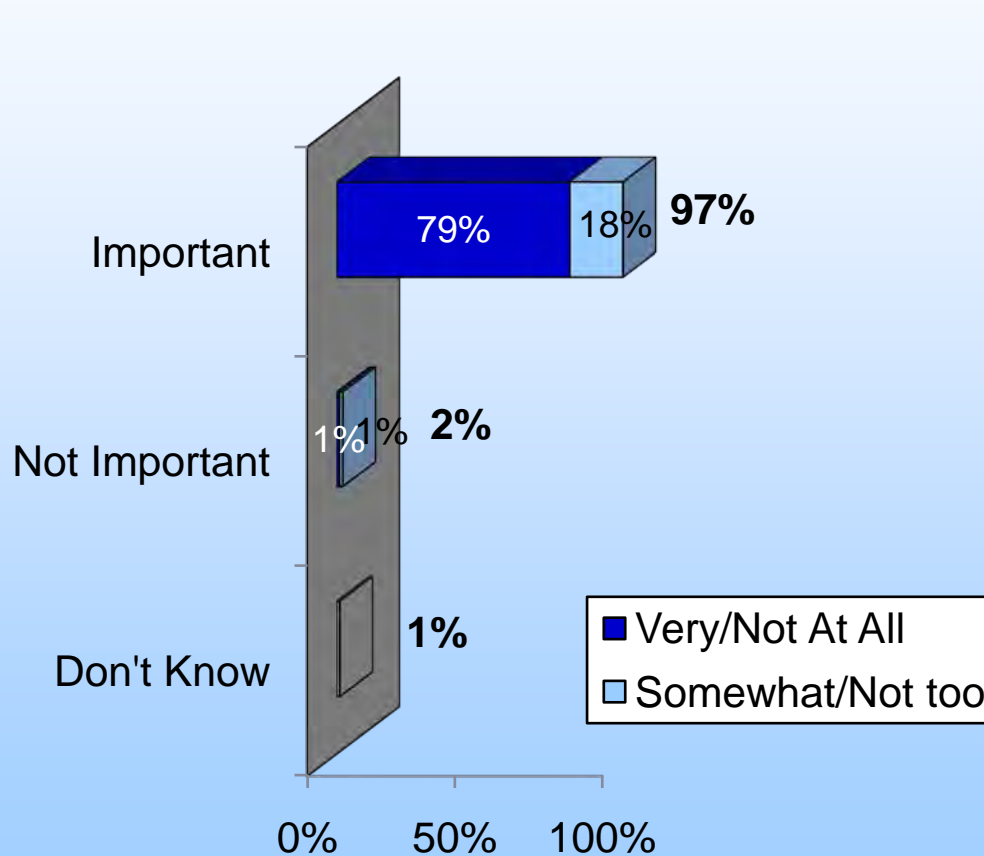


	Confident	Not Confident
Kansas City	72%	25%
Springfield	59%	33%
St. Louis	70%	26%
Balance	64%	30%
Male 64 & under	58%	41%
Male 65+	75%	20%
Female 64 & under	61%	32%
Female 65+	73%	20%
Republican	60%	36%
Ticket Splitter	67%	30%
Democrat	75%	17%
Liberal	78%	14%
Moderate	70%	26%
Conservative	58%	38%



**The future of Social Security is important to Missouri members:** Virtually all members say it is important to them that Social Security is there for future generations.

How important is it to you that Social Security is there for future generations?

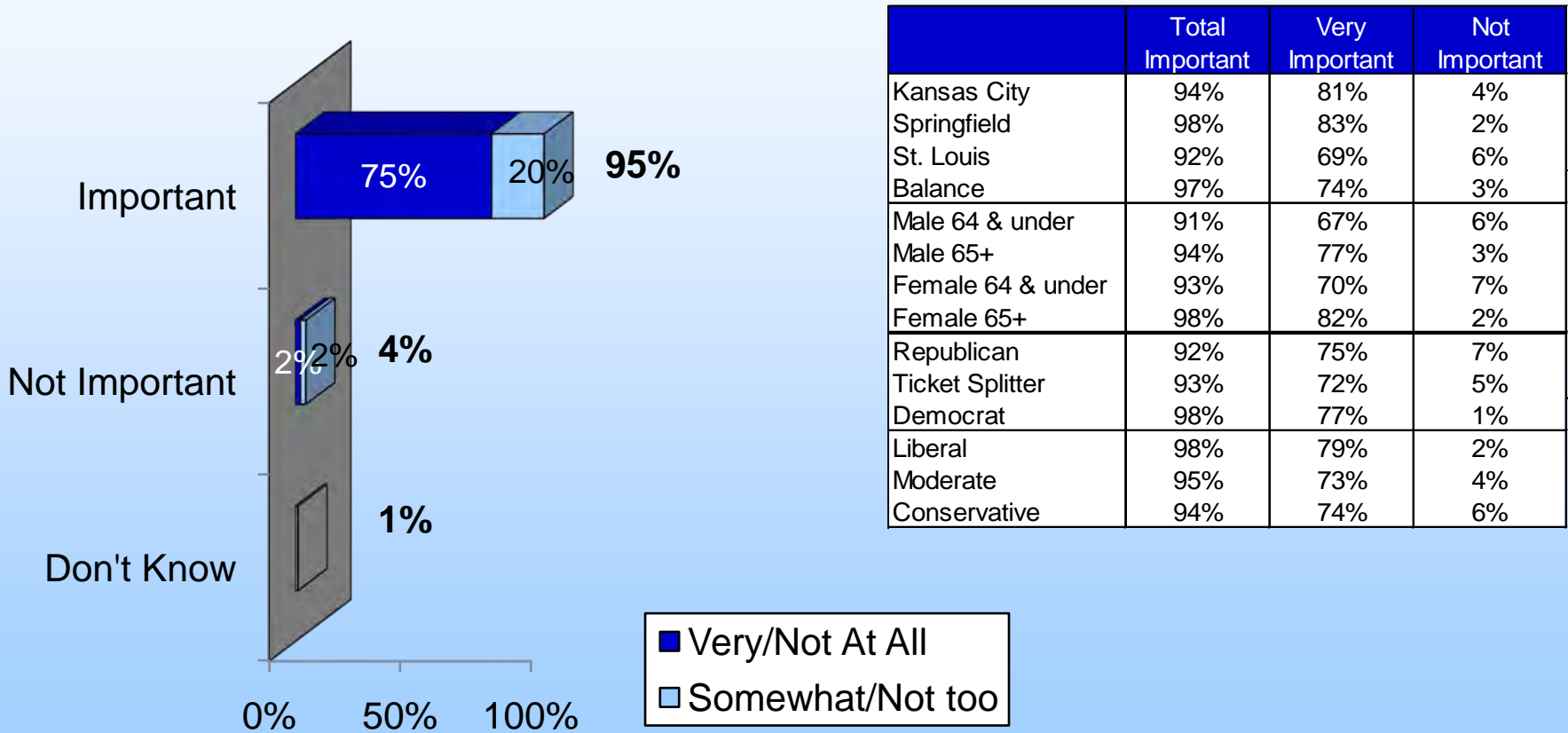


	Total Important	Very Important	Not Important
Kansas City	96%	80%	2%
Springfield	98%	83%	1%
St. Louis	97%	78%	2%
Balance	96%	78%	1%
Male 64 & under	96%	76%	2%
Male 65+	95%	79%	2%
Female 64 & under	96%	72%	2%
Female 65+	100%	87%	0%
Republican	96%	79%	1%
Ticket Splitter	96%	76%	3%
Democrat	98%	82%	1%
Liberal	100%	86%	0%
Moderate	96%	82%	2%
Conservative	97%	74%	1%

**Missouri AARP members want candidates to pledge their commitment to Social Security:**

Across the population, there is a nearly universal sentiment that it is important for candidates in the 2010 election to voice their commitment to ensuring that Social Security remains a guaranteed life-long benefit.

In the 2010 election campaign, how important is it to you that a candidate pledge their commitment to ensuring that Social Security remains a guaranteed life-long benefit.

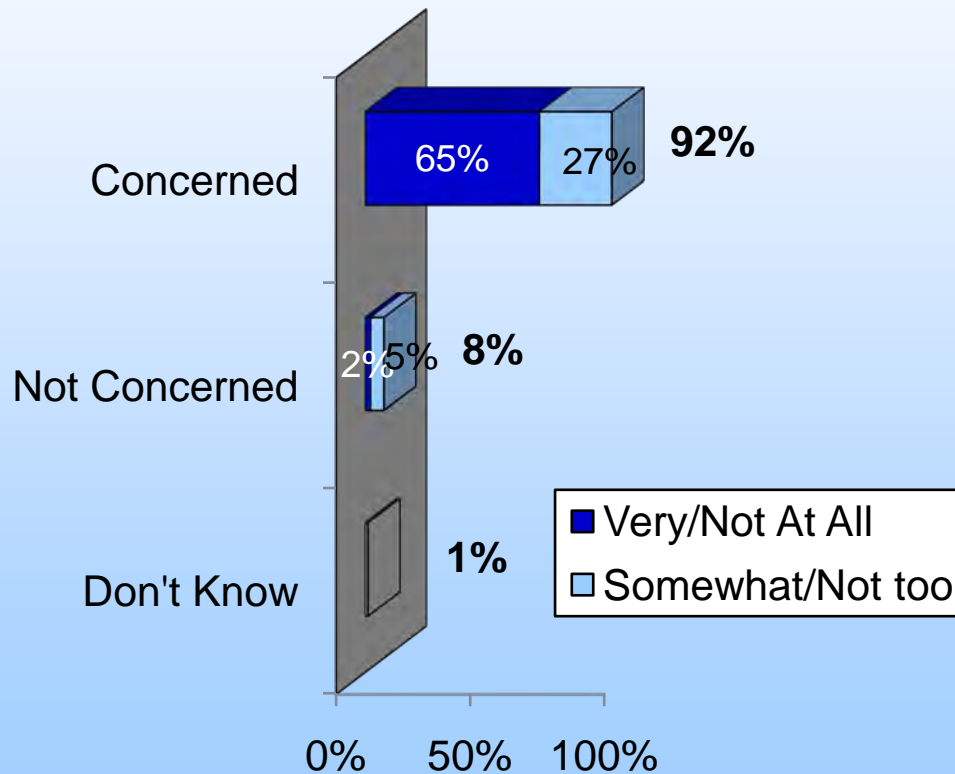


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# *The Deficit*

**Concern about the national deficit runs high across the Missouri member population:** 92% are concerned about the deficit and 65% are very concerned.

How concerned are you about the national deficit?



	Total Concerned	Very Concerned	Not Concerned
Kansas City	92%	68%	7%
Springfield	93%	73%	6%
St. Louis	92%	61%	8%
Balance	91%	64%	9%
Male 64 & under	91%	66%	8%
Male 65+	90%	63%	9%
Female 64 & under	91%	65%	9%
Female 65+	95%	65%	5%
Republican	96%	82%	4%
Ticket Splitter	93%	67%	7%
Democrat	87%	51%	12%
Liberal	85%	44%	15%
Moderate	91%	59%	9%
Conservative	96%	82%	3%

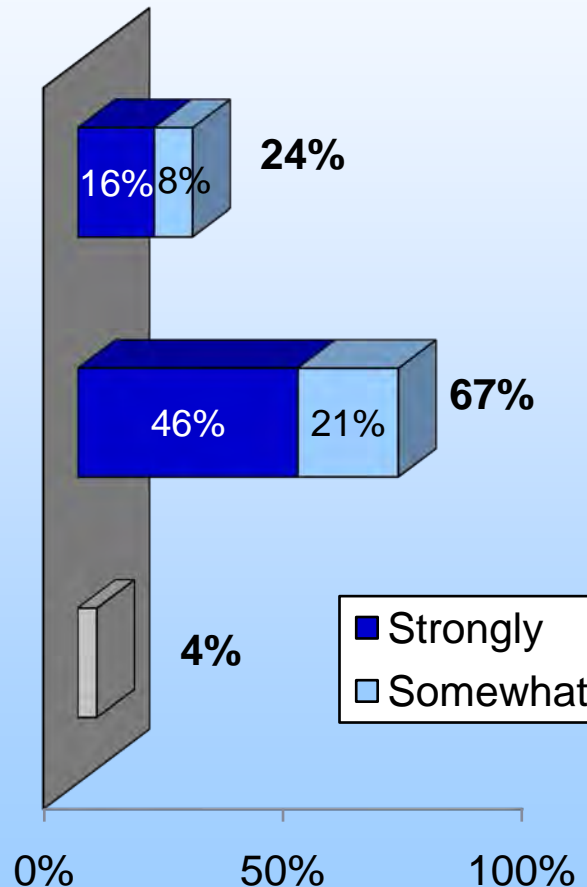
**Two-thirds of Missouri AARP members reject the idea of reducing Social Security benefits for future retirees in order to control the deficit:** Only 24% would agree more with a candidate who says we can't control the deficit without reducing the Social Security benefits of future retirees.

Which of these two candidates do you agree with more?

Says Social Security is one of the biggest federal programs and we can't control the deficit without reducing Social Security benefits for future retirees.

Says Social Security is essential for the retirement security of senior citizens and cutting the benefits of future retirees will place an unfair burden on them.

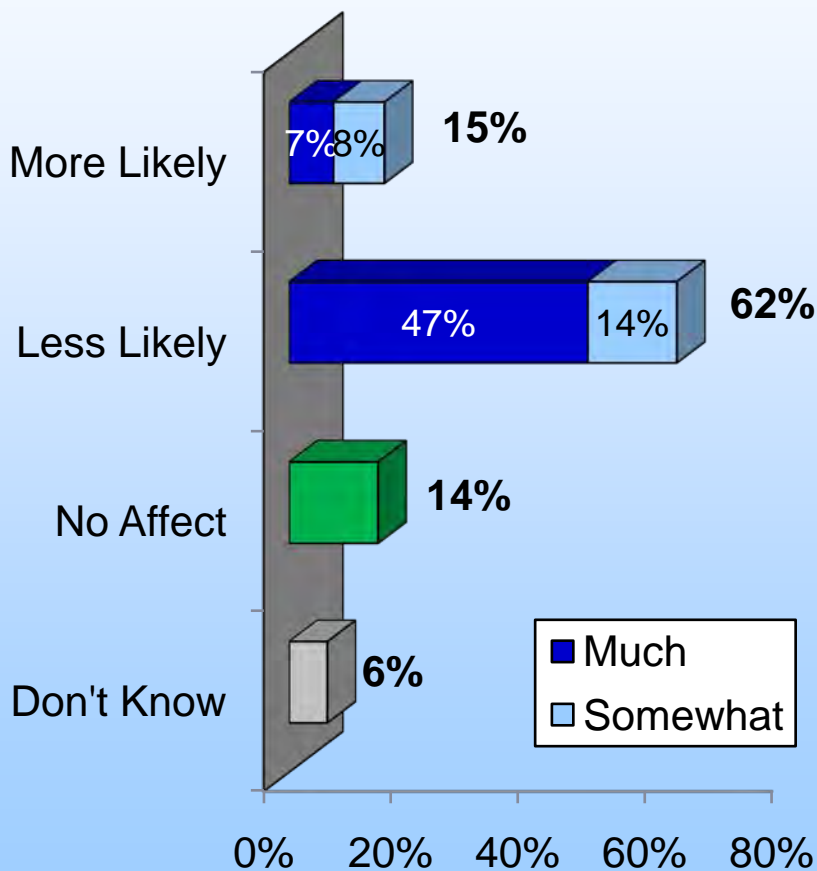
Don't Know



	Cuts Needed	Unfair Burden
Kansas City	21%	74%
Springfield	18%	74%
St. Louis	24%	64%
Balance	33%	62%
Male 64 & under	32%	61%
Male 65+	29%	61%
Female 64 & under	19%	70%
Female 65+	19%	74%
Republican	29%	64%
Ticket Splitter	26%	64%
Democrat	17%	76%
Liberal	18%	75%
Moderate	24%	69%
Conservative	28%	62%

**Missouri AARP members would be less likely to vote for a candidate who would reduce the deficit by cutting Social Security benefits for future retirees.** 62%, including a majority of Republicans, Ticket-Splitters and Democrats would be less likely to vote for a candidate who favors this approach.

Would you be more likely or less likely to vote for a candidate who favors reducing the deficit by cutting Social Security benefits for future retirees, or would it not affect your vote either way?



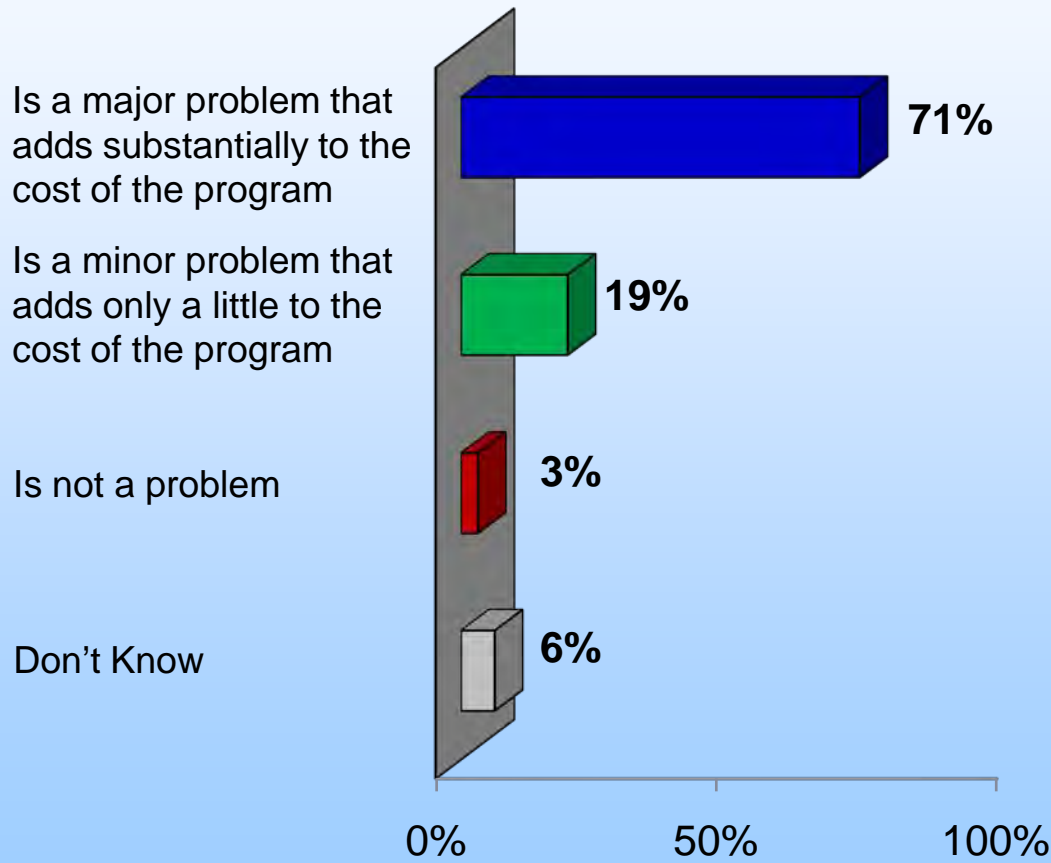
	More Likely	Less Likely	No Affect
Kansas City	9%	68%	15%
Springfield	9%	73%	7%
St. Louis	15%	59%	17%
Balance	26%	51%	14%
Male 64 & under	15%	59%	22%
Male 65+	15%	60%	12%
Female 64 & under	10%	68%	16%
Female 65+	19%	59%	9%
Republican	15%	56%	15%
Ticket Splitter	17%	59%	15%
Democrat	12%	70%	12%
Liberal	16%	70%	9%
Moderate	13%	66%	15%
Conservative	18%	55%	15%

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# *Reducing Medicare Fraud*

**Medicare fraud is seen as a major problem that adds substantially to the cost of the program.** In all, 71% say fraud is a major problem, 19% a minor problem, and 3% that it is not a problem. Majorities of all major subgroups call fraud a major problem.

Would you say that Medicare fraud:

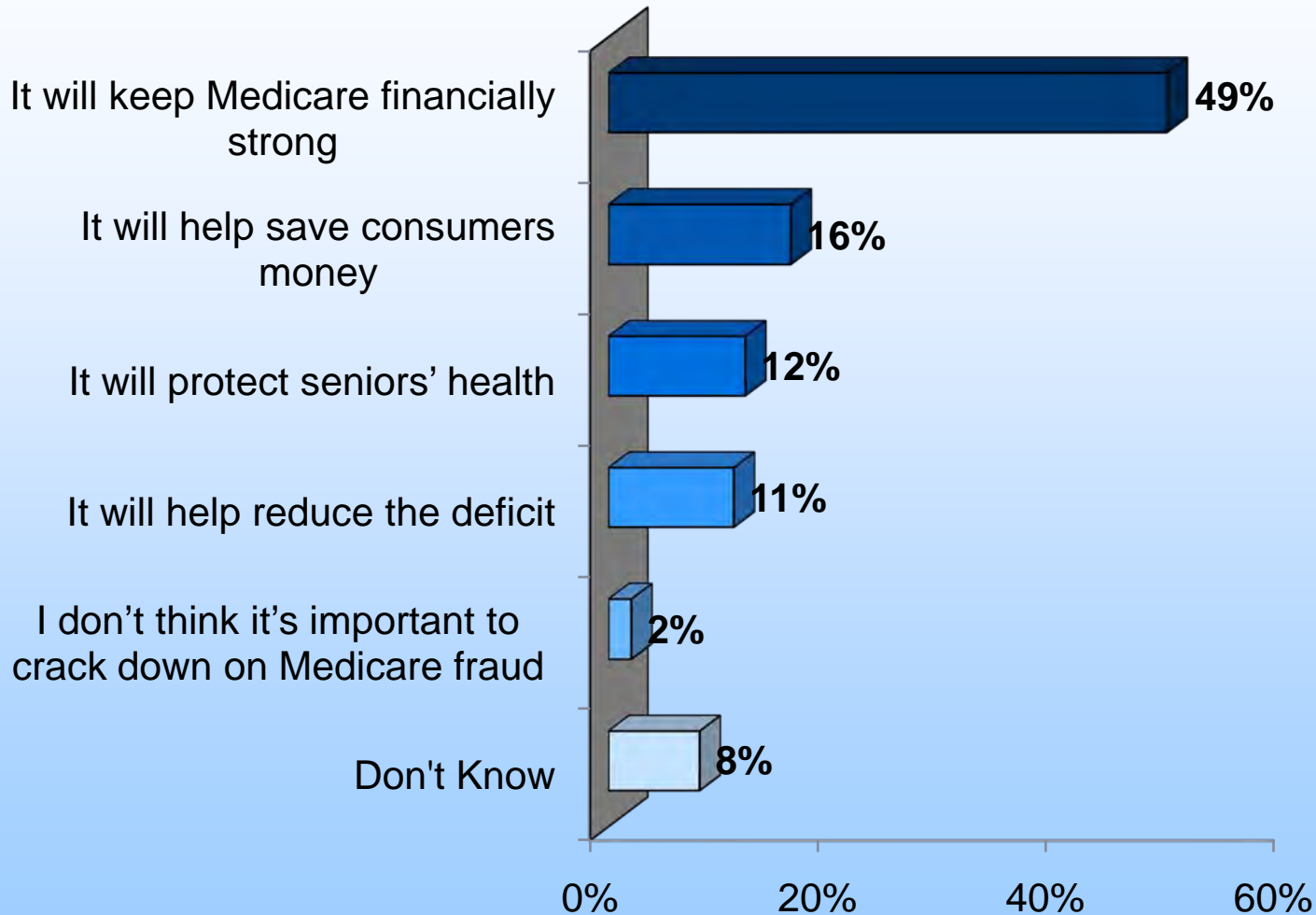


	Major Problem	Minor Problem
Kansas City	66%	18%
Springfield	78%	18%
St. Louis	68%	21%
Balance	77%	18%
Male 64 & under	76%	19%
Male 65+	68%	21%
Female 64 & under	66%	22%
Female 65+	72%	16%
Republican	86%	8%
Ticket Splitter	71%	22%
Democrat	62%	23%
Liberal	60%	22%
Moderate	67%	24%
Conservative	81%	14%



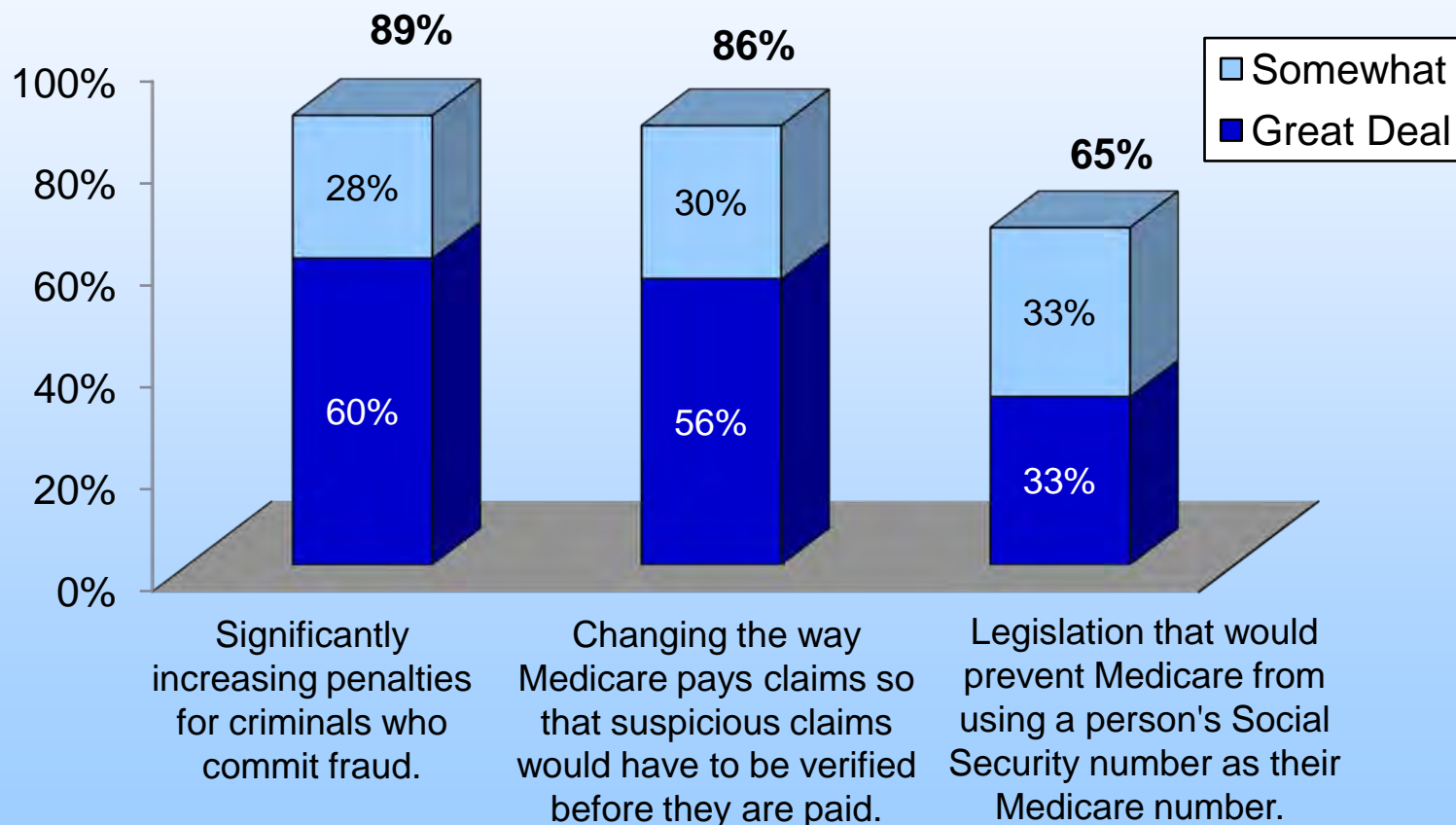
**Cracking down on Medicare Fraud:** A plurality of Missouri AARP members say the most important reason to crack down on fraud is to keep Medicare financially strong.

Which do you think is the most important reason to crack down on Medicare fraud?



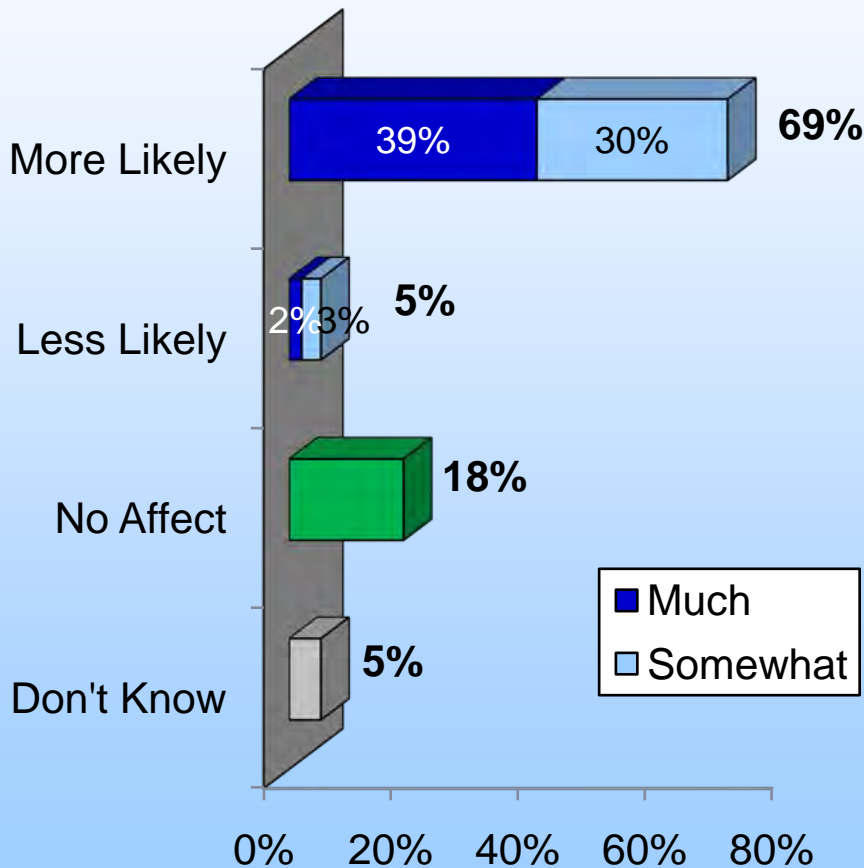
**Missouri members are very responsive to a number of bipartisan legislative proposals that have been offered in Congress to fight Medicare fraud.**

Now I'm going to read several legislative proposals that have been made by members of Congress and ask to what extent you think each proposal would help minimize Medicare fraud and identity theft of Medicare patients?



**Missouri AARP members are more likely to vote for candidates who support these legislative proposals.** Nearly seven in ten Missouri members are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports the legislative proposals to minimize Medicare fraud and identity theft. Candidate support is strong regardless of party, ideology, region, age, sex or income.

Would you be more likely or less likely to vote for a candidate who supports these proposals or would it not affect your vote either way?



	More Likely	Less Likely	No Affect
Kansas City	70%	7%	13%
Springfield	71%	3%	14%
St. Louis	67%	5%	23%
Balance	68%	5%	17%
Male 64 & under	76%	3%	18%
Male 65+	62%	5%	20%
Female 64 & under	71%	7%	17%
Female 65+	66%	5%	18%
Republican	76%	4%	15%
Ticket Splitter	72%	3%	19%
Democrat	63%	8%	20%
Liberal	69%	4%	21%
Moderate	67%	5%	21%
Conservative	74%	4%	15%
Under \$30K	65%	8%	19%
\$30K-\$49K	75%	3%	14%
\$50K-\$74K	74%	1%	22%
\$75K and Over	74%	4%	16%

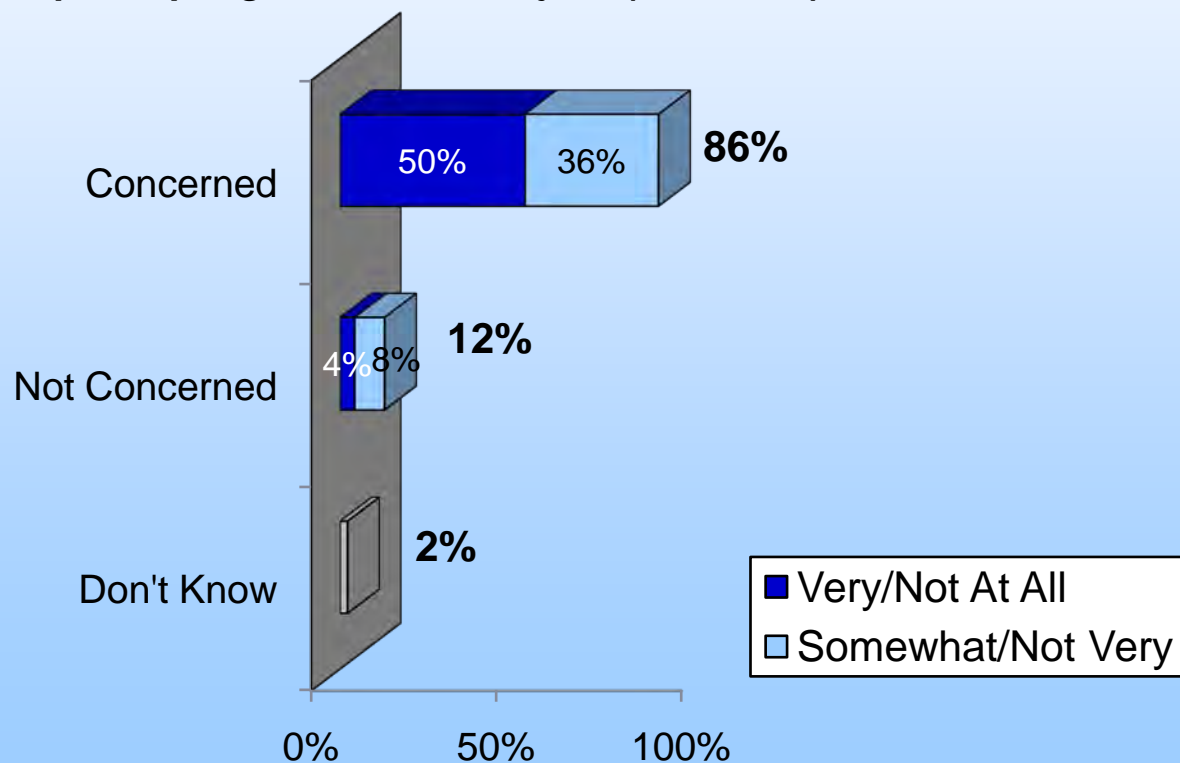
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# *Doc Fix*

**Concern about Medicare reimbursement rates:** Missouri Medicare enrollees express a high level of concern that their current doctors will stop accepting Medicare if the scheduled 23% cut goes into effect.

As you may know, in an effort to control the rate of growth in Medicare spending, current law requires that doctors who treat Medicare patients receive a reduction in reimbursement rates every year. Although Congress has taken action to block the cuts in the past, it has been unable to come up with a permanent solution to the problem. Currently, doctors are scheduled to receive a 23% cut in reimbursement rates starting December 1.

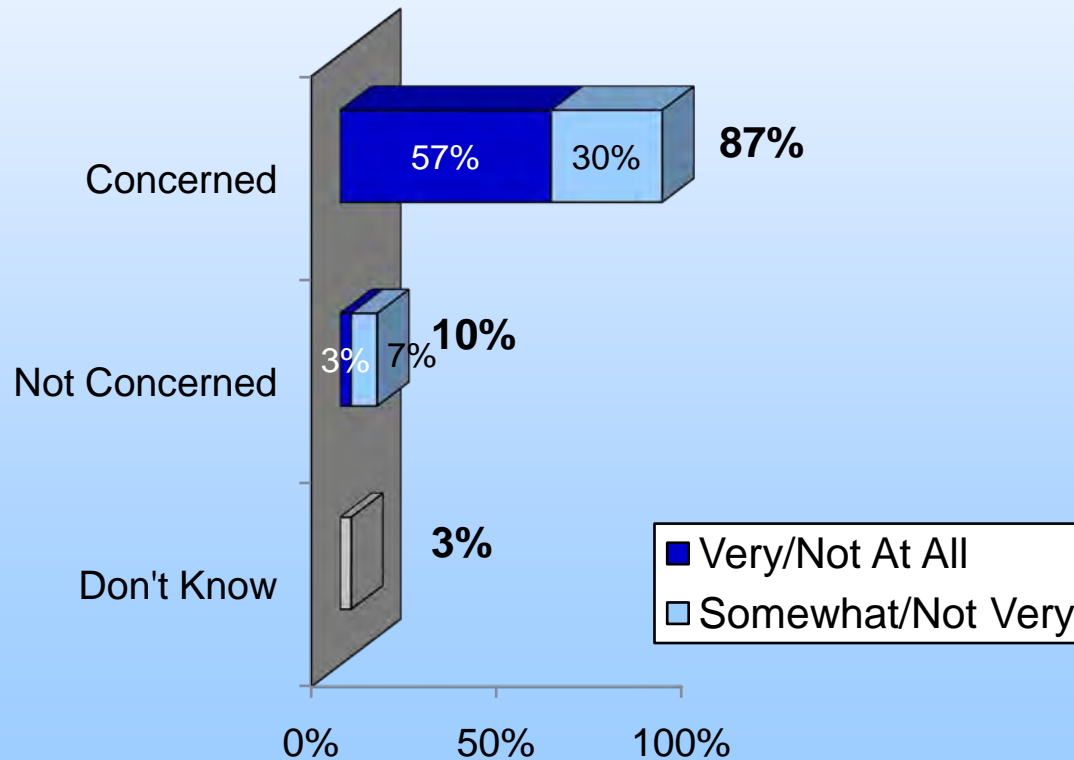
***If the 23 percent payment cut takes effect, how concerned are you that your current doctors will stop accepting Medicare? Are you: (Base=240)***



**Concern about Medicare reimbursement rates:** the non-Medicare Missouri population is highly concerned that their access to Medicare doctors will be limited in the future if Congress fails to fix the doctor reimbursement problem.

As you may know, in an effort to control the rate of growth in Medicare spending, current law requires that doctors who treat Medicare patients receive a reduction in reimbursement rates every year. Although Congress has taken action to block the cuts in the past, it has been unable to come up with a permanent solution to the problem. Currently, doctors are scheduled to receive a 23% cut in reimbursement rates starting December 1.

***If Congress fails to fix the doctor reimbursement problem, how concerned are you that it will limit your access to doctors when you become Medicare eligible? (Base=257)***

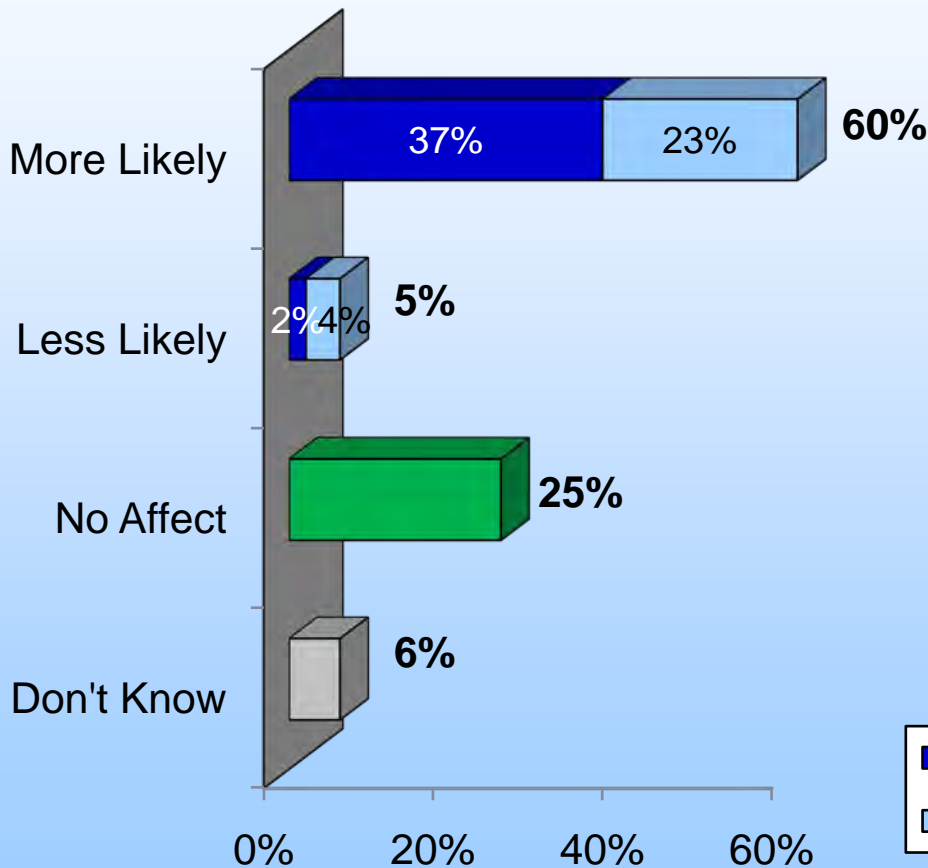


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**Missouri AARP members are more likely to vote for a candidate who promises to fix the system to prevent future cuts in Medicare reimbursement rates to doctors.** In all, 60% are more likely and 37% are much more likely to vote for such a candidate. Only 5% are less likely. A majority of Republicans (76%), Ticket-Splitters (62%) and a plurality of Democrats (48%) are more likely.

Would you be more likely or less likely to vote for a candidate who promises to fix the system to prevent future cuts in reimbursement rates to doctors, or would it not affect your vote either way?



	More Likely	Less Likely	No Affect
Kansas City	70%	7%	15%
Springfield	52%	6%	24%
St. Louis	57%	5%	28%
Balance	60%	4%	30%
Male 64 & under	64%	4%	28%
Male 65+	62%	4%	24%
Female 64 & under	57%	7%	26%
Female 65+	56%	6%	23%
Republican	76%	5%	15%
Ticket Splitter	62%	4%	26%
Democrat	48%	6%	33%
Liberal	62%	5%	25%
Moderate	53%	4%	30%
Conservative	67%	6%	21%

■ Much  
 □ Somewhat

## Summary and Conclusions

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- This survey reveals a political climate born out of the economic crisis and uncertainty of recent years. Missouri AARP members are highly dissatisfied with the direction of the country and with the U.S. economy. Fewer than four in 10 are optimistic about the nation's economic prospects over the next year and 18% think economic conditions will worsen during that time.
- In addition, members are very concerned about the deficit and about the future. Indeed, more than six in ten (65%) Missouri AARP members say they lack confidence that life for their children's generation will be better than it has been for them.
- Even so, most are relatively satisfied with their own economic circumstances and think that their own financial situation will remain stable in the near-term.
- Confidence in Social Security may underpin this view as 67% of all Missouri respondents are confident that they will receive full Social Security benefits throughout their retirement.
- Not surprisingly, then, most think Social Security is very important for future generations and would like to see candidates pledge their commitment to ensuring that Social Security remains a guaranteed life-long benefit. Republicans, Democrats and Ticket-Splitters all stress the importance of this commitment.
- In fact, on the important policy questions in this survey, there was surprisingly little difference based on partisan affiliation or voting behavior.



## Summary and Conclusions

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- This common outlook extends to the concept of reducing the Social Security benefits of future retirees in order to control the deficit. This approach is rejected by 67% of Missouri AARP members (including 61% of Republicans, 76% of Democrats and 63% of Independents) as an unfair burden to future retirees. Further, 62% say they would be less likely to vote for a candidate who favors this approach to deficit reduction. Once again, a majority of all partisan groups (52% of Republicans, 67% of Independents and 64% of Democrats) hold this view.
- Similarly, there is widespread concern about the continued threat of reductions in Medicare reimbursement rates to doctors. Most think that their ability to receive treatment from a doctor who accepts Medicare will be impacted if the issue is not addressed. As a result, 60% say they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who promises to fix the system to prevent further cuts to reimbursement rates to doctors.
- Medicare fraud is perceived as a major problem and members think the most important reason to crack down on fraud is to keep Medicare strong. To that end, they are receptive to the bipartisan legislative proposals tested and would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supports these efforts to minimize fraud and identity theft of Medicare patients.

# AMERICAN VIEWPOINT

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