

# AMERICAN VIEWPOINT

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**HART**  
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**AARP**

2010 Election Survey Results

Ohio 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
<b>Ohio Statewide, n=500</b>	<b>9/12-13/2010</b>
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
Missouri Statewide, n=500	9/20-21/2010

Data were weighted to sex and age within region, 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 Ohio 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 Ohio 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, 62% say the country is on the wrong track, 80% are dissatisfied with the current state of the economy, and 91% 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 19% think it will get worse and 36% 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 one in four (24%) is confident that life for their children's generation will be better than it has been for them while 64% say they are not confident.
- At the same time, most are at least somewhat satisfied with their own economic situation. In fact, 65% are satisfied overall (18% very satisfied) while 33% of Ohio members are dissatisfied with their own economic situation. In addition, they are reasonably optimistic about their economic outlook in the near-term. Most (63%) indicate that their personal financial situation will remain about the same in the next year while 21% think it will get better and 13% worse.
- Part of this optimism may stem from their confidence in Social Security. More than six in ten (62%) Ohio members are confident that they will receive full Social Security benefits throughout their retirement while 31% are not confident. The inherent value of Social Security is underscored by the fact virtually all respondents (96%) – 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, 94% of the AARP members interviewed in Ohio 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, Ohio AARP members do not support reducing Social Security benefits for future retirees in order to control the deficit. The vast majority (71%) 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. One in five (20%) agrees 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, 64% 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 (53%), Democrats (72%) and Independents (61%) 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 (64%). Ohio 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 (47%), although a substantial number say the most important reason to fight fraud is that it will save consumers money (15%), protect seniors' health (12%) or help reduce the deficit (10%).
- Ohio 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 57% who say it would help to a great extent. Similarly, 87% say that "changing the way Medicare pays claims so that suspicious claims would have to be verified before they are paid" would help; 51% a great deal. Further, 61% say it would be helpful to "prevent Medicare from using a person's Social Security number as their Medicare number" (31% a great deal). Here again, a majority of AARP members (67%) are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports these proposals while just 5% are less likely.

# Executive Summary

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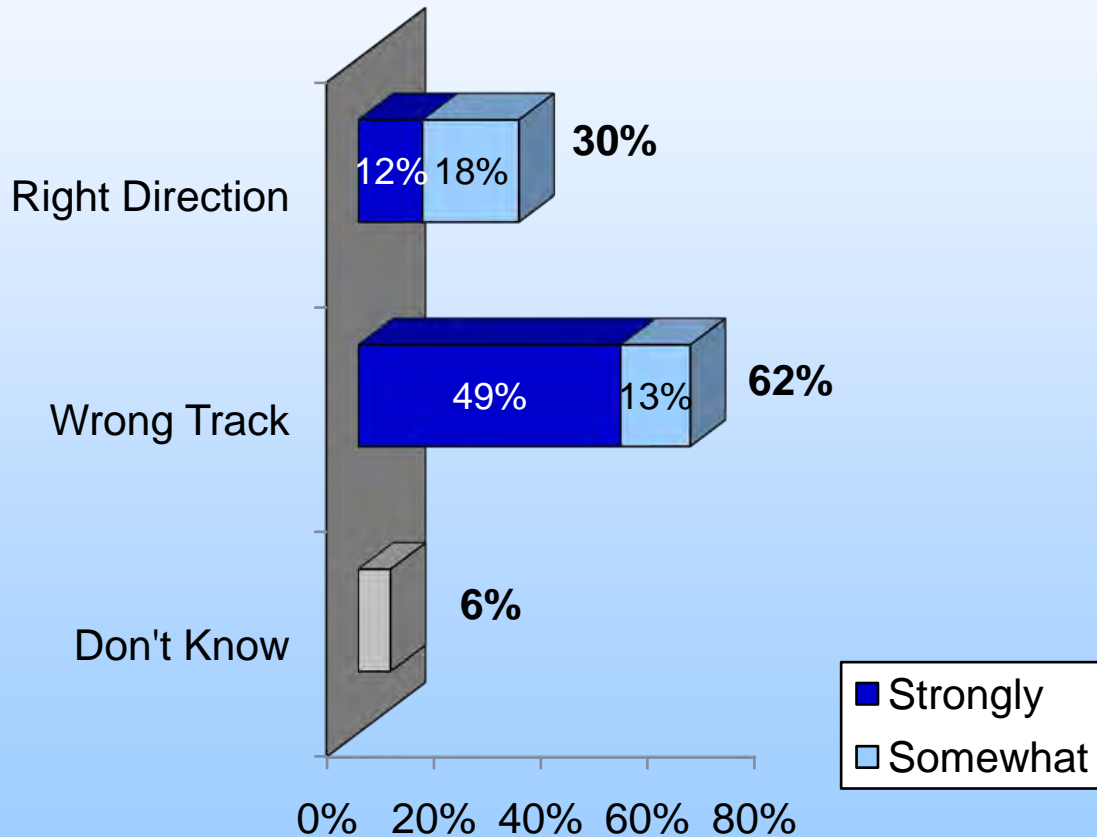
- Ohio members see the threat of annual reduction in reimbursement rates to Medicare doctors as a problem and support a permanent solution. In all, 79% of AARP Medicare beneficiaries say that they are concerned – and 51% are very concerned – that if the 23% cut in payments takes place in December as scheduled, their current doctors will stop accepting Medicare. Future retirees are also concerned; 81% of those not currently enrolled in Medicare say that they are concerned – 51% 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 (55%) 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 Ohio AARP members are dissatisfied with the direction of the country – 62% say things are off on the wrong track. Majorities of most major subgroups hold this view while just 30% overall say things are going in the right direction. A more positive perspective is found among Democrats (53% right direction) and liberals (55%).

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

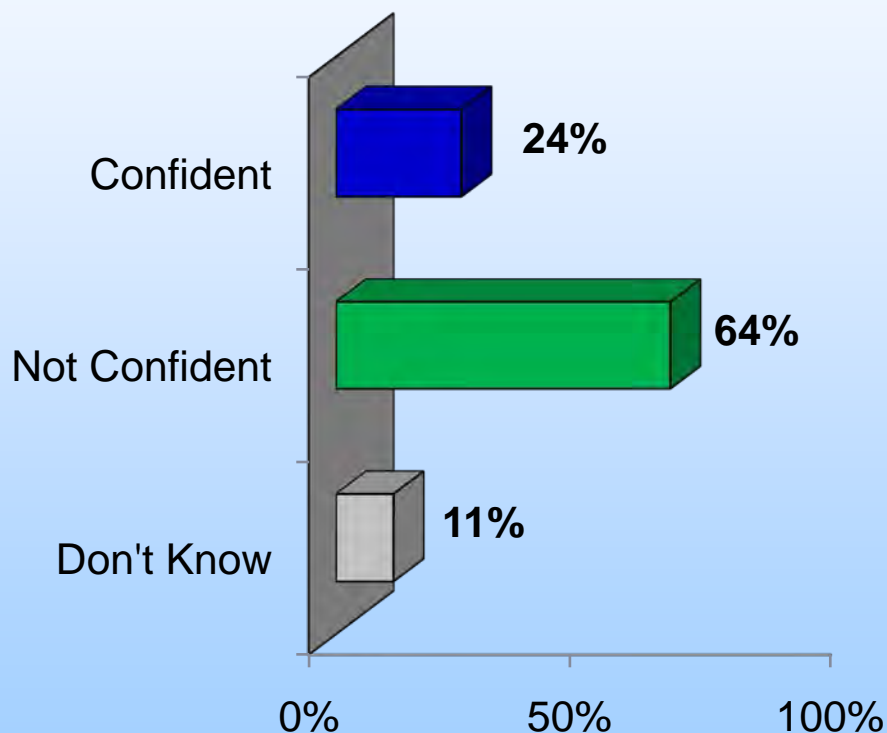


	Right Direction	Wrong Track
Cincinnati	33%	62%
Cleveland	34%	57%
Columbus	31%	62%
Dayton	26%	63%
Balance	22%	73%
Male 64 & under	32%	60%
Male 65+	34%	62%
Female 64 & under	31%	61%
Female 65+	26%	65%
Republican	4%	93%
Ticket Splitter	26%	70%
Democrat	53%	37%
Liberal	55%	36%
Moderate	39%	52%
Conservative	10%	86%



**Life for our Children's Generation:** Most Ohio 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.

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



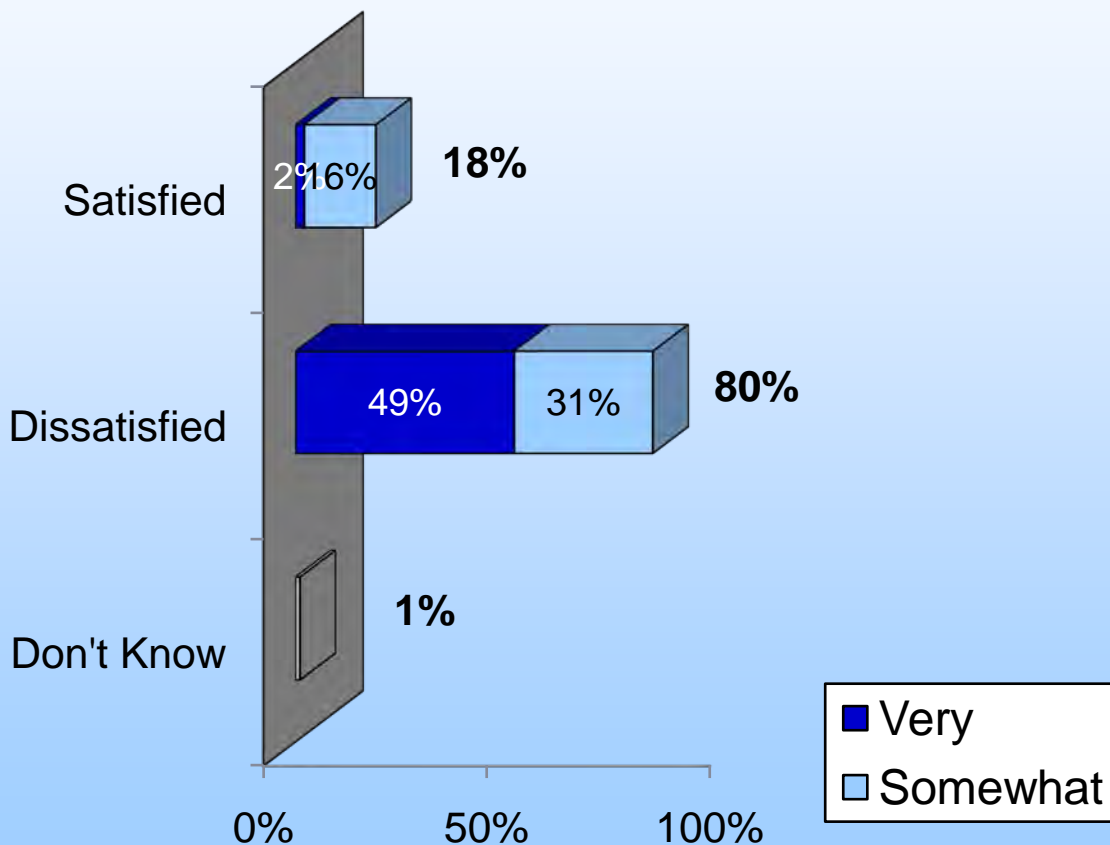
	Confident	Not Confident
Cincinnati	25%	69%
Cleveland	29%	58%
Columbus	25%	62%
Dayton	12%	76%
Balance	20%	67%
Male 64 & under	24%	66%
Male 65+	26%	61%
Female 64 & under	21%	69%
Female 65+	26%	60%
Republican	9%	82%
Ticket Splitter	21%	68%
Democrat	38%	47%
Liberal	45%	45%
Moderate	30%	55%
Conservative	8%	84%
Less than \$30K	24%	60%
\$30K-\$49K	20%	68%
\$50K-\$74K	22%	71%
\$75K and Over	33%	59%

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# *The Economy*

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

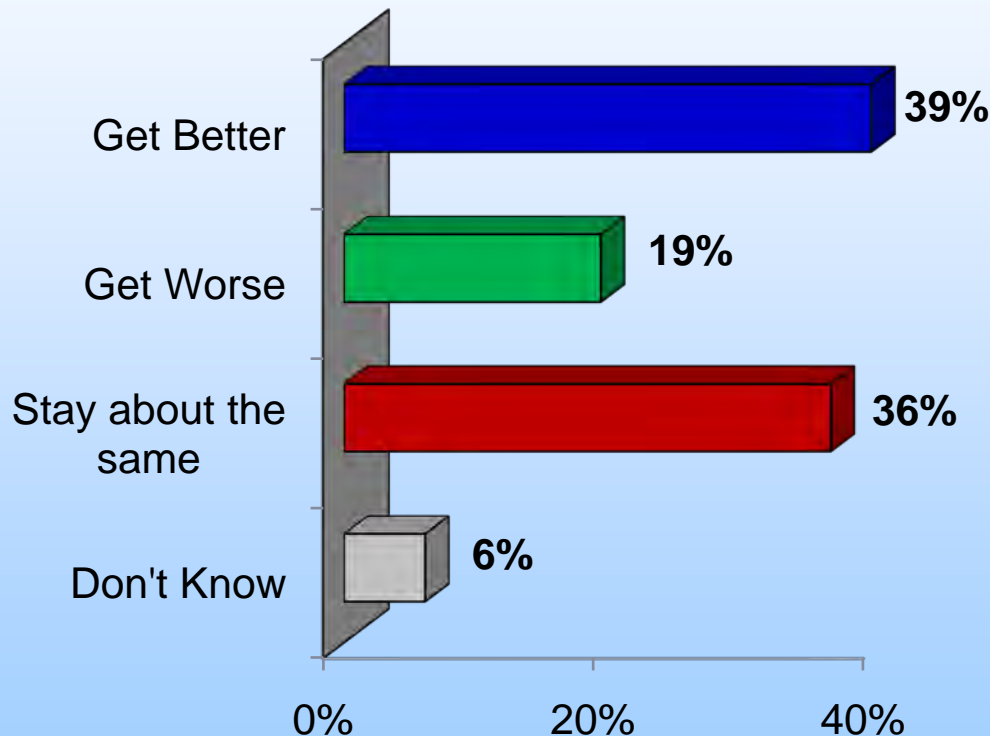
How satisfied are you with the state of the U.S. economy today – are you: very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the state of the economy?



	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Cincinnati	20%	77%
Cleveland	18%	80%
Columbus	22%	75%
Dayton	23%	77%
Balance	11%	88%
Male 64 & under	20%	79%
Male 65+	22%	76%
Female 64 & under	12%	88%
Female 65+	19%	77%
Republican	3%	95%
Ticket Splitter	16%	83%
Democrat	31%	68%
Liberal	28%	71%
Moderate	24%	75%
Conservative	7%	92%
S.S. Through Retire.		
Confident	24%	74%
Not Confident	7%	92%

**Economic outlook:** 39% think the economy will get better in the next year, 19% that it will get worse, and 36% that it will stay about the same. Democrats, liberals, moderates, men age 65+ and those who are confident about Social Security are among the most optimistic about the economic outlook.

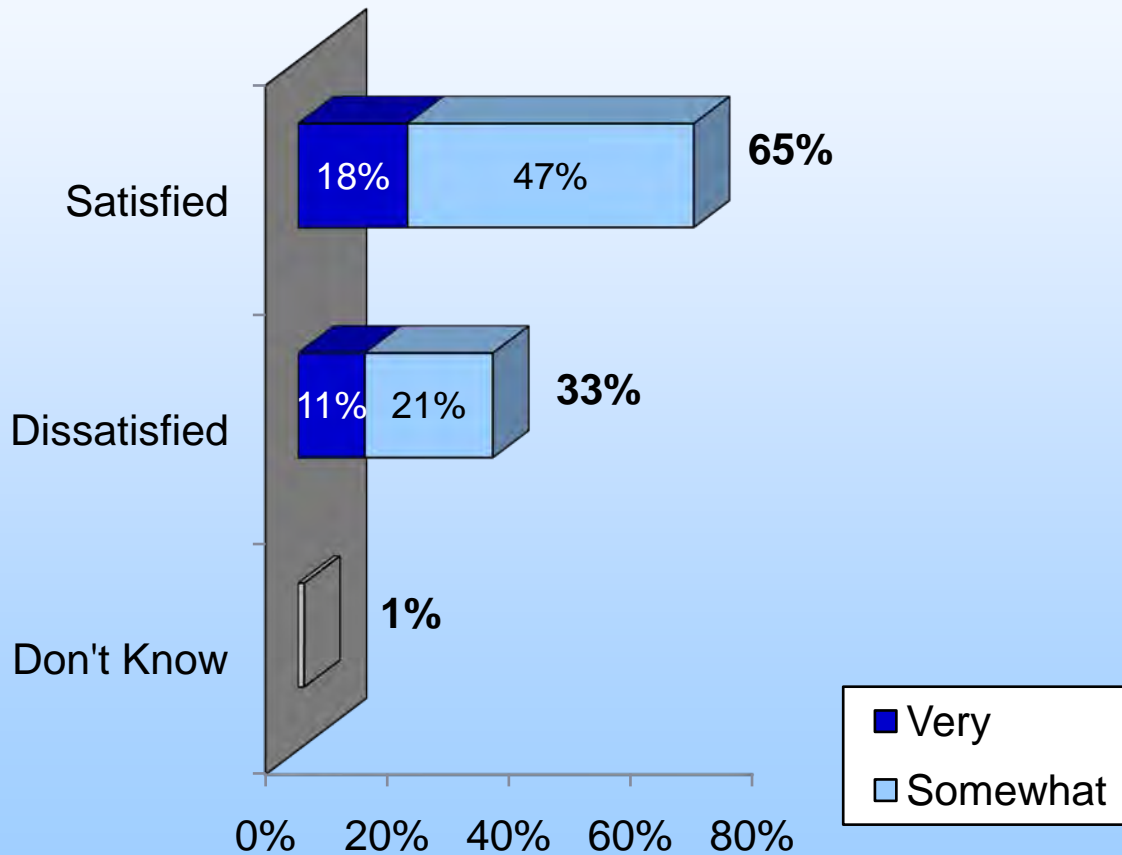
Thinking about a year from now, do you think the national economy will get better, get worse, or stay about the same as it is now?



	Better	Worse	Same
Cincinnati	47%	20%	28%
Cleveland	41%	19%	35%
Columbus	43%	18%	35%
Dayton	29%	20%	46%
Balance	32%	20%	37%
Male 64 & under	37%	20%	39%
Male 65+	49%	20%	26%
Female 64 & under	38%	15%	42%
Female 65+	33%	22%	34%
Republican	19%	37%	38%
Ticket Splitter	35%	19%	40%
Democrat	58%	9%	29%
Liberal	57%	7%	34%
Moderate	48%	13%	36%
Conservative	21%	33%	37%
S.S. Through Retire.			
Confident	47%	14%	32%
Not Confident	23%	32%	43%

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

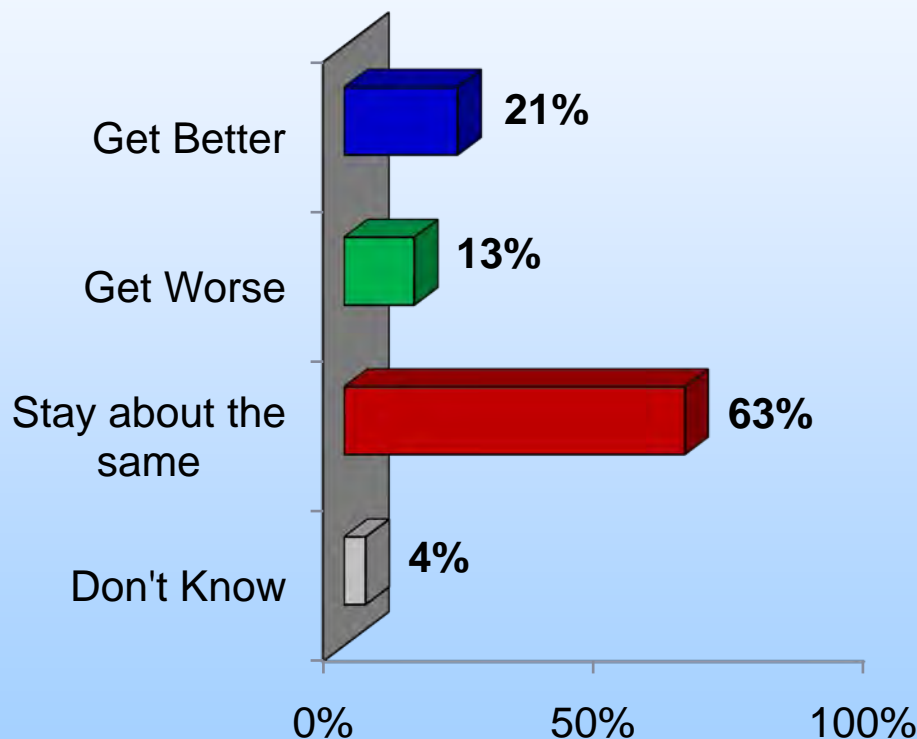
How satisfied are you with the state of your own financial situation today – are you: very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with your own financial situation?



	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Cincinnati	67%	33%
Cleveland	67%	32%
Columbus	64%	32%
Dayton	76%	24%
Balance	58%	39%
Male 64 & under	66%	33%
Male 65+	75%	24%
Female 64 & under	55%	44%
Female 65+	65%	30%
Republican	58%	39%
Ticket Splitter	62%	36%
Democrat	73%	26%
Liberal	72%	27%
Moderate	67%	32%
Conservative	62%	36%
Under \$30K	56%	44%
\$30K-\$49K	64%	35%
\$50K-\$74K	72%	27%
\$75K and Over	79%	19%
S.S. Through Retire.		
Confident	74%	24%
Not Confident	47%	52%

**Most Ohio members indicate that their personal financial situation will be stable in the next year.** 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?



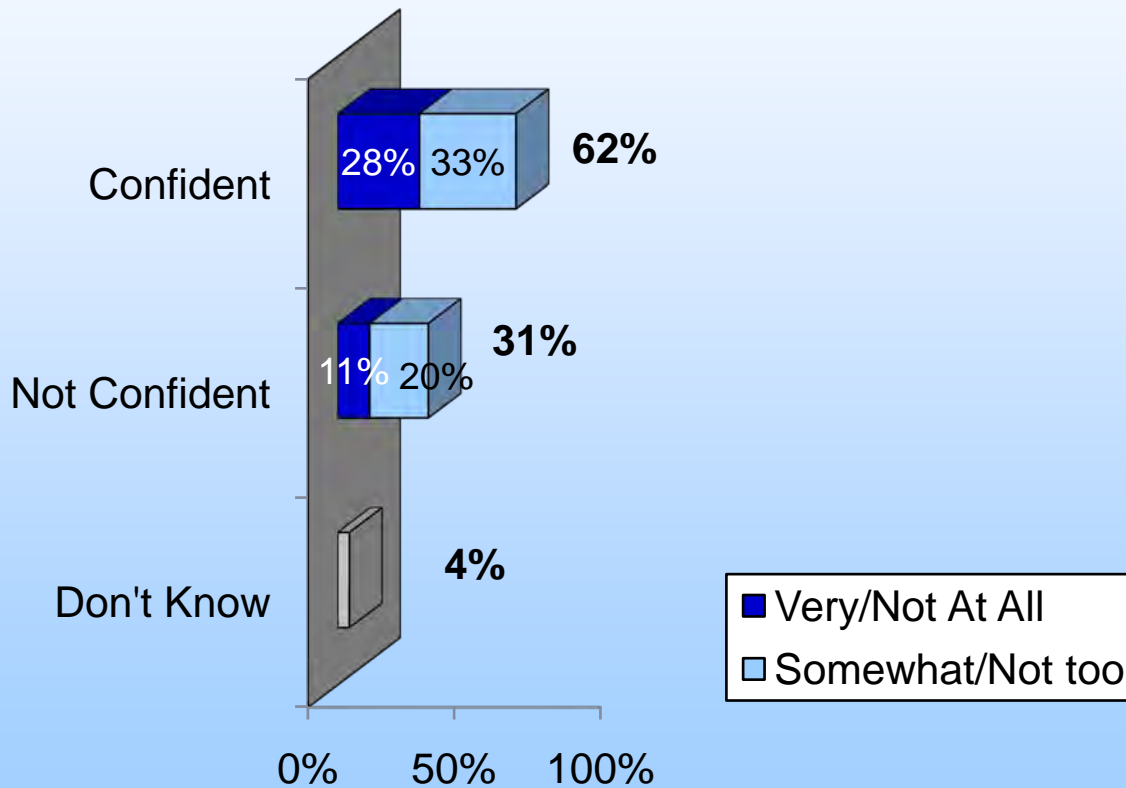
	Better	Worse	Same
Cincinnati	30%	13%	55%
Cleveland	19%	11%	65%
Columbus	20%	11%	68%
Dayton	14%	15%	69%
Balance	21%	17%	57%
Male 64 & under	34%	11%	54%
Male 65+	16%	14%	68%
Female 64 & under	29%	13%	54%
Female 65+	8%	14%	73%
Republican	15%	21%	60%
Ticket Splitter	19%	14%	65%
Democrat	28%	6%	63%
Liberal	26%	5%	66%
Moderate	26%	9%	63%
Conservative	13%	21%	61%
S.S. Through Retire.			
Confident	20%	6%	70%
Not Confident	24%	26%	47%

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# ***Social Security***

**Confidence in Social Security:** Nearly two-thirds of Ohio AARP members say they are confident that they will receive full Social Security benefits throughout their retirement. However, fewer than three in ten respondents (28%) express high confidence. Not surprisingly, younger members are less confident than their older counterparts. Republicans are less confident than Democrats.

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

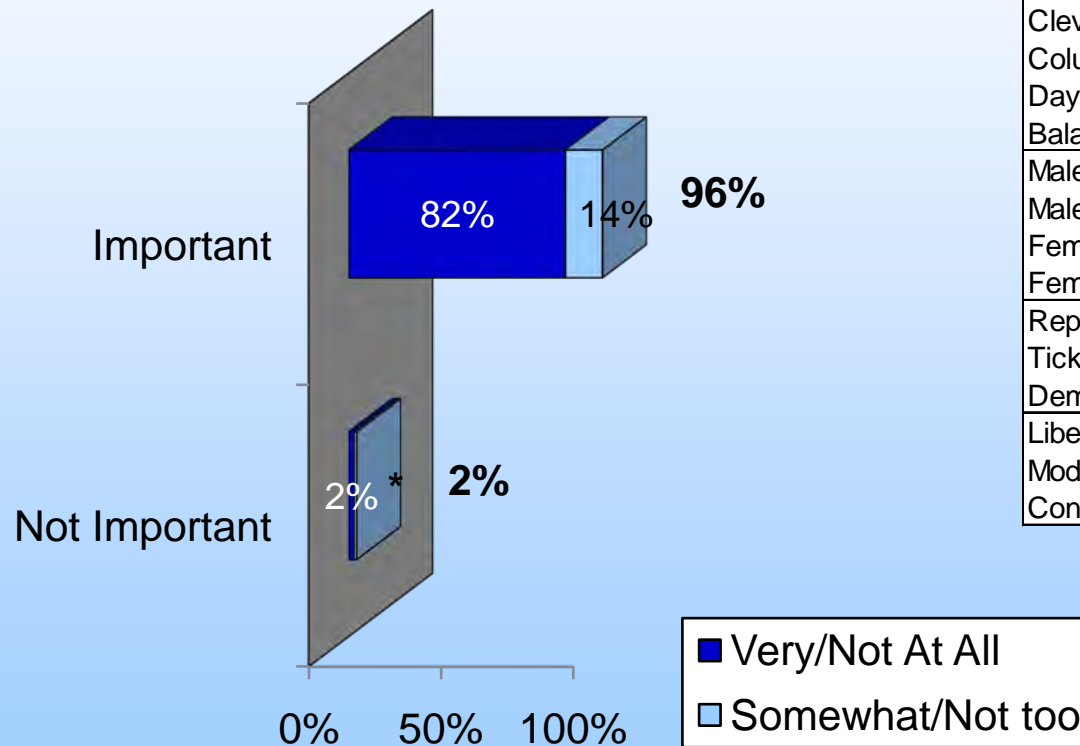


	Confident	Not Confident
Cincinnati	59%	34%
Cleveland	66%	23%
Columbus	60%	35%
Dayton	59%	36%
Balance	57%	38%
Male 64 & under	59%	36%
Male 65+	80%	15%
Female 64 & under	40%	53%
Female 65+	67%	22%
Republican	53%	44%
Ticket Splitter	63%	31%
Democrat	68%	23%
Liberal	68%	24%
Moderate	63%	29%
Conservative	56%	38%



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

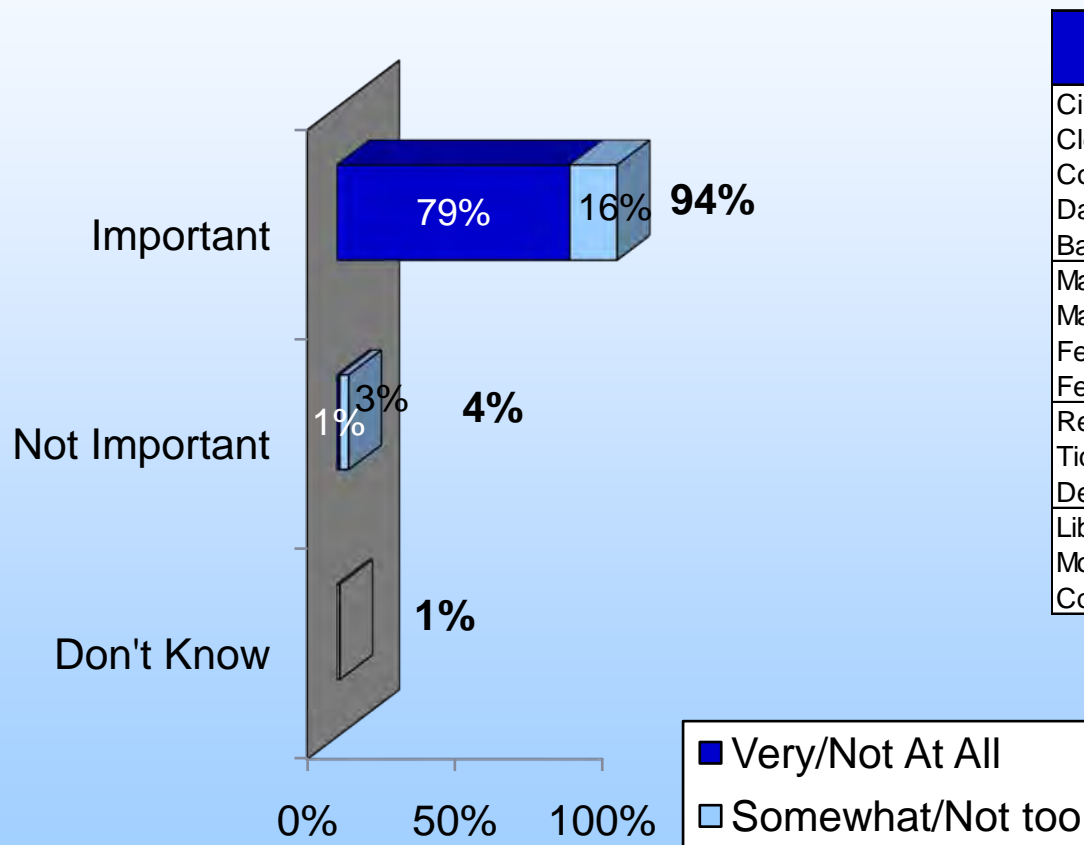
How important is it to you that Social Security is there for future generations?



	Total Important	Very Important	Not Important
Cincinnati	95%	85%	4%
Cleveland	96%	78%	2%
Columbus	94%	80%	3%
Dayton	97%	89%	2%
Balance	97%	82%	1%
Male 64 & under	95%	79%	5%
Male 65+	99%	82%	0%
Female 64 & under	94%	82%	3%
Female 65+	95%	82%	2%
Republican	95%	80%	2%
Ticket Splitter	95%	77%	4%
Democrat	99%	89%	0%
Liberal	96%	83%	4%
Moderate	97%	78%	1%
Conservative	95%	83%	3%

**Ohio 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.



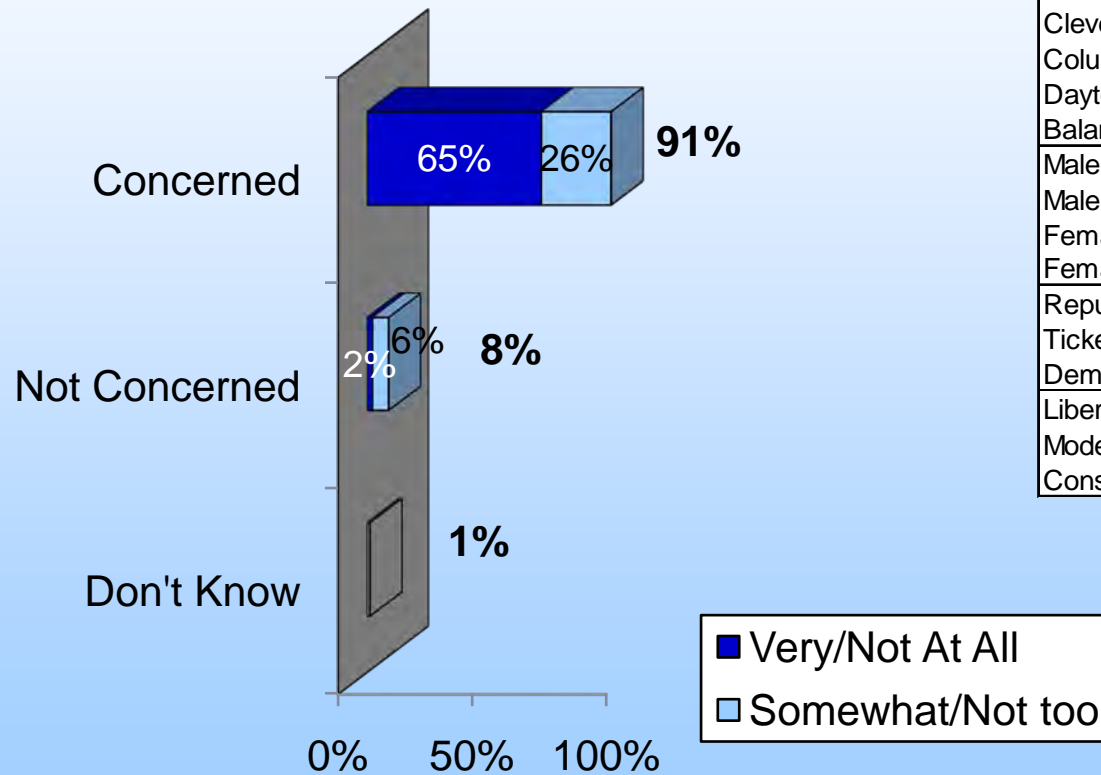
	Total Important	Very Important	Not Important
Cincinnati	98%	86%	2%
Cleveland	91%	76%	7%
Columbus	92%	75%	6%
Dayton	97%	77%	3%
Balance	97%	81%	1%
Male 64 & under	91%	71%	6%
Male 65+	96%	86%	3%
Female 64 & under	96%	73%	4%
Female 65+	94%	82%	4%
Republican	94%	75%	6%
Ticket Splitter	93%	75%	4%
Democrat	97%	86%	2%
Liberal	93%	78%	6%
Moderate	94%	80%	4%
Conservative	94%	76%	4%

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# *The Deficit*

**Concern about the national deficit runs high across the Ohio member population:** 91% are concerned about the deficit and 65% are very concerned.

How concerned are you about the national deficit?



	Total Concerned	Very Concerned	Not Concerned
Cincinnati	83%	61%	15%
Cleveland	93%	64%	6%
Columbus	85%	61%	13%
Dayton	93%	66%	5%
Balance	94%	72%	6%
Male 64 & under	93%	68%	6%
Male 65+	91%	63%	7%
Female 64 & under	90%	62%	9%
Female 65+	89%	69%	11%
Republican	94%	85%	3%
Ticket Splitter	94%	69%	6%
Democrat	85%	47%	15%
Liberal	75%	41%	25%
Moderate	94%	55%	4%
Conservative	98%	88%	2%

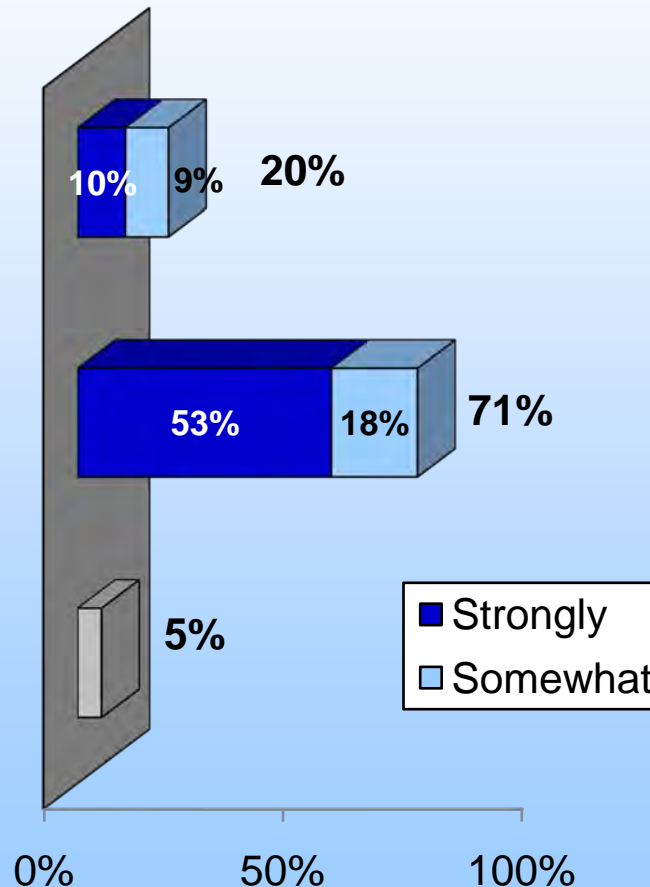
**Seven out of ten Ohio AARP members reject the idea of reducing Social Security benefits for future retirees in order to control the deficit:** Only one in five would agree more with a candidate who says we can't control the deficit without reducing the Social Security benefits of future retirees.

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.

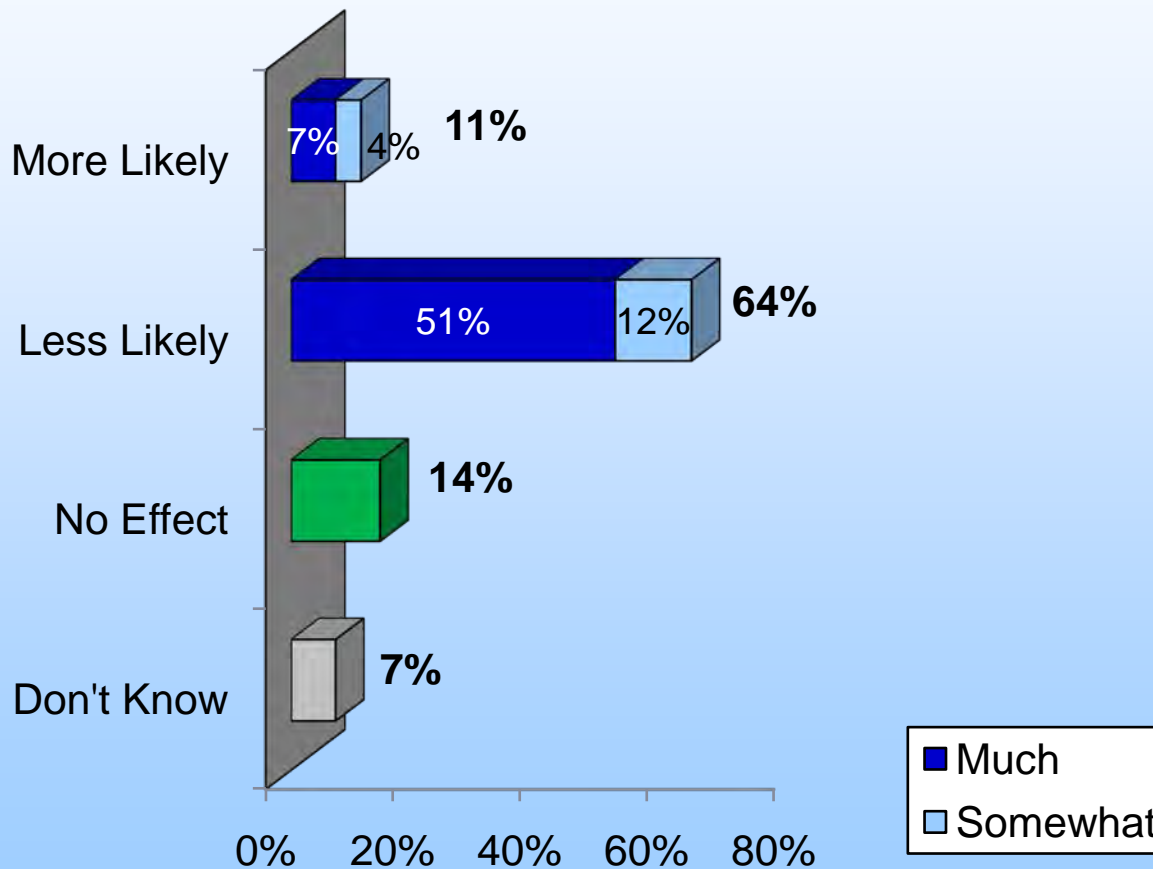
Don't Know



	Cuts Needed	Unfair Burden
Cincinnati	26%	61%
Cleveland	17%	73%
Columbus	14%	76%
Dayton	24%	70%
Balance	22%	71%
Male 64 & under	25%	73%
Male 65+	13%	78%
Female 64 & under	23%	69%
Female 65+	20%	64%
Republican	21%	67%
Ticket Splitter	20%	73%
Democrat	18%	72%
Liberal	24%	64%
Moderate	16%	73%
Conservative	22%	72%

**Ohio AARP members would be less likely to vote for a candidate who would reduce the deficit by cutting Social Security benefits for future retirees.** 64%, including a majority of Ticket-Splitters and Democrats – as well as a large plurality of Republicans – 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?



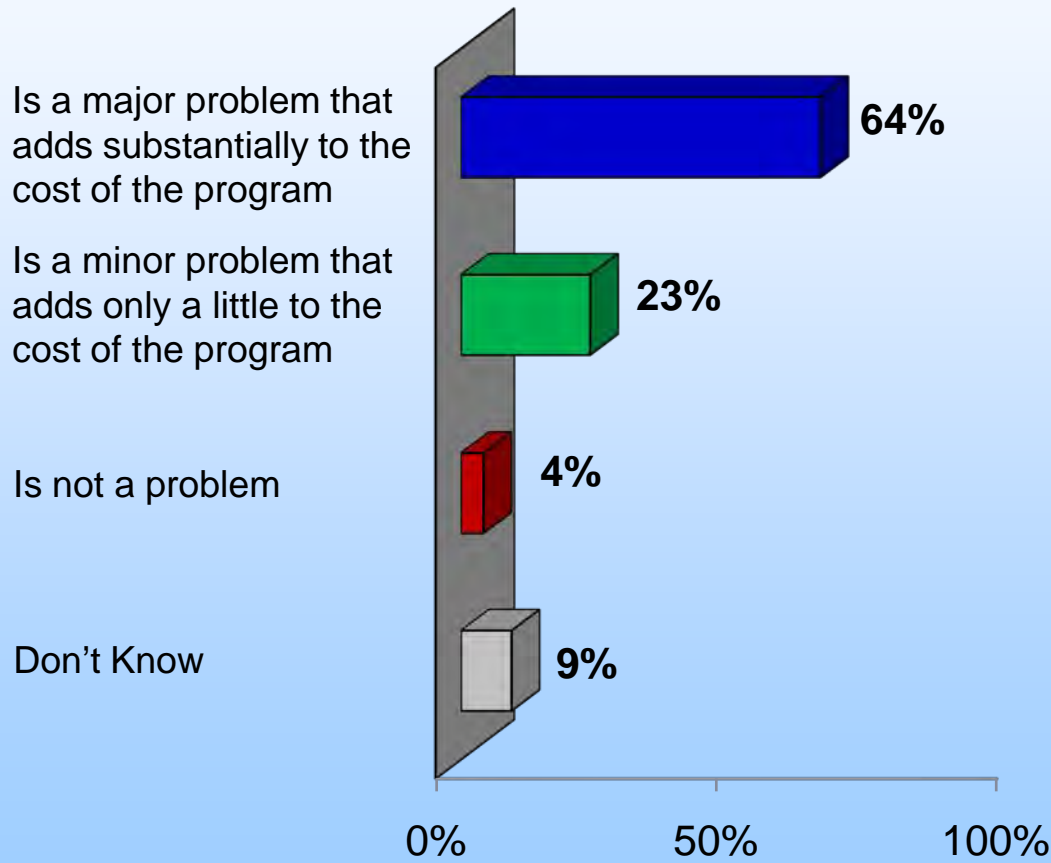
	More Likely	Less Likely	No Effect
Cincinnati	16%	58%	15%
Cleveland	11%	62%	15%
Columbus	6%	69%	16%
Dayton	11%	69%	11%
Balance	11%	64%	13%
Male 64 & under	9%	67%	19%
Male 65+	13%	64%	10%
Female 64 & under	6%	69%	19%
Female 65+	15%	55%	11%
Republican	16%	48%	18%
Ticket Splitter	12%	62%	16%
Democrat	6%	77%	11%
Liberal	7%	71%	15%
Moderate	9%	65%	16%
Conservative	15%	60%	13%

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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, 64% say fraud is a major problem, 23% a minor problem, and 4% that it is not a problem. Majorities of all major subgroups call fraud a major problem.

Would you say that Medicare fraud:



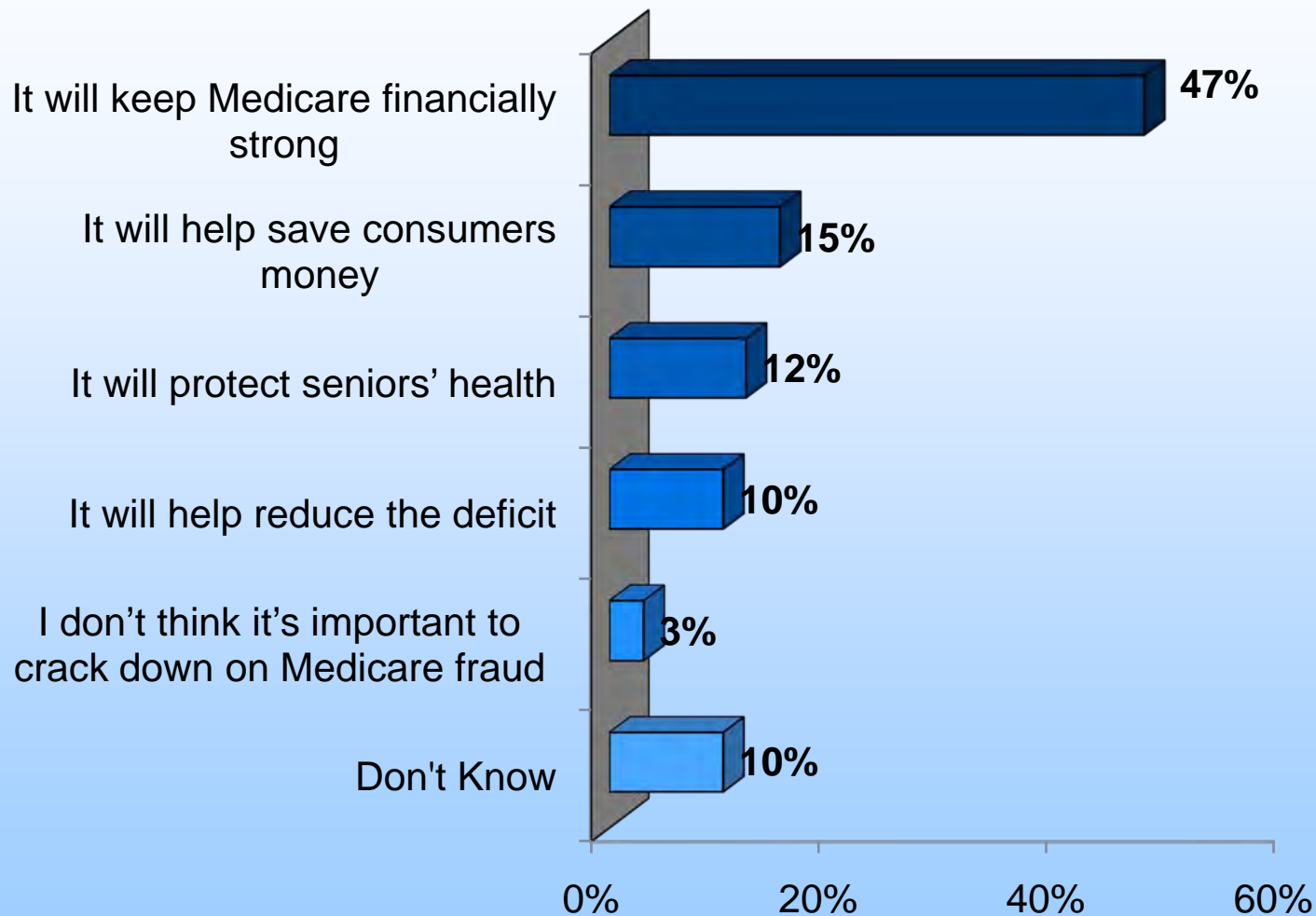
	Major Problem	Minor Problem
Cincinnati	60%	22%
Cleveland	57%	26%
Columbus	67%	21%
Dayton	66%	27%
Balance	74%	16%
Male 64 & under	64%	23%
Male 65+	75%	17%
Female 64 & under	56%	31%
Female 65+	62%	18%
Republican	71%	21%
Ticket Splitter	63%	22%
Democrat	60%	26%
Liberal	60%	30%
Moderate	63%	23%
Conservative	66%	20%



**Cracking down on Medicare Fraud:** A plurality of Ohio AARP members say the most important reason to crack down on fraud is to keep Medicare financially strong. Majorities of men and women age 65 and older hold this view.

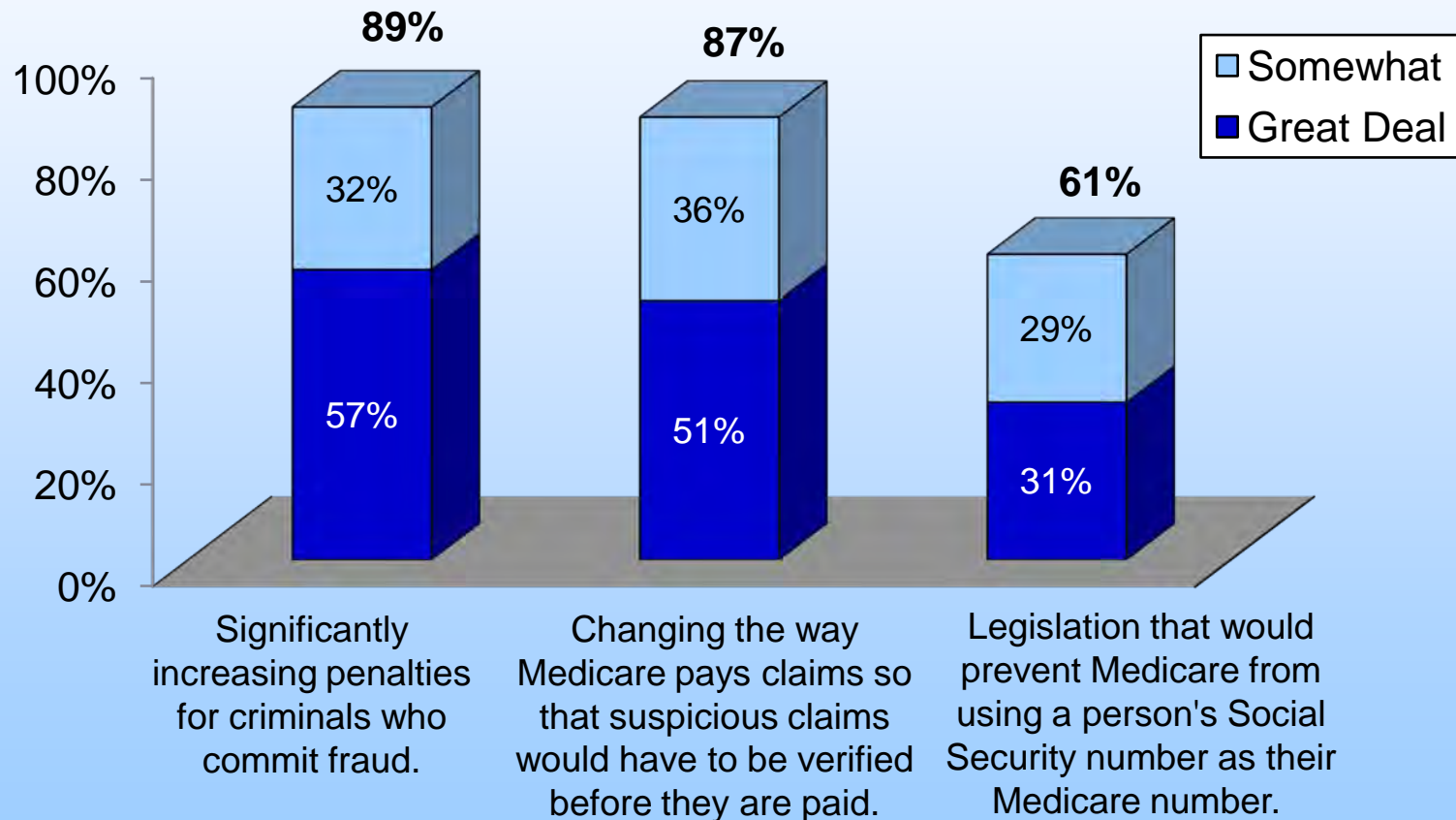
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Which do you think is the most important reason to crack down on Medicare fraud?



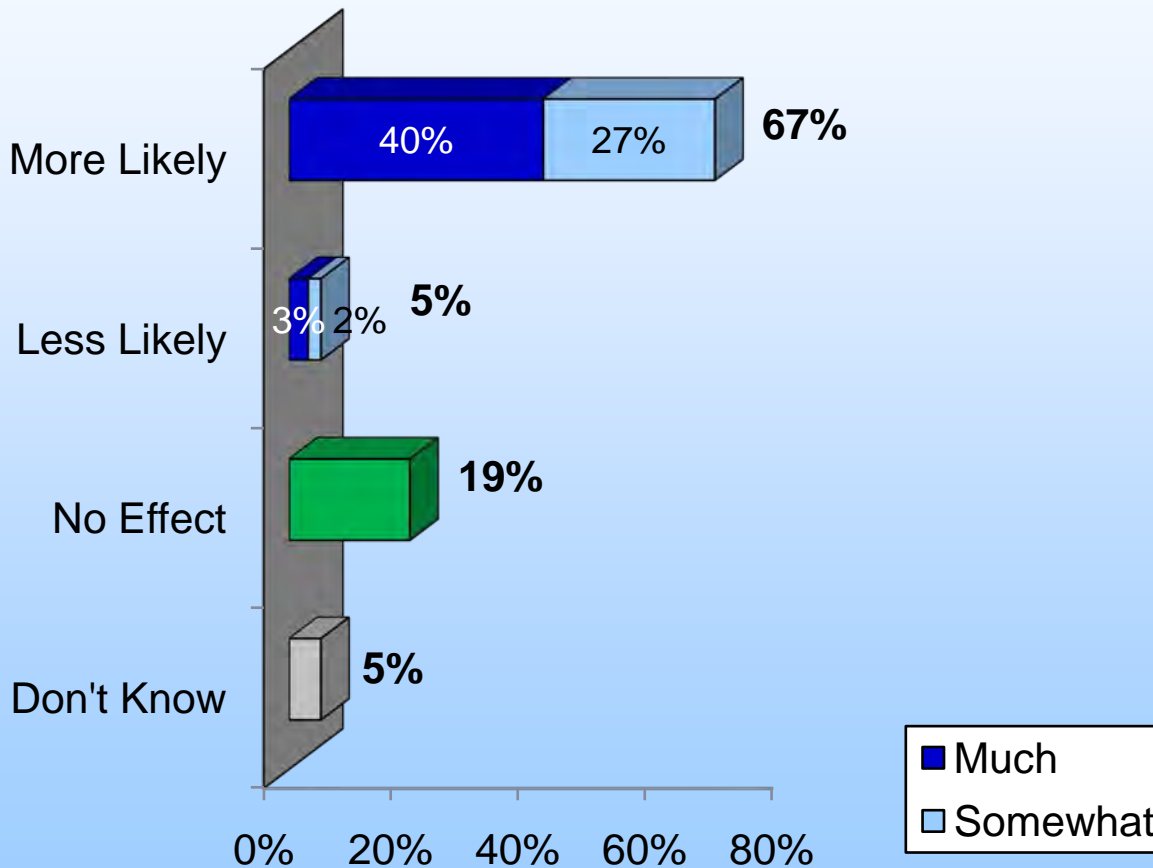
**Ohio members are very responsive to a number of bipartisan legislative proposals that have been offered in Congress to fight Medicare fraud.**

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?



**Ohio AARP members are more likely to vote for candidates who support these legislative proposals.** Two-thirds of Ohio 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, income or education.

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 Effect
Cincinnati	65%	6%	19%
Cleveland	66%	4%	23%
Columbus	63%	5%	18%
Dayton	73%	4%	17%
Balance	69%	5%	16%
Male 64 & under	74%	2%	18%
Male 65+	72%	4%	17%
Female 64 & under	62%	5%	25%
Female 65+	60%	7%	18%
Republican	71%	6%	14%
Ticket Splitter	72%	4%	16%
Democrat	63%	4%	25%
Liberal	62%	4%	24%
Moderate	67%	5%	20%
Conservative	71%	5%	17%
Under \$30K	69%	4%	17%
\$30K-\$49K	72%	6%	14%
\$50K-\$74K	68%	4%	21%
\$75K and Over	67%	4%	21%

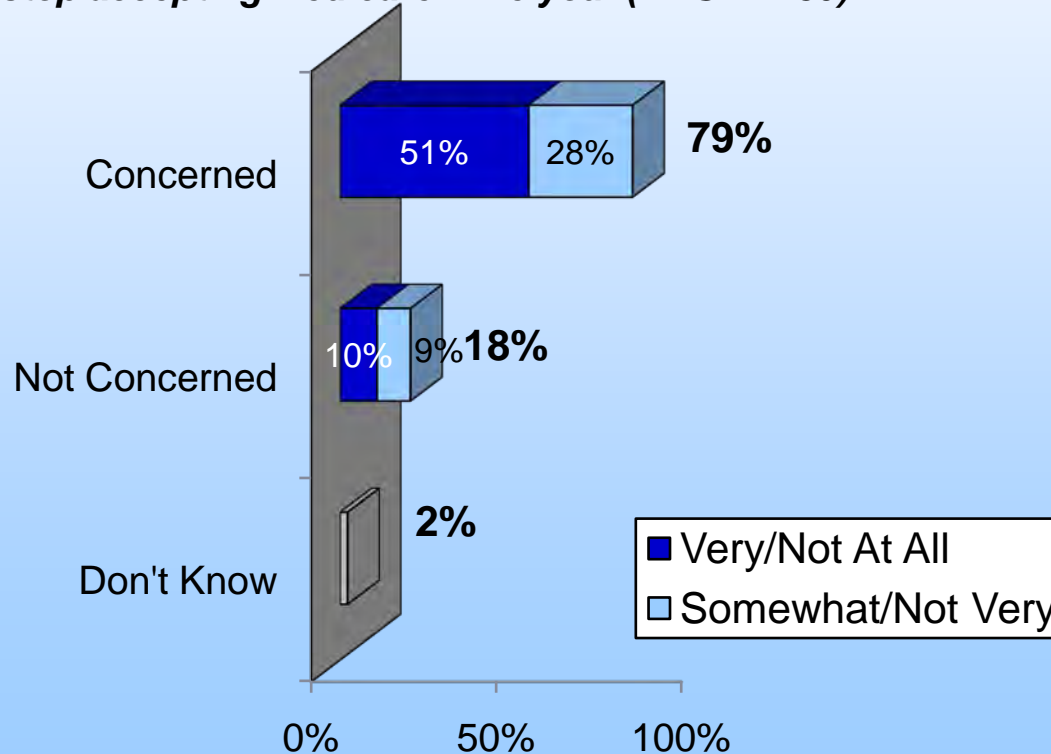
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# *Doc Fix*

**Concern about Medicare reimbursement rates:** Ohio 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.

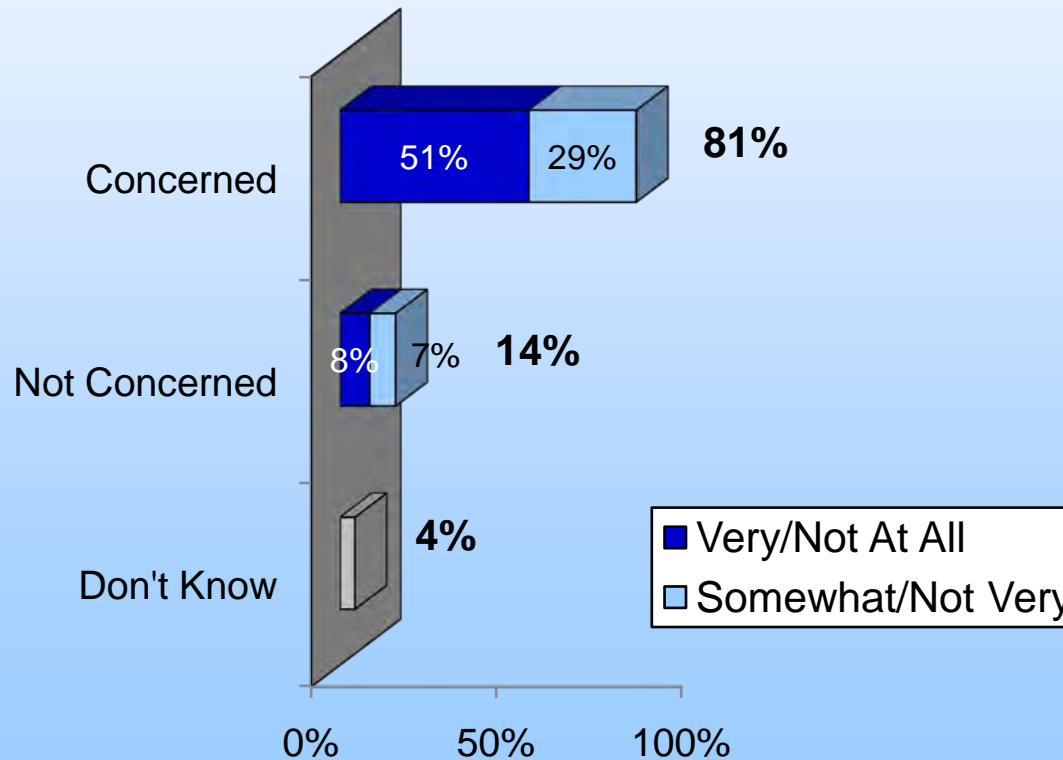
***If the 23 percent payment cut takes effect, how concerned are you that your current doctors will stop accepting Medicare? Are you: (BASE =230)***



**Concern about Medicare reimbursement rates:** the non-Medicare Ohio 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=260)***

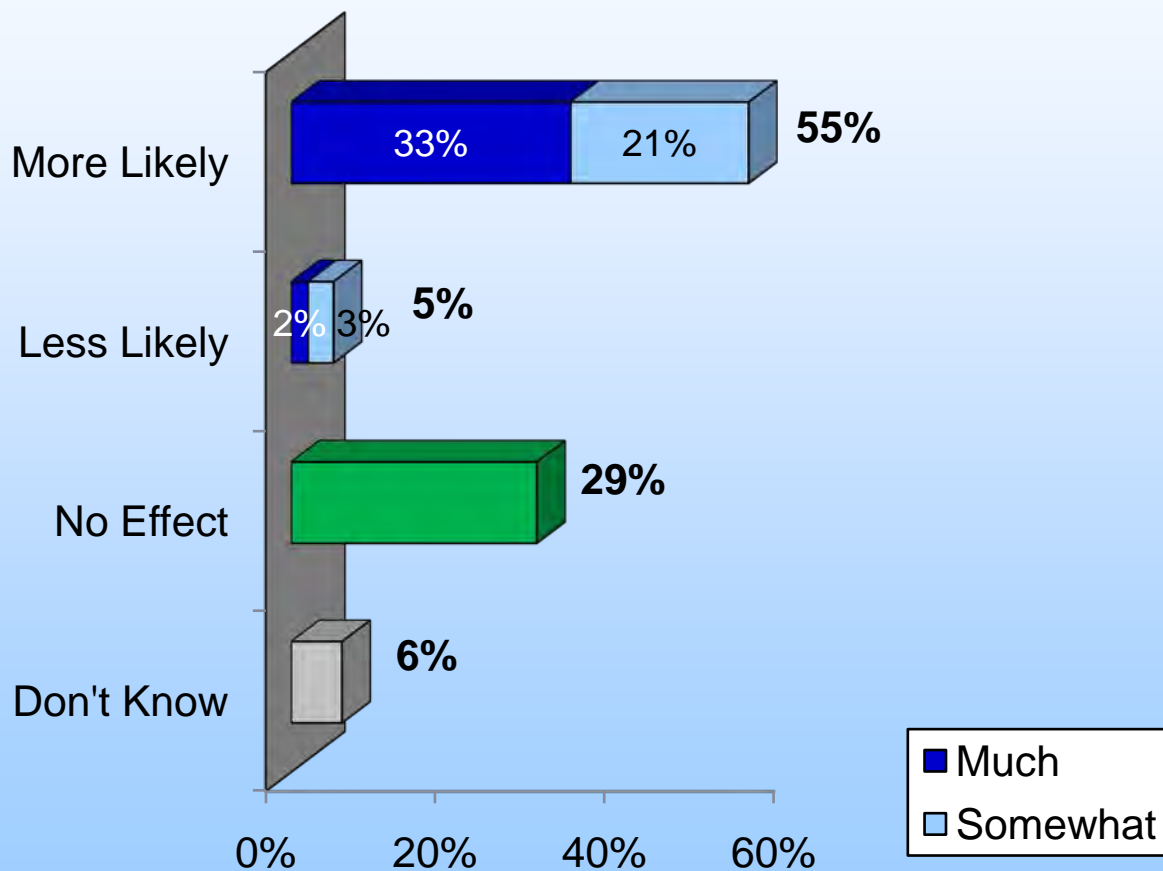


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HART RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

**Ohio 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, 55% are more likely and 33% are much more likely to vote for such a candidate. Only 5% are less likely. A majority of Republicans (67%), Ticket-Splitters (54%) and Democrats (51%) 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 Effect
Cincinnati	59%	2%	23%
Cleveland	46%	8%	32%
Columbus	57%	5%	33%
Dayton	66%	4%	22%
Balance	59%	3%	29%
Male 64 & under	60%	4%	26%
Male 65+	55%	4%	31%
Female 64 & under	55%	4%	32%
Female 65+	49%	8%	28%
Republican	67%	3%	21%
Ticket Splitter	54%	4%	28%
Democrat	51%	8%	34%
Liberal	48%	6%	38%
Moderate	49%	6%	32%
Conservative	65%	4%	20%

## Summary and Conclusions

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- This survey reveals a political climate born out of the economic crisis and uncertainty of recent years. Ohio 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 one in five thinks 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 (62%) Ohio 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 62% of all Ohio 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 71% of Ohio AARP members (including 67% of Republicans, 73% of Democrats and 70% of Independents) as an unfair burden to future retirees. Further, 64% 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 (53% of Republicans, 61% of Independents and 72% 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, 55% 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.

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