

# FAST Facts

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## How Public Reacts to Strategies to Expand Health Coverage

WASHINGTON—How much support do various proposals to expand health insurance coverage have with the public?

The 2009 Health Confidence Survey tested several widely discussed strategies and found that between 68 percent and 88 percent of Americans either *strongly* or *somewhat* support health reform ideas such as national health plans, a public plan option, guaranteed issue, expansion of Medicare and Medicaid, and employer and individual mandates.

However, the July 2009 *EBRI Issue Brief*, where full survey results are reported, noted that views could change as details surface, especially as they concern financing options. Reactions to six strategies appear in the chart below.

**Support for Strategies to Expand Health Insurance Coverage, 2009**

	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose
National Health Plans	52%	36%	4%	5%
Public Plan Option	53	30	5	9
Guaranteed Issue	55	25	9	9
Expansion of Medicare & Medicaid	45	30	9	12
Employer Mandate	42	33	10	12
Individual Mandate	38	30	13	16

Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute and Mathew Greenwald & Associates, Inc., 2009 Health Confidence Survey.

### Definitions:

National Health Plans: Allowing major health insurance companies to offer national plans that anyone can purchase.

Public Plan Option: Creating a new public health insurance plan that anyone can purchase.

Guaranteed Issue: Having national rules requiring insurance companies to cover all people, regardless of their problems.

Expansion of Medicare & Medicaid: Expanding government programs, such as Medicare and Medicaid.

Employer Mandate: Requiring all employers to pay toward subsidized health insurance for employees.

Individual Mandate: Requiring everyone to participate in some kind of health insurance.

The July 2009 *EBRI Issue Brief*, #331, is available at  
[www.ebri.org/publications/ib/index.cfm?fa=ibDisp&content\\_id=4293](http://www.ebri.org/publications/ib/index.cfm?fa=ibDisp&content_id=4293)

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