

Repeal Obamacare or repair it? Idahoans are split

Idahoans are mixed over what to do with Obamacare, split over whether to just plain repeal it or if it's best to repair and improve it, a new Idaho Politics Weekly poll shows.

IPW's pollster Dan Jones & Associates finds that 46 percent of Idahoans just want the Affordable Care Act repealed and completely replaced.

Forty-three percent say improve and repair Obamacare.

Only 8 percent want just to leave the ACA as it is – don't repeal it, don't try to make it better.

And 2 percent don't know.

On a related issue, 43 percent of Idahoans side with GOP congressmen and senators who have recently faced harsh reactions at their town hall meetings.

Many of the protesters at those public events have shouted or held signs in support of Obamacare and warned their national lawmakers not to repeal the national health care plan.

Jones found that 43 percent sympathized with the congressmen at the town halls, 28 percent stood with the protesters, 24 percent were neutral, and 5 percent didn't know.

Of course, the GOP attempt to "repeal and replace" Obamacare by Pres. Donald Trump and House Speaker Paul Ryan failed miserably a month ago.

Ryan, R-Wis., called off a vote in the House after it was clear his quickly-put-together, repeal-and-replace bill would fail.

Idaho Rep. Raul Labrador, a member of the Freedom Caucus in the U.S. House, was instrumental in killing that bill – even being called out by Trump by name, with the threat that Trump may work against Labrador's re-election in 2018.

Jones finds that in Labrador's 1st Congressional District his constituents are evenly split: 45 percent want Obamacare repaired and improved, 45 percent want it repealed outright, 7 percent want it left alone, as is, and 3 percent don't know.

The Jones poll was finished BEFORE the Ryan bill failed. Since that time, several national polls have found that Americans are more in favor of Obamacare than before the Trump/Ryan health care plan fell short.

As is the case with many issues involving former Democratic Pres. Barack Obama, his ACA is viewed through a highly partisan lens.

Jones finds:

- 65 percent of Idaho Republicans want Obamacare repealed outright.

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- Only 32 percent want it repaired and improved.
- 3 percent say leave it alone, and 1 percent don't know.

Democrats are just the opposite:

- 65 percent say improve Obamacare, 6 percent say repeal it, 24 percent say leave it alone, 4 percent don't know.

Half of all political independents (49 percent) say improve the ACA, 42 percent say repeal it, 8 percent say leave it alone, and 1 percent don't know.

Since the Ryan bill was pulled the end of March, there have been several minor attempts to reach some kind of compromise between the moderate and archconservative Republicans in the House, but all have failed.

When Ryan pulled the bill, he said that Obamacare would remain in place "for the foreseeable future."

It's unclear when the House will take up Obamacare again, or even if the GOP-controlled Senate will make any efforts at reform or replace.

Jones polled 628 adults from Feb. 16-28. That statewide sample has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.91 percent.

In the 1st District Jones polled 300 adults, the margin of error plus or minus 5.66 percent.

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