

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: Interested Parties**  
**FROM: Guy Molyneux and Geoff Garin**  
**DATE: November 21, 2017**  
**RE: Maine Voter Survey on Republican Tax Plan**

*From November 18 to 20, 2017, Hart Research Associates conducted a survey among 400 registered voters in Maine, with a margin of error of  $\pm$ five percentage points. The survey measures voters' views of the Republican tax plan now being considered in the US Senate. This memo reports the survey's key findings.*

**OVERVIEW: Maine voters reject the tax plan proposed by Republicans in Congress by five to two. They believe that the plan favors the wealthy, while not reducing their own taxes, and they reject the claim that corporate tax cuts will lift wages. Many facts about the plan are deeply troubling to voters, especially higher health premiums, tax hikes on the middle class, increased deficits, and cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, and education. Finally, as voters learn more about the tax plan, their opposition grows and intensifies, and they conclude that Senator Collins should oppose it.**

### **1) By five to two, Maine voters oppose the Republican tax plan now being debated in the US Senate.**

Just 22% of Maine voters currently approve of the Republican tax plan, while more than half (53%) disapprove. Significantly, strong sentiment on the issue is even more lopsided, with more than three as many voters strongly disapproving (36%) as strongly approving (10%).

- In partisan terms, Democrats are much more unified in opposition to the plan (2% approve, 84% disapprove) than are Republicans in support (46% approve, 22% disapprove). And voters in the center are sharply negative, with independents disapproving by 58% to 16%.
- Opposition to the plan is especially widespread among voters younger than 40 (54% disapprove), women (58%), and those in the western half of the state (62%).
- Among those most familiar with the plan (51% of voters), a solid 64% disapprove, including 49% who strongly disapprove.

### **2) Maine voters believe that the tax plan mainly will benefit the wealthy, and do not expect to receive a tax cut themselves.**

A 62% majority say the tax plan mostly will benefit the wealthy, while far fewer expect it to help middle-class (18%) or low-income (4%) Americans. This runs directly counter to voters' own preference, which is that wealthy families pay more rather than less in federal taxes (59% to 7%).

- Only 12% of Maine voters believe that the plan's corporate tax cuts will be used to raise wages for employees, while 80% reject this claim.
- By 33 points, making sure the wealthy and corporations pay their fair share in taxes is considered a higher priority than across-the-board tax cuts (65% to 32%).

### **3) Maine voters react very negatively to many features and consequences of the tax plan, especially higher health premiums, tax hikes on the middle class, increased deficits, and cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, and education. Opponents of the tax plan have many powerful arguments at their disposal in this debate.**

When voters learn about specific provisions and outcomes of the tax plan, their reaction is often extremely negative. The following facts about the tax plan elicit the strongest negative response, with about three-quarters saying that each makes them feel less favorable to the plan:

- The healthcare changes in the plan will raise health insurance premiums by \$2,350 for thousands of Maine families with individual insurance (84% less favorable, 64% much less favorable).
- It raises taxes on tens of millions of middle-class households (84% less favorable, 65% much less favorable).
- It increases the federal debt by \$1.5 trillion (82% less favorable, 59% much less favorable).
- It increases the budget deficit by an average of more than \$100 billion per year (83% less favorable, 62% much less favorable).
- It will result in cuts to Medicare of \$25 billion a year for the next decade (80% less favorable, 64% much less favorable).
- The loss of revenue from tax cuts likely will require funding cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, and education (80% less favorable, 61% much less favorable).

Two elements of the plan are popular with Maine voters: increasing the child credit to \$2,000 (63% more favorable) and reducing individual tax rates in most brackets (53% more favorable). However, these positive features are overwhelmed by voters' more numerous—and more strongly felt—concerns.

**4) After learning more about the tax plan, Maine voters' opposition grows and intensifies: a 68% majority disapprove—53% strongly—while just 21% approve. And just one in four (25%) wants Senator Collins to vote yes on the plan, while 66% say she should oppose it.**

After voters learn more about the Republican tax plan, opposition increases by 15 points to 68%, while just a third approve (21%). Strong opposition expands by an even larger 17 points to 53%, five times the proportion who strongly approve (9%).

- Opposition grows by an extraordinary 16 points—from 58% to 74%—among political independents.

By 41 points (66% to 25%), Maine voters say that Senator Collins should oppose rather than support the Republican tax plan when it comes to a vote in the US Senate.