

To: Interested Parties
From: Geoff Garin, Abigail Davenport, and London Wagner
Date: June 4, 2025
Re: Voters Oppose the Republican Budget Bill

This memorandum presents key findings from our recently completed survey for Families Over Billionaires, CAP Action, and Protect Our Care. The survey was conducted May 27 to 28, 2025 among a representative national cross section of 1,032 registered voters.

The Republican budget bill is unpopular, and opposition to the bill grows significantly as voters learn more about what it does and what the consequences of its passage would be.

1. With only partisan cues, and no context or messaging, the Republican budget bill is currently underwater. Based on current knowledge about it, the bill garners the support of just 38% of voters, while 46% oppose it, and 16% say they do not know enough about it to have an opinion. Strong opposition exceeds strong support by 32% to 13%.

Only 30% of voters have heard a lot about the budget bill, with another 40% saying they have heard just some about it, and the remaining 30% have heard just a little or nothing at all. Notably, the thirty percent of voters who say they have heard a lot about the Republican budget bill oppose it by a 23-point margin (38% support, 60% oppose).

Democrats oppose the bill by a 75-point margin (6% support, 80% oppose), which is greater than the 62-point margin by which Republicans support it (73% support, 11% oppose). Among swing voters (those who are neither strong partisans nor strong ideologues), the bill—with no context or messaging—is underwater by 12 points (34% support, 47% oppose).

Among voters who supported Donald Trump in 2024, but with reservations, only 46% support the bill.

2. After voters receive the following basic description of the main elements of the bill, including the tax cuts and budget cuts, opposition grows by 15 points to 61% opposed (including 43% strongly opposed) and 39% in support (only 17% strongly support). The growth in opposition to the bill is primarily among those who initially had not heard much about it.

The Republican budget bill, which recently passed the U.S. House of Representatives with the backing of Donald Trump, would do the following:

- *Cut Medicaid and food stamps*
- *Eliminate tax incentives for clean energy projects*
- *Increase border security*
- *Permanently extend all tax cuts in the 2017 Trump tax law, including those for the wealthy*
- *Temporarily eliminate taxes on tips and overtime*

Democratic opposition to the bill grows to 93%, Republican opposition grows to 28%, and swing voters become more lopsidedly opposed to the bill (35% favor, 65% oppose).

Opposition to the Republican budget bill increases across the electorate after this brief description:

- ↑ 63% of voters who identify as independents oppose the bill (up from 44% initially).
- ↑ 27% of voters who supported Donald Trump in 2024 oppose the bill (up from 11% initially), including 42% of Trump voters who receive or have a family member that receives Medicaid (up from 12% initially) and 44% of Trump voters in a household that receives SNAP (up from 10% initially).
- ↑ 56% of voters who supported Donald Trump in 2024, but with reservations, oppose the bill (up from 35% initially).
- ↑ 67% of voters making under \$100k a year oppose the bill (up from 47% initially).
- ↑ 53% of white voters without a college degree oppose the bill (up from 34% initially).

3. After a more robust airing of the provisions of the bill and a back and forth with both Republican and Democratic arguments, support for the bill falls even lower to 34% and opposition grows to 66%, with 51% strongly opposed to the bill.

Notably, this is far worse than the original 2017 tax law which was underwater by an average of 14 points at the time of its passage.¹

After hearing both arguments for and against the bill, 36% of Republicans oppose it, 58% of white voters without a college degree oppose it, and 59% of voters who supported Trump in 2024 with reservations oppose it.

¹ 538 average of survey November 2017 surveys by CNN, Quinnipiac University, Morning Consult, ABC/WaPo and YouGov.

4. After hearing arguments from the bill's supporters and opponents, 59% of voters say they would feel *less* favorable toward their member of Congress if they voted for this budget bill, while only 28% say they would feel more favorable.

Notably, 25% of voters who supported Donald Trump in 2024 and 47% of voters who supported Trump but with reservations said it would make them less favorable toward their member of Congress if they voted in favor of the bill.

The major elements of the Republican budget bill – cuts to Medicaid, cuts to SNAP, and tax benefits that disproportionately go to the wealthy – are extremely unpopular.

1. Opponents' core message about the Republican budget bill—that it makes cuts to Medicaid and SNAP and that it benefits the rich and corporations—is breaking through with some: these are the things that voters are most likely to say they have heard about the bill before they are provided any information about it. But there is a lot more room to grow understanding of the harm the bill will cause and the reasons to oppose it.
2. When voters are provided with a list of provisions from the bill, the three most unpopular elements are that it cuts funding to Medicaid, cuts funding to SNAP, and provides tax cuts that will disproportionately go to the wealthy.

It cuts funding for Medicaid by \$800 billion./It cuts funding for Medicaid by \$800, the largest Medicaid cut in history – 71% of voters say this makes them feel less favorable about the bill, including 58% who say it makes them feel *much* less favorable. Notably, large majorities of the following key groups say it makes them feel less favorable about the bill:

- Voters who supported Trump but with reservations (65% less favorable)
- White voters without a college degree (65% less favorable)
- Voters who make under \$100k a year (75% less favorable)

It cuts funding for food assistance through SNAP by \$300 billion – 72% of voters say this element makes them feel less favorable about the bill, including 56% who say it makes them feel *much* less favorable. Large majorities of the same key groups feel this way:

- Voters who supported Trump but with reservations (68% less favorable)
- White voters without a college degree (68% less favorable)
- Voters who make under \$100k a year (76% less favorable)

Low-income households would see their costs go up by more than \$1,000, middle-income households would see an \$800 tax cut, and the top 0.1% would see an average tax cut of nearly \$400,000 – 68% of voters say this provision makes them feel less favorable about the bill, including 52% who feel *much* less favorable. Again, sizable majorities of these subgroups say this makes them feel less favorable:

- Voters who supported Trump but with reservations (67% less favorable)
 - White voters without a college degree (60% less favorable)
 - Voters who make under \$100k a year (69% less favorable)
3. Extending and making the 2017 tax cuts permanent does *not* help the bill’s popularity, with only 39% of voters saying it makes them more favorable to the bill, 41% saying less favorable, and 20% saying it makes no difference.

When told that the bill extends and makes permanent all tax cuts in the 2017 tax law, including almost \$2 trillion in tax cuts for the wealthy, fully 59% of voters say it makes them feel *less* favorable.

4. It is not surprising that voters react so negatively to the bill’s cuts to Medicaid and SNAP because both programs are broadly popular, including among Republicans.

Eighty-one percent of voters are favorable to Medicaid, including 45% who are *very* favorable. Democrats (91%) are the most favorable, but large majorities of Republicans (71%) and swing voters (80%) also view it favorably.

SNAP (with no explanation of what the acronym stands for) is almost as popular, with 70% of voters holding a favorable view of it, including 38% who are *very* favorable. Respondents who receive the explanation that SNAP stands for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, are even more favorable: 79% favorable among all voters, including 47% who are *very* favorable. Nearly nine in ten Democrats (89%), 71% of Republicans, and 79% of swing voters are favorable.

5. Testing of criticisms of the bill reveals that the most important framing statement against the bill highlights the impact it will have on costs for everyday Americans: *“The American people are already struggling with high prices, and this bill, along with Trump’s tariffs, will make things even worse by stoking inflation, raising interest rates, and forcing people to pay more for healthcare, food, and utility bills.”*

The impact that the Republican budget bill will have on everyday families—especially poor families—leads the list of concerns that voters have about it, along with the perception that the wealthy are the ones who will come out ahead.

1. Over two-thirds of voters express major concerns about the ways the bill will negatively impact everyday families, including decreased access to healthy food for poor children, loss of health insurance coverage and the closure of nursing homes and hospitals, and generally higher costs.

Top concerns about how the bill's cuts to food assistance will hurt children:

- ⇒ 4 million children in need could lose healthy meals. (73% major concerns)
- ⇒ 18 million children are at risk of losing school meals. (73% major concerns)

Top concerns about how the bill's cuts to Medicaid will lead to nursing home and hospital closures and loss of health coverage:

- ⇒ The cuts to Medicaid, which are the largest in history, could cause the closures of nursing homes as well as forcing the closure of hospitals serving rural areas and low-income communities. (71% major concerns)
- ⇒ Almost 14 million Americans will lose their health coverage because of cuts to both Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act. (69% major concerns)

Top concerns about the bill raising costs for families:

- ⇒ It will raise costs on 80 million lower-income and middle-class households. (70% major concerns)
- ⇒ It will raise families' costs for groceries and healthcare by cutting SNAP, Medicaid, and ACA tax credits. (70% major concerns)

2. Additionally, two-thirds of voters express major concerns about the **size of the tax cuts in the bill that go to the top 0.1%**.

- ⇒ People making less than \$30k will actually see their net income go down due to cuts to healthcare and nutrition, while the richest 0.1% will gain more than \$389,000 in after-tax income. (69% major concerns)
- ⇒ It spends more than \$3.8 trillion on tax breaks that overwhelmingly benefit the wealthy, while making deep cuts to healthcare, nutrition, and education. (68% major concerns)

In point-counterpoint debates, opponents of the bill have the high ground against claims by the bill’s proponents, often by very wide margins.

1. Opponents of the Republican budget bill have a clear advantage in a give-and-take about tax cuts.

Republicans’ focus on the bill providing “tax cuts for everyone” and eliminating taxes on tips and overtime does not stand up to the fact that this bill includes tax cuts for the wealthy that will raise costs for the poor and the middle class.

Which statement is more convincing?	
Supporters of the bill say it extends the 2017 tax cuts to taxpayers across the board and all Americans will have their taxes cut, including the elimination of taxes on tips and overtime.	35%
Opponents of the bill say it spends trillions of dollars on tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires, while raising costs for poor and middle-class families.	58%

Opponents of the bill are in the strongest position when focusing on the fact that the bill provides tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires, while slashing funding for basic needs like healthcare and nutrition.

Which statement is more convincing?	
Supporters of the bill say the only reason wealthy people get a bigger tax cut is because they pay much more in taxes to start with.	28%
Opponents of the bill say millionaires and billionaires should not be getting tax cuts at all, especially when the Republican budget bill slashes funding for basic needs like healthcare and nutrition.	64%

2. Voters do not think the Medicaid and SNAP cuts in the bill are just about eliminating fraud and waste, stopping benefits for illegal immigrants, and forcing able-bodied adults to find a job. They are more focused on the harmful impacts that these cuts will have.

Republicans’ claim that they are protecting Medicaid for citizens who need and deserve it while stopping waste, fraud, and abuse does not stand up against a clear statement that the bill takes healthcare away from nearly 14 million Americans almost all of whom are people who either already work, have a disability, or are responsible for caring for their kids or elderly parents.

Which statement is more convincing?

Supporters of the bill say that it protects Medicaid for U.S. citizens who need and deserve it, and strengthens Medicaid by eliminating fraud, stopping benefits for illegal immigrants, and requiring able-bodied people who receive Medicaid to work or look for a job.	36%
Opponents of the bill say that it takes away healthcare from nearly 14 million Americans, almost all of whom are people who either already work, have a disability, or are responsible for caring for their kids or elderly parents.	55%

Republicans’ argument that work requirements for SNAP protect against waste, fraud, and abuse falters against a statement about the adverse consequences of taking away food assistance from children and older people.

Which statement is more convincing?

Supporters of the bill say that whether you call it Food Stamps or SNAP, this is a program that has long been subject to waste, fraud, and abuse, which is why the bill strengthens the work requirement for SNAP.	34%
Opponents of the bill say it does nothing to stop scammers who target vulnerable Americans and instead will take food assistance away from older adults and parents with kids as young as seven years old, meaning millions of children won't have enough to eat.	58%

3. Work requirements are *not* popular. Only 38% of voters say the fact that the Republican budget bill “establishes work requirements for Medicaid” makes them feel more favorable about it, while 50% say it makes them feel less favorable about it. Learning that the bill will “take Medicaid coverage away from able-bodied individuals who do not meet a new work requirement,” makes voters feel even less favorable about it (35% more favorable, 55% less favorable).

When presented with statements about work requirements for Medicaid, voters express more concern about the consequences of having work requirements and who will be hurt than about people abusing the system without them.

When it comes to the issue of Medicaid work requirements, which would concern you more?

<u>Without</u> work requirements, people will abuse the system and receive government benefits instead of working or seriously looking for a job.	39%
<u>With</u> work requirements, many people who are in poor health, have a disability, or take care of their children or parents will lose their healthcare.	61%