Are Republican Members of Congress alienating their own voters by repealing the Affordable Care Act?

As the new Congress rushes towards a repeal of the Affordable Care Act, many are working against the opinion of the voters in their own districts. Research conducted by HaystaqDNA during the 2016 campaign showed that a majority of Americans support the ACA. However, members of Congress are more concerned with opinions of their constituents than they are with national numbers. Therefore, Haystaq looked at support levels by Congressional District. 253 of 435 or 58% of Congressional Districts show a majority of voters supporting ACA.

Not surprisingly, the majority of these pro-ACA districts are held by Democrats. However, 61 pro-ACA districts are currently held by Republicans. Many of these districts are relatively safely Republican, but in many, the difference in support in favor of the ACA is near or above the margin of victory in the 2016 election. This would suggest that voting to repeal the act puts these candidates at risk next year, even more so once voters realize how they will be personally affected by a repeal of the ACA.

The Haystaq microtargeting models have identified 98,942,762 likely ACA supporters nationwide, 41,697,492 of whom live in Republican districts.

METHODOLOGY

These numbers are based on a national survey of approximately 10,000 registered voters. The survey responses were used to build microtargeting models predicting how any individual voter would have answered the question had they been surveyed. The Congressional District percent in support of ACA is based on the number of voters in each district with an ACA support score of 50% or higher. The ACA support score predicts the likelihood that a voter would say that they support the ACA if surveyed. These numbers differ from poll results in that they are not weighted. A poll is likely to be weighted based on assumptions about likely turnout. The Haystaq models are applied to every registered voter.

The microtargeting models were built using a combination of the survey results and nearly 1,000 fields of commercial marketing data, Census demographics and proprietary derived indicators. Haystaq combines a variety of statistical and machine learning algorithms including Penalized Logistic Regression and Random Forests. The predictive models were validated against a hold-out sample to confirm that they accurately predicted the likely survey responses of individuals whose responses were not used in building the models.

Following is the question wording used in the survey:

> *Which comes closest to your opinion on the Affordable Care Act or Obamacare: that it is beneficial but doesn't go far enough, that it is about right, or that it goes too far and should be repealed? Please press 1 if you think Obamacare is beneficial but doesn't go far enough, press 2 if you like the law as it is, press 3 if you think Obamacare goes too far and should be repealed, or press 4 if you are not sure.*

The model predicts the likelihood that a voter with an opinion on ACA would select option 1 (Support ACA but thinks it doesn't go far enough) or option 2 (like the law as it is) vs. 3 (Goes too far and should be repealed). Because the model is predicting support only among those with an opinion, respondents picking option 4 (unsure) are not included.

The survey was conducted using a combination of live and IVR (automated phone calls) to a random sample of more than 10,000 voters nationwide.

TABLE 1: REPUBLICAN DISTRICTS WITH MAJORITY APPROVAL OF ACA

CD	NAME	% OF VOTE IN 2016 ELECTION	% OF VOTERS SUPPORTING ACA
TX23	Will Hurd	50.9%	72.4%
NY11	Daniel Donovan	63.3%	70.4%
FL27	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen	54.9%	67.2%
FL26	Carlos Curbelo	56.3%	65.3%
WA8	Dave Reichert	60.0%	64.9%
CA21	David G. Valadao	93.2%	63.8%
IL12	Mike Bost	57.8%	63.3%
MI11	David Trott	56.9%	61.4%
VA10	Barbara Comstock	52.9%	61.0%
KY6	Andy Barr	61.1%	60.6%
IL13	Rodney Davis	59.7%	60.5%
NJ11	Rodney Frelinghuysen	60.0%	60.4%
NJ7	Leonard Lance	55.7%	59.5%
VA2	Scott Taylor	61.7%	59.1%
MI8	Mike Bishop	58.8%	58.6%
IL6	Peter J. Roskam	59.5%	58.4%
FL18	Brian Mast	55.5%	58.1%
NM2	Steve Pearce	62.8%	57.9%
FL25	Mario Diaz-Balart	62.4%	57.9%
MI6	Fred Upton	61.7%	57.6%
CA25	Stephen Knight	54.2%	57.5%
CO6	Mike Coffman	54.7%	56.7%
FL2	Neal Dunn	69.2%	56.4%
NY24	John Katko	61.0%	55.7%
NY19	John Faso	54.7%	55.6%
AZ2	Martha McSally	56.7%	54.8%
CA39	Edward Royce	57.7%	54.6%
MI7	Tim Walberg	57.9%	54.6%
MI1	Jack Bergman	58.2%	54.6%
PA15	Charles W. Dent	60.6%	54.3%
PA18	Tim Murphy	100.0%	54.2%
PA8	Brian Fitzpatrick	54.5%	54.1%
IL14	Randy Hultgren	59.6%	54.1%
MI4	John Moolenaar	65.8%	54.0%
IA1	Rod Blum	53.9%	53.9%

WA5	Cathy McMorris Rodgers	59.5%	53.9%
TX32	Pete Sessions	100.0%	53.9%
NJ3	Tom MacArthur	60.6%	53.7%
WA3	Jaime Herrera Beutler	61.4%	53.6%
NJ4	Chris Smith	65.5%	53.6%
NJ2	Frank LoBiondo	61.6%	53.6%
MN3	Erik Paulsen	56.9%	53.6%
PA12	Keith Rothfus	61.9%	53.5%
KY1	James Comer Jr.	71.2%	53.3%
MI3	Justin Amash	61.3%	53.0%
ME2	Bruce Poliquin	54.9%	52.7%
GA6	Tom Price	61.6%	52.3%
VA5	Thomas Garrett	58.3%	52.1%
TX27	Blake Farenthold	58.9%	52.1%
LA4	Mike Johnson	65.2%	52.0%
NY2	Peter T. King	62.4%	51.9%
LA5	Ralph Abraham	100.0%	51.8%
TX7	John Culberson	56.2%	51.7%
NC13	Ted Budd	56.1%	51.5%
CA49	Darrell Issa	51.0%	51.4%
NY1	Lee Zeldin	59.0%	51.4%
PA6	Ryan Costello	57.3%	51.2%
FL15	Dennis A. Ross	57.5%	51.1%
OH14	David Joyce	62.7%	51.1%
GA12	Rick Allen	61.6%	50.7%
OH1	Steve Chabot	59.6%	50.4%