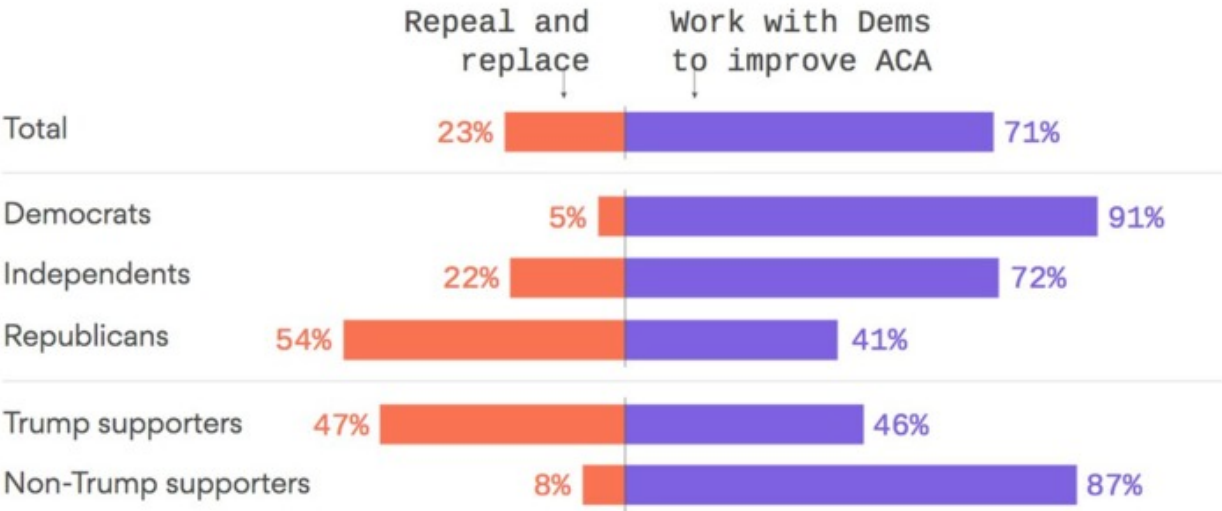


Public wants GOP to work with Dems on health care

Senate Majority Leader McConnell has given his fellow Republicans a warning: if they do not pass a bill to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, they will be forced to work with Democrats on more modest legislation to address challenges in the ACA's marketplaces. A new Kaiser Family Foundation poll to be released Friday suggests that's actually what the American people would like to see happen.

The bottom line: It looks like Republicans could neutralize a backlash from the base if they give up on repeal and work with Democrats.

How would you like Republicans in Congress to approach the ACA?



Data: Kaiser Family Foundation [Health Tracking Poll](#), July 5-10 2017; Note: Something else, Don't know, Refused responses not shown; Chart: Andrew Witherspoon / Axios

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As the chart shows...

- 71% of the public, including nearly all Democrats and 72% of Independents, favor a bipartisan effort to improve the ACA, rather than Republicans continuing their efforts to repeal it.
- 46% of Trump supporters say they want to see Republicans work with Democrats to improve the Affordable Care Act — statistically tied with the 47% who would rather see Republicans continue working on their own plan to repeal and replace it.
- 54% of Republicans want Congress to keep working on a repeal and replace plan, but 41% want Republicans to work across the aisle on fixes to the ACA.

What it means: A poll finding like this probably says more about current views of Washington than the ACA; the public is generally frustrated with partisanship and wants elected officials to work together. There is still plenty of support in the Republican base for repeal, even as support for the Senate health care bill has been slipping and intensity of support in the base is modest.

But this new poll finding suggests that even if Republicans lose ground with some in the base by failing to repeal the ACA, they could make up for it with Trump supporters, Republicans and independents who want to see them work across the aisle on ACA fixes.

Working on repairs rather than repeal could be more of a short-term problem with anti-ACA Republican political contributors, but they will likely come back to incumbents they can rely on for other issues once the health care debate dies down. Still, whether Republicans and Democrats could actually bridge their differences and work together to improve the ACA is a very open question.