

AP-GfK Poll: Raw feelings ease over health law

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In this Jan. 6, 2011, file photo House Rules Committee Chairman David Dreier, R-Calif., holds a committee meeting regarding floor debate on legislation that would repeal the health care overhaul bill on Capitol Hill in Washington. Ahead of a vote on repeal in the GOP-led House the week of Jan. 16, 2011, strong opposition to the law stands at 30 percent, close to the lowest level registered in AP-GfK surveys dating to September 2009. (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

(AP) -- As lawmakers shaken by the shooting of a colleague return to the health care debate, an Associated Press-GfK poll finds raw feelings over President Barack Obama's overhaul have subsided.

Ahead of a vote on repeal in the GOP-led House this week, strong opposition to the [law](#) stands at 30 percent, close to the lowest level registered in AP-GfK surveys dating to September 2009.

The nation is divided over the law, but the strength and intensity of the opposition appear diminished. The law expands coverage to more than 30 million uninsured, and would require, for the first time, that most people in the United States carry [health insurance](#).

The poll finds that 40 percent of those surveyed said they support the law, while 41 percent oppose it. Just after the November congressional elections, opposition stood at 47 percent and support was 38 percent.

As for repeal, only about one in four say they want to do away with the law completely. Among [Republicans](#) support for repeal has dropped sharply, from 61 percent after the elections to 49 percent now.

Also, 43 percent say they want the law changed so it does more to re-engineer the [health care system](#). Fewer than one in five say it should be left as it is.

Congress stepped back last week to honor victims of the rampage in Tucson, Ariz., that left Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz., facing a long and uncertain recovery from a bullet through her brain.

There's no evidence the gunman who targeted Giffords was motivated by politics, but the aftermath left many people concerned about the venom in public life. A conservative Democrat, Giffords had been harshly criticized for voting in favor of the health overhaul, and won re-election by a narrow margin.

Online:

Poll questions and results: <http://www.ap-gfkpoll.com>

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