

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Geoff Garin, Hart Research Associates
DATE: August 10, 2015
RE: Voters in NH, OH, and PA Support Funding for Planned Parenthood and Want Ayotte, Portman, and Toomey to Oppose Threatened Shutdown

From August 3 to 6, 2015, Hart Research Associates conducted surveys among randomly selected statewide cross sections of voters in New Hampshire (502 interviews), Ohio (501 interviews), and Pennsylvania (504 interviews). The interviews were conducted by telephone, including landlines, cell phones, and VOIP connections. The statistical margin of error associated with random samples of 500 respondents is ± 4.5 percentage points.

1. Large majorities of voters in New Hampshire, Ohio, and Pennsylvania oppose Republican proposals to end government funding for Planned Parenthood.

There is a proposal by Republicans in Congress to end all government funding for Planned Parenthood, including funding for women's health services that Planned Parenthood provides, such as cancer screenings and family planning. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose this proposal to end all government funding for Planned Parenthood?

	NH	OH	PA
	%	%	%
Strongly favor	22	20	19
Somewhat favor	9	10	9
Somewhat oppose	11	18	15
Strongly oppose	55	47	54
Not sure	3	5	3

In all three states, Democratic voters overwhelmingly oppose defunding Planned Parenthood. There is broad opposition among independent voters in all three states (72% oppose in New Hampshire, 59% oppose in Ohio, and 69% oppose in Pennsylvania). In both Ohio (47% favor, 50% oppose) and Pennsylvania (53% favor 46% oppose), rank-and-file Republicans are divided evenly on the proposal to end all government funding for Planned Parenthood.

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2. Support for Planned Parenthood is durable in all three states, and there is little change in voters' views after they are exposed to point-counterpoint arguments on the matter, including the arguments that the opponents of Planned Parenthood make.

First, respondents heard the following two arguments, and then were asked for their positions on Planned Parenthood funding:

Those who favor continued funding for Planned Parenthood say one in five women relies on Planned Parenthood for healthcare at some point in her lifetime, and Planned Parenthood health centers provide care for 2.7 million women and men annually. They say no government funding of Planned Parenthood goes to abortion services. Government funding is used for preventive care, cancer screenings, and family planning, and Planned Parenthood helps reduce the number of unintended pregnancies.

Those who favor ending all funding for Planned Parenthood say that Planned Parenthood is the largest abortion provider in America and taxpayers' money should not be used directly or indirectly for an organization that performs abortions. They say recently released videos show Planned Parenthood officials indicating their willingness to sell fetal body parts from abortions and to perform abortions in ways that would increase the likelihood that fetal organs could be harvested.

	<u>NH</u>	<u>OH</u>	<u>PA</u>
	%	%	%
Those who favor continued funding	63	61	64
Those who favor ending all funding	32	29	32
Neither (VOL)	1	7	2
Not sure	4	3	2

Second, respondents heard two additional arguments directly related to the Center for Medical Progress videos.

In the past few weeks, an anti-abortion organization called the Center for Medical Progress has released several undercover videos that show Planned Parenthood doctors discussing fetal tissue that women donate for medical research purposes after an abortion. Some Republicans in Congress say these videos justify ending all government funding for Planned Parenthood because they say the videos show Planned Parenthood officials indicating their willingness to sell fetal body parts from abortions and to perform abortions in ways that would increase the likelihood that fetal tissue could be harvested.

Planned Parenthood, on the other hand, says the videos are heavily doctored and edited to deliberately distort the truth, and the unedited videos show that Planned Parenthood does not profit from the sale of fetal tissue and has strong policies in place against that. They say the organization that released these heavily edited videos shares leadership with the radical anti-abortion organization Operation Rescue that has devoted itself to harassing doctors who provide legal abortion services.

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	NH	OH	PA
	%	%	%
Justify ending all funding	21	26	23
Do not justify ending all funding	65	60	65
Neither (VOL)	3	6	2
Not sure	11	8	10

4. In all three states, there is exceptionally deep antagonism to the idea of shutting down the federal government in order to block funding for Planned Parenthood.

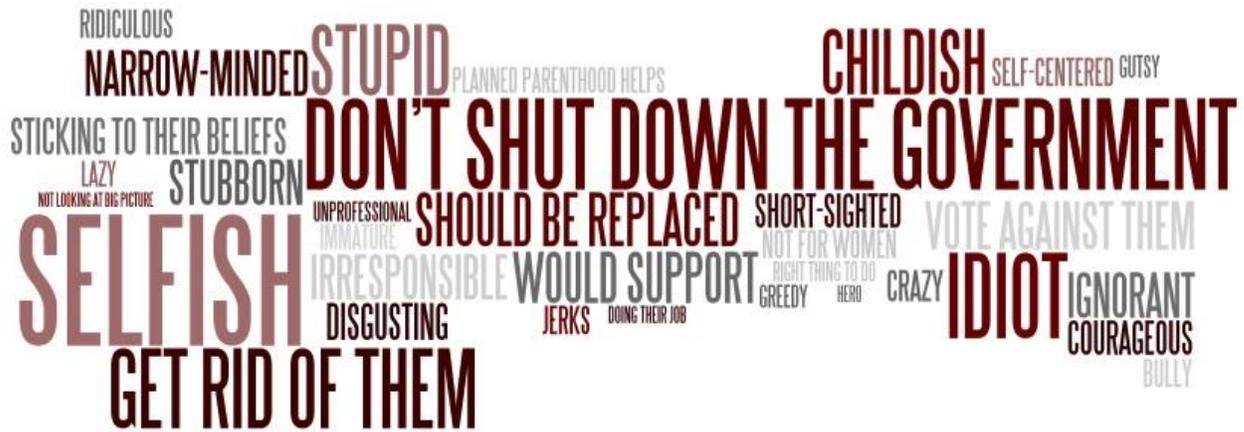
As you may know, Congress must pass legislation by October 1 to fund the government, and if it fails to do so, there would be a government shutdown like the one that occurred a few years ago. Some Republicans in Congress say they would be willing to shut down the federal government rather than pass a government funding bill that includes any money for Planned Parenthood, including any money for services Planned Parenthood provides, such as cancer screenings and family planning.

What is your reaction to the idea of shutting down the federal government to block any funding for Planned Parenthood—very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable?

	NH	OH	PA
	%	%	%
Very favorable	13	15	13
Somewhat favorable	10	8	8
Somewhat unfavorable	13	14	17
Very unfavorable	62	60	59
Not sure	2	3	3
Total Favorable	23	23	21
Total Unfavorable	75	74	76

Majorities of rank-and-file Republican voters in each of the three states react unfavorably to the idea of shutting down the federal government to block funding for Planned Parenthood (51% of Republicans in both New Hampshire and Pennsylvania are unfavorable, as are 56% of Republicans in Ohio).

Voters were asked to say in their own words how they would describe a politician who favors shutting down the federal government in order to block any funding for Planned Parenthood. The following word cloud summarizes those responses:



5. Support for defunding Planned Parenthood will take a political toll on Senators Ayotte, Portman, and Toomey, including among voters who otherwise might be inclined to support them for reelection.

If you learned that [Kelly Ayotte, Rob Portman, Pat Toomey] supports ending all funding for Planned Parenthood, would this make you much more likely, somewhat more likely, somewhat less likely, or much less likely to vote for (him/her) for reelection?

	NH	OH	PA
	%	%	%
Much more likely	13	14	14
Somewhat more likely	16	16	16
Somewhat less likely	18	20	15
Much less likely	38	37	42
No difference (VOL)	13	9	8
Not sure	2	4	5
Total More Likely	29	30	30
Total Less Likely	56	57	57

Among voters who otherwise might be inclined to support Pat Toomey for reelection, a third say they would be less likely to vote to reelect him if they learned he favors defunding Planned Parenthood. The situation is worse for Kelly Ayotte, who risks alienating 39% of her voters. And Rob Portman would be most vulnerable: 44% of his potential supporters say they would be less likely to vote to reelect him if they learned he favors ending all government funding for Planned Parenthood.

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6. Roughly two-thirds of all voters in each state want their senators to take a clear stand now against shutting down the federal government over Planned Parenthood. If Senator Ayotte, Portman, or Toomey vote in favor of a government shutdown, large majorities of voters say they would be less likely to reelect them, including roughly half who say they would be much less likely to support them for reelection.

Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: [Kelly Ayotte, Rob Portman, Pat Toomey] should take a clear stand now against shutting down the government over Planned Parenthood.

	<u>NH</u>	<u>OH</u>	<u>PA</u>
	%	%	%
Agree	68	64	66
Disagree	27	28	29
Not sure	5	8	5

If [Kelly Ayotte, Rob Portman, Pat Toomey] voted to shut down the federal government to block any funding for Planning Parenthood, would this make you much more likely, somewhat more likely, somewhat less likely, or much less likely to vote for (him/her) for reelection?

	<u>NH</u>	<u>OH</u>	<u>PA</u>
	%	%	%
Much more likely	12	14	13
Somewhat more likely	14	11	11
Somewhat less likely	16	19	16
Much less likely	46	45	51
No difference (VOL)	12	9	6
Not sure	-	2	3
Total More Likely	26	25	24
Total Less Likely	62	64	67

Results such as these leave little doubt that those who want to lead their party to a shutdown fight over Planned Parenthood are creating the likelihood of a political debacle for the Republican Party brand and for GOP candidates in 2016 reelection battles.