

2022 Midterm Elections and Health Care: What to Watch

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02:36 KEVIN PEREZ-ALLEN

Good afternoon and thank you for joining us for our 2022 Midterm Election Webinar. My name is Kevin Perez Allen, Chief Communications Officer at United States of Care. And I'll be your host today.

The election narrative this year has been driven by healthcare specific issues, but this is nothing new. Whether midterm or presidential, every election cycle since 2010 has been driven by healthcare. While support for and opposition to the ACA made up the bulk of the arguments throughout the 2010s and the 2020s, we've seen more of a focus on things like telehealth and virtual care, mental health caregiver support, expanded access to care affordability concerns or the big issue of the 2022 cycle, reproductive care.

Today's webinar, we're going to begin with an analysis of older voters and their anticipated impact in November. We'll then move on to a thoughtful discussion on the overall election landscape, analyzing key and federal state risks, key federal and state races from a healthcare perspective. And then finally, we're going to finish up with a discussion about state advocacy possibilities after the midterm and where those opportunities may lie.

Quick housekeeping reminder, this webinar is being recorded. A link to the recorded webinar will email to all attendees and a post webinar email from US of Care. After hearing from today's speakers, we're going to go ahead and open it up for a question and answer session. In order to ask a question, you can access the Q&A function located at the bottom of your screen. And if possible, please let us know to whom you want your question directed.

To guide us through this midterm analysis. Please welcome our panelists:

- Khelan Bhatia, Director of Voter Engagement at AARP
- Lucy Culp, Executive Director of State Government Affairs at the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
- Lisa Hunter, Senior Director of Policy and External Affairs at United States of Care

- Caitlin Westerson, State External Affairs and Partnership Director at United States of Care

To kick us off, I'm gonna throw it over to Khelan.

04:31 KHELAN BHATIA

Great, thanks so much, Kevin, and appreciate US of Care for asking me and AARP to present today.

In election cycles, especially midterm ones like this one, 50+ voters have made and will continue to make up the majority of the electorate. In 2018 the last midterm they made around 60% of the electorate and in the most competitive states and districts around the country, sometimes even more.

I fully expect that to be even larger this year, at the same time though, you know, the 50 Plus, they're not a monolith. You know, we're talking about three different generations of individuals. You're talking differences among race and ethnicity, education levels, geography, and of course, gender. But just one little tidbit, I like to note like in the last midterm, only one Senate candidate who did win, didn't win the 50+ in their state. Everybody else did win the 50+ in their state. So this is a case that we make to candidates, campaigns, and others when we talk about the issues that our members and our constituency care about including prescription drug prices, Medicare, Social Security, family caregiving and other issues.

We also believe based on a lot of our research, that 50+ women, specifically this year, are going to be the ultimate swing vote for a variety of reasons, some of that's linked to inflation, and how everything has gotten more expensive, and made it hard to be able to afford things like health care, food, rent, you name it, and also other issues that some of the other panelists are going to go into including what happened with the Dobbs decision.

As a result of that, we did a lot of research called "Choose the Difference" this year. We just released some more polling on that last week, actually. And when we did our first polling for that we had focus groups around the country, focusing on different groups of women from different ideological groups, as well as different multiethnic groups. And one of the things that we found was, there was a woman who said, "I wish that the politicians like Nancy Pelosi and Mitch McConnell and Chuck Schumer and Joe Biden would come and walk in my shoes." And so as a result, we have a mini campaign within our engagement campaign called [In My Shoes](#), and Kevin or Crystal, if you could play the video. This is the result of what we're trying to do.

07:20 "IN OUR SHOES" AARP CAMPAIGN VIDEO

What if politicians walked in our shoes? If they had to worry about paying bills? Had to wonder if they could afford their prescription drugs? If they struggled to care for a loved one? If politicians walked in our shoes, they'd fight for what we need. Tell them at aarp.org/inmyshoes.

07:51 KHELAN BHATIA

Great, thanks so much. So through that campaign, we're asking people to share their stories, that we will then be able to direct directly to the candidates. Just a little bit about AARP. We we're nonpartisan. We don't endorse candidates. We don't give money to candidates, but we do make sure that they know that our members care about these key issues. And they should be addressing them, addressing the needs of the 50+. And then letting our members know and the general public know where the candidates stand so they can choose the candidates that best fit their views and values.

We've also done quite a few battleground polls this year. And so far in 10 states, we just released New Hampshire, just this morning, actually, you'll see in the chat. There will be a link that has all of our polls, it's on www.aarp.org/voterpolls22. And we did states like Maine, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Florida, Arizona, Wisconsin, Alaska, and now New Hampshire. And we're going to be doing a second poll in Pennsylvania next week. And then doing some follow up focus groups focused on 50+ women in the Philly and Pittsburgh suburbs. Because we do believe the races there, specifically the Senate race there is tightening. And we want to know where 50 Plus voters are because we believe that they're going to be decisive, not only in that state, but also around the country.

And then finally, one of the things that we're doing in this election cycle, which I believe is some of the most important work, is there's been several states that have changed the way that people vote in this country, some for good, some for bad in our opinion. But regardless, we're making sure that our members and the voting public, specifically those voters over the age of 50, know what they need to do to go vote, whether it be identification requirements, any changes to absentee or vote by mail, any changes to in person early voting, what have you. And so we have a website that has all of our State election guides – it's www.aarp.org/electionguidance. That's also in the chat that we've made available to not only our members, but the general public. And any of you on this call, you're welcome to share that with folks in your communities. So that's what we're talking about, with voters over the age of 50. I will now turn it over to Lisa Hunter to go through her presentation.

10:30 LISA HUNTER “HOW MEDIA IS FRAMING THIS CYCLE”

Great, we can go ahead and pull the slides up Khelan. Thank you so much. And that's actually another dynamic that is really good to flag around the fact that some voter laws have changed. And so that is another dynamic that voters are going to be navigating this November, and some of them already are as early voting is underway.

Well, thank you for that. Let's go ahead and move on to the next slide. I'm going to start out here by framing the midterm election and what's bubbling up this cycle.

Historically, many experts regard the midterm elections as an opportunity for voters to either endorse or reject unified party control, and preferring a divided government. So you can look at 2010, when we saw a surge of conservative Tea Party voters delivering the House majority to the Republicans, or even looking back at 2018, with the surge in Democrats rejecting President Trump. In this case, we have another trifecta of Democratic control of the federal government.

And although you know, with razor thin margins, I'll add. And while we have President Biden in office, he is not on the ballot, though his performance alongside that of the dominant party, the Democrats, that's going to be the focal point as voters cast their ballots this year.

So whether you've been following the midterm elections very closely, or even if you're just generally watching the news, I think, you know, what you see here is a good mix of issues. But it's no surprise that a lot of the key issues continue to sort of orbit the economy. So one of the things that we've seen over the course of 2022, actually, let's stick with that, that previous slide, because there's other stuff going on here.

So digging into the economy, I think we've seen inflation has certainly dominated headlines. But so to have other critical issues to voters like abortion after the fallout of the Dobbs decision, the case that invalidated Roe v. Wade. We've seen other things happening, student loan forgiveness that occurred recently, was a key policy priority for the Democrats, in order to sort of turn out their base younger voters, people of color, people that Democrats need to turn out.

But the real trick is that Democrats also have to make sure that they are appealing to swing voters. And that's where health care costs come into play. And, you know, there have been some important developments that have sort of aimed at trying to get at health care costs. We saw that this summer, Congress passed the Inflation Reduction Act, the IRA, which is seen by Democrats as a big win, in lowering costs for consumers through enhanced ACA subsidies for those enrolling in Marketplace coverage, as well as lower costs for drugs for beneficiaries in the Medicare Part D program. The IRA was not just a health care bill, it also had a lot of climate change policies. So another sort of effort to bring out the Democratic base. And even beyond the IRA, there have been some other important winds that the Democrats have been carrying into this cycle, things that should be appealing to swing and moderate voters in their estimation. So Congress passed an Infrastructure package, the American Rescue plan, the first gun control law in nearly three decades that passed on a bipartisan vote, military and economic aid to Ukraine, and other things like that.

On the Republican side, what we've seen is an effort to really amplify a different set of issues. Largely lately, what we've seen is immigration and crime rates. And just this past weekend, we saw reparations, and those sorts of issues coming in ahead of November. They've been talking a little bit less about healthcare. But we also saw the commitment to America being released in September, by Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy. And that included in itself, a healthcare agenda that sort of underscores some of the evergreen issues that Republicans have long sought, things like innovation and drug development, as well as addressing premium costs. And we'll talk a little bit more about that in a little bit. But that gives us a key glimpse to what the GOP agenda might entail for next year if there's a shift in power.

15:12 LISA HUNTER - "KEY TRENDS"

And then of course, we're also expecting spending this cycle to break records, some additional key trends that are sort of feeding into the overall landscape this cycle. One is on voter registration. And what we've seen is a real surge of female voters in states where abortion rights

are at most risk. So you'll see here two data points, one from Kansas showing a 70% jump in registered voters, as well as Pennsylvania, where voter registration jumped in the months following the Dobbs decision. We also mentioned a moment ago, early voting is already underway. So you'll see a handful of states here. My colleague, in a moment, will speak to this probably in about a minute, but just to call it out for those of us who are interested in Medicaid expansion and policy and the sort of 12 hold out states that have yet to expand Medicaid, you'll note that South Dakota has a ballot initiative aimed at Medicaid expansion there. So that's a state to be watching. And then I mentioned this a moment ago, but we're also looking at record breaking spending this cycle. And we're not going to be able to know what the final figures are for some time. But we know a few nuggets from reporting as recently as this morning showing that Republican PACs and national committees have outraised Democrats. At the same time, individual Democrats have outraised individual Republicans. Overall, Republicans are outspending Democrats. And then some, I wouldn't say this is necessarily a surprise, but some of the places where spending is really high, are concentrated in really competitive states for Senate and Governor races. So places like Pennsylvania, Georgia, Arizona, Wisconsin, etc.

17:00 LISA HUNTER - "FEDERAL MIDTERM ELECTION FORECASTS"

All right now for the overview of what the cycle looks like in terms of congressional seats. This is a midterm cycle, of course, and we wait until 2024 for the President, the Presidential Elections to take place. For this cycle, there are of course 35 Senate seats up. And as with every two years, all 435 seats in the House are up. And we're gonna go into these seats in a moment. But first I just want to talk a little bit about the forecasting, which we looked into this morning. Latest forecast, [according to 538](#), you'll see and they do sort of simulation modeling. What they're showing is Democrats as likely to retain control of the Senate. And on the House side, the model is showing that Republicans are favored to win that chamber.

So right now, predictions are settling in on a divided Congress, as many have been predicting for a while. But there are still 27 days until the elections. So there's still time for some of this to shift.

18:00 LISA HUNTER - "35 SENATE SEATS UP THIS CYCLE"

And then, really briefly, these are the 35 seats. This is the composition of the US Senate as it stands at 50/50 with 48 Democrats, plus two independents who caucus with the Democrats, and then the 50 Republicans.

So as I just mentioned, there are 35 seats up this cycle. Among them are 14 that are belonging to Democrats, and then 21 currently held by Republicans. We'll move on to the important toss up and competitive races in a minute.

18:45 LISA HUNTER - "COMPETITIVE SENATE RACES"

I'm gonna try my best to run through these pretty quickly. But we pulled out here the top six Senate races to highlight for you all, which of course looks familiar. These are some of the usual suspects in recent elections anyways. But with a 50/50 Senate, what you have here is a situation where the Republicans need to pick up one seat to regain control of the chamber. Democrats need to defend every seat that they have, including last cycle's gains. so the stakes are really really high.

19:18 LISA HUNTER - "ARIZONA SENATE RACE"

In Arizona Senator Mark Kelly is defending his seat against a challenger Blake Masters, who is one of several candidates who was endorsed by former President Trump. Right now it's looking like the seat is leaning Democrat, according to the [Cook Report](#).

19:34 LISA HUNTER - "GEORGIA SENATE RACE"

And then moving into Georgia, we have former football running back Herschel Walker, the GOP challenger to Senator Raphael Warnock. You guys may have seen the news last week around alleged funding for an abortion in 2009 under Walker. Right now, we're still awaiting more polling to come out of Georgia to get a sense of the potential fallout, if any, but it's important to note that the party has sort of doubled down on its backing of Walker at this point. So right now it's rated as a toss up, but we'll have to see what the polling really says in the next couple of days.

20:10 LISA HUNTER - "NORTH CAROLINA SENATE RACE"

In North Carolina Senator Byrd's retirement is leaving this seat open. So three term House Republican member Ted Budd is facing off against Democrat Cheri Beasley, a former State Supreme Court Justice. Right now, what is happening there is that Bud has a deep voting record that sort of shows his conservative credentials. He's got a Trump endorsement. And it seems like he's going to lean very heavily on some sort of GOP doctrine, if elected. With Beasley, however, it's still a little fuzzy on the details as a result of no voting record. And so right now pollsters have sort of pegged Bud as the narrow favorite, but that could change.

20:58 LISA HUNTER - "NEVADA SENATE RACE"

In Nevada, really, really close, tight race there. Senator Catherine Cortez Masto is defending her seat against challenger Adam Laxalt in a race that pundits are really watching closely. This is also one of the high spending states and right now you know pollsters have been wavering between toss up and lean Republican. This is a race to watch but so too is the tight Governor's and Secretary of State races in Nevada. A lot of dynamics in that state, hospitality, travel, gambling industry, a lot of working class, low income union members, lots of representation from Latinos and Asian American constituencies. But worth noting that these are groups that have proven difficult for Democrats to sort of galvanize in recent elections.

21:48 LISA HUNTER - "PENNSYLVANIA SENATE RACE"

In Pennsylvania, right now it's a toss up. And we've seen this open seat sort of take a lot of different twists and turns. Celebrity Dr. Mehmet Oz is facing Lieutenant Governor Governor John Fetterman. Race appears to be tightening, racking up more and more spending from outside groups. Dr. Oz continues to have some trouble appealing to moderate and swing voters and Fetterman's health has also come in as an issue. While he took time away on the campaign trail earlier this summer. It ranks as one of the most highly sought after Senate seats for Democrats. And all eyes are going to be watching the debate between these candidates in a couple of weeks, I think on the 25th.

22:35 LISA HUNTER - "WISCONSIN SENATE RACE"

And then Wisconsin, last one on our list. That's where Senator Ron Johnson is defending his seat against Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes. Lately, he's been spending a lot of money on attack ads criticizing Barnes on crime. And then Barnes is answering with attack ads criticizing Johnson on abortion. So the race here continues to tighten and ranks as sort of a toss up still.

22:35 LISA HUNTER - "WISCONSIN, NEW HAMPSHIRE, COLORADO SENATE RACE"

There are a handful of other Senate seats that are worth keeping an eye on, like in New Hampshire, with Senator Maggie Hassan defending her seat from a challenger Don Bolduc as well as in Colorado where Republican Joe O'Dea is challenging Senator Michael Bennet. Both of these seats are kind of worth calling out especially for those of us in healthcare, given that Hassan sits on both Senate Finance and Health Committee and Bennett sits on the Finance Committee, and these committees are important in terms of having jurisdiction over health care issues.

22:35 LISA HUNTER - "HOUSE RACES"

All right, and the House. There are a few things happening in the cycle. One of the biggest influences on the election this year for House seats is redistricting. I'm gonna say a word on that in a moment. But needless to say there are a handful of house incumbents to watch as they face off in close races.

A lot of the names you see here are hailing from battleground states like Arizona, Virginia, Iowa, Michigan, and Ohio. But even before you whittle down this list, it's also important to note that the primary season was particularly remarkable given that 15 House members lost re-election races. So in all this has really been a wildly competitive re election year for House members.

On the Democratic side, some familiar names who we typically see on the DCCC frontline list of note is Tom O'Halleran from Arizona who's a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, which has jurisdiction over health programs. He's also known as the most vulnerable House Democrat. And then another name that might sound familiar is Rep. Mary Peltola, who won in Alaska a couple months ago against Sarah Palin during a special election.

And she's a member of the House Education and Labor Committee. On the Republican side, it is worth noting that three of these legislators were among the most vulnerable House incumbents in 2020, Chabot (OH-1), Bacon (NE-2), Garcia (CA-22). And then another observation here - three of the four Republicans of these members came from states that Joe Biden carried in 2020.

25:11 LISA HUNTER - "REDISTRICTING"

All right, the role that redistricting has played in this last cycle is not to be underestimated. A lot of population and demographic shifts in the last 30 years of, you know, Republicans largely holding the power in state legislatures where redistricting lines are often drawn. So we're seeing that the new lines have shifted in a couple of key ways.

Before they were redrawn, Democrats had a +6 seat advantage. And now in the new map, what you'll see is that the Democratic bar at the bottom shows a decrease in the deep blue, quote, "reliable" seats, converting those six seats from before, from deep blue to lighter blue, making them a little less reliable.

And then on the Republican side, you can see that the number of dark red seats has also increased this cycle. So what does this all mean? When you start with an already thin margin for House control, where, you know, Republicans are seeking to get five seats to take the majority back, this really translates into a kind of shift that results in Congressional districts that reflect more ideological seats on both sides of the aisle, meaning less swing districts are at play.

26:28 LISA HUNTER - "KEY HEALTH PRIORITIES: FEDERAL"

And with all of this in mind, where are things currently when it comes to the policy landscape for healthcare, and how does that line up politically? So as you see here, there are several areas of focus for both Democrats and Republicans.

On the Democratic side, within Congress, and based on previous work, the Democratic caucus will likely continue to forge ahead on some of the long standing healthcare priorities for the party, things like abortion and reproductive health care and contraception, strengthening public programs through improved eligibility and services under Medicare and Medicaid, pushing for policies that deliver on health equity, including some of what we know fell out of what we previously called Build Back Better, things like the [Mnibus](#) and postpartum coverage, lifting the five year bar for immigrant coverage, [Medicaid Reentry Act](#) for justice involved individuals, things like that. Other health equity priorities may also include efforts to address social determinants of health. And, of course, legislation that seeks to reduce health care costs both for consumers and within the system. Outside of Congress, because given the democratic control of the executive branch, we're also anticipating some regulatory activity. Things like right now there's the [Medicaid Access Rule](#), which is undergoing comments and intended to address some of the streamlining for getting folks enrolled, and access to coverage in the Medicaid program.

We'll have to see what happens on the notice on benefit and payment parameters as it pertains to exchange marketplace coverage that's due out soon. The Medicare Notice and Call Letter are also due out. And more broadly, on Part D, we'll have to keep our eyes open on implementation of the Inflation Reduction Act and drug pricing policies happening under Part D.

On the other end of the spectrum, under Republican priorities, we've seen some of what McCarthy's commitment to America includes in the health care portion of the rollout, with general framing sort of criticizing Democrats as solutions as a government takeover or top down solutions. But here's what's being proposed by Republicans, some of which is pretty evergreen as well. Lower prices through choice and competition. If this drifts into policies that sort of address, price transparency, there are prospects for bipartisanship there. But if it drifts into personalized medicine and less regulated products on the market, that remain sort of in the Republican column. Another one is investments in medical advancements, which is concerned with ensuring a strong drug development pipeline. This is an area that Republicans exploited during the Inflation Reduction Act. And then while it's not expressly noted in the commitment to America, one more item that is likely to take center stage, especially if one or both chambers flip is an uptick in oversight. And this can happen across at least two key areas, but certainly more COVID-19 spending and pandemic response, and then the implementation of the IRA. And then finally shoring up the financial sustainability of Social Security and Medicare programs.

But all hope is not lost. There are some bipartisan areas where we can see some solutions and progress. So places like behavioral health, including workforce integration with primary care and models that pertain to value based care initiative. Telehealth, and sort of retaining the quote good from the pandemic that led to increased utilization and popularity. There are obviously details underneath all of these where some differences emerge. For example, you know, places like Democrats wanting to leverage telehealth to improve access to abortion services, not really something that Republicans want to pursue at all. And then, on the next item price transparency comes up as a place where Democrats and Republicans can align, giving consumers more information about what their costs are, when it comes to drug pricing, hospital costs, basic health services, and then both Democrats and Republicans care about insulin and reducing patient exposure to out of pocket costs. We saw this bubble up over the summer, the [Shaheen-Collins Bill](#), to cap out of pocket costs for insulin. And we know that the Inflation Reduction Act only applies to Medicare beneficiaries. And so there's a lot left on the table for commercial market.

30:58 LISA HUNTER - "POTENTIAL SCENARIOS"

And here we've summarized the potential scenarios that we could see coming out of the midterms as well as some of the downstream implications for healthcare. At a glance, there are two broad stroke outcomes: uniformly held chambers by one party on the one hand, and then a split or divided Congress on the other. And then there are variations within that. But right now, as I said earlier, most pollsters are showing that the most likely scenario is a split, where

Republicans regain control of the House and Democrats maintain control of the Senate. And I think that's where I'm gonna focus my comments right now.

In terms of leadership, based on the aggressive campaigning that we've seen going on across House races, but I'm not Minority Leader McCarthy, we can see he's the sort of would-be favorite, to step into the speakership. And Senator Schumer would likely retain his position as Majority Leader. Committee assignments, and the House would shift over actually, there'll be some changes in the Senate as well. But given that it's the house, the other thing that we can anticipate there is a bolder legislative action that's reflective of the majority party coming out of that chamber. So it's very likely that we would see some of the Republican priorities that we discussed on the last slide coming up in this next Congress. Of course, you know, checks and balances, the Senate will remain sort of the backstop to this kind of legislation, pursuing a more moderate bipartisan approach to healthcare, healthcare issues. Where things can get really thorny in this kind of a scenario is for Democrats on the oversight side, where sort of history teaches us that, you know, it's likely that House Republicans will be heavily focused on digging into the Biden administration response to the pandemic, as well as closely watching implementation of reforms under the IRA.

You know, this has happened historically, we've saw this sort of pendulum swing occur when Democrats control the House after winning the 2018 midterms, and then focusing on investigations into the Trump administration. So sort of history repeats itself for it tends to. And then in the lame duck, we can anticipate that if we find ourselves in a world where Republicans take back the House and Democrats retain the Senate, you know, there is some opportunity for bipartisan work to get through. Obviously, there's must pass legislation that needs to be taken up in the form of a new funding bill in December. And, you know, let's say nobody from either party wants to see a lame duck, hold government funding hostage next year. And if the Republicans take control, I think, you know, Speaker McCarthy would not want to start his session with a government shutdown.

Relatedly, an end of the year package could also include some of the bipartisan reforms that I'd mentioned earlier, that address things like telehealth, behavioral and mental health policies as well.

34:00 LISA HUNTER - "EFFECT ON STATES"

And with that federal overview, I think it's clear there's so much to be determined with such narrow margins in both the House and the Senate at stake. Of course, we know that what's happening federally can have both a downstream implication for what's happening in states. But similarly, states can influence through their own efforts, what happens in the federal arena as well.

And so I think with that, it's now time for me to turn things over to my colleague, Caitlin, who's going to discuss the state landscape in greater depth. Caitlin, the floor is yours.

34:38 CAITLIN WESTERSON - "GOVERNOR RACES"

Thanks, Lisa. As Lisa talked about, there's a lot going on in this election cycle. And that continues to be true at the state level as well. Obviously, there are some limitations to what the federal government can do. And so states have a lot at stake this election and have the opportunity to really move some policy forward in the next couple of years. So with that we'll jump right into the most contentious governor's races that we see this election cycle.

34:38 CAITLIN WESTERSON - "OREGON GOVERNOR RACE"

Starting with Oregon. Oregon has three candidates running for governor. They're all former state legislators. Tina Kotek is running on the Democratic ticket. Christine Drazen is running on the Republican ticket, and Betsy Johnson is running on the independent ticket. And she is a former Democratic legislator that held office for about 10 years. And so she's polling actually quite well for an independent gubernatorial candidate. And she's consistently held between 20% - 25% of the vote since entering the race. And so that is really having quite an impact on both Kotek and Drazen and the race is quite tight. Both of them are polling, right around 30% - 33%, depending on the day. What's interesting is that if Drazen does win this race, the Republican has not held governorship in Oregon since the 1980s. And it will have a huge impact on the policy that that starts to happen in Oregon, over the next four years.

36:20 CAITLIN WESTERSON - "NEVADA GOVERNOR RACE"

Moving on to Nevada, Nevada's governor race is also a toss up. We have Steve Sisolak, running on the Democratic ticket and Joe Lombardo running on the Republican ticket. Both are polling at 44% and have been, really, since entering the race. What's interesting about the Nevada gubernatorial race is that despite polling across the nation, education is quite a hot issue in Nevada right now. And both campaigns have really heavily focused on policy issues around education including school safety, parents role in education setting, and the curriculum.

37:00 CAITLIN WESTERSON - "ARIZONA GOVERNOR RACE"

In Arizona, we have Democrat Katie Hobbs running against Republican Kari Lake. Both of them are pulling around 47%, within a point or two. With the exception of the federal Senate seats, Republicans hold a lot of the offices in Arizona and only one Democrat has been elected to the Arizona governorship since the end of the 1990s. Carrie Lake is running on, similar to some of the federal stuff that Lisa talked about, Carrie Lake is running an anti-establishment campaign. She's focused on election security and Border Protection. Alternatively, what we see in Katie Hobbs platform is a lot of focus on social issues like healthcare.

38:00 CAITLIN WESTERSON - "KANSAS GOVERNOR RACE"

And in Kansas, we see Laura Kelly is running against Republican Derek Schmidt. Kelly is the incumbent and she is one of the most vulnerable Democrats in the governor's race this year across the country and also one of the most popular. But if Republican candidate Derek Schmidt unseats her, Kansas will have a Republican led legislature and executive branch for the first time in four years. And that can have a really big impact on what happens with Kansas state policy. There are a lot of predictions, though, that the Democratic turnout in November will be quite high in Kansas., if the August primary was any prediction, and that was driven by a desire to defeat a referendum aimed at weakening abortion productions in the state.

38:53 CAITLIN WESTERSON - "WISCONSIN GOVERNOR RACE"

And the final Governor governor's race we'd like to highlight is Wisconsin where we see Democrat Tony Evers facing Republican candidate Tim Michels. Both of them have been polling neck and neck at 48% since entering the race. Most major outlets predict that Evers will keep his governorship, but it will be tight like all of the other ones on this slide.

39:20 CAITLIN WESTERSON - "STATE LEGISLATURES"

And so we'll close out those government races and talk about state legislatures. Obviously, there's a lot of variety of how state legislatures are structured across the country. And we wanted to take a chance to highlight just a handful of them here. Starting with Alaska. Alaska has transitioned to a rank choice voting system for the first time this general election and they've had a divided government since 2015. The Republican Party has had firm control over the Senate and the Governor seat in the house has been controlled by a bipartisan coalition since 2016. The Republican Party needs to gain just three seats to take control of the house in 2022. And that move would lead the Republicans To have a trifecta in this state. Obviously that trifecta would really impact policy in Alaska, especially around access to abortion and election procedures.

In Arizona, both the House and the Senate are currently controlled by a Republican Party, but very thin margins, both just two seats in each chamber, give Republicans control, and all 30 seats of their Senate are up for election in 2022. There are seven battleground ground races in the Senate, three of which are held democratic strongholds, and four of which are Republican strongholds. And so due to redistricting, it's the first time that they'll see what those new districts look like. If Democrats do take control of the Senate, Arizona could see a split legislature and depending on what happens with the governor's race, it could break up the Republican trifecta and really give the Democrats leverage in a state where they haven't had a lot of leverage in recent history.

Moving on to Maine, the Democrats currently control both chambers of the state legislature, but the Republicans are looking to flip one or both of those chambers. It's more likely that they would flip this Senate, which would lead to a split legislature. Maine has historically been known

for voters splitting their ticket and so a high turnout is expected this election cycle in Maine, which would obviously impact their state policy moving forward.

In Michigan, both the chambers are contentious due to an independent redistricting commission that was recently drawn and creates a more competitive map. Republicans currently control the House and the Senate, but they're at risk of losing the Senate. That also would lead to a split legislature in Michigan.

And finally, Minnesota is one of the states that has had a split legislature since 2015. Currently, the Republicans control the legislature and the Democrats control the governor's office. But Democrats are looking to gain control of the House and hoping to align with the governor's office. In 2022, all 201 members of the legislature are up for reelection in Minnesota, and 51 of them are because someone is either retiring or running for a new office. And so that really puts them in a unique position compared to other states.

42:42 CAITLIN WESTERSON - "KEY ISSUES: STATES"

So some of the key issues that are popping up in states for voters are very similar to the federal elections that Lisa mentioned. Mostly voters are concerned about the economy and inflation and gun policy. They take the top few spots in most polls that you look at.

But when you move down to those tertiary priorities for voters, that's where the poll really begins to split, or voters begin to differentiate the issues that are most important to them. So we see abortion access, public safety and crime, immigration, education, climate change, all sorts of policies end up in that third spot, depending on a variety of factors, including geography and where folks live.

With respect to the economy and inflation, voters are very concerned about the cost of living and the impact on their jobs and families. And the broader economy category tends to focus on employment rates and government spending as well. For example, in Arizona, we know that 80% of voters would like to know a candidate's stance on jobs in the economy before they vote. At US of Care, we very much see that as a healthcare link between the economy and inflation, and knowing that healthcare is a huge bucket of people's everyday budget, that this is one of the most salient issues for voters with respect to healthcare.

44:28 CAITLIN WESTERSON - "STATES TO WATCH"

So we wanted to highlight two states to watch here. Oregon and Arizona. Arizona has popped up in our state legislatures to watch, and our governor's races to watch, and I think that that is no surprise. The legislature does not always reflect the will of the people in Oregon and Arizona. Since 2009, Arizona has had a Republican trifecta and their state government but they've increasingly they've recently sent Democratic representation in both the Senate and the House

to DC through their in their congressional elections. And redistricting has really changed a lot in the state over the last couple of years.

So one thing that is new is that if the Democratic candidate, Katie Hobbs does win the election for Governor, there will be new kind of tools available to advocates that are pushing a healthcare agenda in the state, especially with respect to executive actions that might be more viable now than they have been in the past.

In Oregon, in addition to there being a third party, gubernatorial candidate, about two thirds of their legislature has recently turned over, and, and two thirds of their members have served three years or less. And that is really a unique dynamic in Oregon, that hasn't really happened in other states, because those three years have been in a pandemic. And so all of their work has been mostly in a virtual environment. And that's significantly different policymaking than a traditional environment where folks are all serving in the state capitol together. Many of the outgoing legislators over the past couple of years have attributed their departure from office to how low the state legislators are paid in Oregon. And that has really caused a loss of institutional knowledge around healthcare issues, and agency staff. So there will need to be some new healthcare leadership kind of breathed into Oregon, over the next couple of years in order to keep up with the policies they have been pursuing over the last couple of years. And with that, I will hand it over to Lucy Culp at the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society to talk about the health policy issue trends.

46:52: LUCY CULP - "ELECTIONS AND STATE ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES"

Great. Thank you Caitlin. Good afternoon, everybody. I oversee state government affairs, as Caitlin said, for the Leukemia Lymphoma Society. So my team is really made up of the folks that are lobbying on behalf of blood cancer patients and their families in state houses across the country.

47:20: LUCY CULP - "HEALTH POLICY TRENDS OF INTEREST TO STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS"

So I'm going to talk a little bit actually about trends that we're seeing and hearing about from lawmakers going into, really the election cycle, as well as kind of looking beyond that into the 2023 legislative sessions. You know, what that means for the priorities for organizations like mine, and kind of what we're forecasting could actually get done in the near term, over the course of the next year or so. So starting with trends here, as you can kind of see, there's really no shortage of healthcare issues on the minds of lawmakers and regulators, really, of both parties. And, and as Lisa already outlined, there's quite a bit of variability, though, in what each role or each party sees as their role in terms of addressing those issues. But I think the issues kind of, you know, sort of cross party lines. So if I were to bucket these a little bit, I think there's sort of the trend surrounding sort of COVID, the kind of the direct effects as well as the kind of long standing concerns that have been laid bare by the pandemic. So, you know, things like workforce shortages, telehealth policies to better help address mental health. And, of course,

kind of looming on all of our minds with the end of the public health emergency and, and particularly what that means for folks who gave Medicaid coverage during the pandemic.

They're also significant trends related to healthcare costs, thinking here, specifically about the policy levers that states do have to impact both, you know, both prescription drug costs, as well as provider pricing and larger systems costs. But also here thinking about, you know, efforts to protect consumers from medical debt and the financial toxicity that that really comes with being a patient in this country. And, of course, I think, as we've already discussed, there would be no surprise to anyone on this call that we'll see a lot of activity in states around access to abortion and reproductive care. And the last bucket here, it really kind of turns it all into a bit more of a venn diagram, which is policies surrounding access to care. And in particular, always at the state level, you know, Medicaid, especially as it relates to the coverage gap and the end of the public health emergency.

And I'd be remiss if I didn't say, I think all of these trends are really kind of swirling, at least in part around the health of the economy and where the broader economy is headed. You know, just yesterday, I think we probably all saw the IMF warned that the worst is yet to come as we look towards the possibility or even the likelihood of a global recession. And of course for states, and for Medicaid programs in particular, you know, that could have a really profound effect as lawmakers are looking at tightening state budgets and reduced revenues.

50:10 LUCY CULP - "PRIORITIES FOR PATIENT ADVOCACY GROUPS"

So it's kind of to give you a sense of what this means for organizations like LLS. Of course, we all have our own priorities that vary. And none of our groups is representative of the whole, but I wanted to share this slide, just to share that there are on the left about 40+ members of the partnership to protect coverage. Sometimes you've heard it maybe called the "Burritos", our groups really came together in 2017, and continue today to advocate together that coverage be affordable, accessible and understandable for all consumers and patients. And while the elections and the outlook certainly impact how we pursue those policies, we really continue to operate from the perspective that no matter which party is in power, these are the goals that we'll continue to work towards.

51:07 LUCY CULP - "WHERE MOVEMENT MAY HAPPEN IN 2023 / PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY UNWINDING"

To kind of put that all together in terms of key issues to watch, I've highlighted a few here that are kind of a particular relevance to organizations like mine, but in the interest of time, maybe I'll just focus on public health emergency unwinding.

And as I think we're all aware, the elections really could have a profound impact here. We have a situation where many Republican led states are hoping to kind of clear out the Medicaid rules quickly and reduce state spending, and many Democratic led states are engaging in efforts to smooth the transition and provide additional coverage options for folks. So while states have

been preparing and planning for quite some time now, it seems like there's a pretty safe assumption that the earliest end date for the PHE is January, and it could really go even later into the spring. And regardless of when it actually happens, I think lawmakers in both parties are looking closely at the unwinding and, and are sure to have an impact on the process as it moves forward. And here I don't want to paint too dire a picture. But this work, as I think about this work, and in the coming session in January, all happening while lawmakers are also kind of carefully watching economic forecasts and thinking about how to balance what could be diminishing state budgets, it paints a pretty bleak picture. And one again, that I think is really impacted by the outcome of this election cycle. And those to come. So knowing we want to save time for questions. Maybe I'll kind of pause here kick it back over to Kevin.

53:01 KEVIN PEREZ-ALLEN - "Q&A SESSION"

All right. Well, thank you, Lucy. Let's go ahead and move into our Q&A session. Please, again, make sure to use the Q&A function at the bottom of your screen to submit your question. And if possible, go ahead and direct it to one of our panelists. And I will go ahead and read the questions aloud. Right. So to start, there is a quick question on any slides available now from D Gregg. Those are not necessarily the slides, but the recording of this webinar is going to be emailed to every attendee here after we're done. So you will essentially get the slides.

53:40 KHELAN BHATIA - "HAS AARP ALWAYS SERVED 50+ POPULATION?"

Okay, so this one is for Khelan. Has AARP always served with that 50 plus population? I always thought 65+, just curious.

So yeah, it's for 50+. But you can also become a member at any age, just to be a full member, you gotta be 50.

54:03 LISA HUNTER - "WHY ARE WE SEEING A CLOSE NEVADA RACE?"

All right, easy enough. Thank you. Okay, so this one is for Lisa, Nevada has been trending blue since 2008, and has a sizable Latino population. Why are we seeing this race so close compared to the last decade?

Great question. And I'm just going to start by saying I am not an expert in Nevada, but I can venture a couple of guesses or at least share some of what I'm thinking is happening. And then Kevin, I may ask you to layer in too.

But my instinct is that like a decade ago, we had Obama and Reid in office, and that was a very different sort of political machine operating strategists. What I'm reading is that strategists on the ground in Nevada now are really struggling to ensure that Latinos turn out. There are some really strong constituencies, there's some really interesting dynamics around working class, low income voters in the state in general. There's a lot of power in the unions, culinary comes to mind. And that, you know, typically shows up for Democrats traditionally. But I expect that this is

really a constituency that's plagued by fatigue, the pandemic. And it's worth noting that sort of just like the big theme coming into Nevada is really around outreach and turnout.

And then the other thing in Nevada is that we know, there are a lot of policies that Democrats have passed and lifted up that have strong support, like the public option that was championed by Governors Sisolak and some Democratic Senate legislators, to bring down costs. People are really looking to see more affordable coverage, lower costs, that's something that we know is important to voters. But again, the key is really around turnout and outreach as it so often is elsewhere. Kevin, Any other guesses to venture in on Nevada?

55:43 KEVIN PEREZ-ALLEN - NEVADA COMMENTS

I think the big one, and I always point this out every election cycle, Latinos are not a monolith, you know, we're from different countries in Central and South America. You know, we have different priorities. You know, I think it's important to note with Nevada, specifically, there are 1.7 million total registered voters in Nevada, and about 312,000 of those are Latinos. So that's like just under 18%. While that's still a sizable portion of the electorate, it's not massive. And then if we look at how Latinos are registered there, 44% of Latinos in Nevada are registered Democrats, 15% are Republican, and the rest are either independent or just undecided. I'm not sure the exact ballot designation in Nevada. So there's a lot of reasons for this.

So and then something else that's good to keep in mind. And this might be a little more Texas and Florida specific, but we're seeing it in Latino communities just kind of across the country, is there has been a concerted effort by more conservative groups by Republican aligned groups to invest in Latino communities, specifically, you look at the [library initiative](#), which is funded by the Koch brothers, and they're really pushing hard in our communities to talk about why, you know, they're the best, the best messengers or they provide the best policies for Latinos specifically.

And so Latinos are, by nature, very persuadable. I think the stat is every 30 seconds, a Latino turns 18 years old and becomes the voting age. And our average age is about 27 years old, and there isn't really a strong, we're one way or the other, just across the community. So it's important to keep that in mind. And for both parties to understand that we're not necessarily locked in one way or the other. And there needs to be a continued investment, not just showing up every November every two years, you know, to talk to the community. So that's what I would add to the conversation there. But moving on, because we do have additional questions.

58:12 - LISA HUNTER - "SPLIT TICKET VOTING IN GEORGIA AND WISCONSIN"

And this is for Lisa, and also maybe Khelan. How does the landscape look in regards to split ticket voting, for example, Wisconsin, the odds of both Evers and Johnson winning, or Georgia with Kemp and Warnock winning?

Okay, I'll try here. I think over the past several midterms, the number of states splitting their ticket between Senate and gubernatorial races has gone down. Right now there are 26 states

that have both a Senate and a gubernatorial race this year. And what we've seen in [Sabato's Crystal Ball](#) is predicting the states that are most likely to see split ticket voting, including New Hampshire, Vermont, Georgia, Ohio, and Kansas.

59:08 - KEVIN PEREZ-ALLEN - "PENNSYLVANIA LEGISLATURE"

There is a good question on Democrats potentially making gains in the Pennsylvania legislature. However, I do have to say that one, because that is a prognostication question. And it's a little more partisan. We can't really, we're not really at odds or at liberty to, to make guesses on that. It's not really within our wheelhouse. We're just kind of looking at the landscape as a whole. But great question, but probably for a different panel.

59:36 LISA HUNTER - "OUTLOOK FOR SINGLE PAYER"

Another question isn't directed to anybody. So if anybody has an answer, I don't know that we do have one on this. But what's the outlook for single payer, either in states or at the federal level, our view on the viability of this?

This does seem like it was a more prominent issue in the 2020 election.

I can speak to this on the federal side. I think both parties are really looking at initiatives or policies that don't necessarily get to single payer, at the end of the day, but sort of more incremental policies. I think some constituencies within the Democratic Party are looking to continue on Medicare For All. But certainly there are other shades of coverage expansions that, I think Democrats are taking up.

And then definitely next year, I think we should be watching the Health Committee, because the leadership there is going to switch. And the reason I raise that is because Patty Murray will be stepping down and likely going over to appropriations, but taking up the helm on the Democratic Chairman side. Right now, it looks like it's going to be Bernie Sanders, which also has a relation here to single payer, as well. But I don't know if other colleagues want to jump in on this.

1:01:07 LUCY CULP - "OUTLOOK FOR SINGLE PAYER"

I was just gonna say, I think it's a similar story at the state level where states have historically tried to take up the issue in a significant way. It often comes down to funding and how to pay for it. And that gets quite a bit more challenging at the state level. So I think I think that's right, that states are looking for incremental approaches and kind of picking around the edges instead.

1:01:36 LISA HUNTER - "WHAT POLICIES WILL WE SEE IN LAME DUCK SESSION?"

All right, thanks. We'll ask one more question because we are now over time by a minute. We appreciate all of you staying on for this little bit of extra time.

What policies do you think are most likely to pass in the lame duck? And how will the election outcomes impact legislative priorities during that time?

Lisa, would you like to take a first stab at this one?

I mean, I can take a stab I want to, I don't know Lucy or Kailyn or others want to jump in? I feel like I'm monopolizing the answer line here.

I will say I think there's definitely a must pass legislation with the funding bill that continues into December 16, if I'm remembering correctly, the stop gap, the CR. But something has to happen. Folks are talking about an end of year package that could occur.

And frankly, I think there is motivation on both sides, regardless of how the elections turn out here, to do something on mental health. We saw something coming out of the finance committee with significant investment in workforce, behavioral health, etc. There's also been a lot of talk about telehealth. And so those to me are the two places at least that US of Care is tracking pretty closely and we believe that people are looking for solutions and are eager to see action on before the end of the year. But if my colleagues have other thoughts, please, please jump in.

1:03:06 KEVIN PEREZ-ALLEN - "CLOSING"

Okay, well, if you thank you, Lisa. I appreciate that. If you have additional questions or would like to speak to a member of our panel, go ahead and send me an email. That's kperezallen@usofcare.org. And we'll look to get your question answered.

I want to thank everyone for their participation. Very special. Thank you, obviously to our speakers, Khelan, Lisa, Caitlin and Lucy for their time, analysis, and hard work on this. And thank you all for joining. Have a great week!