

# Another GOP Pollster Warns Party Of Mid-Term Disaster If Enhanced ACA Credits Expire

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Allowing the enhanced Affordable Care Act premiums to expire at the end of the year is essentially a tax hike on millions of working-class Americans that supported President Donald Trump, and maintaining the credits should be the GOP 's top legislative priority, according to GOP pollster John McLaughlin, who explained the results of a recent survey in an Aug. 29 op-ed in a Townhall titled *“A Health Care Tax Hike Poses the Greatest Midterm Threat to the GOP”*

“The bottom line is this,” McLaughlin concludes. “Preserving the health care tax credit should be a top legislative priority for Congress this fall. Congress secured a historic victory for President Trump and the American people by passing the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA). Allowing the enhanced premium tax credits to expire and health care prices to spike would undermine the full promise of this incredible win.”

McLaughlin & Associates, which conducted the poll of 1,200 people in partnership with Americans for a Balanced Budget (ABB), found 83 percent of voters support the tax credits -- and that they are more likely to support candidates for U.S. Senate or Congress who voted to preserve them. “Among Republicans and Trump voters, that figure is nearly identical at 76 percent and 73 percent, respectively,” McLaughlin says.

**The results mirror those from a survey conducted by Tony Fabrizio and Bob Ward.** That poll similarly found Republicans will be crushed in the midterms if they don't address the expiring credits.

First enacted in 2021, the enhanced APTCs made zero premium health plans available to more people and allowed the tax credits to flow to people earning more than four times the poverty level, capping their monthly premium contribution at no more than

8.5% of income. The credits were later extended through 2025 in the Inflation Reduction Act.

Fiscal conservatives argue providing the credits to wealthier Americans is wasteful and the extra subsidies have spurred fraudulent behavior, so the enhanced credits should be allowed to expire; health care stakeholders and Democratic lawmakers stress that the credits helped millions more people afford coverage, and losing the credits would be catastrophic for consumers whose individual premium costs would immediately spike.

The expected loss of the tax credits played a role in the median 18% rate hike proposed by health plans nationwide, according to KFF.

**McLaughlin argues in the Townhall op-ed that folks who rely on the enhanced PTCs aren't taking advantage of the system,** but are hardworking Americans, some juggling multiple jobs, who must purchase their own coverage because it is not offered by their employer.

“Allowing these enhanced PTCs to expire would effectively amount to a tax increase, resulting in millions of Americans losing their health care and health care costs spiking dramatically,” said McLaughlin. “The first effects of this tax hike will start to be felt before the tax credits expire, as rates will begin to be published in September, elevating the urgency for a solution.”

**“Our MAGA voters need this tax credit,” McLaughlin wrote.** “Going into next year’s midterm elections, we can’t afford to lose the votes of these working MAGA voters. We need them to come back out to the polls.”

**McLaughlin also found voters oppose other policy changes that diminish the individual market, including shortening the open enrollment window and ending automatic re-enrollment.** The One Big Beautiful Bill requires pre-enrollment verification, thus effectively ending auto-reenrollment as of 2028; CMS separately intends to shorten open enrollment for healthcare.gov states next year.

Two thirds of voters are against the shorter open enrollment period, including majorities of Trump voters, Republicans, Democrats and Independents. Nearly four out of five voters also support auto re-enrollment. Automatic re-enrollment is very popular among Trump voters (80%), Republicans (81%), Democrats (81%), and Independents (75%)

“Protecting the marketplace is viewed as good policy for working class Americans and is a big political winner for lawmakers. Conversely, lawmakers who diminish the marketplace or are blamed for dismantling it will be vulnerable and held accountable by voters,” McLaughlin wrote in a memo on his poll, which was conducted in mid-June.

“It is clear voters have non-negotiables when it comes to making changes to the marketplace: 1) preserve and extend the enhanced Premium Tax Credits that are set to expire at the end of 2025 without congressional action, 2) protect and keep the current open-enrollment period as is, and 3) continue to automatically re-enroll customers to safeguard their coverage. With those three key features of the marketplace supported and protected, voters favor finding ways to reduce and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse,” he says.