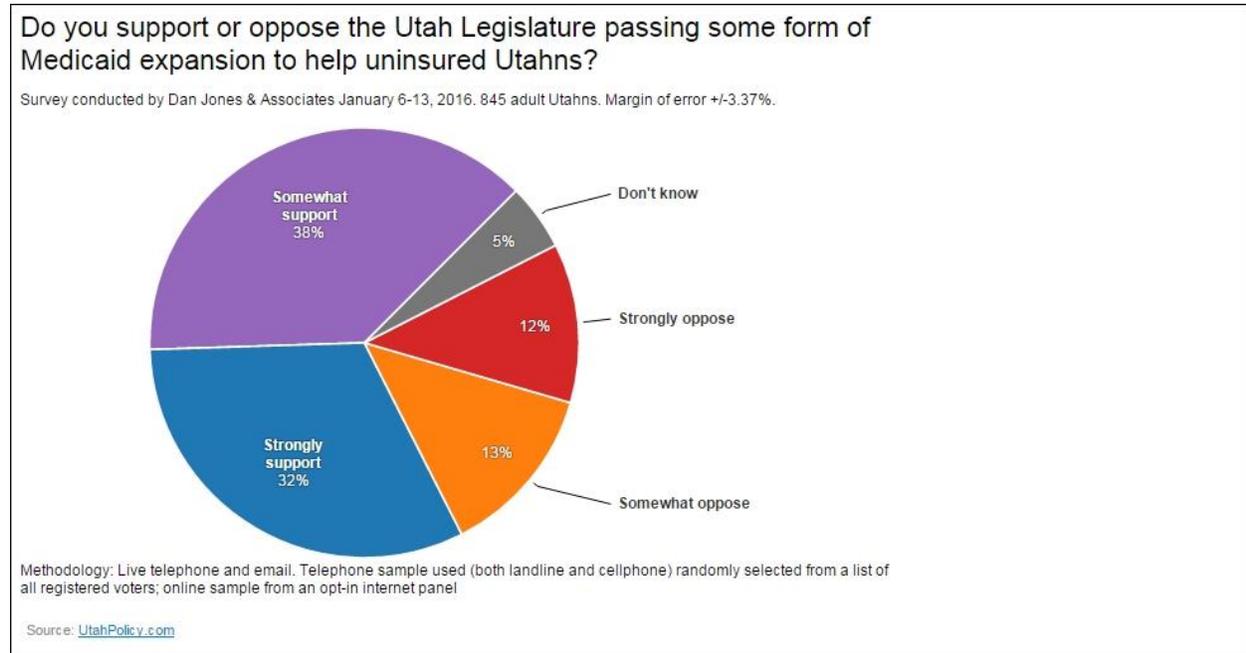


Poll: Big Majority of Utahns Want Some Sort of Medicaid Expansion

Link: <http://utahpolicy.com/index.php/features/today-at-utah-policy/8247->

Written by [Bob Bernick](#) on 19 January 2016. Posted in [Today At Utah Policy](#)



Nearly three-fourths of Utahns want the upcoming 2016 Legislature to pass some kind of Medicaid expansion to cover low-income, uninsured citizens, a new UtahPolicy poll finds.

Lawmakers convene next Monday for their annual 45-day general session.

And while Medicaid expansion will be on the agenda, by no means is it guaranteed that some kind of plan will be adopted by the GOP-controlled body.

In a new survey, pollster Dan Jones & Associates finds that 70 percent of Utahns want lawmakers to expand the low-income medical coverage plan in some form.

A quarter (25 percent) don't want any Medicaid expansion, Jones finds, and 5 percent don't know.

As a reader of UtahPolicy knows, GOP Gov. Gary Herbert last year put forward his [Healthy Utah](#) plan. It passed the state Senate by one vote (a few Democratic votes needed there).

But it failed in a House vote late in the session. GOP House members passed a more pared down expansion, called Utah Cares. It went nowhere in the Senate.

There was a committee hearing on Healthy Utah in the House (it [failed](#)) and further debate and vote on Healthy Utah on the House floor (it [failed](#) in a motion to substitute Healthy Utah for Utah Cares, HB446).

And the 2015 session ended with no Medicaid expansion, as provided for in Obamacare.

Herbert then put together a special committee of six leading GOP officeholders, including himself. After months of private meetings, the so-called Gang of Six came up with a plan that would have taxed Utah's medical community to pay for most of the state's 10 percent share of expansion under Obamacare.

But both the House and Senate GOP caucuses killed that plan quickly.

Herbert says he won't push Healthy Utah in the 2016 Legislature, and won't propose an alternative.

House Speaker Greg Hughes, R-Draper, says House Majority Leader Jim Dunnigan, R-Taylorsville, and other House Republicans will work on yet another alternative – one aimed at just covering the neediest in the so-called coverage gap of around 43,000 low-income Utahns.

That plan has not yet been unveiled.