

MAINE RESIDENTS SPEAK OUT ON RESEARCH

A Public Opinion Study for Research!America

January 2006

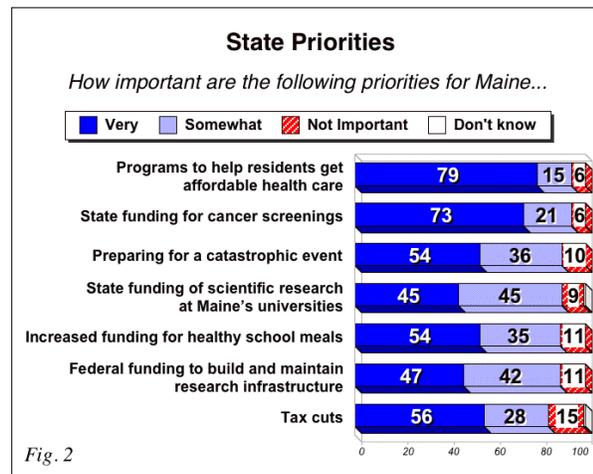
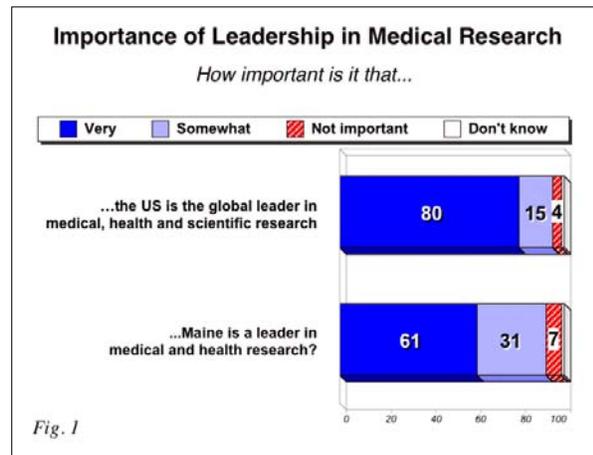
Research!America has been gauging public opinion on people's attitudes toward medical, health and scientific research since 1992. Results of the recent poll in Maine show a high level of support and value for research conducted in both the public and private sector. These poll responses indicate there is an overwhelming belief in Maine that research is important and is a high priority for its citizens, particularly as it impacts the state's health, education and economy.

LEADERSHIP IN RESEARCH IS IMPORTANT TO MAINE RESIDENTS

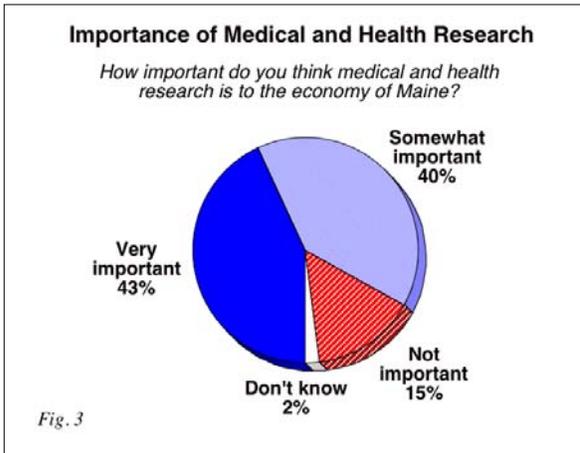
Research is clearly important to Maine residents (see figure 1). In fact, 95% of Maine residents say it is important that the United States is the global leader in medical, health, and scientific research, with eight-in-ten saying this is *very* important.

Similarly, 92% of residents say it is important for Maine to be a leader in medical and health research, and 61% say it is *very* important (see figure 1). However, only 23% say Maine is currently very much a leader. Forty-three percent say the state is somewhat a leader, and 28% believe Maine is not a leader.

In terms of specific state priorities, programs to help residents get affordable health care tops the list at 94%, along with state funding to ensure access to cancer screenings (see figure 2). Ninety percent rank preparing the community for a catastrophic event as an important priority for Maine, as well as state funding to support scientific research conducted at Maine's universities. Increasing funding for healthy school meals and providing federal funding to build and maintain research infrastructure are each ranked as important priorities by 84%, while 84% rate tax cuts as an important priority.



MEDICAL RESEARCH IS IMPORTANT TO MAINE'S ECONOMY



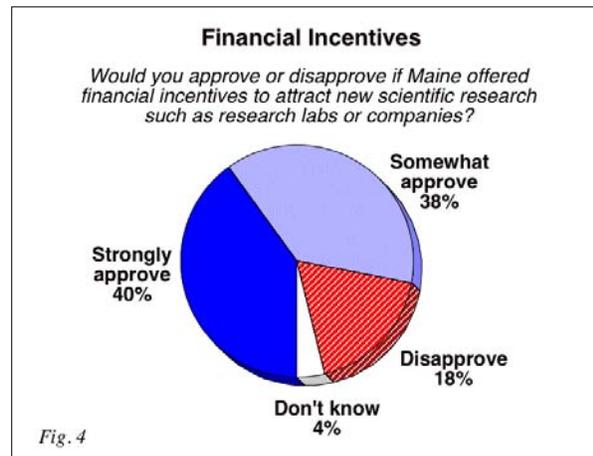
Eighty-three percent of Maine residents feel that medical and health research is important to the state's economy. Forty-three percent feel spending on medical and health research is *very* important to Maine's economy, and another 40% feel it is somewhat important (see figure 3).

Similarly, thinking in terms of job creation and incomes, 94% of Maine residents feel that spending money on scientific research is important to the state's economy. Sixty-one percent feel

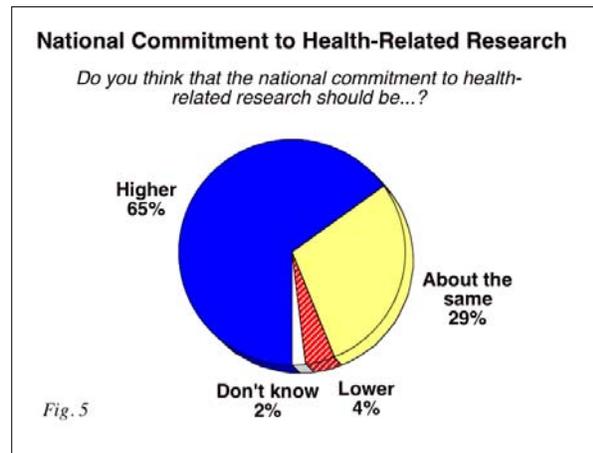
spending on science research is *very* important, and another third feel it is somewhat important.

RESIDENTS FAVOR ENHANCED SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR RESEARCH

Residents strongly support the state offering financial incentives to attract new scientific research. In fact, 40% *strongly* approve of such incentives and an additional 38% *somewhat* approve (see figure 4). Seventy-seven percent agree that Congress should support tax and regulatory policies that encourage private industries to conduct more medical research.

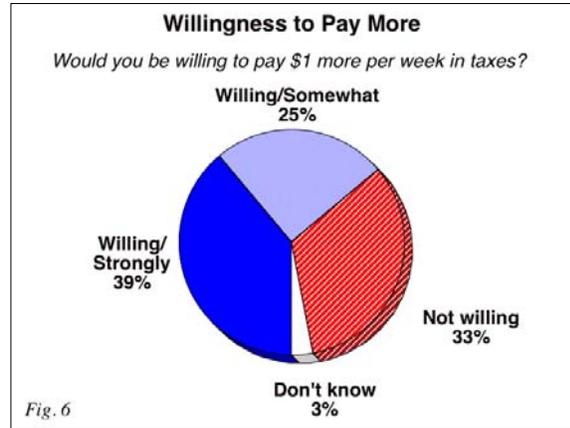


Furthermore, 65% of Maine residents feel the national commitment to health-related research should be higher (see figure 5). A plurality of 52% of Maine residents believe we should be spending more than the current five to six cents per U.S. health dollar on medical and health research. Twenty-one percent say this is the right amount and only 6% say we should be spending less. Ninety-six percent feel it is important for the U.S. to educate and train individuals qualified to conduct medical and health research, and 74% feel this is *very* important.



Eighty-four percent agree that even if it brings no immediate benefits, basic research which advances the frontiers of knowledge is necessary and should be supported by the federal government.

Not only do residents approve of more government spending on research, they are also willing to pay more for it. Two thirds would be willing to pay \$1 more per week in taxes if the money would be spent on additional medical research (see figure 6).

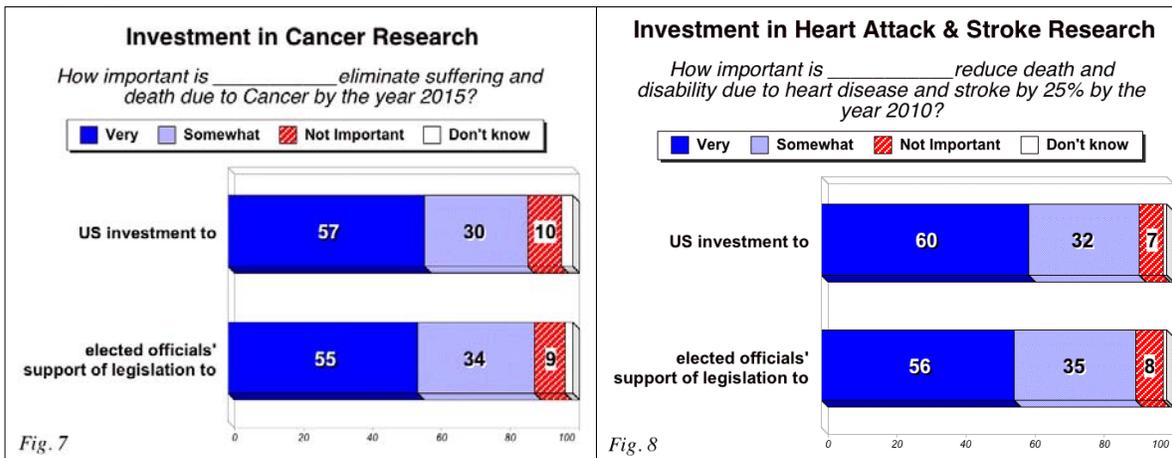


Residents also support prevention research. Sixty-eight percent believe we should be spending more than the current one cent per health care dollar on prevention and public health research, while just 13% say this is the right amount.

Maine residents believe it is important to study why some health problems disproportionately affect low income and minority citizens. Ninety-two percent say it is important to conduct research to end these differences. Specifically, 73% feel this is *very* important and 19% feel it is *somewhat* important.

RESIDENTS SUPPORT INVESTING IN SPECIFIC MEDICAL RESEARCH GOALS

Maine residents also support programs to reduce suffering and death due to specific health problems (see figure 7). Eighty-seven believe it is important for the U.S. to invest in the Bush Administration’s goal to eliminate suffering and death due to cancer by the year 2015. Fifty-seven percent feel this is *very* important, and 30% feel it is *somewhat* important. Eighty-nine percent feel it is important for their elected officials to support legislation aimed at eliminating suffering and death due to cancer by the year 2015 (55% *very* important).



Similarly, 92% feel it is important for the U.S. to invest in a goal to reduce death and disability from heart disease and stroke by 25% by the year 2010 (see figure 8). Sixty

percent feel this is *very* important, and another 32% feel it is *somewhat* important. Ninety-one percent agree it is important for their elected officials to support legislation aimed at reducing death and disability from heart disease and stroke by 25% by the year 2010 (56% *very* important).

Despite their willingness to support medical and health research efforts, 59% of Maine residents are unable to name any organization in Maine where medical research is conducted (see figure 9). The Jackson Laboratory was mentioned by 17%, followed by the Maine Medical Center Research Institute (9%), and the University of Maine (5%). All other organizations named were cited by 1% or fewer.

Institutions Conducting Research

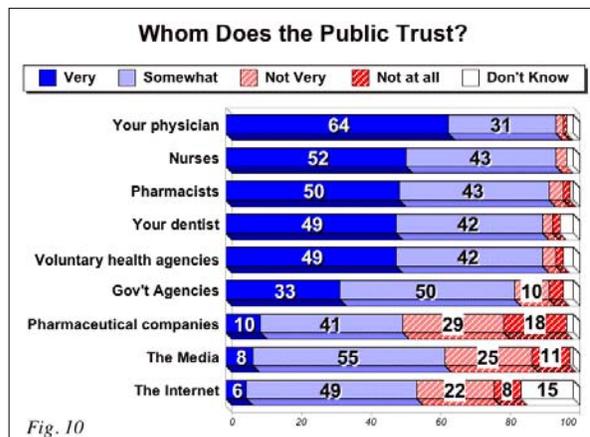
Do you know of any institutions in Maine where medical and health research is conducted?

	First Mentions	Total Mentions
The Jackson Laboratory	17	20
Maine Medical Center Research Institute	9	12
University of Maine	5	9
Eastern Maine Health Care	1	2
University of New England	1	2
University of Southern Maine	1	2
Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory	1	1
Other	8	16
Don't know	59	83

Fig. 9

NURSES, PHARMACISTS, AND TEACHING HOSPITALS ARE MOST TRUSTWORTHY SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON MEDICAL AND HEALTH RESEARCH

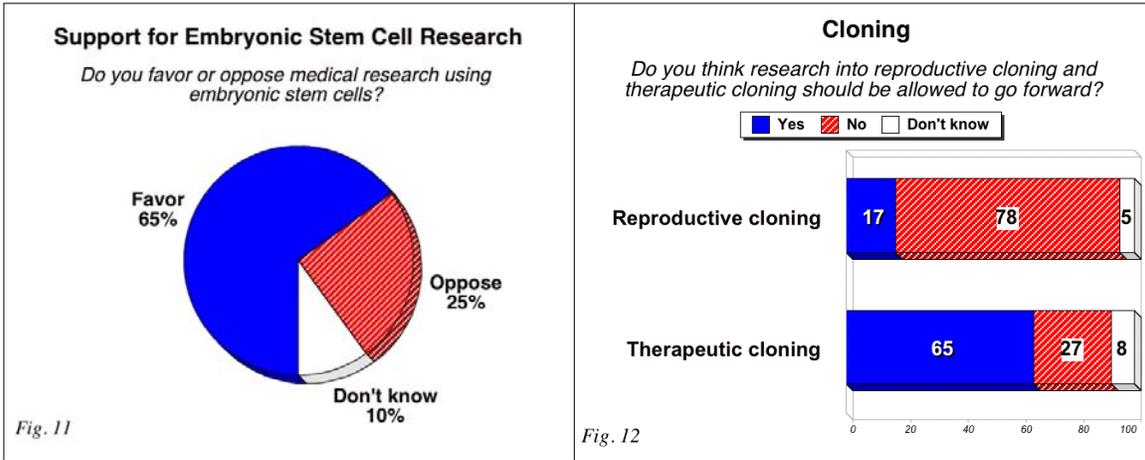
Residents consider health care providers to be the most trustworthy sources of information about medical and health research, with 95% saying their physicians are very or somewhat credible, 95% saying nurses are credible, and 93% saying pharmacists are credible. Dentists and voluntary health agencies such as the American Heart Association are seen as credible by 91%. Government agencies are slightly less credible at 83%, with 33% saying they are *very* credible. News media sources (63%), the internet (55%), and pharmaceutical companies (51%) are considered credible by smaller majorities, and the percentage who find these organizations *very* trustworthy is significantly lower (8%, 6% and 10% respectively).



CURRENT ISSUES IN MEDICAL RESEARCH

Asked what concerns residents have about medical research, a plurality of 30% cite no concerns. Fifteen percent are concerned about wasting money, while a combined 10% mention finding cures for various diseases (including 5% diseases in general, 3% cancer, and 1% diabetes). Seven percent mention that research is needed, while 5% are concerned about lack of funding, and all other concerns were cited by fewer than five percent.

No one mentioned stem cells specifically as a concern, however, 67% of Maine residents say they have been following the debate about stem cells (16% *very* closely, 51% *somewhat* closely). A majority of 65% of Maine residents favor medical research using embryonic stem cells, with 39% *strongly* in favor (see figure 11). Just one-quarter of Maine residents oppose stem cell research. Sixty-four percent of Maine residents also support federal funding of medical research using embryonic stem cells.



Cloning was mentioned as a concern by fewer than 1%. When given more information about types of cloning, residents express support for research into therapeutic cloning (used to help in the search for possible cures and treatments for diseases and disabilities). Sixty-five percent agree that research into therapeutic cloning should go forward, while 27% feel that it should not be allowed. Nearly four-in-five Maine residents say research into reproductive cloning should not be allowed to go forward, with 68% who feel *strongly* that it should not be allowed (see figure 12).

Just one percent of Maine residents mentioned that they are concerned about animal testing in medical research. Seventy-one percent believe the use of animals in medical research is necessary for progress in medicine.

METHODOLOGY

Charlton Research Company conducted a telephone survey among 800 adults in Maine. The entire sample was proportionate to the state's demographics, including geography, gender, voter registration and ethnicity. The survey, fielded October 29-November 4, 2005, has a theoretical sampling error of +/-3.5%. Please note that much of the question text in this report has been paraphrased.

This poll was commissioned by Research!America, a not-for-profit, membership-supported national alliance of organizations and individuals dedicated to enhancing public education and advocacy for medical, health, and scientific research. For more information about the Maine poll, including a list of sponsoring organizations, or for other questions about public attitudes towards scientific research, contact Research!America at: 1101 King Street, Suite 520, Alexandria, Virginia 22314 · Telephone: 703/739-2577 · Fax: 703/739-2372 · e-mail: info@researchamerica.org · www.researchamerica.org.

