Large Percent Of Physician Leaders Support Supreme Court Decision On ACA

An online poll of physicians who lead hospitals, health systems and large group practices across the U.S. found that more than 60 percent of respondents agreed with the U.S. Supreme Court's recent decision to uphold the Affordable Care Act.

The unscientific poll, which was sent via email to about 9,500 physician leaders who are members of the American College of Physician Executives (ACPE), drew 617 responses. Of those, 61.1 percent said they supported the court's decision, while 33.4 opposed. An additional 5.5 percent were unsure.

"ACPE is dedicated to serving as the balanced voice for physician leadership in America," said Peter Angood, MD, CEO of ACPE. "Regardless of any one individual's opinion, the Supreme Court's decision was an important moment in health care. The thoughtful and cogent comments our physician leaders contributed to the poll accurately reflect the passion and dedication they have for improving the practice of medicine for both physicians and patients."

ACPE members were invited to post comments to the electronic survey, and many expressed strong opinions about the 5-4 decision.

Keith Marton, MD, of Seattle, WA, was among the majority of ACPE members in favor of upholding the ACA.

"The more I've learned of the contents of the ACA, the more I've come to appreciate it," Marton wrote. "It has components that will not only increase access to health insurance (the primary goal), but actually control costs and potentially improve quality."

The potential cost of the ACA was a major sticking point for those who opposed the decision. Several wondered how the government planned to pay for it.

"This is not just higher taxes for working Americans but also forced commerce," said Eric Nazziola, MD, MBA, of Paramus, NJ. "The long-run result of this is more wasteful government bureaucracy, rationing of care and erosion of quality."

Whether they approved of the ruling or not, many expressed relief a decision had been reached and voiced a desire to move forward with improving patient care.

"What I do believe is that as physicians we have an obligation to assure the provisions of the law do not negatively impact the care we provide for patients," said Christopher Cantilena, MD, MMM, of Palm Desert, CA. "As physician leaders, we

also have an obligation to set an example for our colleagues and help them navigate what will surely be turbulent waters."

ACPE is the nation's largest health care organization for physician leaders. Its members include chief executive officers, chief medical officers, medical directors and clinicians.

Since its founding in 1975, ACPE's primary focus has been encouraging physicians to assume active roles in the leadership of health care organizations and helping physicians acquire leadership and management skills. It has grown exponentially in that time, from 64 members to more than 10,000 members in 46 countries.

To view poll results, go to www.acpe.org [1].

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[1] http://www.acpe.org