



# The Role of Healthcare in the 2018 Midterm Elections

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Healthcare is an issue that remains at the forefront of debates in Congress and the media – but is it at the top of voters’ minds?

Our team at WSW analyzed polling data over the past 6 months to understand how voters are thinking about healthcare as the nation approaches the 2018 midterm elections.

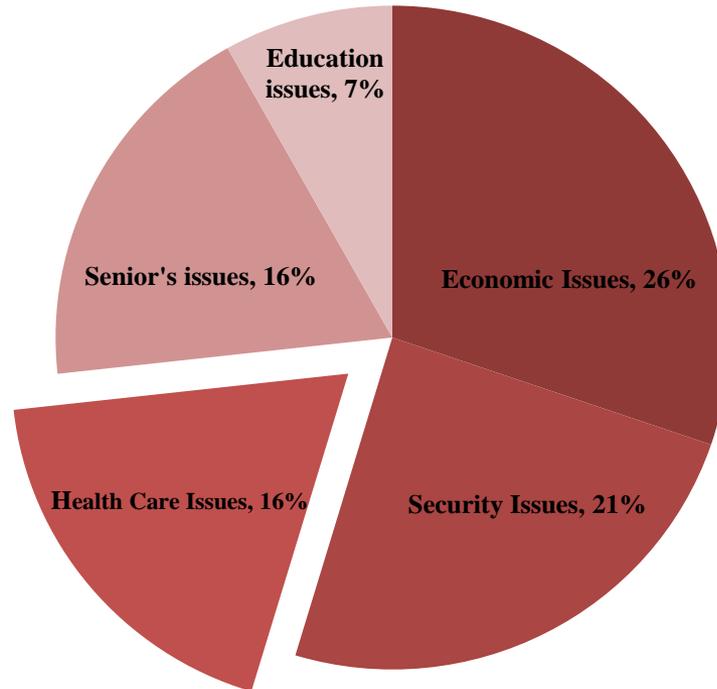
The following slides highlight key points the health industry should be cognizant of as they develop and execute their legislative and regulatory affairs strategies. **One salient point in the data we found – healthcare costs remain a top priority regardless of party affiliation.**

Winning Strategies Washington is prepared to empower your government affairs teams and help them navigate the political and policy environment in the months ahead. How can we assist you? Please reach out to us if you have any questions or have a particular need.



# Top 5 Policy Issues Identified by Voters

In a [new poll](#) from Morning Consult which surveyed 331,219 Americans between April 1, 2018 and June 30, 2018, healthcare ranks as the third most important policy issue. When [voters were asked](#) what the top set of issues on their mind is when casting a vote in federal elections, health care issues were on the mind of 16% of those surveyed.



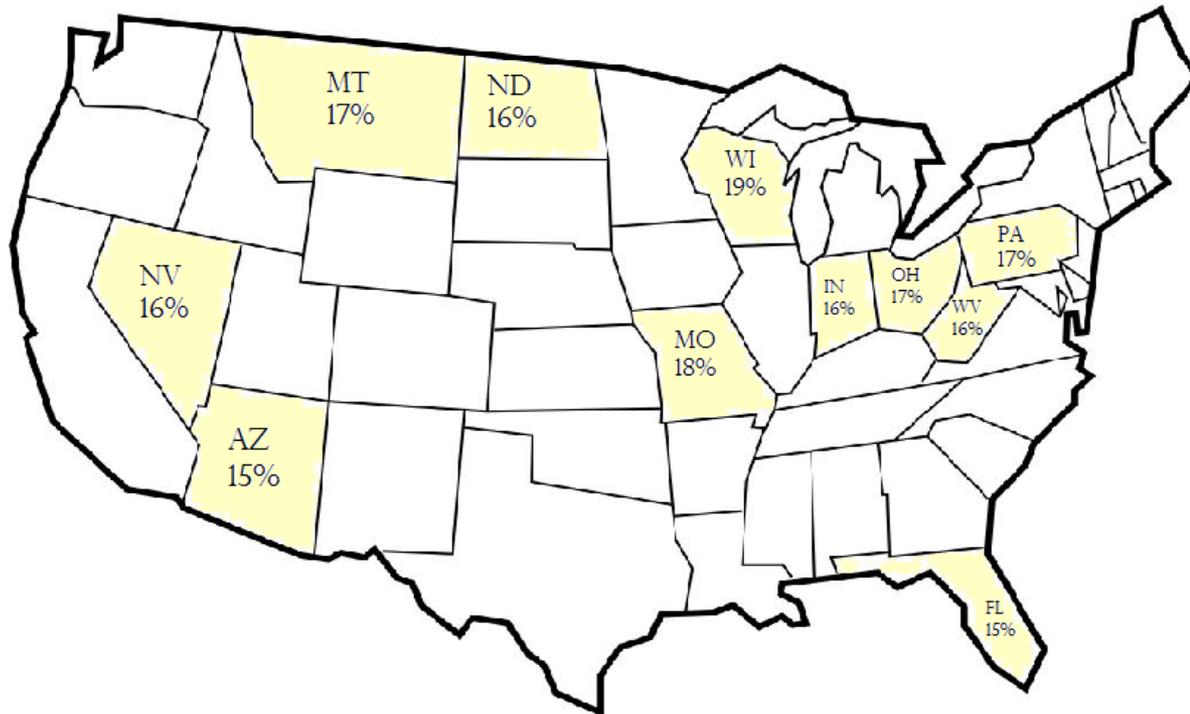
# Top Two Policy Issues Identified by Voters

In another [poll](#) conducted by the Huffington Post, healthcare is the most important issue to voters when they are asked to select the two most important issues from a list. The poll was conducted between March 23-26, 2018 and surveyed 1,000 adults. More than a quarter of those surveyed selected healthcare as one of the two most important issues to them. Tied for second were gun policies and the economy.



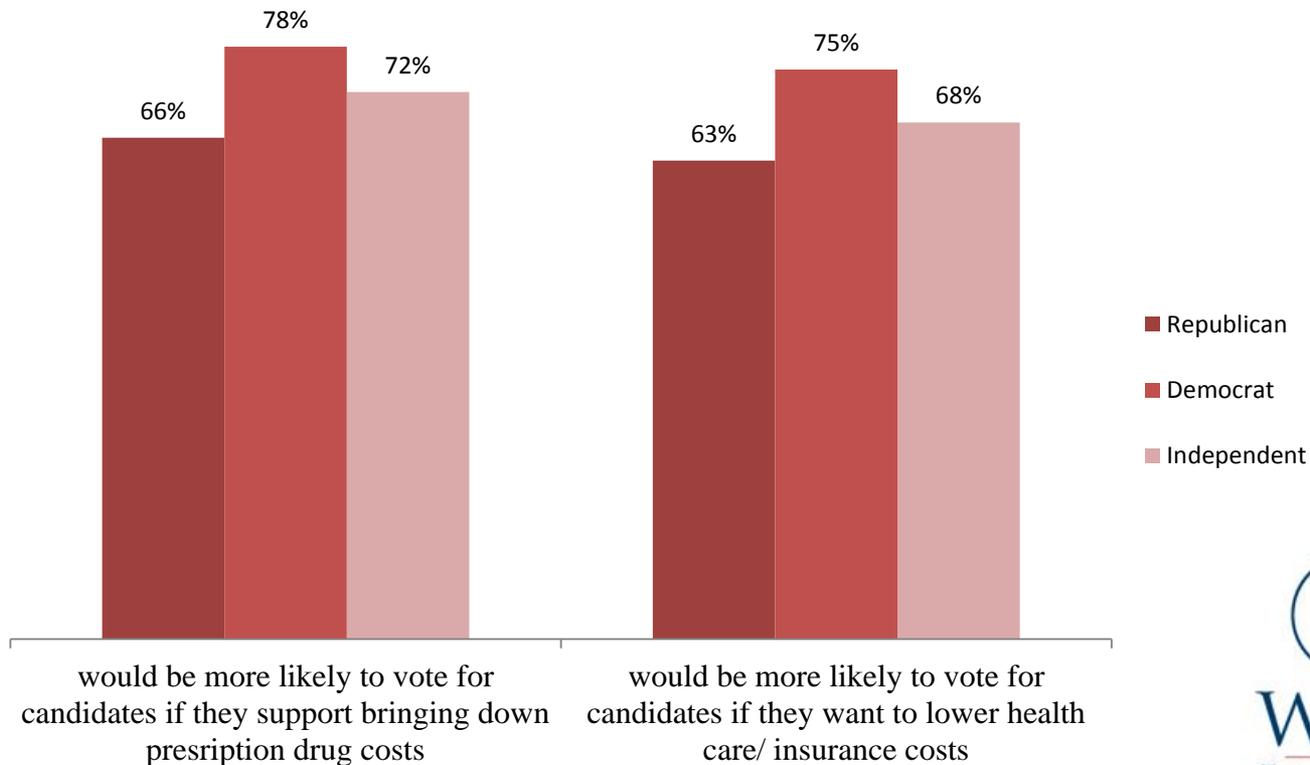
# Healthcare in Competitive Races

In the 11 states with most competitive Senate races explored in [the Morning Consult poll](#), almost 20% of voters in each state said that healthcare is a top priority on their mind when casting their vote. In Wisconsin, healthcare was the second most important issue to voters after the economy.



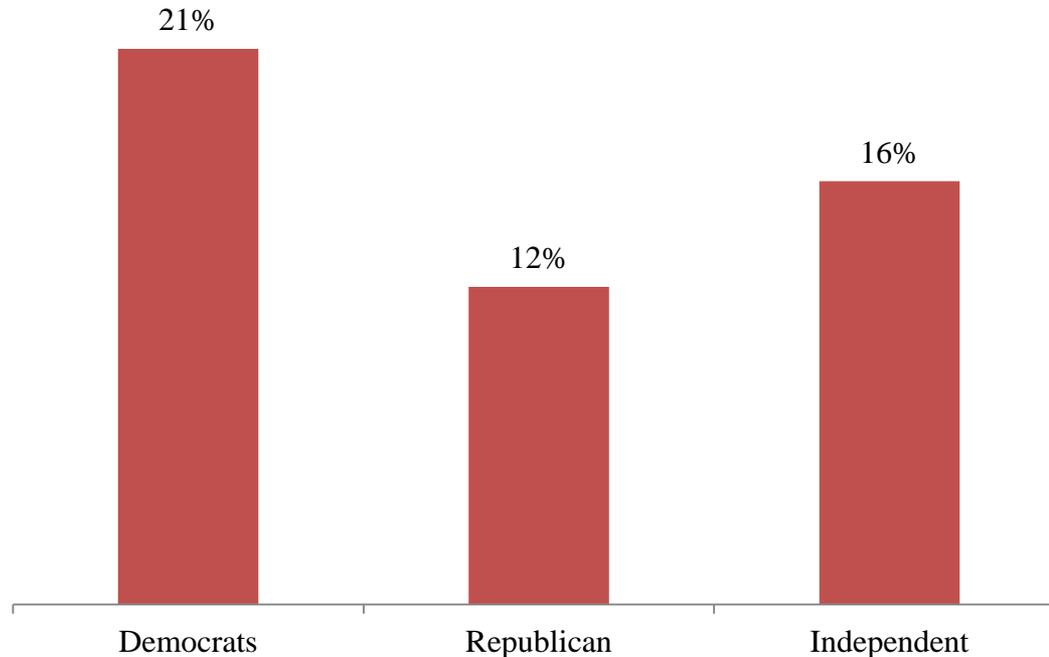
# Top Two Issues Within Healthcare

In a Kaiser Family Foundation poll, large percentages of voters across the political spectrum said they would be more likely to vote for candidates who support **lowering prescription drug costs** and **lowering health care costs**. The poll surveyed 2,000 Americans between April 20- April 30, 2018.



# Healthcare As a Top Policy Issue By Party

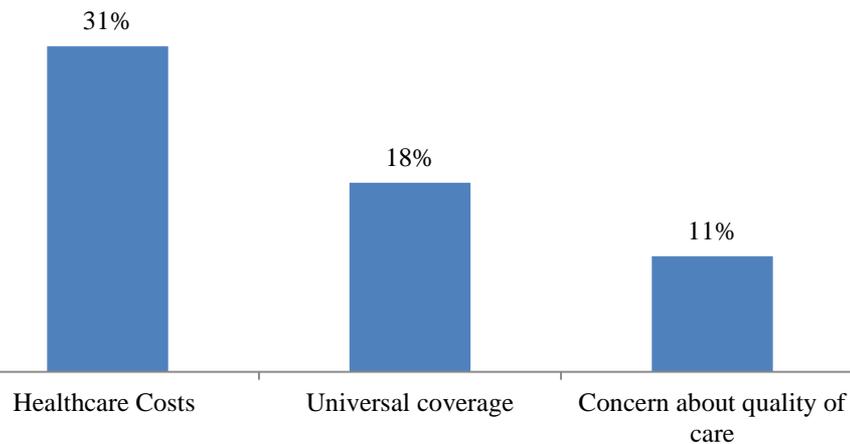
A larger percentage of Democrats than both Republicans and Independents said that healthcare is a top issue on their mind when voting, according to the [Morning Consult poll](#).



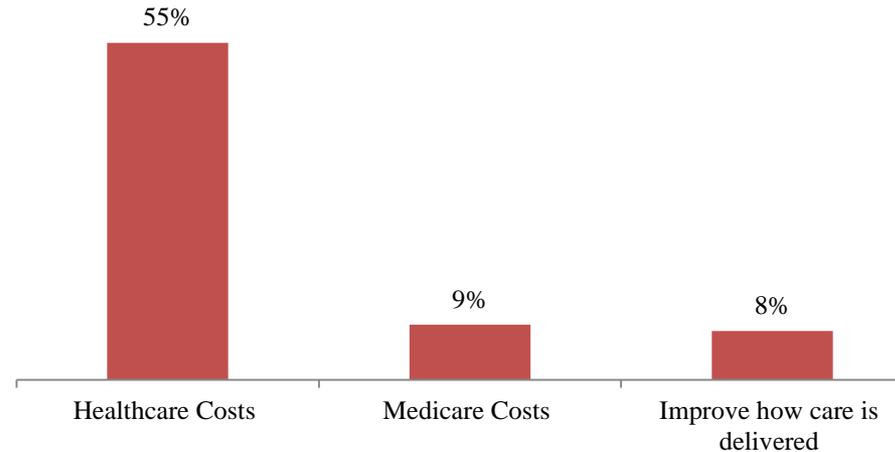
# Healthcare Priorities by Party

The [Kaiser Family Foundation poll](#) asked voters who said that they want to hear candidates discuss healthcare, what specifically in healthcare they wanted to hear discussed. The top three responses for Democrats and Republicans are below. Members of both parties highlighted healthcare costs as the most important policy to be discussed by candidates.

## Democrats

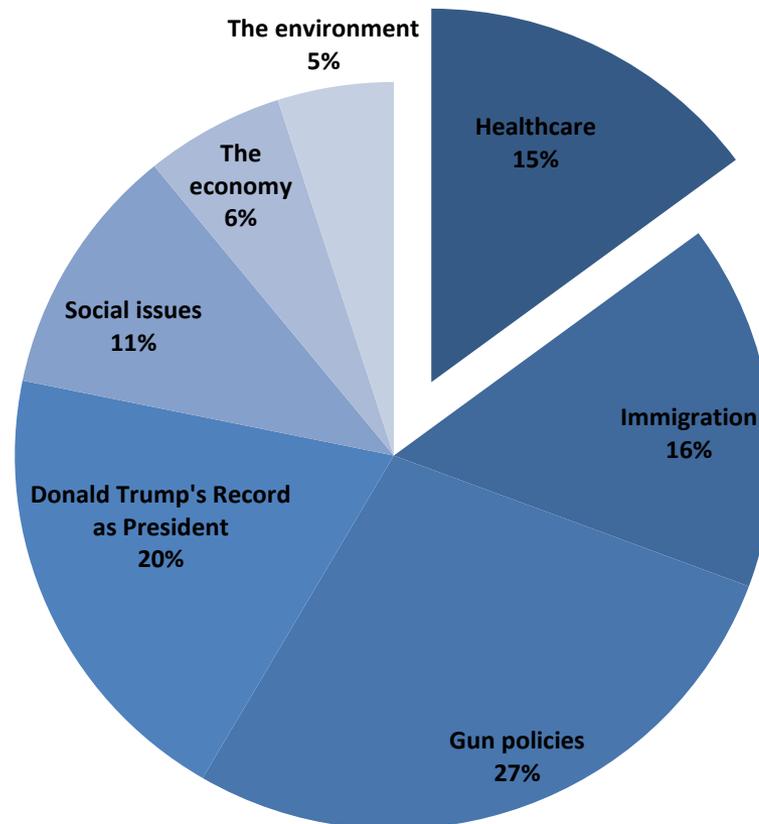


## Republicans



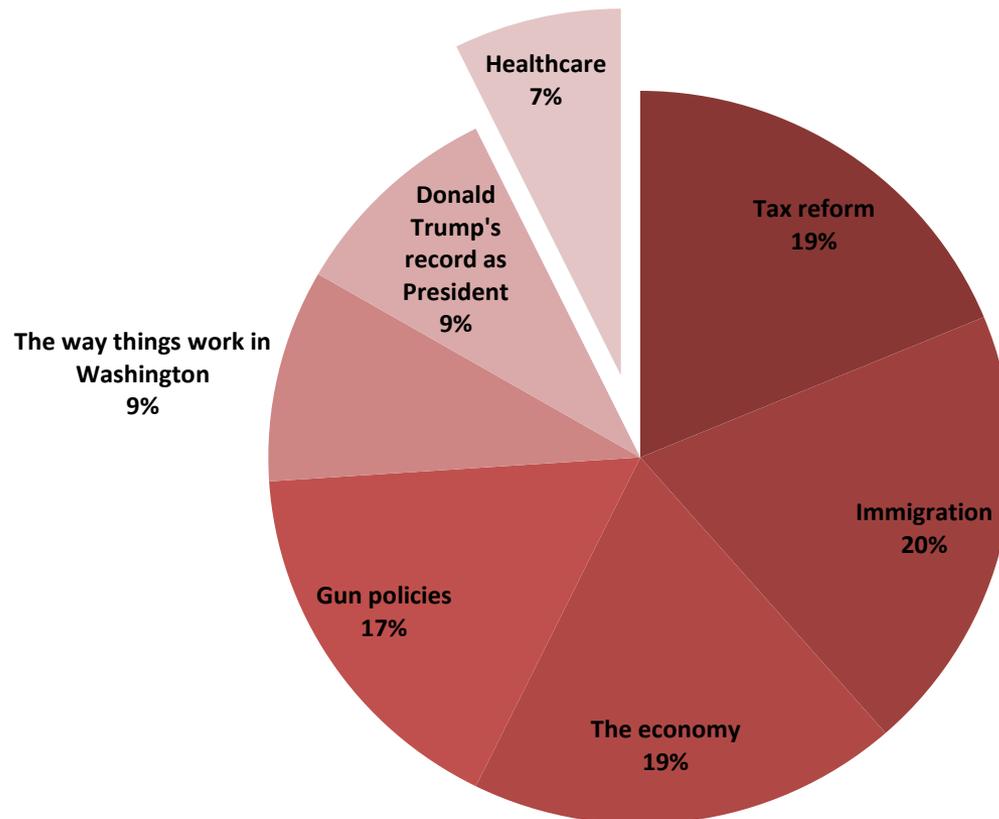
# Democratic Candidates and Healthcare

When asked to identify the top two issues they have heard the most about from Democratic candidates, 19% of respondents in the [Huffington Post poll](#) picked healthcare as one of the top two issues discussed by Democratic candidates. Healthcare falls behind gun policies, immigration and Donald Trump's record as President.



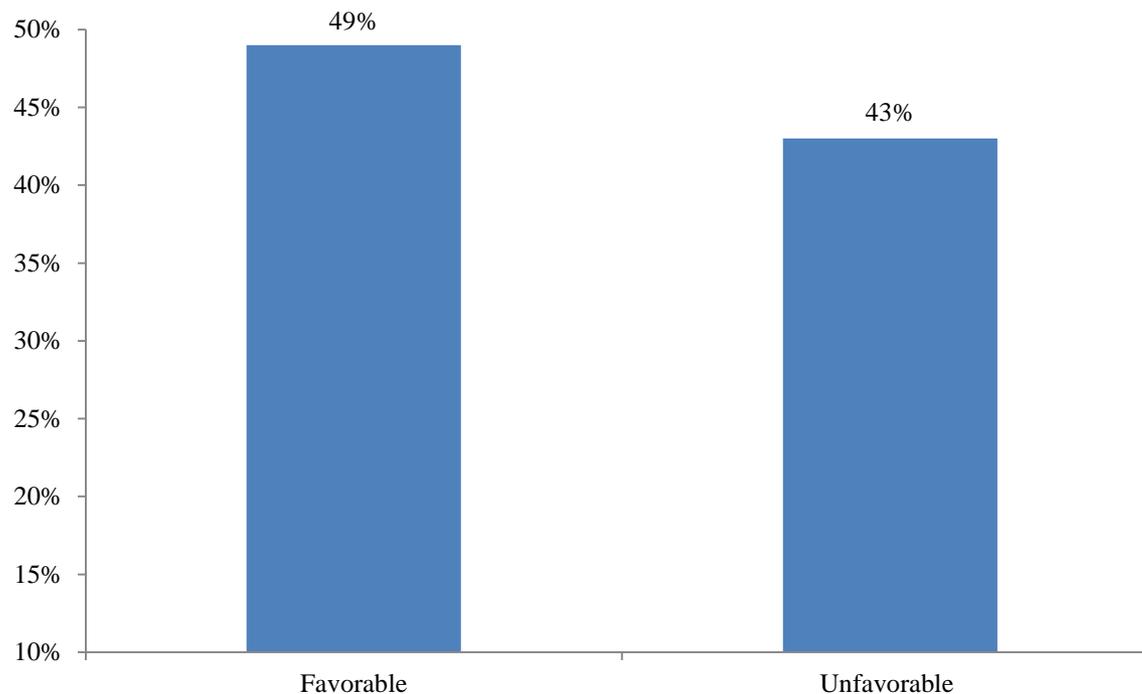
# Republican Candidates and Healthcare

When asked to identify the top two issues they have heard the most about from Republican candidates, 7% of respondents in the [Huffington Post poll](#) picked healthcare as one of the top two issues discussed by Republican candidates. Healthcare falls far behind tax reform, the economy and immigration among other issues.



# Shifting support for the Affordable Care Act

Going into the midterm elections, the ACA is viewed generally favorably by Americans when they are asked if they have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the law. In fact, in February 2018, the ACA reached the highest favorability ratings in history (54%) according to [a Kaiser Family Foundation](#) tracker. Those favorability ratings haven't stayed steady. Those who have a favorable opinion of the law slightly decreased to 49% by April 2018 as illustrated below.



# Questions?

Contact our [WSW Team](#)

202-589-0800



# WSW Health Team

## **Michael Merola – Founding Partner**

Mike is a former Deputy Chief of Staff for Senator Torricelli. As a founding partner of the firm, he has developed a reputation for success on behalf of clients in some of the most difficult issues before Congress, from Medicare reimbursement to transportation reauthorization. In addition to health care and transportation, Mike's expertise extends to corporate entities, non-profit organizations, and governmental clients.

## **Rob Zucker – Partner**

Rob spent nine years on Capitol Hill in the New Jersey and Illinois congressional delegations. In addition to working for Sen. Lautenberg, Rob worked as Legislative Director for Rep. Steve Rothman, a Member of the House Appropriations Committee, where he focused on domestic funding and policy issues involving health, education, labor, homeland security, appropriations, transportation and infrastructure, and homeland security while overseeing an aggressive legislative agenda.

## **Chelsey Hickman – Principal and Director of Operations**

Chelsey served as Chief of Staff for Rep. Kay Granger of Texas, Chairwoman of the State-Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee and Vice Chair of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. In this role, Chelsey worked closely with officials from the State Department, Department of Defense, and other agencies under the jurisdiction of those subcommittees to advance the Congresswoman's priorities. Prior to working for Rep. Granger, Chelsey worked for Sen. Larry Craig, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, handling his entire appropriations portfolio.



# WSW Health Team

## **Charla Penn– Principal**

An 11-year Capitol Hill veteran, Charla has extensive experience working on health care policy for key Members of the House of Representatives. Charla most recently served as principal health care policy advisor to Rep. Bill Pascrell, a member of the Ways and Means Committee. Previously, she worked as a health policy assistant for a member of the Appropriations Committee, Rep. Allen Boyd, in addition to serving as a liaison to the Agriculture and Military Construction Subcommittees.

## **Molly McDonnell– Principal**

Molly spent five and a half years working for Congressman Leonard Lance, a senior member of the Energy and Commerce Committee. Molly served as Congressman Lance's Senior Health Policy Advisor working on issues related to the Food and Drug Administration, rare disease, drug development, and medical research. In this role, she worked closely with pharmaceutical companies, patient advocacy organizations, and research institutions to build coalitions to successfully move policies through the legislative process.

## **Bobby Clark– Of Counsel**

Bobby most recently served as a Counselor to the Secretary of Health and Human Services during the Obama Administration and was a member of the Department's leadership team. In this capacity, he advised Secretary Sylvia M. Burwell on policy matters related to public health and science. Before joining HHS, Bobby worked at PwC's Health Research Institute, where he led the Institute's analysis of regulatory and policy initiatives impacting the pharmaceutical and life sciences industries. Bobby served as a health policy advisor in the U.S. House of Representatives from 2003-2010, specifically as a senior staff member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Subcommittee on Health and for Representative Frank Pallone, Jr. of New Jersey.



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