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## **NEW POLL REVEALS 80% OF CANADIANS WANT CHANGES TO CANADA'S ACCESS TO MEDICINES REGIME**

***Parliament poised to vote on private member's bill to reform the Regime***

**November 26, 2009, Toronto** — The Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network is renewing its call for Parliament to pass a private member's bill on reforming Canada's Access to Medicines Regime (CAMR) amid new poll results showing 80 percent of Canadians are supportive of the key changes being proposed. Members of Parliament are scheduled to begin debate on second reading for Bill C-393 — a private member's bill to amend CAMR — on November 27, with a vote to be held on December 2. The national poll was conducted by opinion research firm Pollara for the Legal Network, Canadian Crossroads International and UNICEF Canada.

“Canadians want their government to do the right thing and pass Bill C-393,” said Richard Elliott, Executive Director of the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network. “The children of the developing world have waited long enough for Canada to fulfill its promise. Now is the time to act.”

When asked which guiding principle should be most important when administering Canada's Access to Medicines Regime, nine out of ten Canadians (91 percent) say the *guiding principle* of CAMR should be “ensuring a simplified process that allows for quick sale and delivery” of generic medicines to developing countries, as opposed to “protecting the patents of brand-name drug companies,” which only 9 percent of Canadians support as the guiding principle.

Originally passed by Parliament more than five years ago with all-party support, what was then called the *Jean Chrétien Pledge to Africa Act* was intended to facilitate exports of affordable medicines to people in developing countries. This was to be done by letting Canadian generic drug companies apply for special licences to manufacture and sell lower-priced, generic versions of the original medicines patented by brand-name drug companies. In return, the brand-name drug companies receive royalties. Yet the initiative has largely failed to deliver on Parliament's pledge, with only a single shipment of medicine being sent to a single country.

Bill C-393 aims to streamline the current law to make it more user-friendly and effective in a manner consistent with Canada's international legal obligations. Bill C-393 would replace this inefficient and ineffective system with a “one licence” solution, meaning that generic drug companies would need to obtain only a single licence authorizing them to

export to any of the eligible developing countries who wish to purchase the medicine and without having to seek a new licence for every single drug order.

A slim majority is familiar with CAMR (52 percent), with two thirds (64 percent) indicating their support for the law after reading a brief description.

Asked about proposed legislative changes to CAMR, eight in ten Canadians (80 percent) said they support the changes, with only 9 percent opposed. There is strong support for changing CAMR across all regions and demographics.

“Parliament has an opportunity to pass a bill that can be a win for everyone,” said Elliott. “It’s a win for patients in the developing world who need medicines, a win for Canadian generic companies that can supply those medicines, a win for brand-name companies that would get royalties and a win for Canada’s international reputation — all at no cost to Canadian taxpayers. But we have to act now.”

Complete poll results can be viewed at [www.aidslaw.ca](http://www.aidslaw.ca)

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### **About the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network**

The Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network ([www.aidslaw.ca](http://www.aidslaw.ca)) promotes the human rights of people living with and vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, in Canada and internationally, through research, legal and policy analysis, education, and community mobilization. The Legal Network is Canada’s leading advocacy organization working on the legal and human rights issues raised by HIV/AIDS.

### **About the survey**

From October 20 to October 22, 2009, Pollara conducted an on-line survey among a randomly selected, representative sample of 1,025 adult Canadians aged 18 and over. The margin of error for the total sample is +/- 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

For more information, please contact:

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Gilles Marchildon  
Director of Communications  
Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network  
Telephone: +1 416 595-1666 ext. 228  
Cell: +1 647 248-2400  
E-mail: [gmarchildon@aidslaw.ca](mailto:gmarchildon@aidslaw.ca)

Christopher Holcroft  
Principal, Empower Consulting, on behalf of the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network  
Cell: +1 416 996-0767  
E-mail: [chris\\_holcroft@yahoo.com](mailto:chris_holcroft@yahoo.com)

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**Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, UNICEF Canada and  
Canadian Crossroads International:**

**Canada's Access to Medicines Regime (CAMR) Survey**



Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network | Réseau juridique canadien VIH/sida

Research Report

October 2009

# Methodology

- From October 20 to October 22, 2009, Pollara conducted an online survey among a randomly selected, representative sample of 1,025 adult Canadians aged 18 and over. A non-probability sample of this size with a 100% response rate would have an approximate margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20 for the total sample. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current Census data for age, gender and region to ensure the dataset reflects the actual population distribution. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

Regional Distribution	Complete	Margin of Error*
British Columbia	n=92	+/- 10.2%
Alberta	n=96	+/- 10.0%
Prairies	n=105	+/- 9.6%
Ontario	n=409	+/- 4.9%
Quebec	n=233	+/- 6.4%
Atlantic	n=90	+/- 10.3%
<b>CANADA</b>	<b>n=1025</b>	<b>+/- 3.1%</b>

\* Sampling margin of error calculated at 95% confidence interval.

# Executive Summary

## CONTEXT

- Canadians almost unanimously agree that it is important to help people in the developing world who need medicines to prevent and treat diseases such as AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.
- A half of Canadians do not feel the federal government is providing enough help to developing countries to deal with serious diseases by making medicines more affordable or by increasing access to medicines.

## CAMR: AWARENESS & FAMILIARITY

- Upon being read a brief description of Canada's Access to Medicines Regime, a slim majority (52%) of Canadians indicate awareness. Depth of understanding of CAMR is low – just 18% are very or somewhat familiar with the legislation.

## CAMR: SUPPORT FOR CURRENT LEGISLATION & REFORM

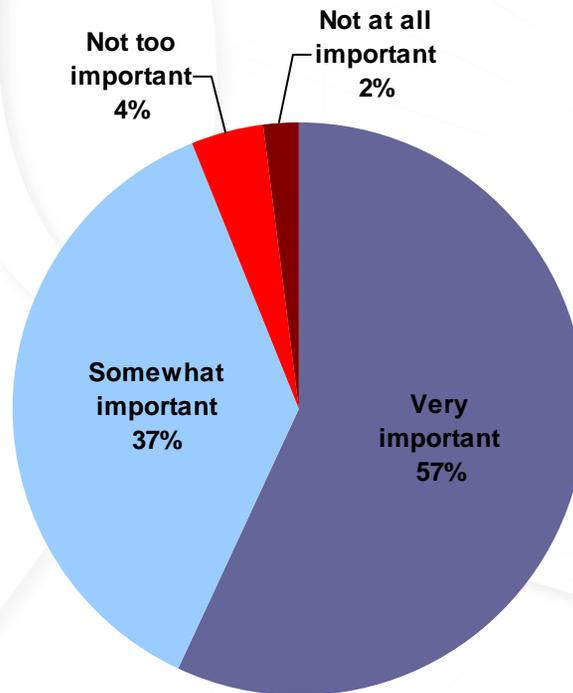
- After reading a brief description of CAMR, two-thirds of Canadians support the current legislation, while a fifth say they are opposed to it. The rest are unsure.
- Moreover, upon then being read a brief description of the proposed “one license” changes in the bills presently before Parliament, eight-in-ten indicate support for these proposed reforms. Just 9% are opposed and 11% are unsure.
- In addition, when asked to choose between two guiding principles for CAMR, nine out of ten Canadians prefer “ensuring a simplified process that allows for quick sale and delivery of generic medicines to developing countries” as opposed to “protecting the patents of brand-name drug companies.”

# Detailed Results

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# Importance of Helping People in Developing Countries

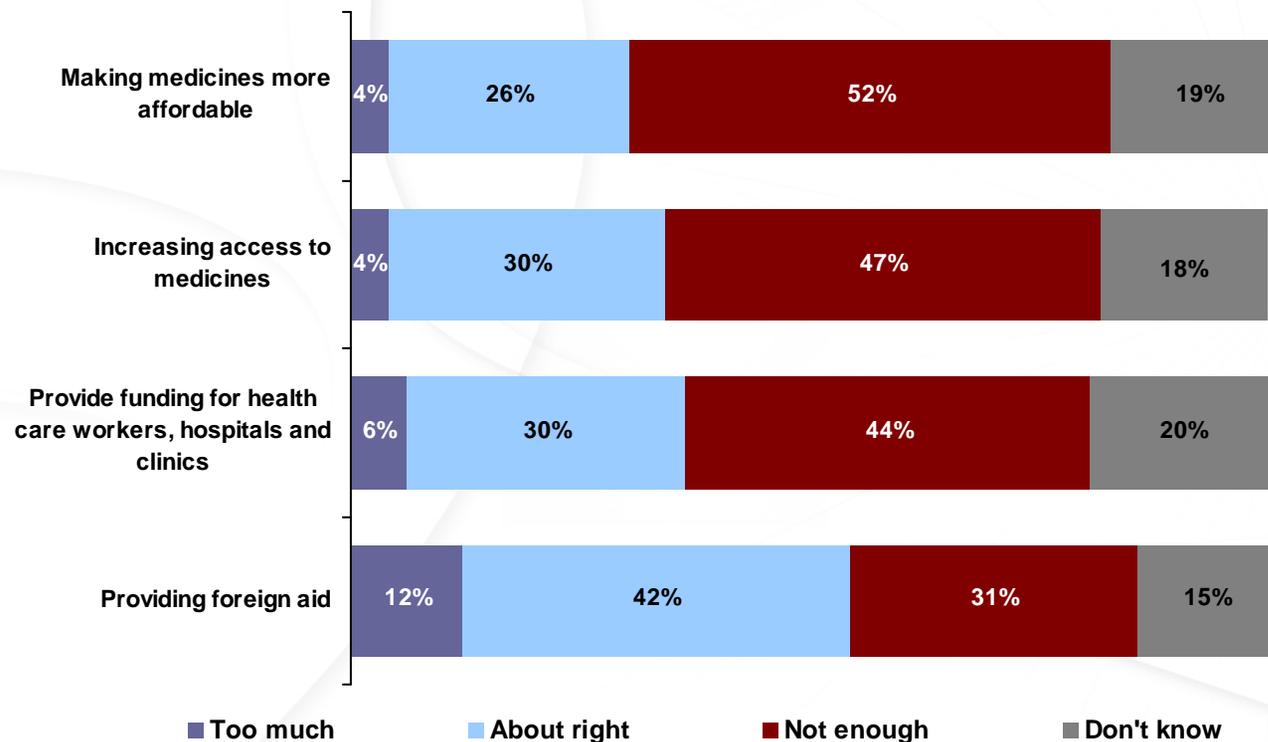
- Canadians almost unanimously agree that it is important to help people in the developing world who need medicines to prevent and treat diseases such as AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, with 93% saying this is an important initiative. More than half (57%) say this is “very important” and another 37% describe it as “somewhat important.”



Question: “To begin, how important do you think it is for Canada to help people in the developing world who need medicines to prevent and treat diseases such as AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.” [n=1025]

# Federal Government Help

- Most Canadians (52%) do not feel the federal government is providing enough help to developing countries to deal with serious diseases by making medicines more affordable. Many also don't feel Ottawa is doing enough in terms of increasing access to medicines (47%) or providing funding for health care workers, hospitals and clinics (44%).



Question: "To the best of your knowledge, do you think that the federal government is providing too much, not enough, or about the right amount of help to developing countries to deal with serious diseases in each of the following areas?" [n=1025]

# Awareness and Familiarity with CAMR

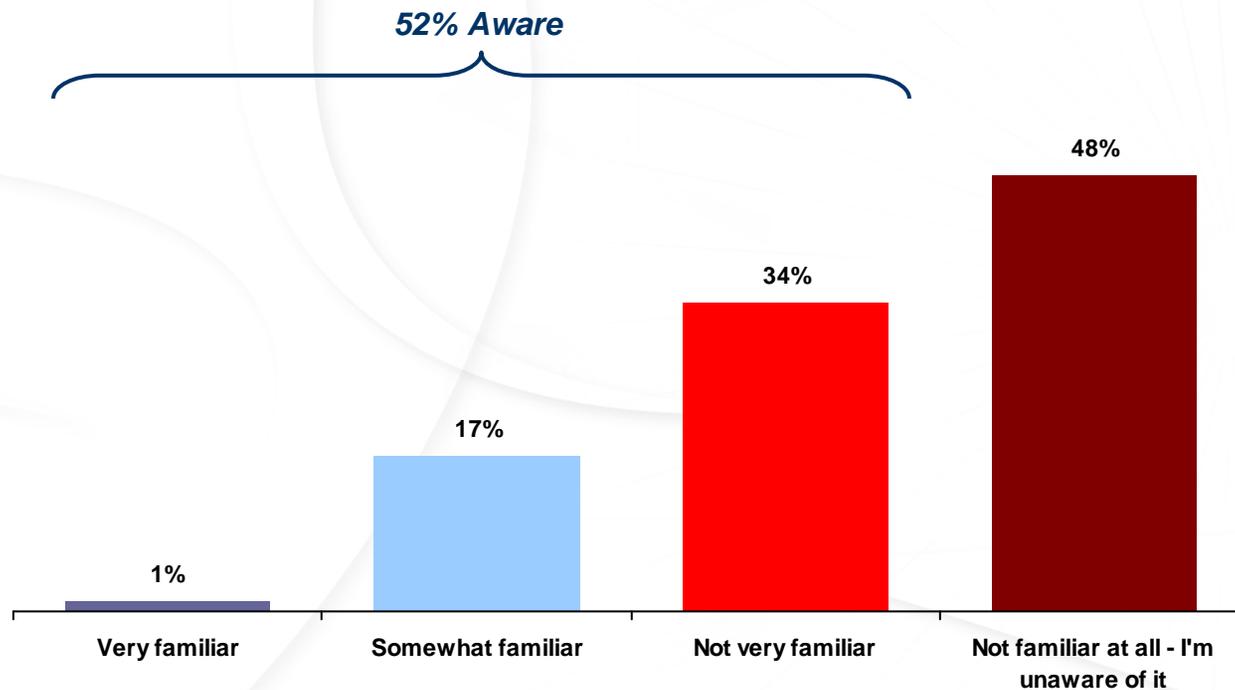
- To gauge familiarity with Canada's Access to Medicines Regime (CAMR), respondents were provided with the following brief description of the legislation:

*As you may know... In 2004, Canada's Parliament passed a law that created "Canada's Access to Medicines Regime" (CAMR). The law is supposed to help developing countries (in Africa and elsewhere) get increased access to less expensive medicines for AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, or other diseases.*

*It aims to achieve this by letting Canadian generic drug companies apply for special licenses to manufacture and sell generic, lower-priced versions of the original medicines patented by brand-name drug companies – but they can only sell these generic medicines to eligible developing countries named in the law. In return, the brand-name drug companies collect royalties from the sales of these generic drugs to developing countries.*

# Awareness and Familiarity with CAMR

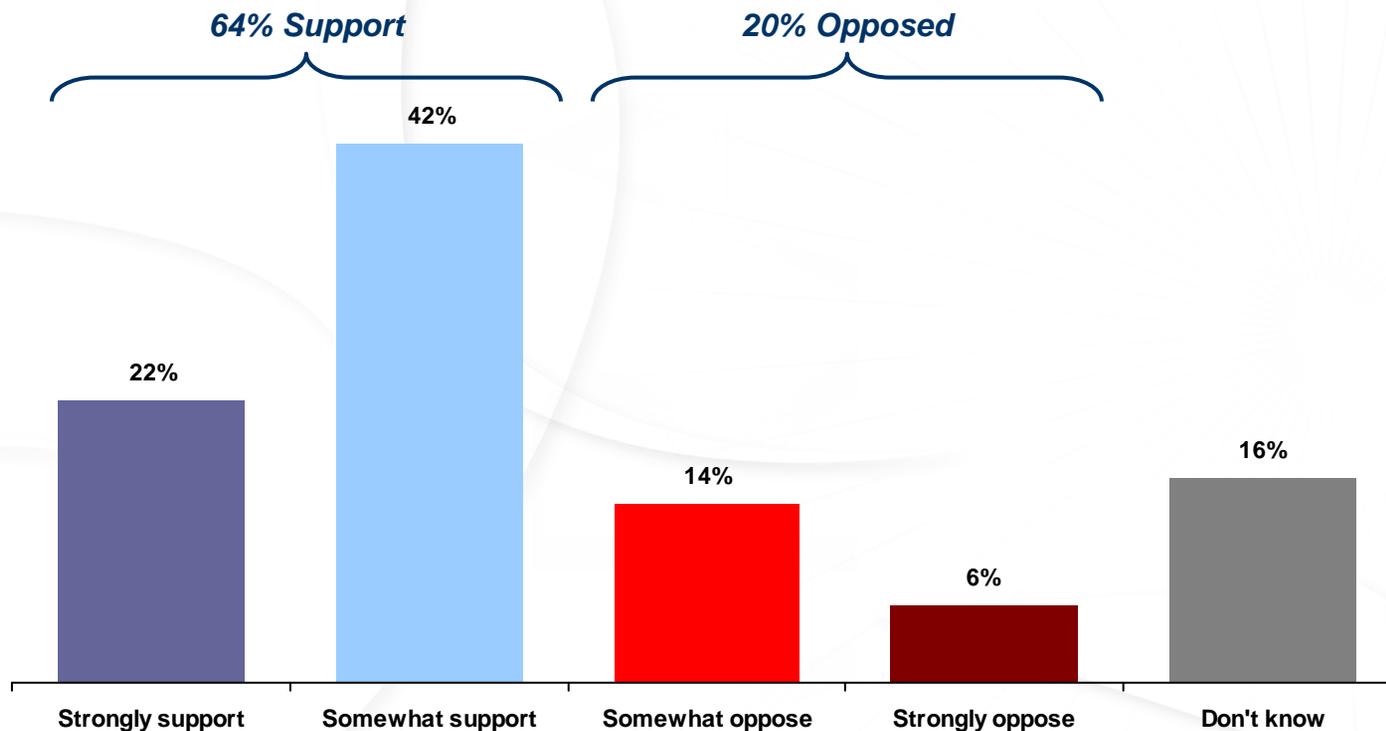
- Upon being read a brief description of Canada's Access to Medicines Regime, a slim majority (52%) of Canadians indicate awareness.
- Depth of understanding of CAMR is low – just 18% are very or somewhat familiar with the legislation.
- While familiarity with CAMR is low across the board, it is highest among men (23%) and those with a university education (22%).



Question: "As you may know... In 2004, Canada's Parliament passed a law that created Canada's Access to Medicines Regimer (CAMR) ... [DESCRIPTION CUT] ... How familiar are you with this law?" [n=1025]

# Support for / Opposition to CAMR

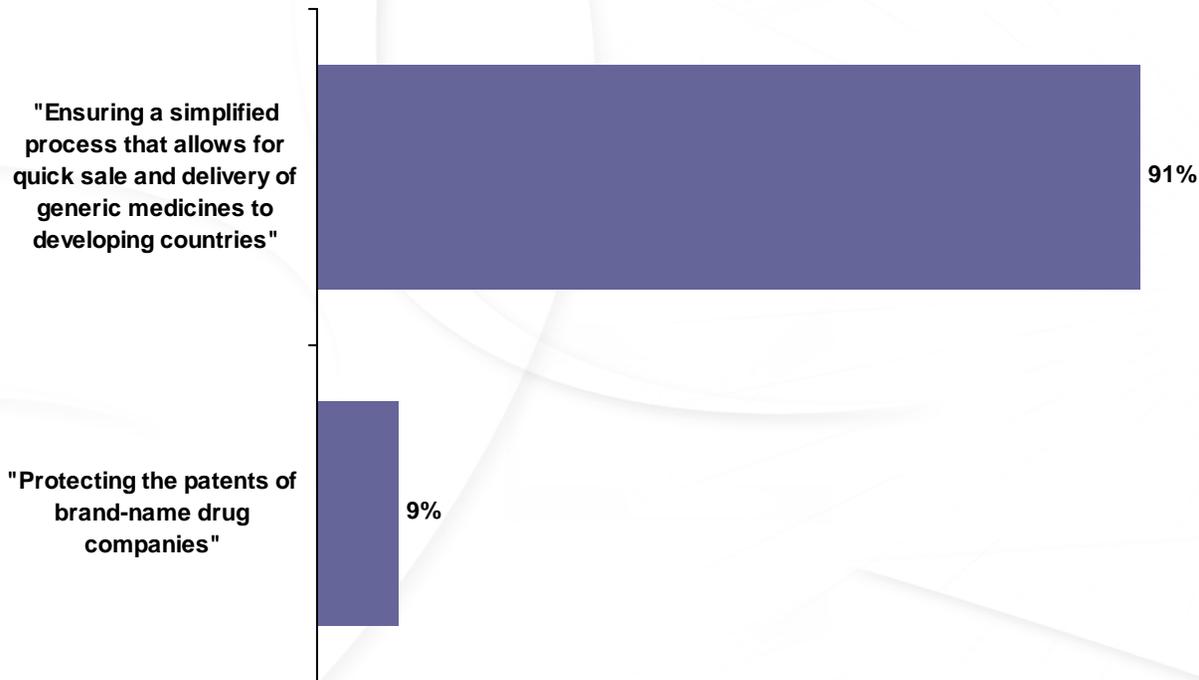
- Based upon the previous description of CAMR, two-thirds of Canadians (64%) support the legislation, while 20% say they are opposed to it. Another 16% are unsure.
- Support is strongest among men (70%) and among those with a university education (71%).



Question: "And, based on what you have read or know, do you support or oppose this law?" [n=1025]

# CAMR'S Guiding Principle

- Nine out of 10 Canadians (91%) say the guiding principle of CAMR should be “ensuring a simplified process that allows for quick sale and delivery of generic medicines to developing countries,” as opposed to “protecting the patents of brand-name drug companies,” which only 9% of Canadians support as a guiding principle of CAMR.



Question: “And, which of the following possible guiding principles do you think should be most important when administering Canada’s Access to Medicines Regime (CAMR)?” [n=1025]

# Support for / Opposition to Changing CAMR

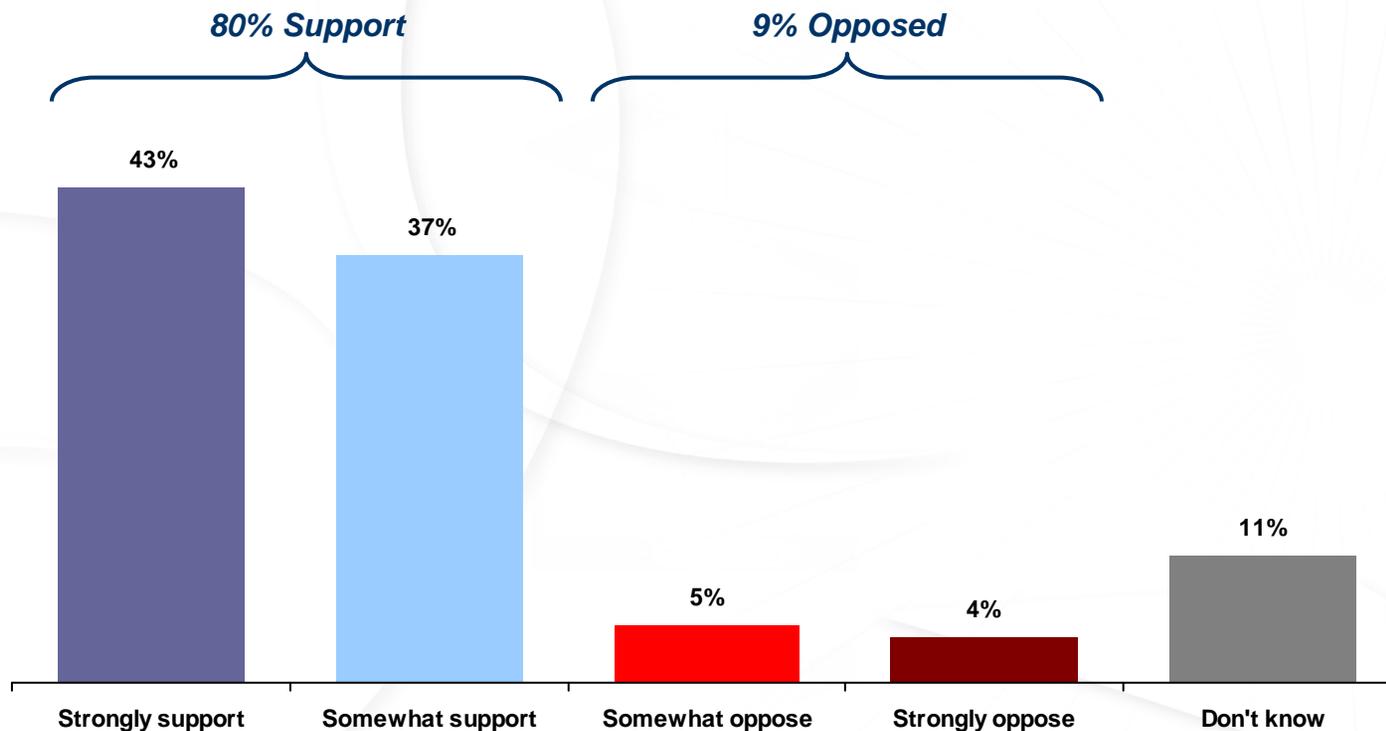
- To gauge support for or opposition to proposed changes to Canada's Access to Medicines Regime (CAMR), respondents were provided with the following brief description of the proposed changes:

*Now, as you may know, there are two bills currently being debated in Parliament that seek to make the CAMR licensing process simpler and easier for generic drug companies and developing countries. At present, CAMR requires generic drug companies to apply for a special license for each order of medicines for each individual country they wish to supply.*

*The proposed changes would only require generic drug companies to obtain one license for each medicine they intend to make, and would allow them to make this medicine to fill multiple orders for as many eligible developing countries as needed – without having to re-apply for a license for each drug order.*

# Support for / Opposition to Changing CAMR

- Four out of five Canadians (80%) support changing CAMR to make the licensing process simpler and easier for generic drug companies and developing countries. This includes 43% who strongly support the proposed changes to the legislation. The strong level of support for changing CAMR is consistent across all demographic and socio-economic subdivisions of Canadian society.



Question: "Now, as you may know, there are two bills currently being debated in Parliament that seek to make the CAMR licensing process simpler and easier for generic drug companies and developing countries ... [DESCRIPTION CUT] ... Thinking about this, do you support or oppose these proposed changes to CAMR?" [n=1025]

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**101 Yorkville Avenue, Suite 301  
Toronto, Canada M5R 1C1  
Tel: 416.921.0090 | Fax: 416.921.3903  
[www.pollara.com](http://www.pollara.com)**