



**2019 ACA Marketplace Analysis:
Key Highlights and Implications**



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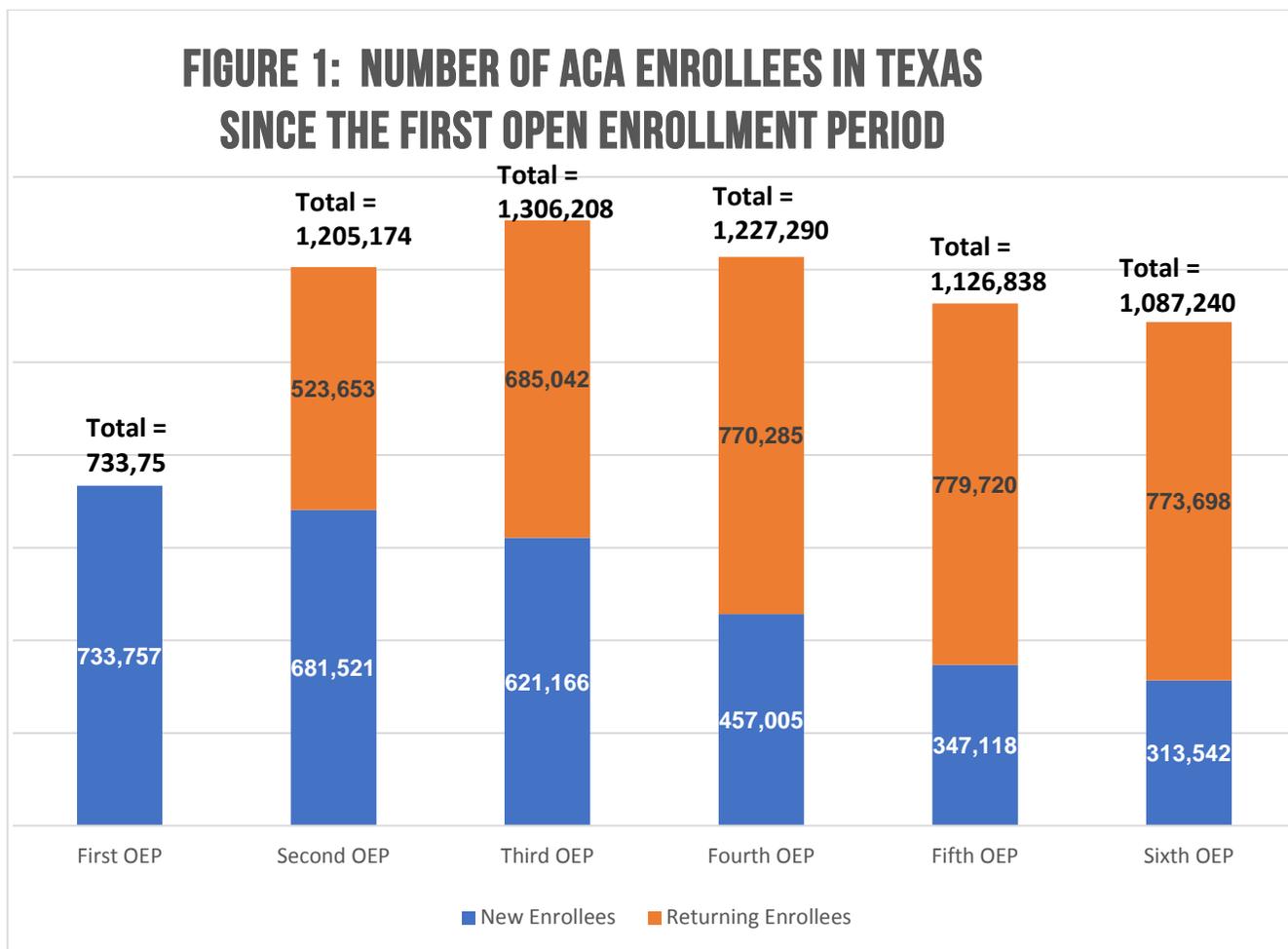
ANALYSIS OF THE 2019 AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (ACA) ENROLLMENT DATA FOR TEXAS: KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND IMPLICATIONS

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Episcopal Health Foundation conducted an analysis of recently released ACA enrollment data for Texas from the [Centers from Medicare & Medicare Services](#) for the Health Insurance Marketplace's sixth open enrollment period (OEP). In this report, we examine the new enrollment data from the recent OEP, November 1, 2018 through December 15, 2018, and compare it to data from the first five OEPs. We also discuss the implications of the latest ACA enrollment data in Texas in the larger context of national healthcare reform.

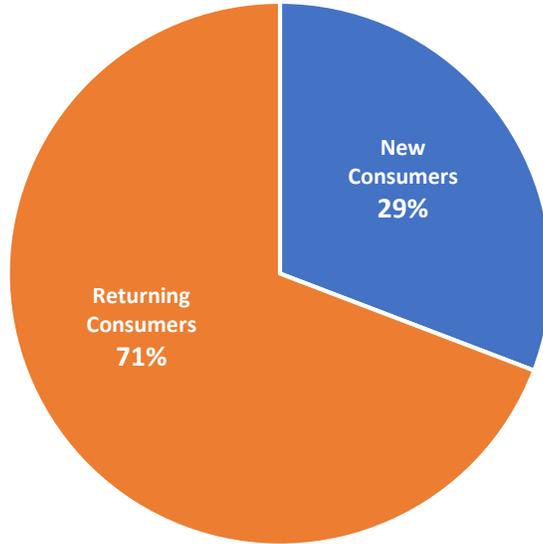
Finding 1: Total enrollment during the sixth OEP was 1,087,240, down slightly from 1.1 million in the previous OEP.

As Figure 1 shows, there was a slight dip in the total number of enrollees in the sixth OEP while the number of returning enrollees has increased steadily throughout the open enrollment periods. Of the Texans who enrolled in coverage in the sixth OEP, 71% (773,698) were returning enrollees, which is slightly lower than the number of returning enrollees in the fifth OEP (779,720). On the other hand, there is a decline in the number of new consumers in the sixth OEP (313,542) as compared to the fifth OEP (347,118). 55% of the enrollees were women and 87% lived in non-rural areas.



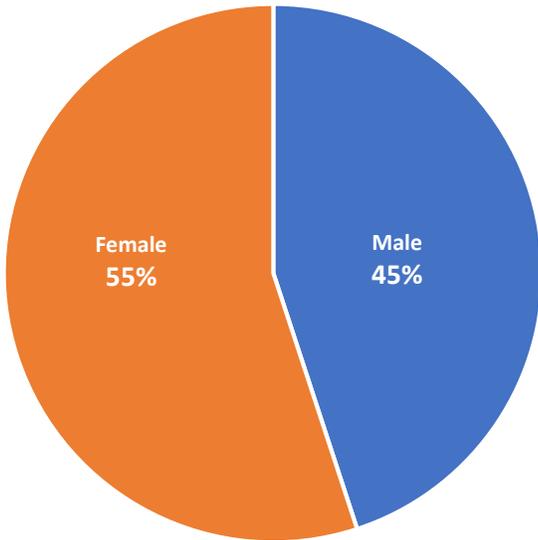
Most enrollees were **returning consumers**

Percent of total number of ACA Marketplace consumers in Texas who were new consumers versus returning consumers, 2019



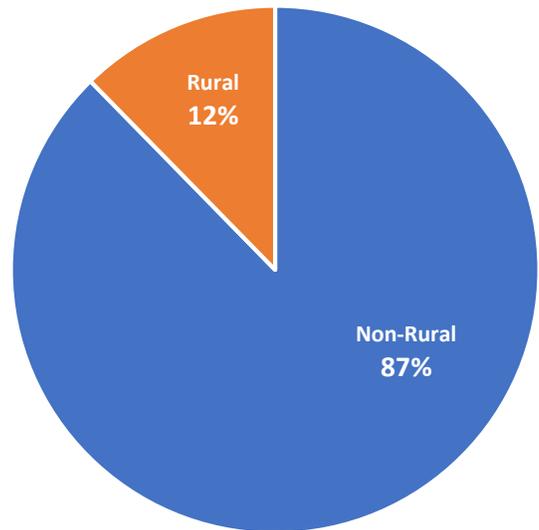
Most enrollees were **women**

Total number of marketplace enrollees in Texas by gender, 2019



Most enrollees lived in **non-rural areas**

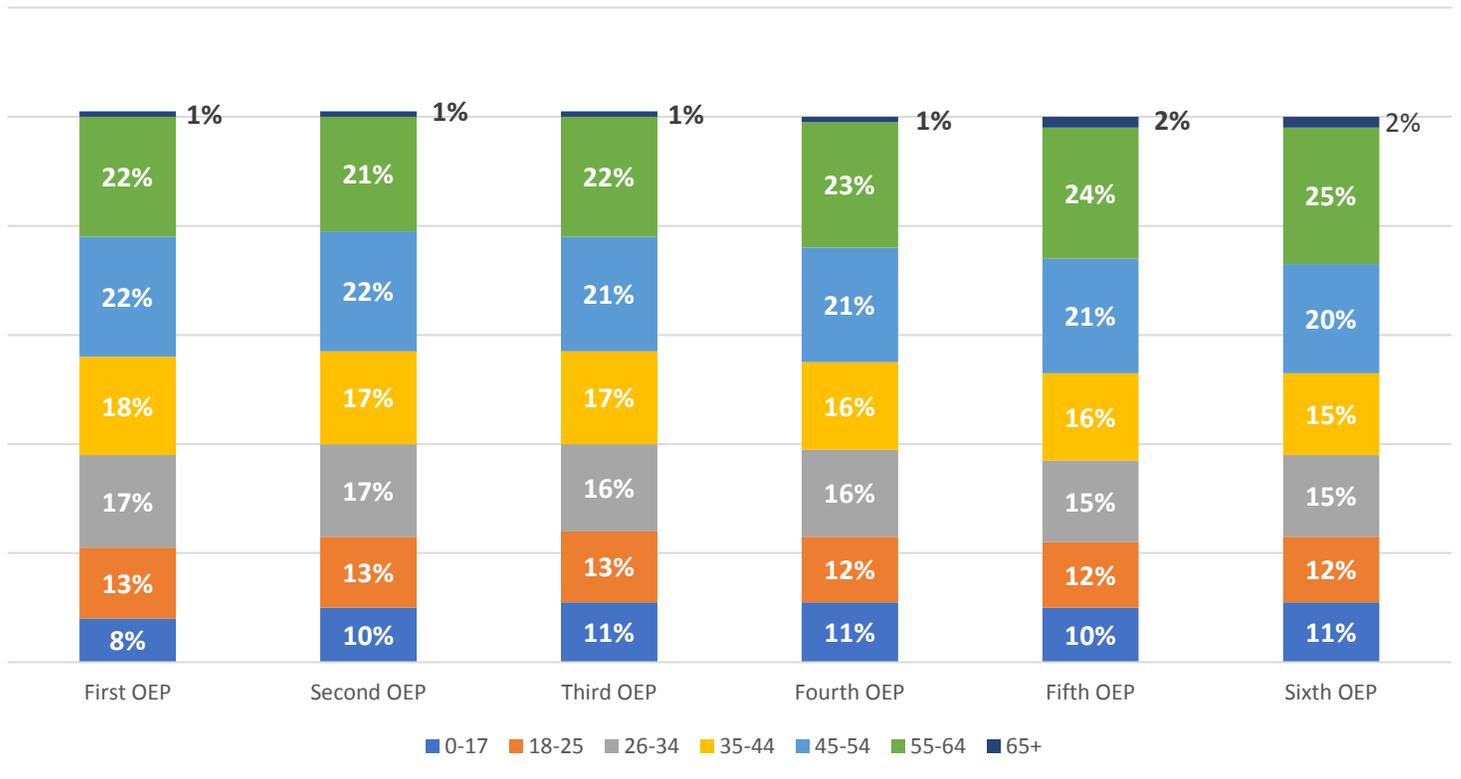
Total number of marketplace enrollees in urban and rural areas in Texas 2019



Finding 2: Adults ages 55-64, low-income and moderately low-income individuals were among the key demographic groups of Texas enrollees

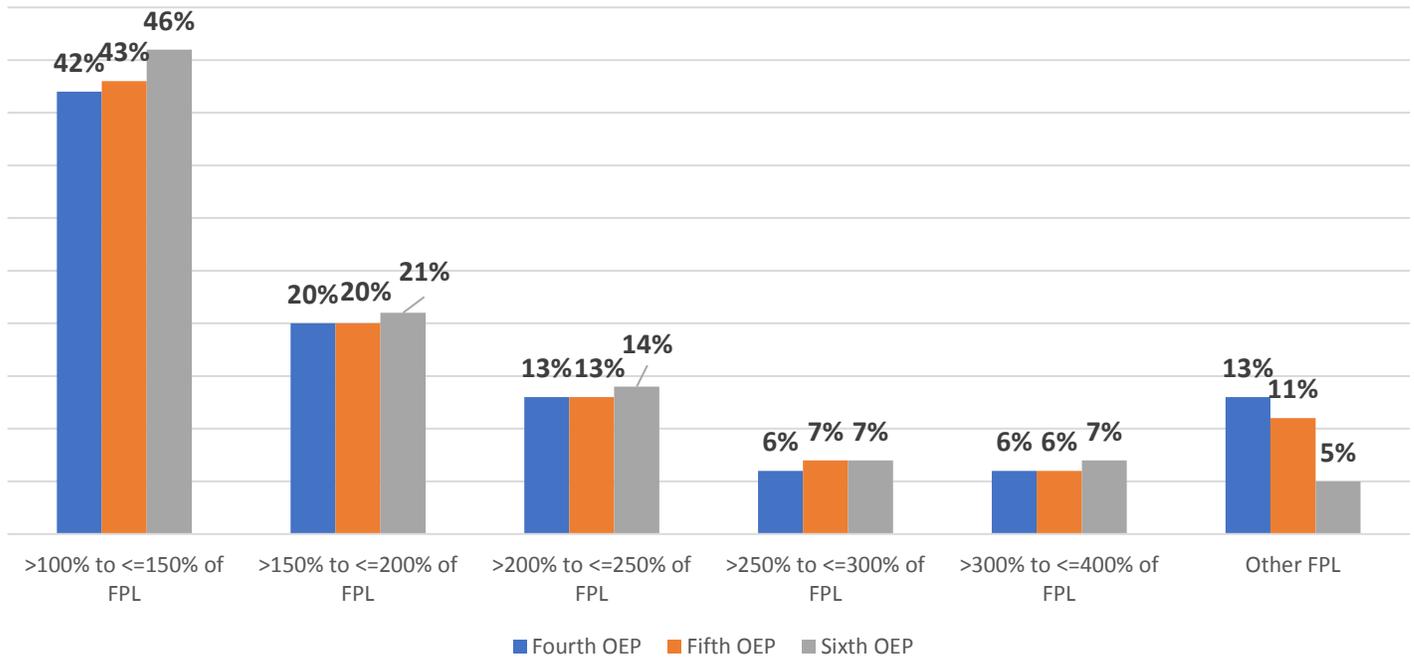
As Figure 2 shows, the age distribution of ACA Enrollees has been consistent across all five OEPs. During the most recent OEP, adults ages 55-64 comprised 25% of all enrollees, followed by adults ages 45 to 54 at 20%.

FIGURE 2: ADULTS AGES 55-64 WERE THE LARGEST CATEGORY OF ENROLLEES



As Figure 3 shows, six in 10 ACA enrollees in Texas were low or moderately low income during the most recent OEP. This is consistent with 2018.

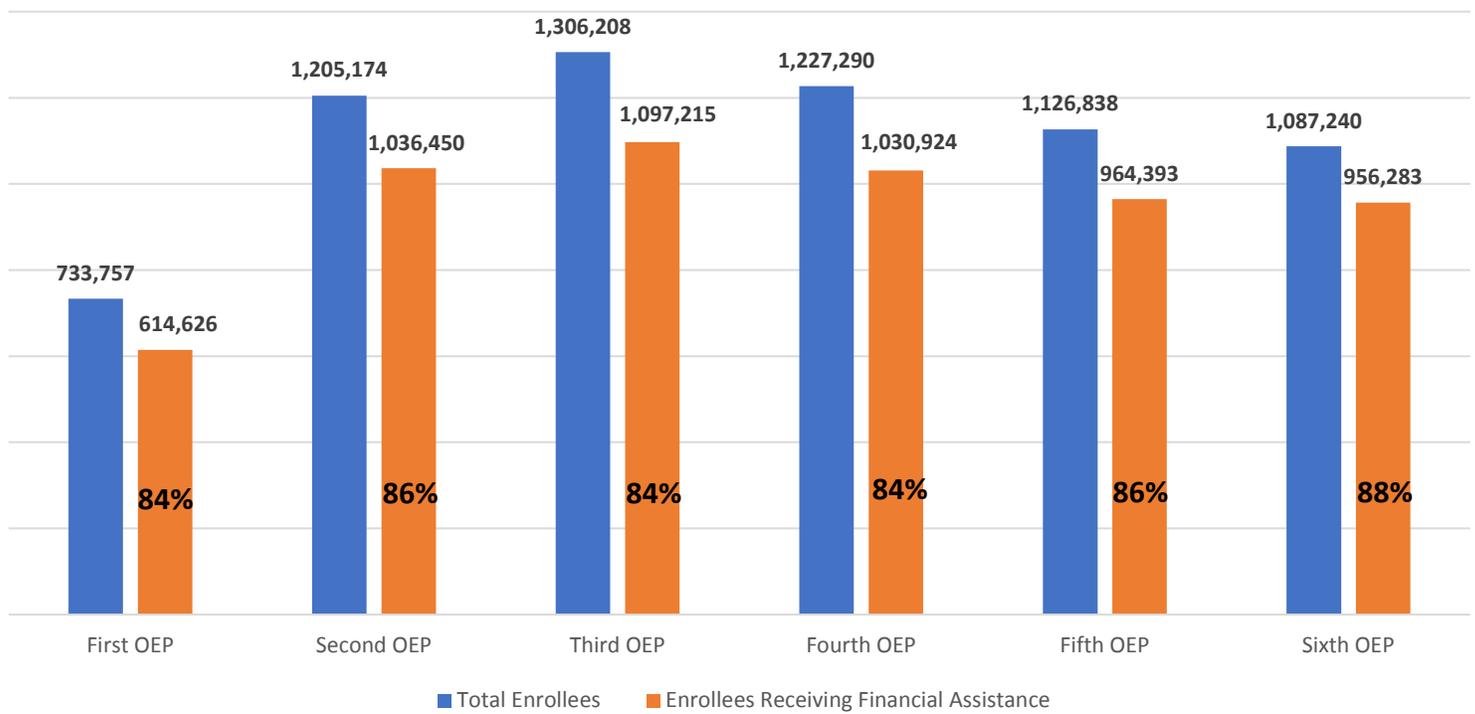
FIGURE 3: TEXAS ENROLLEES WERE MOSTLY LOW AND MODERATELY-LOW INCOMES



Finding 3: 9 in 10 Texas enrollees received financial assistance. Federal tax credits have reduced the costs of premiums by 78%

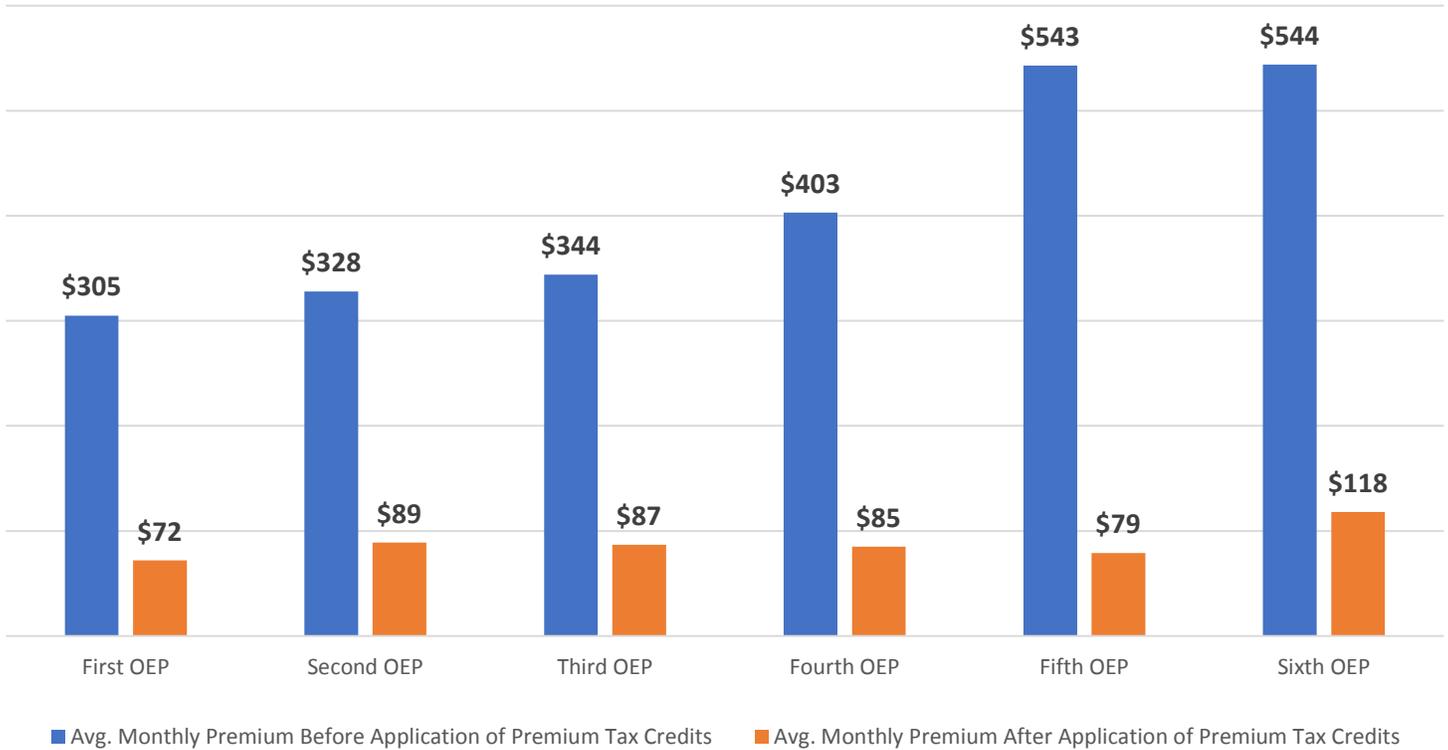
As Figure 4 shows, 956,283 Texas enrollees, or 88% of all Texas enrollees, received financial assistance in the form of premium tax credits during the most recent OEP. Again, this trend is consistent across all OEPs.

FIGURE 4: NUMBER AND PERCENT OF TEXAS ENROLLEES WITH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ACROSS SIX OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIODS



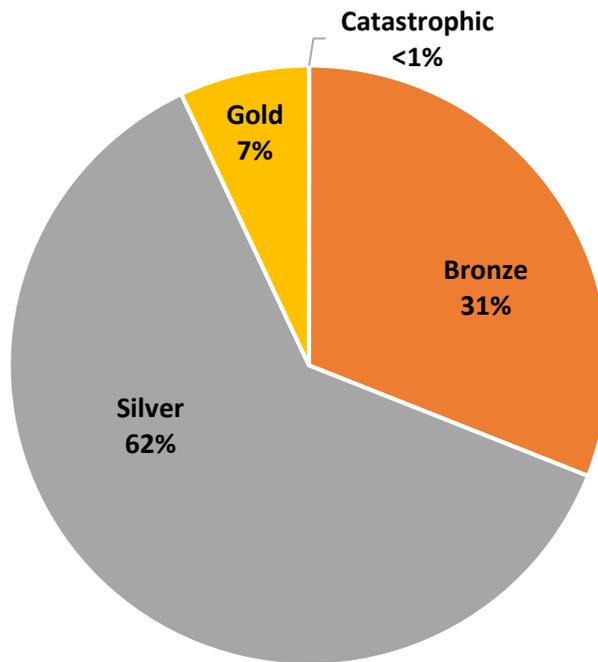
On average, federal financial assistance provided Texas enrollees with a 78% reduction in monthly premiums across all six OEPs. As Figure 5 shows, average premium costs were \$544 per month in the sixth OEP, which is consistent with the average premium costs in the prior OEP. When you factor in the federal tax credits, the average cost of the premiums for enrollees who received tax credits in the sixth OEP dropped by 78% to \$118 per month.

FIGURE 5: ACA TAX CREDITS CUT PREMIUM COSTS TO TEXANS BY 78%



Similar to previous years, 62% of ACA enrollees selected a silver plan while 31% of enrollees selected a bronze plan.

Most Texas enrollees selected a Silver or Bronze plan



Discussion: What are the data telling us?

To gain insights into the latest data, it is important to understand the larger environment that affected the ACA marketplace enrollment in Texas. Prior to the sixth OEP, CMS reduced federal navigator funding from \$6 million to \$1.3 million, a reduction of 78% from the previous year. While this trend is consistent across all states, as noted in a [KFF issue brief](#), the significant reduction in navigator funding and a shortened OEP period of six weeks may have contributed to the slight decline in the ACA enrollment figure in Texas.

Of the over 1 million Texans with low to moderate incomes enrolled in the ACA marketplace, 88% received federal tax credits to subsidize their premium costs under the ACA. This clearly demonstrates there is a great need for affordable health insurance coverage for low-income Texans. Further, as shown in Figure 1, the increasingly high rates of returning enrollees suggests that a majority of Texans who were enrolled in ACA healthcare coverage want to keep their coverage.

Our analysis also reveals that on average premiums within the ACA marketplace in Texas have stabilized across the two most recent OEPs. More importantly, as a result of federal tax credits, the average cost of premium for most Texas enrollees (88%) is only \$118 per month.

Even with the ACA marketplace, Texas leads the country with an uninsured rate of 19% and 4.7 million uninsured residents. As our analysis of Texas marketplace enrollment data reveals, low income Texans continue to enroll in the ACA marketplace despite recent court actions, health legislation uncertainty and reduced federal navigator funding, and a majority of them were returning enrollees. As Congress continues to look for ways to reform the healthcare system, we urge policy makers at both federal and state levels to carefully consider alternatives to expand health insurance coverage for low-income Texans who need affordable coverage.