



# 2008 AARP Voters' Guide

## Iowa House District 13

How to use the AARP Voters' Guide:  
Here's how this Voters' Guide works. AARP asked key questions about issues important to our members and their families of each major candidate for this race. Each candidate was allowed up to 125 words to answer each question. AARP did not edit or modify those answers. The candidates were asked to check the support or oppose circles. The candidates may have chosen not to check a circle.

AARP has provided a summary of our position for each of the issues.

- Pass this guide on to friends and family.
- Share your views with the candidates.
- Ask for clarification from any candidate whose answer seems unclear.

Be sure to vote on November 4.

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**Q** ■ *Would you support or oppose a Consumer Protection bill, creating a private cause of action against consumer fraud?*

**AARP's Position:**

Creating a private cause of action against consumer fraud

**Support**     **Oppose**

**Scott Tornquist (Republican)**

Creating a private cause of action against consumer fraud

**Support**     **Oppose**

**Sharon Steckman (Democrat)**

Creating a private cause of action against consumer fraud

**Support**     **Oppose**

Iowa is the only state in the nation that does not grant individuals a private right of action against acts of consumer fraud. The only entity in Iowa that may file a case under the Consumer Fraud Act is Iowa's Attorney General Office. Receiving over 6000 consumer fraud complaints annually, they cannot and do not prosecute every case of consumer fraud in the State of Iowa.

AARP Iowa's top priority is creating a private cause of action against fraud. Individuals need to be able to pursue remedies, like damages and injunctions, and receive attorney fees so that attorneys will take their case. Iowa should join the rest of the nation and empower individual consumers to fight on their own against frauds perpetrated against them.

I support this with some guidelines and limitations that would guard against frivolous suits and offer some protections to business even as we seek to enhance consumer protections. Balance is critical.

The candidate chose not to respond by the deadline.

**Q** ■ *What specific steps would you take to ensure that residents in need of long-term care have access to a full range of services?*

**AARP's Position:**

Funding the unmet home and community based service needs

**Support**     **Oppose**

Funding for a Single Point of Entry System through the Aging and Disability Resource Centers

**Support**     **Oppose**

**Scott Tornquist (Republican)**

Funding the unmet home and community based service needs

**Support**     **Oppose**

Funding for a Single Point of Entry System through the Aging and Disability resource Centers

**Support**     **Oppose**

**Sharon Steckman (Democrat)**

Funding the unmet home and community based service needs

**Support**     **Oppose**

Funding for a Single Point of Entry System through the Aging and Disability resources Center

**Support**     **Oppose**

AARP believes that Iowa should prioritize providing long-term care in the setting of Iowans' choice, their homes, with just the help they need. The Senior Living Program documented an estimated \$2.8 million in "Unmet Needs" (FY 2007) for older Iowans' services like chore assistance, adult day services, and others services. With the natural disasters, that number will rise dramatically. Funding for Iowa's Aging and Disability Resource Center needs to continue to better connect older Iowans to local aging services in their area, a Single Point of Entry System.

AARP supports promoting the independence of seniors and delaying the use of institutional care by:

- Funding the Unmet Service Needs identified in Iowa's Senior Living Program.
- Funding the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC).

The state tax code needs a complete overhaul. Specific to senior citizens, assisted living facilities and nursing facilities should be taxed at residential (rather than commercial) rates to the extent that these tax reductions are passed on to the consumer (rather than taken as excess profit for the facility). This will provide seniors with more economically feasible choices.

The candidate chose not to respond by the deadline.

**Q:** What specific steps would you take to ensure that all older Iowans, but especially those displaced by natural disaster, have access to affordable housing, and can age in place?

**AARP's Position:**

Efforts to integrate universal design concepts into home rebuilding and home modification

**Support**     **Oppose**

State efforts to help local communities rebuild and develop affordable housing options

**Support**     **Oppose**

About half of Iowans over 65 live in homes built before 1960. Universal Design home modifications are a way to make older homes convenient for Iowans as they age. With Iowa's 2008 natural disasters, home issues have taken on a whole new meaning. The state can play a role in helping Iowans rebuild or modify their home with universal design concepts to allow better and safer living, and avoid institutional care longer. AARP supports state efforts to encourage and integrate universal design concepts into home rebuilding efforts and home modifications.

Additionally, as Iowans have been displaced by the disasters, especially in low income housing areas, affordable housing is a critical issue. AARP supports state efforts to work with devastated local communities to help develop affordable housing options.

**Scott Tornquist (Republican)**

Efforts to integrate universal design concepts into home rebuilding and home modification

**Support**     **Oppose**

State efforts to help local communities rebuild and develop affordable housing options

**Support**     **Oppose**

The candidate chose not to make additional comments.

**Sharon Steckman (Democrat)**

Efforts to integrate universal design concepts into home rebuilding and home modification

**Support**     **Oppose**

State efforts to help local communities rebuild and develop affordable housing options

**Support**     **Oppose**

The candidate chose not to respond by the deadline.

**Q** ■ *What steps would you take at the state level to improve health care quality and make coverage affordable and accessible to more Iowans?*

**AARP's Position:**

Open existing programs to the uninsured

**Support**     **Oppose**

Subsidizing Private health coverage

**Support**     **Oppose**

Adopting national standards for health care quality reporting

**Support**     **Oppose**

HF 2539 established a pilot project for pre-Medicare adults (age 50-65) to provide coverage by direct care workers and eliminated pre-existing conditions roadblocks as people move between plans. AARP Iowa supports measures to achieve access to affordable health care coverage for all individuals, including pre-Medicare adults.

HF 2539 also began a health care transparency initiative, access to information related to health care quality and price. The next step is for Iowa's providers to report national standard quality indicators so that Iowans can compare indicators between states.

**Scott Tornquist (Republican)**

Opening existing programs to the uninsured

**Support**     **Oppose**

Subsidizing private health coverage

**Support**     **Oppose**

Adopting national standards for health care quality reporting

**Support**     **Oppose**

I have been the driving force behind a free health care clinic in Mason City for the past two and a half years. Modeled after Community Free Clinic in Cedar Rapids, we now have our 501.C.3 status, by-laws and a board of directors. We hope to be open by the end of the year, and will provide basic health care services to all uninsured, regardless of age.

**Sharon Steckman (Democrat)**

Opening existing programs to include the uninsured

**Support**     **Oppose**

Subsidizing private health care coverage

**Support**     **Oppose**

Adopting national standards for health care quality reporting

**Support**     **Oppose**

The candidate chose not to respond by the deadline.