



2008 AARP Voters' Guide

Michigan State House District 19

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.

www.aarp.org/elections

Get the facts.
Use the power.
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The power to make it better.®

Health and Financial Security

Q: *Are you committed to working with your fellow elected officials, regardless of party, to develop and implement policies that provide all Americans with access to quality, affordable health care and lifetime financial security?*

AARP's Position:

Commit to help end gridlock by working across party lines.

Support **Oppose**

Steve King (D)

Commit to help end gridlock by working across party lines.

Support **Oppose**

John Walsh (R):

Commit to help end gridlock by working across party lines.

Support **Oppose**

The candidate chose not to respond.

Millions of Americans worry about their health and long-term financial security. They fear the future will not be as prosperous for their children and grandchildren. They face competing demands of affording health care, saving for retirement, sending children to college and supporting aging parents. At the same time, soaring health care costs constrain employers' ability to grow and compete.

AARP believes that providing quality, affordable health care and improving lifelong financial security for all Americans should be legislative priorities.

I am committed to working with any stakeholder having good, responsible plans to expand access to health care and incentivizing people to plan for their long-term financial security. As our nation ages, it is critical that we consider all options for the delivery of healthcare, allowing families to make informed decisions that are appropriate to their circumstances.

Retirement Savings Programs

Q ■ *Do you support or oppose the creation of a state assisted savings plan for Michigan workers who lack access to a retirement savings plan at work?*

AARP's Position:

Support or oppose creation of state assisted savings plan

Support Oppose

Steve King (D)

Support or oppose creation of state assisted savings plan

Support Oppose

John Walsh (R)

Support or oppose creation of state assisted savings plan

Support Oppose

The candidate chose not to respond.

More than half of American workers lack access to a retirement savings plan at work. One new approach to expand savings is to use a state's experience and expertise to provide workplace retirement savings programs for small employers that are unable to provide them because of high fees.

When groups of small employers join together these fees drop enough to be affordable. Once the program is established, operational costs would be paid by participants. The state would be reimbursed for the costs of establishing the plan, and would serve as overseer of the plan, but would have no fiduciary or legal liability for its performance.

AARP supports adoption of this kind of state assisted retirement savings plan.

While the State can help in the creation of retirement plans to be managed by small businesses, its role should be limited to creating incentives for the private sector to meet this growing need. The private sector, with State incentives, is better suited to address the demand, as opposed to the creation of another governmental bureaucracy.

Reforming Long-Term Care

Q: *Will you support or oppose legislation that creates a “one-stop shopping” system for long-term care supports, services and payment options? Will you support allowing consumers to choose where they will receive state-funded long-term care services and to select the service provider?*

AARP's Position:

A single agency for “one-stop shopping.”

Support Oppose

Make single point of entry available statewide beginning in 2010.

Support Oppose

Allow consumers to choose where they will receive services and select the service provider.

Support Oppose

Steve King (D)

A single agency for “one-stop shopping.”

Support Oppose

Make single point of entry available statewide beginning in 2010.

Support Oppose

Allow consumers to choose where they will receive services and select the service provider.

Support Oppose

The candidate chose not to respond.

John Walsh (R)

A single agency for “one-stop shopping.”

Support Oppose

Make single point of entry available statewide beginning in 2010.

Support Oppose

Allow consumers to choose where they will receive services and select the service provider.

Support Oppose

“One-stop shopping”: Having recent, personal experience dealing with the healthcare needs of my Mother, I appreciate the need for easier access to information and resources. Access to information that is understandable and sufficient in content to permit an informed decision, often made during a stressful period. I support continuation of pilot programs currently underway, and look forward to analyzing results from the same as a basis for creating a long term, state-wide solution.

“Long-Term Care Connections”: Expansion of the “Long-Term Care Connections” throughout Michigan is a wise idea, made more so following assessment of existing pilot projects currently underway.

“Consumer Choice”: Greater consumer choice permits families to make decisions consistent with their individual circumstances. These information based choices, within a defined system of delivery and reimbursement, could possibly save the State money in the long run. For instance, in-home care can prove better for the patient and less expensive than treatment in a nursing home. While no expert on the subject, I do look forward to learning more about options that are currently available, and those under consideration, and analyzing the same in a fiscally responsible manner.

Many Michigan residents and their families, who need long-term care to maintain independence, often face confusion searching through the maze of service options scattered throughout many different agencies. Unfortunately, most options are geared to nursing homes rather than home and community based care, which most people prefer. It would make this process much easier to have information, assessment, and eligibility determination for services in a single agency so residents have one-stop shopping.

AARP supports two major changes in the state’s long-term care system:

- Creation of “one-stop shopping” approach for long-term care information, assessment, eligibility determination, and payment options.
- Allowing consumers to choose where they will receive state-funded long-term care services and to select the service provider.

Q: *Will you support or oppose legislation that requires pharmacies to post the prices of the 150 most prescribed drugs and their generic equivalents? Will you support or oppose legislation requiring drug companies to report what they spend on marketing to physicians?*

AARP's Position:

Require pharmacies to post prices

Support Oppose

Require drug companies to reveal marketing expenses to physicians

Support Oppose

Steve King (D)

Require pharmacies to post prices

Support Oppose

Require drug companies to reveal marketing expenses to physicians

Support Oppose

The candidate chose not to respond.

John Walsh (R)

Require pharmacies to post prices

Support Oppose

Require drug companies to reveal marketing expenses to physicians

Support Oppose

Prescription drug prices continue to increase at nearly twice the rate of general inflation and more employers are eliminating prescription drug coverage for their workers and retirees. AARP supports policies to help people afford needed prescription drugs, such as access to information on comparable generic drug prices.

Consumers need to know if pharmaceutical sales representatives are influencing physicians to choose expensive brand name drugs over less expensive generic drugs.

AARP wants to ensure a free and open marketplace that makes available the lowest possible prescription drug prices. We support legislation that:

- Requires pharmacies to post the prices of the 150 most prescribed drugs and their generic equivalents; and
- Requires drug companies to report to the state what they spend on marketing to physicians.

“Requiring pharmacies to post prices”: While certainly worth exploring, I cannot, at the present time, support legislation as described. The complexity of the issue defies a yes or no answer. The varying insurance reimbursement policies and differences in approved drugs, will not permit an easy to understand price comparison.

“Requiring drug companies to reveal marketing expenses”: I believe this type of legislation reflects improper governmental intrusion in commerce, particularly in light of existing laws protecting consumers against fraud and other criminal conduct perpetrated against them. Physicians maintain that they have patient care as their first priority, and require information provided by vendors, including drug companies, in the delivery of care.



If you are not registered to vote, go to www.aarp.org/makeadifference/politics/ and look under Tools for a form to fill out and send to your local voter registrar (the address will be there). Go to the same website if you need an application for an absentee ballot or to find out if your state allows early voting and what dates that will occur.

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