



2008 AARP Voters' Guide

Utah Senate District 23

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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ECONOMIC SECURITY for OLDER WORKERS

Q ■ What steps will you take to prepare Utah for an aging workforce? Do you support or oppose increasing funding for job training for older workers? Do you support or oppose the elimination of the Social Security/Unemployment Insurance offset?
(Please limit your response to 125 words)

AARP's Position:

Increase funding for job training for older workers

Support Oppose

Eliminate the Social Security / Unemployment Insurance offset

Support Oppose

Richard Watson (D):

Increase funding for job training for older workers

Support Oppose

Eliminate the Social Security / Unemployment Insurance offset

Support Oppose

Dan Liljenquist (R):

Increase funding for job training for older workers

Support Oppose

Eliminate the Social Security / Unemployment Insurance offset

Support Oppose

The candidate chose not to mark a circle.

Traditional sources of retirement income, such as Social Security, employer pensions, and personal savings often are not enough. More than 37 million in the workforce are over 50, a number that will rise as the workforce grows older and works longer.

AARP supports flexible employment practices, such as job sharing, flextime, and phased retirement. Employer training programs should be made available to help workers of all ages.

Many retirees must reenter the workforce to supplement their Social Security retirement benefits or to get health insurance. Only four states—including Utah—reduce unemployment insurance benefits for those who lose a job while on Social Security. AARP opposes this practice, as it penalizes those who qualify for unemployment insurance yet are denied the coverage they've earned.

One of the fastest growing demographics in Utah is retirees. But, so many retirees cannot afford to live a full retirement. And, the job market is currently lacking experienced workers. Therefore, training older workers makes sense.

The candidate chose not to reply by the deadline.

Q How would you propose to change policy to provide more accessible and affordable home and community-based care options to older Utahans and those with disabilities? *(Please limit your response to 125 words)*

AARP's Position:

Rebalance the long-term care system by removing funding bias favoring nursing home

Support Oppose

Establish programs allowing certain nursing home residents to transition into less restrictive settings

Support Oppose

Shifting existing Medicaid long-term care dollars to home and community based programs

Support Oppose

Richard Watson (D):

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Support Oppose

The candidate chose not to mark a circle.

The candidate chose not to reply by the deadline.

AARP is committed to achieving long term care reform so more people needing these services can remain in their homes and get services in the community. In Utah, the majority of long-term care spending is directed to nursing homes and institutions. Utah is ranked 47th in the country regarding the percentage of Medicaid dollars going to home and community based care of older people and adults with physical disabilities.

Several states have saved money and improved patient satisfaction with quality of care by shifting the allocation of resources, so a greater proportion provides services in the community and not in nursing homes. AARP supports the right of people to have more choice where they want to get services and how they manage their own care.

Currently, about 60% of all nursing home residents receive some Medicaid to assist in paying for their nursing home stay. However, with the rising costs of placing seniors in nursing homes, we should give incentives and help to those who choose home care.

Q: In the face of escalating cost, how would you reform the health care system to make it available, affordable and accessible for every Utahan?
(Please limit your response to 125 words)

AARP's Position:

Provide increased subsidies for health insurance for eligible participants based on ability to pay

Support Oppose

Provide incentives for preventative care

Support Oppose

Create "medical homes" for more integration and coordination among providers

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The candidate chose not to mark a circle.

AARP supports reforms to increase access to affordable, high-quality health care coverage for all Utahns, particularly those without public or private insurance or those at risk of losing coverage.

Making health care affordable is a shared responsibility among government, business, health care providers and individuals. Other reform options include opening existing public programs (e.g. Medicaid) to new categories of people who are uninsured.

I would start by increasing the Medicaid rate to qualifying patients to a more fair and equitable rate. And a rate that is comparable to our neighboring states. Utah spends the least amount of Medicaid to seniors in the Western States.

The candidate chose not to respond by the deadline.



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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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