



# 2008 AARP Voters' Guide

## Utah Senate District 24

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](http://www.aarp.org/elections)

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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

**Tobiah Dillon (D):**

Increase funding for job training for older workers

Support  Oppose

Eliminate the Social Security / Unemployment Insurance offset

Support  Oppose

**Ralph Okerlund (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.

I neither support nor oppose this. I haven't had the opportunity to see how effective it is, and I don't think that blindly throwing money at the problem makes it go away. I do think that more attention should be given to preparing ourselves for more years in the workforce and the requisite continuing education to stay current in our chosen fields for longer than we intend, just in case.

I believe Utah's workers should have every means available to them to support themselves and their families. While Social Security may limit the sting of losing a job, it doesn't take the place of unemployment compensation, especially when the cost of living is significantly higher due to increased medical costs.

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

**Tobiah Dillon (D):**

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

**Ralph Okerlund (R):**

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

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 47<sup>th</sup> 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.

I'm not opposed to nursing homes, but I think that it makes fiscal sense to support people staying in their homes, rather than trying to sell in these troubled times. I applaud the work of groups such as Community Nursing Services and I believe that communities can benefit more from having seniors actively engaged in the community, rather than living in an isolated community behind nursing home doors.

In my visits to nursing homes, I've seen a number of people who could be just as healthy on their own with a few visits from caretakers. I think they could contribute more to society and receive more in return in a more mainstream setting.

**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 preventive care

Support  Oppose

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

Support  Oppose

**Tobiah Dillon (D):**

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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.

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

A progressive-scale system is certainly something that works for SCHIP and could be implemented easily. The devil's in the details, however, as how the lines are drawn determines how effective the plan would actually be.

Provide incentives for preventive care. This just makes so much sense, I fail to see why the current system wasn't built around it in the first place.

Create "medical homes" for more integration and coordination among providers. I hold to the naïve idea that this is what hospitals are for: to bring together experts from multiple fields in the care and treatment of the people. In the absence of that integration, I would very much like to see practices adopt a more holistic approach to care.





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*If you are not registered to vote, go to [www.aarp.org/makeadifference/politics/](http://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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## Voter Information Inside