



2008 AARP Voters' Guide

State Senate District No. 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

Get the facts.
Use the power.
Vote.

Inside:

Legislative Priority	2
Health Care Reform	3
Health Care Cost	4
SeniorCare	5

AARPSM

The power to make it better.[®]

Legislative Priority

Question:

What will be your top state priorities if elected, and how will you work to break the gridlock to get things done on these issues?

AARP POSITION

AARP believes that providing quality, affordable health care and improving lifelong financial security should be top legislative priorities. AARP surveys show that Wisconsinites are worried 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: affording health care, saving for retirement, sending children to college and supporting aging parents.

Increasingly partisan political gridlock stands in the way of the ability to solve major issues. Wisconsinites want results from elected leaders, not promises without action. It's time for individuals, businesses, non-profit organizations, and government to come together to find solutions.

CANDIDATE:
TOM KIMMET
REPUBLICAN

Candidate chose not to respond.

CANDIDATE:
JULIE LASSA
DEMOCRAT

My top legislative priorities will continue to:

- Focus on strategies to grow the economy especially those that encourage entrepreneurship, promote new technologies, expand training programs for incumbent and dislocated workers,
- Promote access to affordable quality health care for all Wisconsin citizens
- Protect children from recalled and defective toys and products as well as harmful chemicals
- Promote good government through better budget accounting, auditing of large state programs regularly for performance and management.

My past legislative record shows that I have been able to get passed partisan gridlock to have common sense legislation signed into law. I will continue to work in a bipartisan manner to advance those policies that are in the best interest of my district and the state.

Health Care Reform

Question:

How would you reform the health care system to make it a quality system that is affordable and accessible for every Wisconsinite?

AARP POSITION

AARP believes that all Wisconsinites deserve affordable, quality, and accessible health care. An individual's health care costs, including premiums, deductibles and out-of-pocket costs should be limited to between 5% and 10% of income. In an AARP Wisconsin survey, 69% of respondents age 50 -64 said the healthcare system is in a "state of crisis" or has "major problems." Those who have insurance and those who are uninsured respond similarly to this question. Over half of all respondents said they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supported healthcare coverage for all Wisconsin residents.

Three quarters of Wisconsinites age 50-64 without health insurance, are working. Half of Wisconsin's uninsured workers are self-employed or work for small employers. Many Wisconsinites are underinsured, paying too much for inadequate coverage.

CANDIDATE:
TOM KIMMET
REPUBLICAN

Candidate chose not to respond.

CANDIDATE:
JULIE LASSA
DEMOCRAT

Like most Wisconsin residents, citizens of the 24th District are concerned about quality affordable health care. I support a comprehensive reform of the health care system that improves patient outcomes, increases transparency, emphasizes preventative care and healthy lifestyles, and covers all Wisconsinites.

I voted for a plan in the Senate that would give all Wisconsin citizens the same health care coverage that members of the Legislature have. While this plan still needs fine tuning, it is a good place to start as we move forward. I will continue working to solve this complex issue and pushing for the Legislature to solve this problem because so many people are counting on us to find a solution and to get it right.

Health Care Cost

Question:

How do you propose to rein in the cost of health care while maintaining or improving the quality of and access to health care?

AARP POSITION

Across Wisconsin, individuals and employers are telling us that they can't afford health care; cost sharing is increasing and benefits are shrinking.

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, health insurance premium costs nationwide have increased a cumulative 78% between 2001 and 2007. In an AARP Wisconsin survey, over eight in ten respondents said that making healthcare more affordable for all residents is extremely or very important.

AARP supports benefit packages that provide necessary care including chronic disease management, prescription drug coverage, prevention and wellness, mental health services. AARP also supports stronger oversight of the insurance industry.

AARP believes information technology, such as electronic medical records, would result in better, more efficient care, fewer mistakes and, ultimately, lower costs.

CANDIDATE:
TOM KIMMET
REPUBLICAN

Candidate chose not to respond.

CANDIDATE:
JULIE LASSA
DEMOCRAT

I believe there are a number of policy changes that could be instituted to drive down health care costs and increase patient health outcomes.

- Increase the use of electronic medical records that can be accessed by medical providers throughout the state
- Help individuals and families adopt healthier lifestyles through statewide initiatives that promote nutrition and exercise, use of seat belts, cessation and prevention of smoking etc.
- Standardize health care through the adoption of medical best practices by medical professionals
- Improve coverage of mental health services
- Improve chronic disease management by patients and medical professionals

Adopt the recommendations of the Legislative Council Study Committee on Performance-Based Disease Management Program for Large Populations of which I am the Vice Chair.

Senior Care

Question:

Do you support or oppose the continuation of SeniorCare at current benefit levels? How would you ensure the SeniorCare program continues beyond December 2009?

AARP POSITION

AARP Wisconsin and others are working on a plan to improve SeniorCare and provide an even more meaningful benefit to most participants of the program. The plan will be cost neutral to the state and will need legislative approval. According to a recent AARP Rx Watchdog Report, the cost of prescription drugs rose by more than 50%, on average, between 2002 and 2007. In Wisconsin about 100,000 Wisconsinites age 65 and older get help with the cost of their prescription drugs through SeniorCare. However, SeniorCare's future is uncertain because federal funding for the popular program will end in December 2009.

CANDIDATE:
TOM KIMMET
REPUBLICAN

Candidate chose not to respond.

CANDIDATE:
JULIE LASSA
DEMOCRAT

I support SeniorCare because it offers affordable prescription drug coverage that many seniors count on and it is superior to the federal Medicare prescription program in terms of coverage and savings.

I was active in helping to secure the current federal waiver by contacting the Secretary of the US Department of Health and Human Services and encouraging my constituents to register their support for SeniorCare with him as well.

I will continue to work with my constituents, legislative colleagues, Governor Doyle and our federal elected representatives to ensure that either a permanent waiver is put in place or that an equivalent or superior federal prescription drug program is adopted.



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.

AARP Wisconsin
222 West Washington Ave #600
Madison, WI, 53703
1-866-448-3611

Voter Information Inside

AARP 222 West Washington Ave. #600
Madison WI 53703