



# 2008 AARP Voters' Guide

## State Senate District No. 10

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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Use the power.  
**Vote.**

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## 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:  
**SHEILA HARSDORF**  
REPUBLICAN

Candidate chose not to respond.

CANDIDATE:  
**ALISON PAGE**  
DEMOCRAT

In the State Senate, my aim is to help build a great State of Wisconsin that we can pass on to future generations. To achieve this goal, we need to create access to affordable, quality health care for everyone in Wisconsin, invest in our education system, support our small businesses and conserve our natural resources.

## 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:  
**SHEILA HARSDORF**  
REPUBLICAN

Candidate chose not to respond.

CANDIDATE:  
**ALISON PAGE**  
DEMOCRAT

After spending my life working as a registered nurse and health care administrator, I have seen how expensive, inefficient and unfair our current system is. We need to find a solution that increases access, improves the quality of care we receive, and that doesn't leave anyone behind.

There is definitely work to be done to improve recent proposals for reform, because they do not adequately address some unique needs of people who live in the 10th Senate District, nor are they workable solutions for most small business owners. In the State Senate, I will bring all of the key players to the table to ensure that a statewide solution benefits everyone.

## 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:  
**SHEILA HARSDORF**  
REPUBLICAN

Candidate chose not to respond.

CANDIDATE:  
**ALISON PAGE**  
DEMOCRAT

As a healthcare administrator, I have an in-depth understanding of how money flows through the healthcare system. The most expensive parts of the healthcare system – emergency care and care of chronic illness – are exactly the parts that we will have a decreased need for if we enable people in Wisconsin to be responsible for their health over the course of their lifetimes.

## 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:  
**SHEILA HARSDORF**  
REPUBLICAN

Candidate chose not to respond.

CANDIDATE:  
**ALISON PAGE**  
DEMOCRAT

SeniorCare is a highly effective program that provides enhanced benefits to Wisconsin seniors that are not available in other states.

I applaud the Wisconsin Congressional delegation for securing funding through 2009, and in the State Senate I will fight to defend SeniorCare for years to come.





*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**

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