Montana
THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE AND 50+ VOTER MINDSET
Benenson Strategy Group and GS Strategy Group conducted 950 interviews – by phone, using registered voter lists – with likely 2018 voters in Montana from September 6th through 16th 2018. This included an oversample of 350 voters 50+ for additional analysis. Data was weighed to ensure it was representative of the likely voting universe.

The margin of error for the entire data set is ±3.10% at the 95% confidence level.
• Among likely voters over the age of 50, the margin of error is ±3.58% at the 95% confidence level.

Due to rounding, answer choices may not always add up to 100%.

Note: All reported data is among 50+ voters except when otherwise specified.

Partisan crosstabs in this report represent how people identify themselves when asked, not how they are registered.

For more information, contact Kate Bridges at kbridges@aarp.org
Among those on the ballot this November, Senator Tester leads in favorability, while Representative Gianforte and challenger Kathleen Williams are in a close race.

Plenty of ticket splitting going on, while voters 50+ and Independents drive Tester’s lead in the horserace.

Younger voters are leaning Republican; 50+ voters and Independents are leaning Democratic.
Voters 50+ feel like Senator Tester better understands the challenges they face.

**Among 50+ Voters:**

- **Who better understands the challenges facing older Americans?**
  - 31% Rosendale
  - 54% Tester

- **Who better represents your views on Social Security and Medicare?**
  - 33% Rosendale
  - 53% Tester

A slim majority feels Senator Tester is ready to cross the aisle to get things done.

**Which of the following comes closest to your opinion…**

**Among 50+ Voters:**

- Jon Tester has been an independent Senator, working on both sides of the aisle to fight for the best interest of Montana families
  - 51
- Jon Tester has sided too often with liberals in the Senate on things that harm Montana families
  - 38

- Matt Rosendale will be an independent Montana voice in the US Senate
  - 29
- Matt Rosendale will only support Donald Trump’s agenda in the US Senate
  - 59
When asked yes or no on I-185, Montana voters support the initiative 56 to 36.

Initiative 185 increases taxes on tobacco products and uses the funds to expand Medicaid, veterans care, smoking prevention, and long-term care for seniors and people with disabilities.

There is a desire to expand Medicaid and it is bipartisan.

Would support expanding Medicaid to provide health care coverage to individuals earning less than 17,000 dollars a year.

Democrats: 91% support
Independents: 68% support
Republicans: 52% support
Understanding the support and opposition for Initiative 185

On an open-ended basis, **health concerns about tobacco** and **potential to raise more funds for Medicaid and healthcare** push the bulk of the support for Initiatives 185. Meanwhile, resistance about **raising taxes** or **unfairly targeting smokers** underpins opposition to Initiative 185.

### What's the main reason you would vote “yes” on this initiative?
*Open-ended responses among all likely Voters who'd vote “Yes” on Initiative 185*

- Dangers of tobacco use: 41
- Funding for Medicaid / Health Care: 30
- Taxing tobacco use: 28
- Right thing to do: 7
- Will help veterans: 5
- Will help seniors: 2

### What are your biggest concerns about this initiative?
*Open-ended responses among all likely Voters who’d vote “No” on Initiative 185*

- Raising taxes: 26
- Unfair targeting of smokers: 19
- Funds won't be spent on health care: 14
- Expansion of Medicaid: 9
- Won't work: 7
- Don't know enough about it: 7
The 50+ Voter Mindset
Profile Of Montana 50+ Likely Voters

**Gender**
- 53% female
- 47% male

**AARP**
- 41% are AARP members

**Race**
- 91% White
- 5% Native American
- 4% Other

**Education**
- College Graduate: 46%
- Some College or Technical School: 30%
- High School or Less: 22%

**Employment**
- Employed full-time: 28%
- Employed part-time: 5%
- Retired, not working: 48%
- Retired, working part-time: 11%

**Living In...**
- 35% Urban
- 53% Rural
- 10% Suburban

**Age**
- 50-59: 27%
- 60-69: 38%
- 70+: 36%

**Party ID**
- Democrat: 26%
- Independent: 42%
- Republican: 31%
Jobs, the economy and health care are top-of-mind among Montana’s 50+ voters – far out-pacing concerns about the environment, taxes and education. Even among voters 65+, jobs and the economy are top responses.

Just 1-in-3 50+ voters are very confident they will have enough money to live comfortably in retirement, with near-retirees the most concerned. 1-in-3 50-64 year olds are not confident about their financial security for their retirement, and just fewer than 1 in 4 are very confident.
Occupying Their Minds

On an open-ended basis, financial security -- health care costs, Social Security, retirement, cost of living -- are keeping Montanans up at night, followed by partisanship concerns, immigration, and global issues. When asked directly, partisanship and division in the national discourse are the top concerns.

HOW OFTEN DO YOU PERSONALLY WORRY ABOUT...
Among 50+ Voters

- Very often
- Somewhat often

A majority of voters in every party worry about this very often

- How divided America and Americans have become: 56%
- Prices rising faster than your income: 30%
- The quality of schools that your children or grandchildren go or will go to: 27%
- Not being able to afford the health care you or your family need: 23%
- Having to take care of an aging parent or family member: 18%
- Not being able to retire when you want to, for financial reasons: 15%
Montana’s 50+ voters widely support AARP’s priorities.

Lead by a desire to strengthen Social Security and Medicare so they protect society’s most vulnerable and prevent prescription drug companies from charging sky-high prices; across AARP’s key issues, 50+ voters in Montana, both Democrat and Republican, are on the same page as AARP.

If a candidate wanted to do this, would you…vote for them?

*Among 50+ Voters*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Definitely</th>
<th>Probably</th>
<th>May or May Not/Don't Know</th>
<th>Probably Not</th>
<th>Definitely Not</th>
<th>Definitely/Total Among Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen Social Security and Medicare to make them financially</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>27/59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stable and improve benefits to the most vulnerable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Require prescription drug companies to reduce the cost of prescriptions</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>34/57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create new ways to help Americans save for retirement</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>19/46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let health insurance companies deny coverage for people with</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
<td>8/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre-existing conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let health insurance companies charge people over 50 up to 600</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>percent more for insurance than people under 50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Montana’s 50+ voters think it’s high time the government did something to bring down out-of-control drug costs.

Remarkably, in an era of hyper partisanship, support for letting Medicare negotiate directly with drug companies gets nearly unanimous support among Montana’s 50+ voters— with especially strong support from Republicans.

But seven-in-ten of all 50+ voters in the state also want to make it possible to buy prescriptions from abroad, limit the profits pharmaceutical companies are allowed to make, and close loopholes that let pharmaceutical companies charge sky-high prices.

Support for policy proposals to lower the cost of prescription drugs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Proposal</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
<th>Support Among Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allow Medicare to negotiate with drug companies for lower prices</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow Americans to order prescription drugs from other countries if the price for that same drug is higher in the U.S</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit the profits that drug companies can make on medications</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close loopholes that allow pharmaceutical companies to keep prices high</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit what drug companies can spend on marketing, tv commercials, and other advertising</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WOULD YOU SAY THAT PRESCRIPTION DRUG COMPANIES....

Among 50+ Voters

24% Charge as much as they need to for drugs because research and development is expensive and many drugs fail to reach market

62% Charge as much as possible for drugs because they know that people who are sick, have a health condition or are in pain will pay for it
The 50+ Voter Mindset: Social Security

Social Security is one of the most important issues to 50+ voters. They want to see immediate action to shore it up, but they want to do so in a way that expands benefits to the most vulnerable and they are on guard against Congressional reforms that would harm seniors.

50+ voters want Social Security to be stable and improved for the most vulnerable…

According to projections in the latest Social Security Trustees' report, Social Security can pay full benefits for 16 more years, but if nothing is done to make the program financially sound for the long term, benefits will be cut by nearly 25% starting in 2034.

HOW SOON, IF AT ALL, DO YOU THINK THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO SOMETHING TO STRENGTHEN SOCIAL SECURITY FOR THE FUTURE?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Voters 50+</th>
<th>Dem 50+</th>
<th>Ind 50+</th>
<th>Rep 50+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immediately</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 5 years</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 15 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...But they worry that reforms, if not done right, could jeopardize seniors’ well being.

WHICH CONCERNS YOU MORE? Among 50+ Voters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>Total Vote For</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidate who would strengthen Social Security and Medicare to make</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>them financially stable and improve benefits to the most vulnerable</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate who would reform Social Security and Medicare to make</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>them financially stable</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress will make changes to Social Security that will harm seniors</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress won't make changes to Social Security and the program will go</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bankrupt</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both/Neither</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The 50+ Voter Mindset: Medicare & Medicaid

MEDICARE AT A GLANCE

Premium support is very unpopular among Montana’s 50+ voters.
A plurality fears Medicare reform of any kind may actually harm seniors more than it would help.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHICH CONCERNS YOU MORE? Among 50+ Voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a proposal in Congress which says that for future seniors, Medicare would no longer pay for health care services directly but instead would provide each senior with a set amount of money to help purchase an insurance plan in the private marketplace.

DO YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE THIS PROPOSAL, WHICH IS SOMETIMES CALLED PREMIUM SUPPORT?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you support or oppose this proposal?</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voters 50+</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats 50+</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents 50+</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans 50+</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MEDICAID AT A GLANCE

Medicaid is popular among Montana’s 50+ voters.
A strong majority of voters across party lines are favorable to the program.

WOULD YOU SAY YOU HAVE A FAVORABLE OR UNFAVORABLE VIEW OF MEDICAID? Among 50+ Voters

63% Favorable
76% Democrats
60% Independents
55% Republicans

27% Unfavorable