Awareness & Image
Joni Ernst is somewhat better known than Theresa Greenfield, but also has higher unfavorable ratings than her challenger among voters 50+.

U.S. Senate Race
The race for Senate is close among 50+ voters with Ernst holding a four-points edge. The 65+ break for the challenger by 14 points, while Ernst holds a commanding 21-point lead among 50-64 year-olds. A race with two female candidates still yields a small gender gap, with men 50+ favoring Ernst by 9 points, and women 50+ – completely up for grabs – favoring Greenfield by a point. Ernst buoyed her lead with an 11-point margin among 50+ Independents.

Presidential Race
Among voters 50+, the presidential race is also close, with Trump leading by two points, and with a wider margin among voters age 50-64. Biden’s advantage with voters 65+ and his out-performing Trump on winning partisans, is allowing Biden to keep this close.
A majority of voters 50+ worry that someone in their family will contract coronavirus. These fears are very different by party, with Democrats almost twice as likely as Republicans to hold them. Worry about the virus is slightly higher among women 50+ than men and among those age 65 and older than those 50-64.

A majority of Iowa voters 50+ say they would get vaccinated for the coronavirus if an FDA-approved vaccine were available. Democrats and voters age 65 and older are all more likely to say they would. Yet despite the higher level of worry, women 50+ are less likely than men 50+ to say they would get vaccinated.

A plurality of voters 50+, by a narrow one-point margin, want a candidate focused more on reopening businesses than on reducing the spread of the virus. More Democrats, women 50+ and voters age 65+ want politicians to focus more on containing the pandemic than opening businesses.

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**Worry you or someone in your family contracting coronavirus (% worry very/somewhat often)**

- Overall 50+: 55%
  - Democrats 50+: 61%
  - Independents 50+: 49%
  - Republicans 50+: 53%
- 50-64: 48%
  - Men 50+: 60%
  - Women 50+: 51%
- 65+: 61%

**If an FDA-approved vaccine to prevent coronavirus was available right now at no cost, would you agree to be vaccinated? (% Yes)**

- Overall 50+: 55%
  - Democrats 50+: 61%
  - Independents 50+: 49%
  - Republicans 50+: 53%
- 50-64: 48%
  - Men 50+: 60%
  - Women 50+: 51%
- 65+: 61%

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**Are you more likely to vote for a candidate who is focused on...**

- **Rebuilding the economy by reopening businesses and getting people back to work.**
  - Republicans: 76%-19%
  - Age 50-64: 56%-40%
  - Men 50+: 53%-44%

- **Keeping families healthy and reducing the spread of Coronavirus in your community.**
  - Democrats: 80%-18%
  - Age 50-64: 54%-40%
  - Women 50+: 51%-44%

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[https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00401.017](https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00401.017)
Iowa allows every voter to vote absentee by mail, which is the choice of a plurality of voters 50+. Two-in-five of voters 50+ plan to vote in-person in Election Day. Absentee voting is higher among voters age 65+ and Democrats. A majority of Republicans 50+ say they plan to vote in-person on Election Day.

A majority of Iowa voters 50+ express concerns about the coming vote. The larger of these concerns is on the impact of reduction in the postal service on absentee ballots. This worry is highest among Democrats and is higher among those 65+ than voters age 50-64, and among women 50+ than men 50+. On the other end of the spectrum is the concern about vote by mail fraud, held by three-in-four Republicans 50+ and a majority of Independents 50+. Voters 65+, a majority who plan to vote by mail, are less concerned about fraud than voters age 50-64.
Wide majorities of voters 50+ say Social Security and Medicare are very important issues when deciding their vote for U.S. Senate. Huge majorities also say they are more likely to vote for a candidate that fights to protect funding for Social Security and Medicare, to lower prescription drug prices and for access to affordable long-term care options.

Despite the partisan division observed with other issues, these issues unite voters 50+ and are available to candidates looking to forge greater levels of support among this critical voting bloc.

Q: Please tell me if would you be more likely or less likely to support a candidate for the U.S. Senate that advocated this position?

Substantial majorities of 50+ voters from both parties cite the importance of Social Security and Medicare on their Senate vote, and similarly would vote for a candidate fighting for these issues as well as for lower Rx drug prices and access to affordable long-term care.

Importance of Social Security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Importance of Medicare

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% extremely/very likely important on Senate vote

How important is this issue when deciding your vote for U.S. Senate?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Security</th>
<th>Medicare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>83%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% more likely to support a candidate for the U.S. Senate that advocated this position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protect Medicare</th>
<th>Protect S.S. Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medicare Rx Prices</th>
<th>Affordable LTC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>92%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<td>82%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### U.S. Senate Race - Gender

There is a small gender gap among voters 50+, with Greenfield up a single point with women but Ernst leading by nine among men.

The differences are especially clear among unmarried women, where Greenfield holds a sizable advantage, while Ernst leads among married women and men, and single men.

College grad women give Greenfield a 7 point lead, while non-college grad women favor Ernst by a point.

Greenfield leads Ernst among both women and men 65 and older, and Ernst leads among both genders among voters age 50-64. In each age cohort, Ernst does better among men.

### Iowa: Women 50+

**Joni Ernst**

- Women 50+  
  - Married: 56%
  - Unmarried: 54%

**Theresa Greenfield**

- Women 50+  
  - Married: 47%
  - Unmarried: 44%

**Net**

- Women 50+  
  - Married: +9
  - Unmarried: +16

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greenfield</th>
<th>Women 50+</th>
<th>Ernst</th>
<th>Net Ernst</th>
<th>Net Ernst</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>Likely Voters 50+</td>
<td>+9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>+16</td>
<td>Voters 50-64</td>
<td>+26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>-16</td>
<td>Voters 65+</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>+6</td>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>+15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>-8</td>
<td>Urban/Suburban</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>+7</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>+14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>Less than College</td>
<td>+8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>College Grads</td>
<td>+12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>+8</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>+9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>-16</td>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>+10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Among all likely voters 50+**

- Joni Ernst: 50%
- Theresa Greenfield: 46%
- Net Ernst: +4
Profile Of Iowa 50+ Likely Voters

AARP commissioned the bipartisan polling team of Fabrizio Ward & Hart Research to conduct polls in five states with key U.S. Senate races, including Iowa. The firms interviewed 1200 likely Iowa voters, which includes a statewide representative sample of 800 likely voters, with oversamples of 400 likely voters age 50 and older, between Aug. 30 and Sept. 5, 2020. The interviews were conducted via landline and cellphone. The margin of sampling error for both the 800 statewide sample and the 800 total sample of likely voters age 50+ is ±3.5%.

Due to rounding, answer choices may not always add up to 100%. All reported data is among 50+ voters except when otherwise specified. Partisan crosstabs in this report are based on self-reported party registration.

For more information, contact Kate Bridges at kbridges@aarp.org

**GENDER**

54% female

46% male

**AARP**

36% are AARP members

**RACE**

92% White

6% Non-White

2% Refused

**EDUCATION**

Less than 4-Year College

67

4-Year College Graduate+

32

**EMPLOYMENT**

Employed

36

Unemployed

4

Retired

55

Homemaker

4

**PARTY ID**

Democrat

37

Independent

23

Republican

40

**AGE**

50-64

51

65+

49

**LIVING IN...**

47% Rural

27% Urban

23% Suburban

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