

**AARP News Release
For Immediate Release
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Survey Finds AARP Members Back Critical Provisions of Health Care Reform Legislation

[Columbia, SC]—A new poll of AARP members released today finds strong support across party and ideological lines for elements of health care reform included in the Affordable Health Care for America Act, which recently passed the House of Representatives. The bill, which strictly limits how much more insurance companies can charge based on age and closes the Medicare prescription drug doughnut hole, was endorsed by AARP.

Among AARP members, strong majorities reported that many of the bill's key provisions were convincing reasons to support the legislation. These include strictly limiting insurers from charging much higher premiums because of age (68%), closing the gap in Medicare's prescription drug coverage known as the doughnut hole (69%) and improving coverage for critical preventive services like cancer screenings (77%).

“Despite an inflammatory debate on a very personal and important issue, our members—across party and ideological lines—support health care reform that protects Medicare, lowers the price of prescription drugs, increases their access to coverage and protects their choice of doctors, said Jane Wiley, AARP South Carolina state director.

While a partisan divide was evident when respondents were asked about the current plan in Congress, AARP members supported the legislation by more than a 2-1 (63%-30%) margin. More than half of self-described independents indicated support for the plan.

Other reform elements with high levels of support among AARP members included ensuring Americans can see the doctor of their choice (76%), stopping insurance companies from denying coverage because of a person's health history (75%) and ensuring Americans can keep their current coverage (78%). Majorities of self-identified Republicans supported most of the reform elements presented, including stopping discrimination because of pre-existing conditions (66%), covering routine preventive care (64%) and allowing Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices (64%).

Wiley added: “The bill recently passed by the House incorporates the reforms that our members care most about. We'll continue the fight for these critical elements as the Senate takes up its own legislation in the coming weeks. Our members, and all older Americans, are counting on lawmakers to reform the health care system this year.”

Starting on Tuesday, November 17th, AARP will launch a new national television ad on a mix of news, lifestyle, cable and sports channels. The ad, entitled “HELP,” demonstrates that people from all walks of life are feeling stranded by the current health

care system. It calls attention to the need for the kind of health care reform AARP has been fighting for: reform that will put patients first, protect Medicare, bring down drug costs and ensure that no one can be denied affordable health care because of their age or health history.

AARP surveyed its members on key health care reform provisions supported by AARP, as well as other contentious issues being discussed in the debate. The telephone survey, fielded October 30 to November 8, 2009, was conducted with randomly selected members of AARP. The nationally representative sample of 803 AARP members has a margin of error of +/- 3.5%.

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