



# **2003 AARP Alabama Member Opinion Survey**



Published February 2004



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**Report Prepared by David Cicero**

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AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization dedicated to making life better for people 50 and over. We provide information and resources; engage in legislative, regulatory and legal advocacy; assist members in serving their communities; and offer a wide range of unique benefits, special products, and services for our members. These include *AARP The Magazine*, published bimonthly; *AARP Bulletin*, our monthly newspaper; *AARP Segunda Juventud*, our quarterly newspaper in Spanish; *NRTA Live and Learn*, our quarterly newsletter for 50+ educators; and our Web site, [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org). We have staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

### **Acknowledgements**

AARP staff from the Alabama State Office, State Affairs, and Knowledge Management contributed to the design and implementation of the study. Special thanks go to AARP staff including Joan Carter, Ilene Henshaw, John Luehrs, Anita Ritter, Gretchen Straw, Rachelle Cummins, Darlene Mathews, and Cheryl Barnes. David Cicero wrote the report. For more information, contact Rachelle Cummins at (202) 434-6297.

## Survey Highlights

The *AARP Alabama Member Opinion Survey* was conducted from April through May, 2003. A random sample of 2,000 AARP members in Alabama was selected from AARP's membership database. Fifty-five percent of the sampled Alabama members returned surveys by the due date, providing 1,099 useable surveys for analysis.

- Alabama members are extremely concerned about making sure that their pension benefits or retirement savings are safe and secure and having access to affordable prescription drugs.
- The top legislative priorities of Alabama members are access to affordable prescription drugs and the availability, cost, and quality of health care.
- Members say it would be important to be able to choose and receive long-term care services at home. If faced with a need for long-term care, most Alabama members prefer to pay a nurse or aide or have family and friends provide in-home care.
- Members support increasing funding for services that would allow persons to stay in their own homes longer, even if it meant reducing funds for nursing homes.
- Alabama members believe ensuring the availability of a broad range of long-term care services that help persons stay in their own home should be a top or high priority for AARP.

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## About This Survey

This mail survey explores the opinions of Alabama AARP members. The survey includes questions about personal concerns, AARP roles and activities at the state level, and options for long-term care.

AARP conducted the *AARP Alabama Member Opinion Survey* from April to May 2003. Researchers at AARP randomly selected 2,000 AARP members in Alabama making sure to select members from each of three age groups: 50-59, 60-74, and 75+. Each selected member received a pre-notification postcard, the survey itself, a reminder postcard, and a second survey. 1,099 members returned the survey, making the response rate 55 percent. The sample was weighted by age group to represent the actual composition of AARP members in Alabama. The sampling error for this study is  $\pm 3.0$  percent.

In addition to presenting the opinions of all AARP members in Alabama, this report describes the differences among the above mentioned age groups' responses to the survey. Due to the large sample size of the survey, even minor differences can represent significant trends within age groups. Similarly, a relatively small percent of people with a particular experience or opinion can represent a large number of people in Alabama. There are currently 397,410 AARP members in Alabama. They comprise 30 percent of the 50+ population.

This report contains three appendices: the **Core Question Tables** contains the three age group responses for each item in four core questions; **Segments at a Glance** summarizes top-rated findings for each age group; and the **Annotated Questionnaire** is an actual survey with weighted responses of Alabama members.

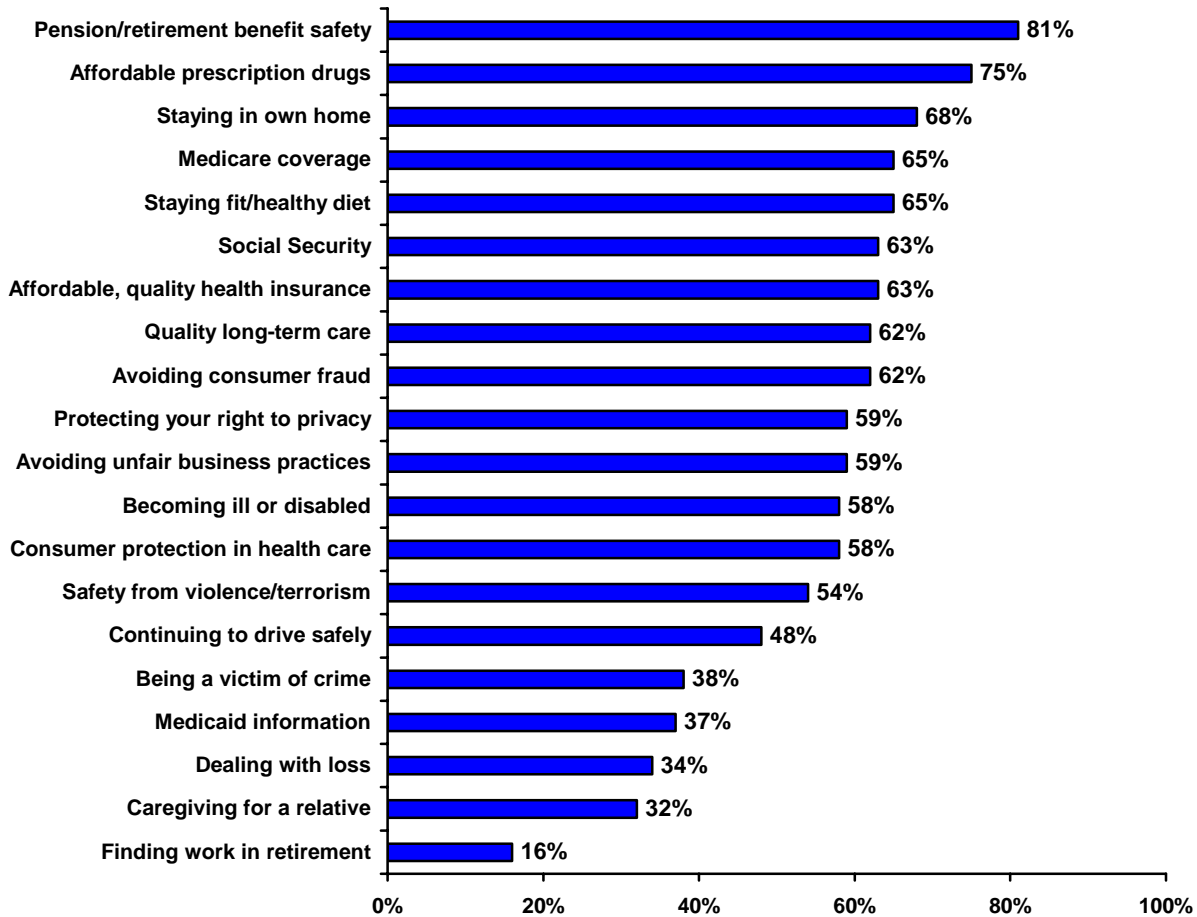
# Findings

## Member Concerns

### What issues concern Alabama members the most?

Over 80 percent of AARP members in Alabama report being extremely concerned about the safety of their pension or retirement benefits. Three-quarters of members are also extremely concerned about the affordability of prescription drugs in retirement. Over six in ten members are extremely concerned about their ability to stay in their own homes as they age, having Medicare as a basis for health care in retirement, staying fit, having Social Security as a base for retirement income, and the availability of affordable, quality health insurance. AARP members in Alabama are least worried about finding work in retirement, caring for relatives, and dealing with the loss of a loved one.

**Extreme Concerns among Alabama Members**  
Weighted n = 1099



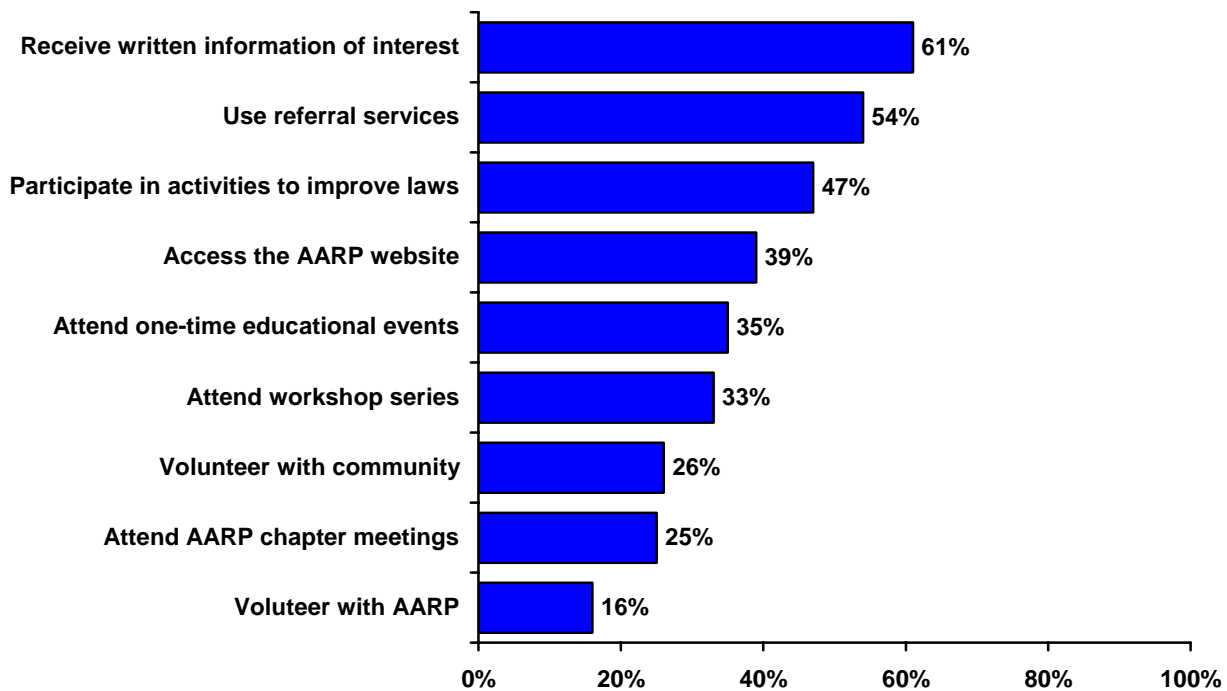
Overall, fewer younger members have extreme concerns than older members. Members age 60 and above express extreme concerns more often than members age 50-59 on all five of the top five personal concerns. However, members age 50-59 are more likely to have extreme concerns about issues found lower on the list such as finding work in retirement, providing care or financial support to relatives, and having adequate information on Medicaid. See Appendix A for age group differences in the 20 issues rated in the survey.

## **Member Interaction with AARP**

### **What types of opportunities through AARP would Alabama members use?**

Alabama members were asked to check what opportunities, if offered by AARP, they would personally use to address their interests or concerns. Members report interest in receiving written information pertaining to their interests or concerns and using an AARP referral service. Members also express interest in activities designed to improve laws. However, respondents are less interested in volunteering with AARP or in the community and attending AARP chapter meetings. Overall, 86 percent would use at least one opportunity.

**Opportunities Alabama Members Would Personally Use**  
**Weighted n = 1099**



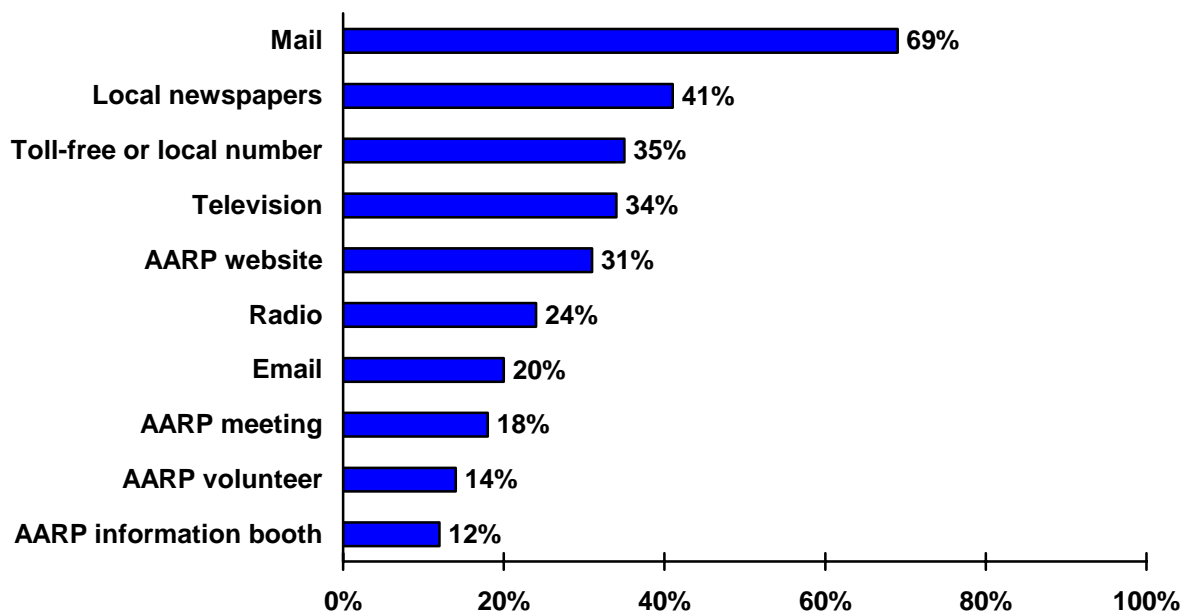


Generally, younger members are more likely to indicate interest in activities than older members. Most notably, only 27 percent of 75+ year olds would access the AARP website as compared to 56 percent of 50-59 year olds. These younger members are also much more likely to show interest in attending educational events and using referral services. However, members of all ages equally express interest in participating in activities to improve state laws, policies, regulations, or practices. See Appendix A for age group differences in the nine opportunities listed in the survey.

## How do Alabama members want to find out about AARP activities?

The best way to reach AARP members in Alabama is through the mail. Nearly 70 percent of respondents report this method as a way in which they would like to receive information. Secondly, two out of five members want to see information in their local newspapers. Not many members want to visit an AARP information booth, speak with a volunteer, or attend chapter meetings.

**Options for Learning about AARP Activities in the Community**  
Weighted n = 1099



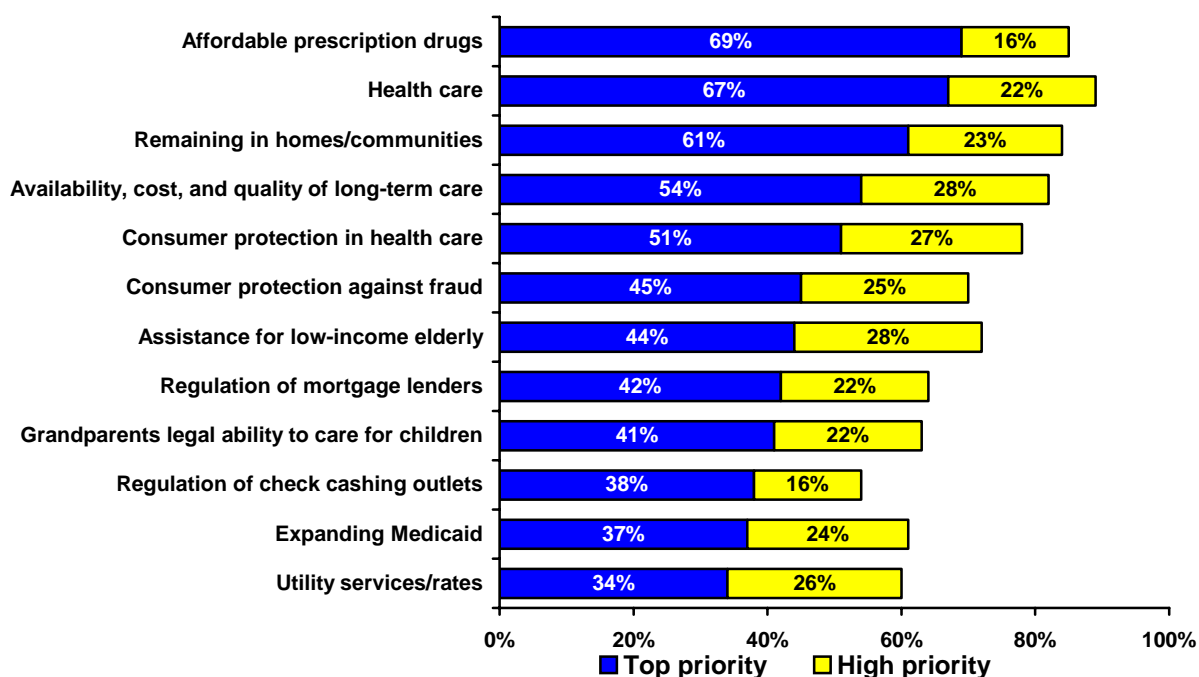
Members age 75 and older are more likely than younger members to want to read about AARP activities in the local newspaper (50% vs. 40% respectively). Over half (51%) of members age 50-59 want to access information online, while only 31 percent of 60-74 year olds and nine percent of 75+ wish to do the same. Not surprisingly, the 50-59 age group is also more likely to want to receive e-mails about these activities. Overall, it appears that members of the oldest age group primarily want to receive information by mail or newspaper, whereas younger members have more diverse preferences. See Appendix A for age group differences in the ten ways to find out about AARP activities.

## Member Legislative Priorities

### What are the top legislative priorities for Alabama members?

Alabama members believe that AARP's top legislative priorities should be access to affordable prescription drugs; availability, cost, and quality of health care; and how older persons can remain in their homes/communities as they age. Members place less priority on maintaining low utility/service rates, expanding Medicaid, and regulating check cashing outlets.

**Top and High Priority Legislative Issues for Alabama Members**  
Weighted n = 1099



The issue of availability, cost, and quality of health care has similar top priority ratings across the age groups. When differences do occur, members age 50-59 are more likely to think that most issues should be a top priority. Two notable exceptions are remaining in your own home as you age and consumer protection against fraud: Concern for these issues increases with age. See Appendix A for age group differences in the 12 legislative priorities rated in the survey.

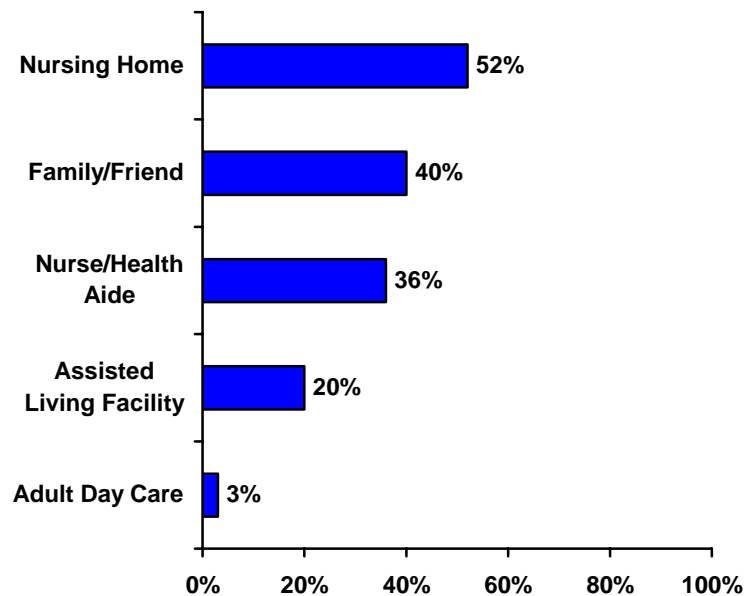
## Member Experience and Opinions on Long-Term Care

### Have Alabama members needed long-term care in the last five years?

Less than one in four (23%) Alabama members or members of their families needed long-term care within the past five years. This translates into about 91,500 members who have had experience with long-term care.

Members who needed long-term care for themselves or a family member within the last five years were asked to indicate what type of care they used. Over half report using a nursing home, while 40 percent say family and friends helped. Only three percent used the services of adult day care.

**Type of Long-Term Care Services Used**  
Base n = 248 who needed care

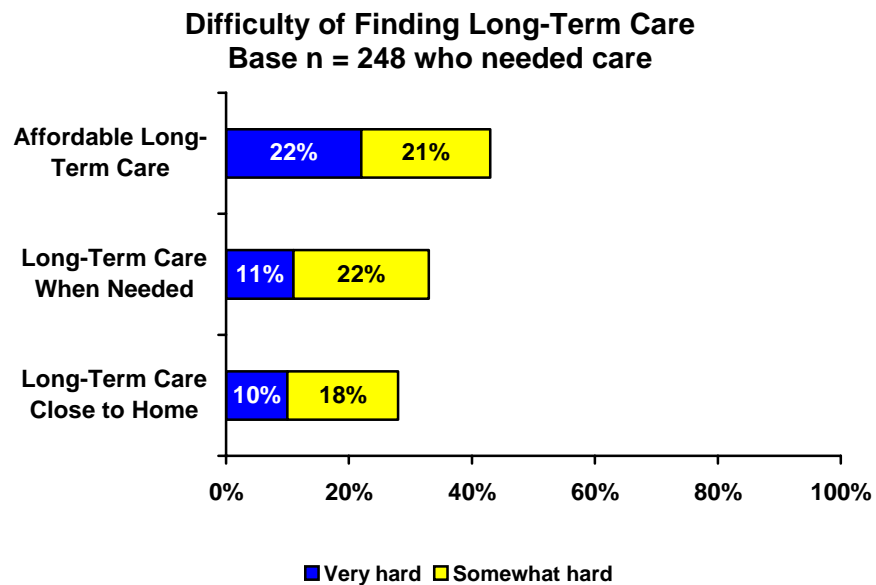


## How do Alabama members rate the quality of long-term care received?

AARP asked those who personally used or had any member of their family use long-term care services about their experience with these services. Members were most satisfied with the care given by family or friends while they remained in their own homes. Over nine in ten members rate this type of care as excellent (53%) or good (38%). Members who lived in nursing homes were the most disappointed with care. Over 30 percent rated care from nursing homes as fair (24%) or poor (7%). Eighty-five percent of members who received care in an assisted living facility<sup>1</sup> and 86 percent of members who received care at home with the help of skilled professionals<sup>2</sup> rate the service as either excellent or good.

## How hard was it for Alabama members to find long-term care?

Among those needing long-term care services, more than two in five say it was very or somewhat hard to find *affordable care*, and about one in three say it was very or somewhat hard to find care *when it was needed*. Over one in four say it was very or somewhat hard finding long-term care *within a reasonable distance* from home.



<sup>1</sup> Results should be interpreted with caution because just 50 respondents received care in an assisted living facility or had a family member that did so.

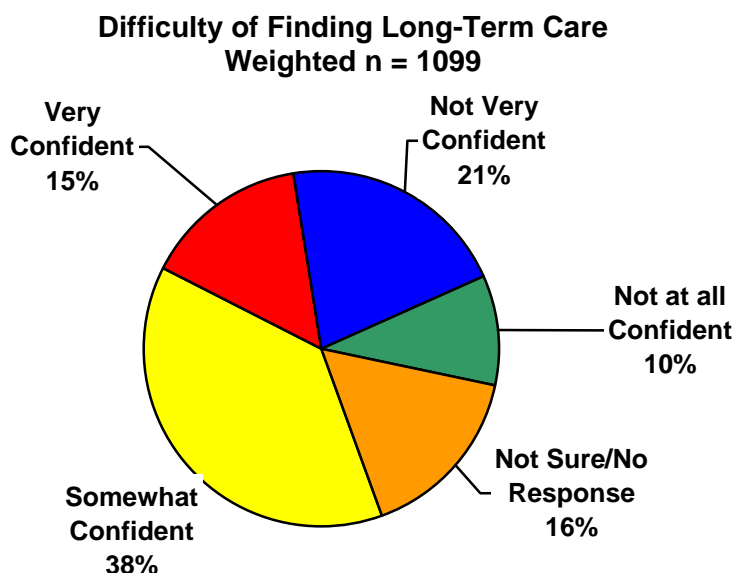
<sup>2</sup> Results should be interpreted with caution because only 88 respondents or their family members received care from a paid professional at home.

## Will Alabama members or their families need long-term care in the next five years?

Half of Alabama members indicate that it is very likely (22%) or somewhat likely (28%) that they or a member of their family will need long-term care sometime in the next five years. If these projections hold true, over 198,700 Alabama members will touch the long-term care system in this timeframe. However, roughly one-fourth of members believe that they are not at all likely (7%) or not very likely (22%) to need care. One in five members is either uncertain about the possibility (18%) or did not respond to the question (3%).

## How confident are Alabama members about finding appropriate long-term care services in their community?

Nearly one in three members is not confident that they could find necessary long-term care. Slightly more than half of members fall into the somewhat confident or very confident range.



Members were provided a list of possible information sources and asked where they would go to find out about long-term care services. Most members choose their doctor (55%) or family or friend (37%). Other information sources members cite are Health and Human Services (23%), hospital discharge planners (23%), AARP (19%), and Area Agency on Aging (18%). Very few members indicated that they would find out about long-term care from the newspaper (4%), the Internet (6%), a clergy member (10%), or the phone book (11%).

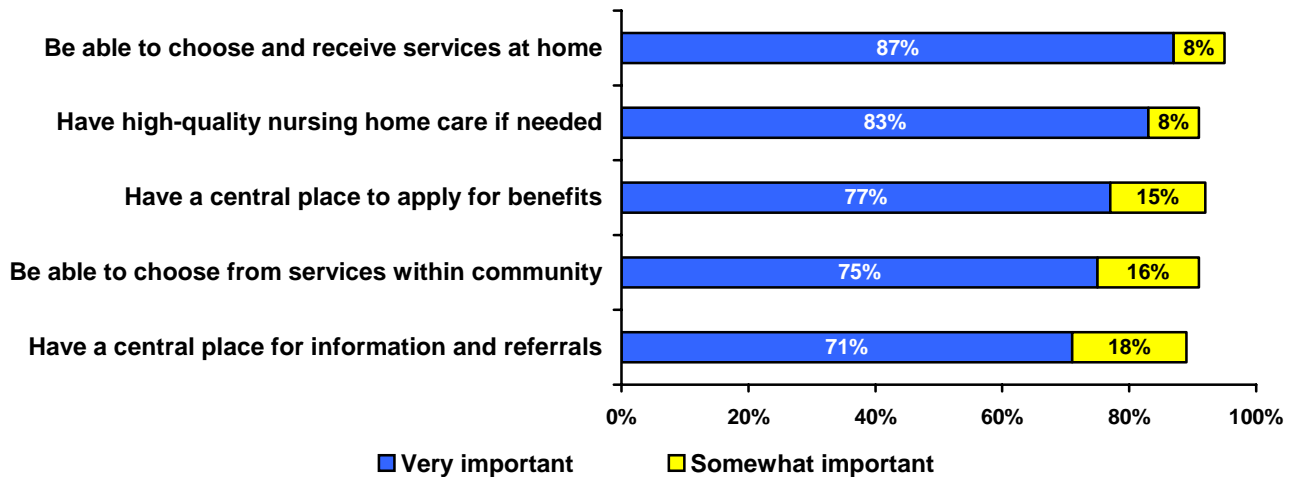
## What issues would be important to members negotiating the long-term care system?

Alabama members were asked to note the importance of five potential features of long-term care services. The items explore the importance of community based options, nursing home care, and one stop shopping. Members find all of these features to be important.

Alabama members view being able to “choose and receive services that allow you to stay home as long as possible” as the most important feature. Ninety-five percent of members believe this option is very important (87%) or somewhat important (8%). In addition, over 80 percent of members indicate that having “...high quality nursing home care available...” is very important.

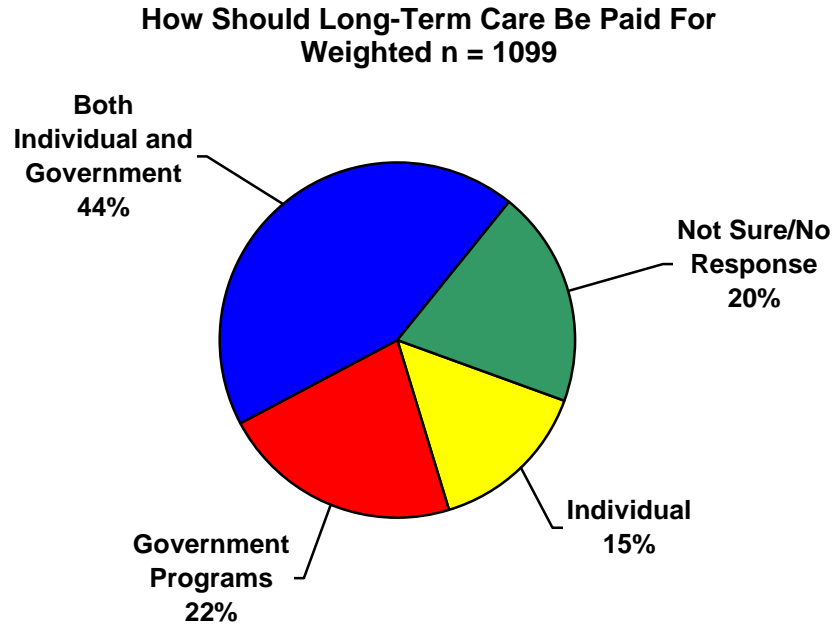
**“If you or a family member needed long-term care services, how important would it be to you to...”**

Weighted n = 1099



## How should long-term care services be paid?

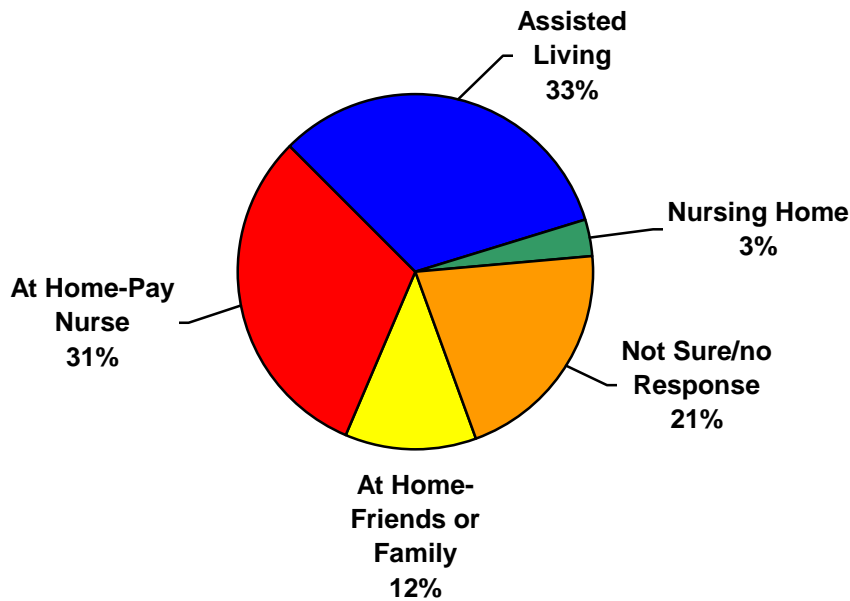
More than two in five Alabama members believe that both the individual and the government should share the costs of long-term care.



## Where do Alabama members prefer to receive long-term care?

When asked to specify what type of care Alabama members would select should the need arise,<sup>3</sup> over 30 percent indicate that they would opt for an assisted living program. Another 31 percent would pay a nurse to come into their home, while 12 percent would rely on friends and family, and only three percent would choose a nursing home. Another way to view these findings is that 43 percent of members would choose to remain in their own home, either with the help of a paid professional or friends and family. One in five Alabama members are not sure or did not answer the question. This finding, coupled with 30 percent of members being unsure of their ability to find care, may indicate that Alabama members need more information concerning their options. In fact, nearly 60 percent of people who are unsure about what type of long-term care they would want are also not confident about their abilities to find care should the situation arise. This compares to only 40 percent of members who have considered their options and know which one they would choose.

**Where Alabama Members Prefer to Receive Long-Term Care**  
Weighted n= 994



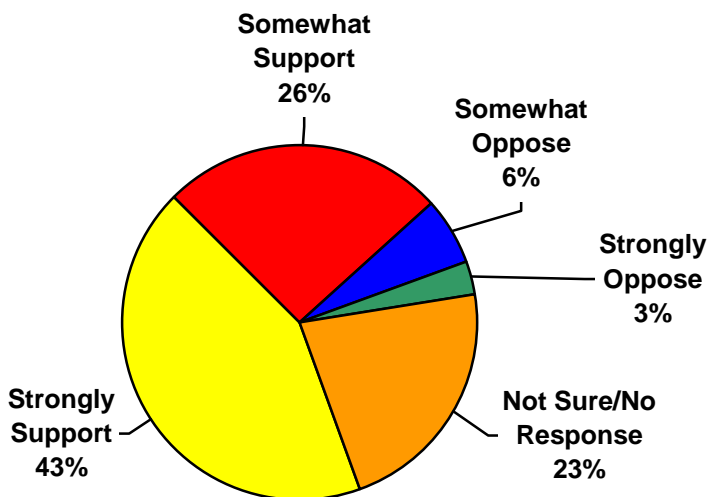
<sup>3</sup> 115 respondents were excluded from this analysis because they reported more than one answer.



## Do Alabama members support funding for programs that would allow people to stay in their own homes?

Alabama members were asked to indicate how much they would support increasing state funding for programs that would allow people to stay in their own homes by utilizing services such as adult day care. Such a program would most likely cut into Medicaid's nursing home assistance, which currently pays for eight out of ten nursing home residents. Alabama members overwhelmingly support this idea. Sixty-nine percent of respondents either somewhat or strongly support this action, while only nine percent oppose. The other 23 percent are unsure or did not answer this question.

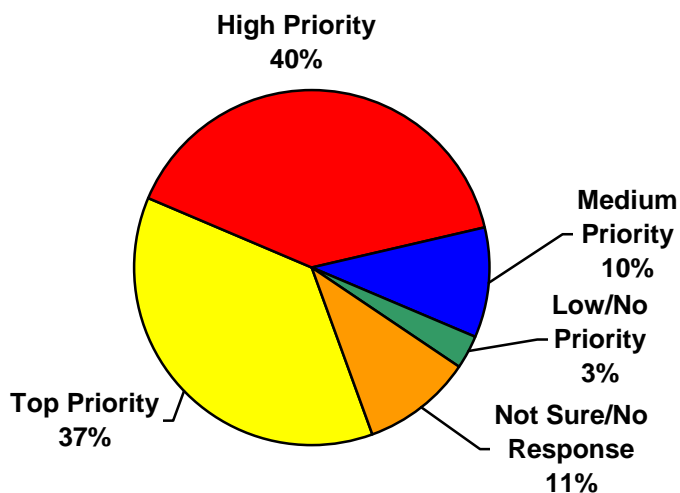
Views on Increasing Funding for Programs Designed to Allow People to Stay in Their Own Homes  
Weighted n = 1099



## How much of a priority is it for AARP to work on ensuring a range of long-term care services?

Nearly eight in ten Alabama Members believe that ensuring a range of long-term care services should be a top (37%) or high priority (40%) of AARP. Only three percent rated this as a low priority or not a priority.

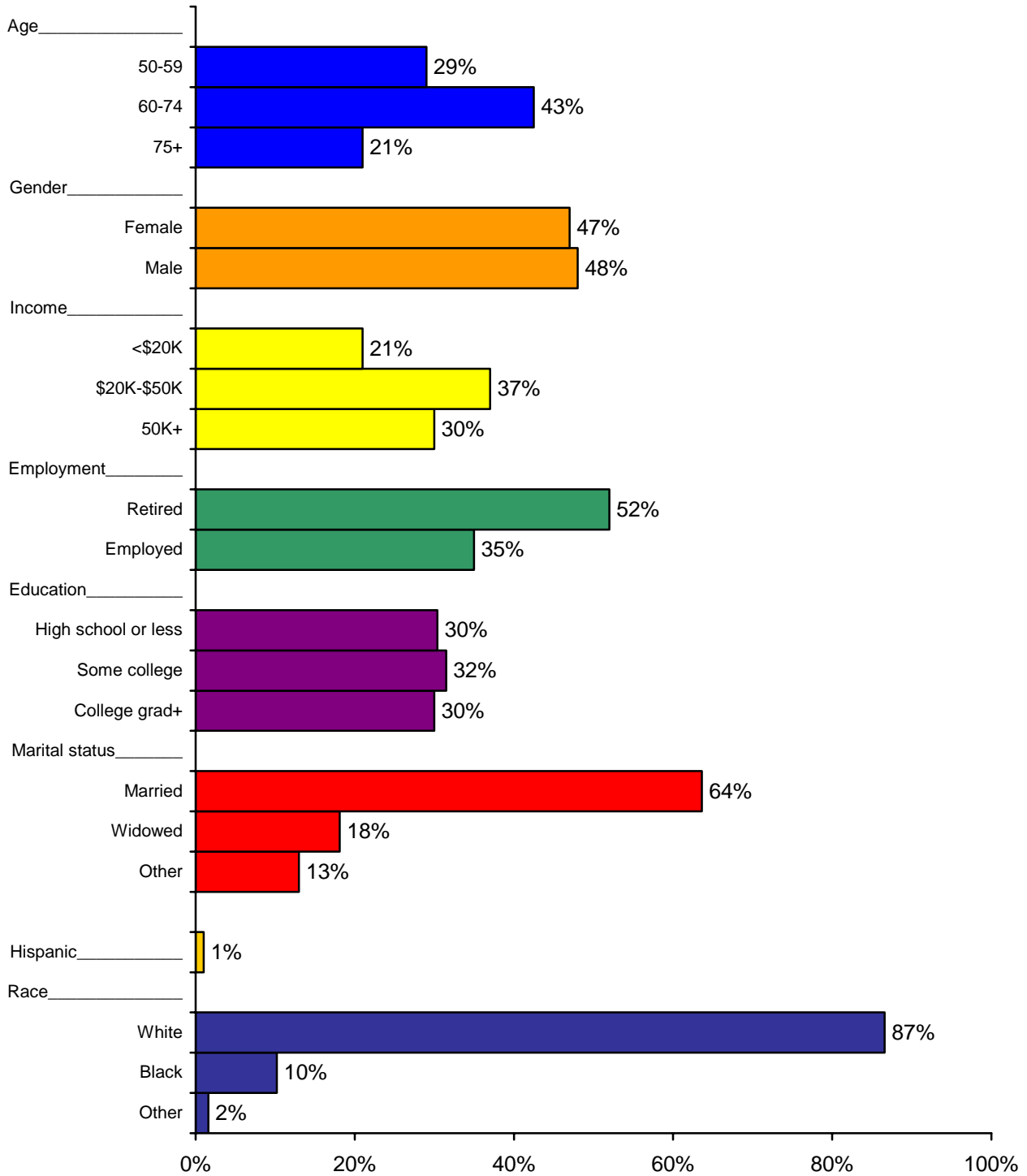
**Priority for Ensuring Broad Range of Long-Term Care Services  
That Allow Persons to Stay in Their Own Home  
Weighted n = 1099**



Members 60 and older are more likely to say that ensuring the availability of a broad range of long-term care services that will help persons stay in their own home should be a top priority for AARP than younger members (46% vs. 34%).

## Demographic Characteristics

Weighted n = 1099



## Conclusions

Overall, members' concerns and legislative priorities are consistent with AARP's strategic priorities. In particular, members express the most concern about making sure that their pension benefits and retirement savings are safe and secure, having access to affordable prescription drugs, staying in their own homes as they age, and having Medicare as a basis for retirement health care coverage. For the most part, members' top legislative priorities parallel these issues. Each age group rates access to affordable prescription drugs as their top legislative priority, the availability, cost, and quality of health care as their second priority, and the ability to stay in their own homes as they age third.

Long-term care is an important issue for Alabama members. As mentioned above, members of all age groups rate being able to stay in their own homes as one of the three top legislative priorities as well as one of the three top personal concerns. This is compounded by the expectation of over half of the respondents to need long-term care in the next five years. Consistent with these opinions, 95 percent of Alabama members rate being "...able to choose and receive services at home" as either very or somewhat important, and 69 percent would support legislation designed to make this a possibility. Moreover, only three percent indicate that they would want to receive services in a nursing home. Yet, over half of Alabama members or their families who require care end up in a nursing home. In fact, people who received care in a nursing home rated the option with the least quality. Nearly eight in ten Alabama AARP members believe that helping people stay in their own homes as they age should be a high or top priority of AARP.

Alabama members are also not entirely confident that they would be able to receive long-term care when needed, which is supported by the accounts of members who have already sought care. Looking forward, 45 percent are not very confident, not at all confident, or unsure about their abilities to find long-term care if it was necessary; looking back on their experiences, over 40 percent had difficulty finding affordable long-term care when it was necessary. Members say they would turn to physicians, family/friends, health and human services, hospital discharge planners, or AARP for help finding long-term care providers.

Another important issue for AARP Alabama is how to reach its members. Members are most likely to say they would personally use written information on topics of interest to them or to use referral services. Direct mail is still the best way for members to learn about AARP activities in the community while local newspapers are the next best method.

Alabama members are deeply concerned with the issues facing their future, particularly those associated with retirement. Almost half say they would participate in activities to improve state laws, policies, practices or regulations that affect them.

## **Appendix A: Core Question Tables**

**Table 1**  
**Extremely Concerned About Key Issues**  
**By Age**

|  | Percent Extremely Concerned |                  |                  |                |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
|  | Age                         |                  |                  |                |
|  | Total<br>(n=1099)           | 50-59<br>(n=314) | 60-74<br>(n=467) | 75+<br>(n=232) |
| Safe and secure pension benefits/savings                                 | 81%                         | 79%              | 83%              | 83%            |
| Having access to affordable prescription drugs                           | 75                          | 75               | 76               | 76             |
| Staying in your own home as you age                                      | 68                          | 63               | 71               | 70             |
| Having Medicare as a base for retirement health coverage                 | 65                          | 61               | 67               | 69             |
| Staying physically fit/maintaining a healthy diet                        | 65                          | 60               | 68               | 67             |
| Having Social Security as base for retirement income                     | 63                          | 60               | 63               | 66             |
| Finding affordable, high quality health insurance                        | 63                          | 68               | 60               | 62             |
| Having high quality long-term care                                       | 62                          | 61               | 63               | 62             |
| Avoiding consumer fraud  | 62                          | 55               | 65               | 68             |
| Protecting your right to privacy   | 59                          | 56               | 63               | 61             |
| Avoiding business practices that are unfair or fraudulent                | 59                          | 54               | 65               | 61             |
| Becoming ill or disabled   | 58                          | 51               | 63               | 62             |
| Having consumer protections in health care plans, including managed care | 58                          | 59               | 59               | 57             |
| Keeping your family safe from acts of terrorism and violence             | 54                          | 44               | 58               | 61             |
| Continuing to drive safely   | 48                          | 36               | 52               | 57             |
| Being a victim of crime  | 38                          | 31               | 40               | 45             |
| Dealing with the loss of a family member                                 | 34                          | 33               | 34               | 36             |
| Having adequate information on Medicaid                                  | 37                          | 40               | 35               | 36             |
| Providing care or financial support                                      | 32                          | 36               | 31               | 28             |
| Finding work in retirement   | 16                          | 20               | 16               | 9              |

**Table 2**  
**Would Personally Use Opportunity If It Were Offered in Alabama**  
**By Age**

|  | Percent Would Personally Use the Opportunity |                  |                  |                |
|--|--|------------------|------------------|----------------|
|  | Total<br>(n=1099)                            | 50-59<br>(n=314) | 60-74<br>(n=467) | 75+<br>(n=232) |
| Receive written information  | 61%  | 72%              | 61%              | 53%            |
| Use referral services  | 54   | 66               | 53               | 47             |
| Participate in activities to improve state laws, policies, regulations, or practices | 47   | 51               | 48               | 48             |
| Access the AARP website  | 39   | 56               | 36               | 27             |
| Attend one-time educational events   | 35   | 43               | 36               | 26             |
| Attend a workshop series or several meetings/classes of interest                     | 33   | 39               | 32               | 28             |
| Volunteer your time with an organization in your community                           | 26   | 30               | 28               | 20             |
| Attend AARP Chapter meetings   | 25   | 28               | 27               | 20             |
| Volunteer your time to an AARP activity  | 16   | 19               | 17               | 13             |
| No answer  | 15   | 6                | 12               | 22             |

**Table 3**  
**How Alabama Members Want To Find Out About AARP Activities**  
**By Age**

|   | Percent Who Want to Find Out by Each Method |                          |                          |                        |
|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
|   | Age   |                          |                          |                        |
|   | <b>Total<br/>(n=1099)</b>                   | <b>50-59<br/>(n=314)</b> | <b>60-74<br/>(n=467)</b> | <b>75+<br/>(n=232)</b> |
| Receive information by mail, such as letter, brochure, flyer                          | 69  | 77                       | 69                       | 67                     |
| Read about local AARP activities in newspapers in your community                      | 41  | 40                       | 40                       | 50                     |
| Call a toll-free or local telephone number for a pre-recorded list of AARP activities | 35  | 39                       | 36                       | 33                     |
| Tune in to a local TV channel or program  | 34  | 34                       | 36                       | 34                     |
| Access AARP information online  | 31  | 51                       | 31                       | 9                      |
| Hear about them on a local radio station/program                                      | 24  | 30                       | 22                       | 23                     |
| Receive an email notification   | 20  | 29                       | 20                       | 10                     |
| Attend a meeting where AARP activities are described                                  | 18  | 19                       | 20                       | 18                     |
| Contact an AARP volunteer or AARP Chapter member                                      | 14  | 16                       | 14                       | 13                     |
| Visit an AARP kiosk, booth, or office in your community                               | 12  | 14                       | 13                       | 10                     |
| No answer   | 9   | 5                        | 7                        | 11                     |



**Table 4**  
**Top Legislative Priority Ratings for AARP in Alabama**  
**By Age**

|  | <b>Percent Top Priority</b> |                 |                |                |                |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|  | <b>Age</b>                  | <b>Total</b>    | <b>50-59</b>   | <b>60-74</b>   | <b>75+</b>     |
|  |                             | <b>(n=1099)</b> | <b>(n=314)</b> | <b>(n=467)</b> | <b>(n=232)</b> |
| Access to affordable prescription drugs                              |                             | 69              | 75             | 72             | 70             |
| Availability, cost, and quality of health care                       |                             | 67              | 73             | 70             | 68             |
| Availability, cost, and quality of long-term care services           |                             | 54              | 57             | 56             | 56             |
| Remaining in own homes or communities as age                         |                             | 61              | 59             | 67             | 66             |
| Consumer protection for health insurance, including managed care     |                             | 51              | 53             | 55             | 50             |
| Consumer protection against fraud                                    |                             | 45              | 38             | 50             | 56             |
| Assistance for older low-income residents                            |                             | 44              | 46             | 47             | 46             |
| Regulation of mortgage lenders to prevent abusive practices          |                             | 42              | 41             | 46             | 44             |
| Enabling grandparents caring for children to obtain legal services   |                             | 41              | 42             | 43             | 45             |
| Regulating fees charged by check-cashing outlets and pay-day lenders |                             | 38              | 33             | 44             | 43             |
| Expanding Medicaid   |                             | 37              | 42             | 37             | 39             |
| Utility services and rates   |                             | 34              | 34             | 36             | 36             |

## **Appendix B: Segments at a Glance**

## Segments at a Glance Members Age 50 to 59\*

(weighted base: 317)

|  |     |   |
|--|-----|---|
| <b>Top Six Personal Concerns</b>                           | 79% | Secure pension benefits/retirement savings        |
|  | 75% | Affordable prescription drugs                     |
|  | 68% | Affordable high quality health insurance          |
|  | 63% | Staying in your own home as you age               |
|  | 61% | Medicare as base for retirement health coverage   |
|  | 61% | High quality long-term care                       |
| <b>Top Five State Legislative Priorities</b>               | 75% | Affordable prescription drugs                     |
|  | 73% | Availability, cost, and quality of health care    |
|  | 59% | Remaining in own homes/communities as age         |
|  | 57% | Availability, cost, and quality of long-term care |
|  | 53% | Consumer protections for health care              |
| <b>Top Five AARP-Provided Opportunities</b>                | 72% | Receive written information                       |
|  | 66% | Use referral services                             |
|  | 56% | Access the AARP website                           |
|  | 51% | Participate in activities to improve state laws   |
|  | 43% | Attend one-time education events                  |
| <b>Top Five Methods for Learning about AARP Activities</b> | 77% | Receive written information by mail               |
|  | 51% | Access AARP information online                    |
|  | 40% | Read about in local newspaper                     |
|  | 39% | Call a toll-free or local telephone number        |
|  | 34% | Tune in to a local TV channel or program          |

\* There are approximately 119,223 members age 50 to 59.

## Segments at a Glance Members Age 60 to 74\*

(weighted base: 393)

|  |     |   |
|--|-----|---|
| <b>Top Five Personal Concerns</b>                          | 83% | Secure pension benefits/retirement savings        |
|  | 76% | Affordable prescription drugs                     |
|  | 71% | Staying in your own home as you age               |
|  | 68% | Staying physically fit/healthy diet               |
|  | 67% | Medicare as base for retirement health coverage   |
| <b>Top Five State Legislative Priorities</b>               | 72% | Affordable prescription drugs                     |
|  | 70% | Availability, cost, and quality of health care    |
|  | 67% | Remaining in own homes/communities as age         |
|  | 56% | Availability, cost, and quality of long-term care |
|  | 55% | Consumer protections for health care              |
| <b>Top Five AARP-Provided Opportunities</b>                | 61% | Receive written information by mail               |
|  | 53% | Use referral services                             |
|  | 48% | Participate in activities to improve state laws   |
|  | 36% | Access the AARP website                           |
|  | 36% | Attend one-time educational events                |
| <b>Top Five Methods for Learning about AARP Activities</b> | 69% | Receive written information by mail               |
|  | 40% | Read about in local newspaper                     |
|  | 36% | Call a toll-free or local telephone number        |
|  | 36% | Tune in to local TV channel or program            |
|  | 31% | Access AARP information online                    |

\* There are approximately 186,783 members age 60 to 74.

## Segments at a Glance Members Age 75+\*

(weighted base: 225)

|  |     |   |
|--|-----|---|
| <b>Top Five Personal Concerns</b>                          | 83% | Secure pension benefits/retirement savings        |
|  | 76% | Affordable prescription drugs                     |
|  | 70% | Staying in own your own home as you age           |
|  | 69% | Medicare as base for retirement health coverage   |
|  | 68% | Avoiding consumer fraud                           |
| <b>Top Five State Legislative Priorities</b>               | 70% | Affordable prescription drugs                     |
|  | 68% | Availability, cost and quality of health care     |
|  | 66% | Remaining in own homes or communities as age      |
|  | 56% | Availability, cost, and quality of long-term care |
|  | 56% | Consumer protection against fraud                 |
| <b>Top Five AARP-Provided Opportunities</b>                | 53% | Receive written information                       |
|  | 48% | Participate in activities to improve state laws   |
|  | 47% | Use referral services                             |
|  | 28% | Workshop series                                   |
|  | 27% | AARP Website                                      |
| <b>Top Five Methods for Learning about AARP Activities</b> | 67% | Receive written information                       |
|  | 50% | Read about in local newspaper                     |
|  | 34% | Tune in to local TV channel or program            |
|  | 33% | Call a toll-free or local telephone number        |
|  | 23% | Hear on a local radio station/program             |

\*There are approximately 87,430 members age 75 or older.

## **Appendix C: Annotated Questionnaire**

# 2003 AARP Alabama Member Opinion Survey

**WEIGHTED N = 1,099, RESPONSE RATE = 55%, SAMPLING ERROR = +/- 3.0%**  
(Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple responses. A “\*” means less than 1%.)

## Personal Concerns

- 1. Below is a list of concerns that have been expressed by people age 50 and older. Please rate your own level of concern about each item using a 5-point scale where 1 means you are "not at all concerned" and 5 means you are "extremely concerned."**

|   | Extremely<br>Concerned |     |     |     | Not at all<br>Concerned | No<br>Response |
|---|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------------------------|----------------|
| a. Having adequate information on Medicaid, the government health insurance program for low income people | 37%                    | 18% | 22% | 10% | 11%                     | 2%             |
| b. Providing care or financial support for a parent, grandchild or other relative                         | 32%                    | 22% | 20% | 11% | 12%                     | 4%             |
| c. Having Medicare as a base for retirement health coverage   | 65%                    | 17% | 10% | 3%  | 3%                      | 2%             |
| d. Avoiding consumer fraud  | 62%                    | 19% | 10% | 3%  | 3%                      | 3%             |
| e. Having Social Security as a base for retirement income   | 63%                    | 16% | 12% | 4%  | 3%                      | 2%             |
| f. Finding affordable, high quality health insurance  | 63%                    | 14% | 11% | 4%  | 5%                      | 3%             |
| g. Staying in your own home as you get older  | 68%                    | 18% | 8%  | 3%  | 2%                      | 1%             |
| h. Staying physically fit/maintaining a healthy diet  | 65%                    | 23% | 8%  | 1%  | 1%                      | 2%             |
| i. Having high quality long-term care for you or a family member  | 62%                    | 20% | 12% | 3%  | 2%                      | 3%             |
| j. Making sure your pension benefits and/or retirement savings are safe and secure                        | 81%                    | 11% | 4%  | 1%  | 2%                      | 2%             |
| k. Finding work in retirement   | 16%                    | 20% | 25% | 15% | 22%                     | 4%             |
| l. Dealing with the loss of a close family member   | 34%                    | 22% | 24% | 10% | 7%                      | 4%             |
| m. Having access to affordable prescription drugs   | 75%                    | 14% | 6%  | 2%  | 3%                      | 1%             |

1. (CONTINUED) Below is a list of concerns that have been expressed by people age 50 and older. Please rate your own level of concern about each item using a 5-point scale where 1 means you are "not at all concerned" and 5 means you are "extremely concerned."

|  | Extremely Concerned |     |     |     | Not at all Concerned | No Response |
|--|---------------------|-----|-----|-----|----------------------|-------------|
| n. Having consumer protections in health care plans including managed care | 58%                 | 22% | 11% | 3%  | 3%                   | 3%          |
| o. Becoming ill or disabled  | 58%                 | 21% | 14% | 4%  | 2%                   | 2%          |
| p. Being a victim of crime   | 38%                 | 22% | 24% | 10% | 5%                   | 2%          |
| q. Continuing to drive safely  | 48%                 | 25% | 17% | 4%  | 4%                   | 2%          |
| r. Keeping your family safe from acts of terrorism and violence            | 54%                 | 19% | 15% | 6%  | 2%                   | 5%          |
| s. Protecting your right to privacy  | 59%                 | 20% | 11% | 3%  | 2%                   | 6%          |
| t. Avoiding business practices that are unfair or fraudulent               | 59%                 | 19% | 11% | 3%  | 2%                   | 6%          |

## AARP Roles and Activities at the State Level

2. Listed below are some opportunities AARP could provide within Alabama to address member interests and concerns. Would you personally use the opportunity if it were offered in Alabama?

(Check ALL that apply)

| %  |  |
|----|--|
| 33 | Workshop series or several meetings/classes on topics of interest or concern to you  |
| 35 | One-time educational events on topics of interest or concern to you  |
| 61 | Written information on topics of interest or concern to you  |
| 54 | Referral services to help you find resources and services in your community  |
| 47 | Activities to improve state laws, policies, regulations, or practices that affect you  |
| 39 | AARP website for information on topics of interest or concern to you and information about upcoming AARP events in Alabama   |
| 16 | Volunteering your time to an AARP activity in your own community   |
| 26 | Volunteering your time with a worthy organization in your community  |
| 25 | AARP Chapter meetings in your community that give you an opportunity to meet other people and provide some community service |
| 15 | No Response  |



**3. If AARP has or were to have programs, services, or activities in your community, how would you want to find out about them?**

(Check ALL that apply)

| <u>%</u> |   |
|----------|---|
| 12       | Visit an AARP kiosk, booth, or office located in your community   |
| 35       | Call a toll-free or local telephone number for a pre-recorded list of current AARP activities, programs, and services in your community |
| 14       | Contact an AARP volunteer or AARP Chapter member in or near your community  |
| 18       | Attend a meeting at which AARP programs and activities are described  |
| 69       | Receive information by mail (e.g., letter, brochure, flyer)   |
| 31       | Use the AARP website to access AARP information   |
| 20       | Receive an email notification   |
| 41       | Read about local AARP activities in newspapers in your community  |
| 34       | Tune in to a local TV channel or program  |
| 24       | Hear about them on a local radio station/program  |
| 9        | No Response   |

## Long-Term Care

**Long-term care** is care for people of all ages who are frail, ill, or disabled who need help with daily activities, such as getting dressed, bathing, preparing meals, or eating. This help could be provided at home, in the community (such as a senior center or assisted living residence), or in a nursing home on a regular basis for long periods of time.

**4. In the LAST five years, have you or any member of your family (that is your spouse, parents, children, siblings, or grandparents) used long-term care services?**

| <u>%</u> |                                      |
|----------|--------------------------------------|
| 23       | Yes                                  |
| 68       | No → <b>SKIP TO QUESTION 7</b>       |
| 1        | Not sure → <b>SKIP TO QUESTION 7</b> |
| 9        | No Response                          |

**5a. What kind of long-term care service did you or your family member use during that time? (Check ALL services used) (n=248)**

**5b. How do you rate the quality of care that was provided?**

|     |  | Rate Quality |      |      |      |             |
|-----|--|--------------|------|------|------|-------------|
|     |  | Excellent    | Good | Fair | Poor | No Response |
| 52% | Lived in a nursing home<br><i>If checked, rate the quality of care</i> →<br>(n=130)  | 14%          | 53%  | 24%  | 7%   | 2%          |
| 20% | Lived in an assisted living facility<br><i>If checked, rate the quality of care</i> →<br>(n=50)  | 39%          | 47%  | 15%  | 0%   | 0%          |
| 36% | Lived at home while receiving help with daily activities or personal care tasks from skilled health professionals or health aides<br><i>If checked, rate the quality of care</i> →<br>(n=88) | 39%          | 47%  | 11%  | 2%   | 0%          |
| 40% | Lived at home while receiving help from family or friends<br><i>If checked, rate the quality of care</i> →<br>(n=100)  | 53%          | 38%  | 8%   | 1%   | 0%          |
| 3%  | Attended adult day care<br><i>If checked, rate the quality of care</i> →<br>(n=7)  | 28%          | 43%  | 28%  | 0%   | 0%          |
| 20% | No Response (n=49)   |              |      |      |      |             |

**6. If you used long-term care services for yourself or a family member, how easy or hard was it to... (n=248)**

|   | Very Easy | Somewhat Easy | Somewhat Hard | Very Hard | Not Sure | No Response |
|---|-----------|---------------|---------------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| a. Find the appropriate long-term care <b><u>when</u></b> it was needed?                          | 17%       | 38%           | 22%           | 11%       | 1%       | 11%         |
| b. Find the appropriate long-term care <b><u>within a reasonable distance from your home?</u></b> | 20%       | 34%           | 18%           | 10%       | 1%       | 17%         |
| c. Find the appropriate long-term care <b><u>that you were able to afford?</u></b>                | 12%       | 27%           | 21%           | 22%       | 2%       | 15%         |

**7. How likely is it that you or any member of your family (that is your spouse, parents, children, siblings, or grandparents) will need long-term care within the NEXT five years?**

| <u>%</u> |                   |
|----------|-------------------|
| 22       | Very likely       |
| 28       | Somewhat likely   |
| 22       | Not very likely   |
| 7        | Not at all likely |
| 18       | Not sure          |
| 3        | No Response       |

**8. If you or a family member needed long-term care, how confident are you that you would know how to find the appropriate services in your community?**

| <u>%</u> |                      |
|----------|----------------------|
| 15       | Very confident       |
| 38       | Somewhat confident   |
| 21       | Not very confident   |
| 10       | Not at all confident |
| 14       | Not sure             |
| 2        | No Response          |

**9. If you or a family member needed long-term care services, where would you be most likely to find out about these services?**

| <u>%</u> |                           | <u>%</u> |                            |
|----------|---------------------------|----------|----------------------------|
| 37       | Family/friend             | 55       | Physician                  |
| 4        | Newspaper advertisement   | 10       | Clergy                     |
| 18       | Area Agency on Aging      | 23       | Hospital Discharge Planner |
| 19       | AARP                      | 6        | Internet                   |
| 23       | Health and Human Services | 5        | Other: _____               |
| 11       | Telephone book            | 8        | Not sure                   |
|          |                           | 2        | No Response                |

**10. If you or a family member needed long-term care services, how important would it be to you to:**

|  | <b>Very Important</b> | <b>Somewhat Important</b> | <b>Not Very Important</b> | <b>Not At All Important</b> | <b>Not Sure</b> | <b>No Response</b> |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| a. Choose and receive services that allow you to stay home for as long as possible   | 87%                   | 8%                        | 1%                        | *                           | 1%              | 3%                 |
| b. Have a central place where you could get information or referrals for all types of long-term care services, both government and private | 71%                   | 18%                       | 3%                        | *                           | 2%              | 6%                 |
| c. Have a central place where you could find out what services and benefits you are eligible for and apply                                 | 77%                   | 15%                       | 2%                        | *                           | 1%              | 6%                 |
| d. Be able to choose from a variety of services within your own community  | 75%                   | 16%                       | 2%                        | *                           | 2%              | 5%                 |
| e. Have high quality nursing home care available if it was needed  | 83%                   | 8%                        | 1%                        | 1%                          | 1%              | 5%                 |

**11. Please check the box that most closely matches your opinion on how long-term care services should be paid for? (Check only one)**

- %
- 15 The costs of long-term care should be paid mostly by the individual receiving care—either through insurance or savings
  - 22 The costs of long-term care should be paid primarily through government programs
  - 44 The costs of long-term care should be shared between the individual and the government
  - 16 Not sure
  - 4 No Response

**12. Which care option would you prefer for yourself or a family member needing long-term care?**

| <u>%</u> |   |
|----------|---|
| 15       | Have family and friends provide all the care at home  |
| 35       | Pay a nurse or a personal care aide to provide care at home   |
| 37       | Have care provided in a residential facility, such as assisted living, where housing, food, and personal care such as help with bathing and dressing are provided for residents |
| 5        | Have care provided in a nursing home  |
| 16       | Not sure  |
| 2        | No Response   |

**13. Almost eight in ten nursing home residents in Alabama have their nursing home care paid for by Medicaid, the state health insurance program for low-income people. Most of the state funds for long-term care are spent on nursing homes rather than on services that allow a person to stay in their own home or in a community setting such as an adult day care center.**

**Would you support or oppose increasing state funding for services that would allow people to stay in their own homes longer, even if it meant reducing funding for nursing homes?**

| <u>%</u> |                  |
|----------|------------------|
| 43       | Strongly support |
| 26       | Somewhat support |
| 6        | Somewhat oppose  |
| 3        | Strongly oppose  |
| 17       | Not sure         |
| 6        | No Response      |

**14. How much of a priority should it be for AARP Alabama to work on ensuring the availability of a broad range of long-term care services throughout the state that will allow a person to remain in their own home?**

| <u>%</u> |                 |
|----------|-----------------|
| 37       | Top priority    |
| 40       | High priority   |
| 10       | Medium priority |
| 2        | Low priority    |
| 1        | Not a priority  |
| 5        | Not sure        |
| 6        | No Response     |

## State Legislative Issues

**15. To be effective, AARP Alabama wants to work on the most important issues facing Alabama AARP members. Keeping in mind what's most important to you, how much of a priority should it be for AARP to work on the following legislative issues in Alabama?**

|    |   | Top<br>Priority | High<br>Priority | Medium<br>Priority | Low<br>Priority | Not A<br>Priority | Not<br>Sure | No<br>Response |
|----|---|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------|
| a. | Availability, cost, and quality of health care  | 67%             | 22%              | 3%                 | 0%              | *                 | *           | 8%             |
| b. | Consumer protection against fraud   | 45%             | 25%              | 15%                | 4%              | 1%                | 1%          | 10%            |
| c. | Utility services and rates  | 34%             | 26%              | 20%                | 5%              | 2%                | 1%          | 12%            |
| d. | How older persons can remain in their own homes or communities as they age  | 61%             | 23%              | 6%                 | 1%              | 1%                | 1%          | 8%             |
| e. | Consumer protection standards for health insurance including managed care plans   | 51%             | 27%              | 9%                 | 2%              | *                 | 1%          | 10%            |
| f. | Availability, cost, and quality of long-term care services  | 54%             | 28%              | 6%                 | *               | *                 | 1%          | 11%            |
| g. | Assistance programs for older, low-income state residents   | 44%             | 28%              | 14%                | 2%              | 1%                | 1%          | 10%            |
| h. | Access to affordable prescription drugs   | 69%             | 16%              | 5%                 | 1%              | 1%                | 1%          | 8%             |
| i. | Expanding Medicaid, the government health insurance program for low income people   | 37%             | 24%              | 17%                | 6%              | 3%                | 3%          | 10%            |
| j. | Regulation of mortgage lenders to prevent abusive practices   | 42%             | 22%              | 15%                | 5%              | 3%                | 2%          | 11%            |
| k. | Regulating the fees charged by check-cashing outlets and pay day lenders  | 38%             | 16%              | 15%                | 9%              | 7%                | 3%          | 11%            |
| l. | Enabling grandparents caring for children, but not their legal guardians, to obtain necessary financial, medical, educational, and legal services for these children. | 41%             | 22%              | 16%                | 6%              | 3%                | 3%          | 10%            |

## About You

The following questions are for classification purposes only and will be kept entirely confidential.

### 16. Are you male or female?

| <u>%</u> |             |
|----------|-------------|
| 48       | Male        |
| 47       | Female      |
| 5        | No Response |

### 17. What is your age as of your last birthday? \_\_\_\_\_ years

| <u>%</u> |             |
|----------|-------------|
| 29       | 50-59       |
| 43       | 60-74       |
| 21       | 75+         |
| 8        | No Response |

### 18. What is your current marital status?

| <u>%</u> |               |
|----------|---------------|
| 64       | Now married   |
| 18       | Widowed       |
| 9        | Divorced      |
| 1        | Separated     |
| 3        | Never married |
| 5        | No Response   |

### 19. What is the highest level of education that you completed?

| <u>%</u> |   |
|----------|---|
| 8        | Less than high school                                 |
| 22       | High school graduate or equivalent                    |
| 32       | Some college or technical training beyond high school |
| 15       | College graduate (4 years)                            |
| 15       | Post-graduate or professional degree                  |
| 9        | No Response   |

### 20. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

| <u>%</u> |  |
|----------|--|
| 26       | Employed or self-employed <u>full-time</u> |
| 9        | Employed or self-employed <u>part-time</u> |
| 52       | Retired and not working                    |
| 7        | Other such as homemaker                    |
| 2        | Unemployed and looking for work            |
| 4        | No Response                                |

**21. Do you have access to a personal computer at home, at work, or some other place?**

| <u>%</u> |             |  |
|----------|-------------|--|
| 59       | Yes         | → <b>21a. If YES: Do you have access to the Internet or the ability to use online services such as America Online (AOL)? (n=650)</b> |
| 37       | No          |  |
| 4        | No Response |  |

84% Yes 9% No 3% Don't Know 4% No Response

**22. Are you Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino?**

| <u>%</u> |             |
|----------|-------------|
| 1        | Yes         |
| 90       | No          |
| 1        | Don't know  |
| 8        | No Response |

**23. What is your race?**

| <u>%</u> |                                   |
|----------|-----------------------------------|
| 87       | White or Caucasian                |
| 10       | Black or African American         |
| *        | Asian                             |
| 1        | Native American or Alaskan Native |
| 0        | Hawaiian or Pacific Islander      |
| 2        | No Response                       |

**24. What is your 5-digit zip code? WRITE IN YOUR ZIP CODE** \_\_\_\_\_

**25. What was your annual household income before taxes in 2001?**

| <u>%</u> |                      |
|----------|----------------------|
| 7        | Less than \$10,000   |
| 14       | \$10,000 to \$19,999 |
| 13       | \$20,000 to \$29,999 |
| 13       | \$30,000 to \$39,999 |
| 11       | \$40,000 to \$49,999 |
| 15       | \$50,000 to \$74,999 |
| 15       | \$75,000 or more     |
| 11       | No Response          |

Thank you for completing this survey. Please use the postage-paid envelope and return it to State Member Research, AARP, 601 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20049, by **May 23, 2003**.



**AARP**

**Knowledge Management**

**For more information contact Rachelle Cummins (202) 434-6297**