



**Common Ground on the  
Future: The Opinions of  
AARP Members in  
Colorado About Election  
Issues In 2006**

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The Opinions of AARP Members  
in Colorado About Election Issues  
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**Data Collected by Woelfel Research, Inc.  
Report Prepared by Terri Guengerich**

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AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that helps people 50+ have independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole. We produce *AARP The Magazine*, published bimonthly; *AARP Bulletin*, our monthly newspaper; *AARP Segunda Juventud*, our bimonthly magazine in Spanish and English; *NRTA Live & Learn*, our quarterly newsletter for 50+ educators; and our website, [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org). AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. We have staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

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## Background

The Colorado Governor's race is one of the most watched and hotly contested races in the country. As the State attempts to rebound from the financial restrictions imposed by TABOR, the newly elected Governor is going to face a myriad of potentially contentious issues from health care reform, implementing a multi-state purchasing pool to better negotiate the cost of prescription drugs, and the appointment of the Public Utility Commissioner as Coloradans face ever increasing energy costs.

Every candidate for elected office in the United States knows that the 50+ population is a powerful voting force. Older Americans are the group most likely to read newspapers, stay apprised of issues, register to vote, and actually turn out on Election Day.

About one of every four of the 4.3 million people in Colorado counted in the 2000 Census represents people who are 50 years of age and older.<sup>1</sup> In 2002, 46 percent of people 18+ in Colorado voted in the November election.<sup>2</sup> In a recent survey of AARP members in Colorado, conducted in the summer of 2005,<sup>3</sup> nearly nine in ten AARP members (88%) said they voted all or most of the time in state elections for Governor or Legislators.

AARP members represent a sizable voting segment of more than 36 million members. In Colorado, there are more than 640,000 AARP members. People 50 years and older have higher voter registration percentages and voter turnout than younger persons, and they are also the segment of the population most likely to turnout for a mid-term election.

In June 2006, AARP commissioned a national telephone survey of a representative sample of 1,000 AARP members. In addition, four hundred AARP members were sampled in Colorado. This report is based on the responses of these Colorado members and describes the opinions of AARP members in Colorado about these election issues:

- Medicaid
- Long-term care and TABOR
- Social Security

The survey methodology is described at the end of this report, and annotated questionnaires of AARP members in Colorado members as well as AARP members nationally are also found there.

AARP is a non-partisan organization. It does not contribute to political campaigns nor does it endorse or oppose any candidates for public office.

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<sup>1</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1, Matrices P13 and PCT12.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2002. Internet Release date: July 28, 2004

<sup>3</sup>Burton, Cassandra and Binette, Joanne (2005). Colorado Long-Term Care: A Survey AARP Members. AARP Knowledge Management.

## Highlights

- Seven in ten AARP members in Colorado feel that things in this country have gotten off on the wrong track.
- Over three in four AARP members consider AARP a trusted source of information about issues in the upcoming election for Governor. The majority of members who identify themselves as Republicans, Democrats, and Independents consider AARP a trusted source.
- Over eight in ten AARP members in Colorado would support its Medicaid program joining a multi-state purchasing pool to lower the cost of prescription drugs for Medicaid recipients. The majority of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents also support joining such a purchasing pool.
- Two in three AARP members in Colorado support changing the TABOR Amendment to increase state funds for long-term care services that would keep seniors at home and independent. At least half of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents also support this change.
- Over eight in ten AARP members in Colorado oppose using Social Security taxes to fund private accounts. This opposition is consistent across all political parties.
- Seven in ten AARP members in Colorado would support a Social Security plan that provides guaranteed benefits to future generations by balancing additional contributions from higher income workers with modest reductions in future benefits. The majority of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents would likewise support this plan.

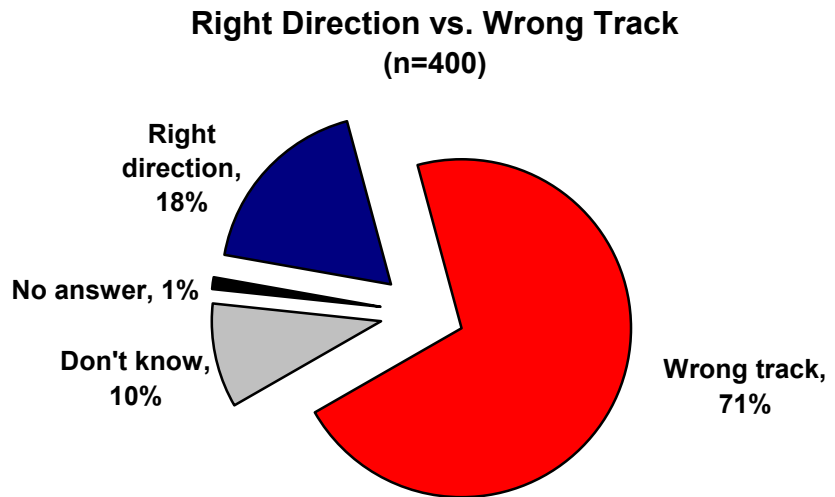
## Findings

### Seven in ten AARP members in Colorado feel that things in this country have gotten off on the wrong track.

AARP members were asked whether they feel things in this country are going in the right direction or have gotten off on the wrong track. Nearly two in ten members feel that things are going in the right direction, and one in ten is not sure.

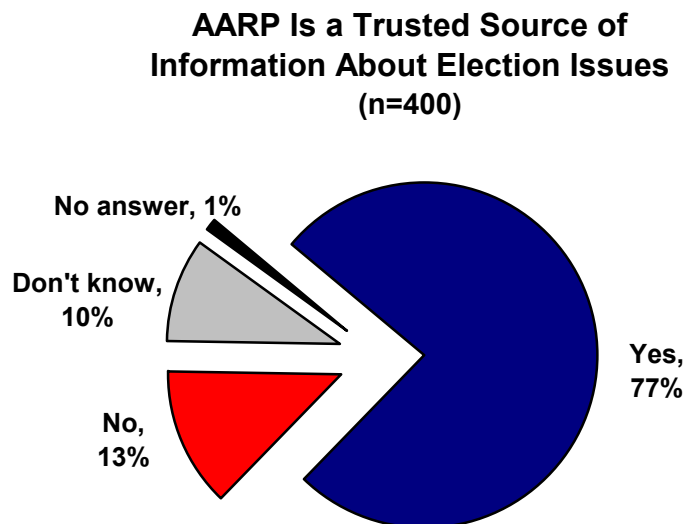
AARP members who identify themselves as Democrats and Independents are more likely to feel things have gotten off on the wrong track (Democrats—92%, Independents—77%, and Republicans—37%).

AARP members who identify themselves as Republicans are more likely to feel things are going in the right direction (Republicans—41%, Democrats—6%, and Independents—14%).



### Over three in four AARP members consider AARP a trusted source of information about issues in the upcoming election for Governor.

About one in eight do not consider AARP a trusted source, and one in ten is not sure. Over two-thirds of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents consider AARP a trusted source (Republicans—69%, Democrats—88%, and Independents—76%).



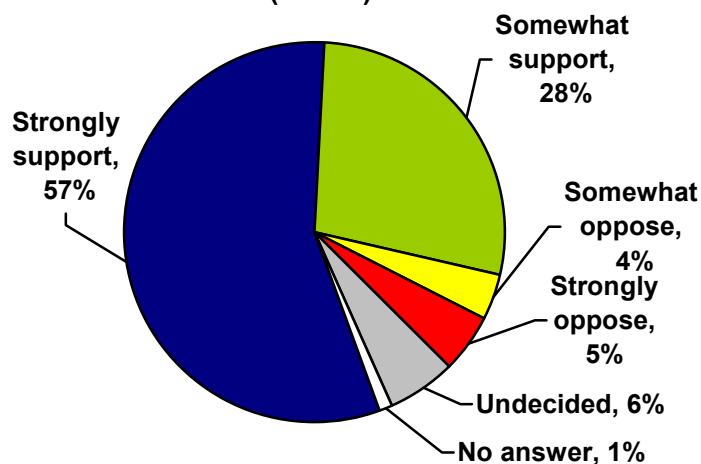
## MEDICAID

**Over eight in ten AARP members in Colorado would support its Medicaid program joining a multi-state purchasing pool to lower the cost of prescription drugs for Medicaid recipients.**

Less than one in ten opposes joining such a pool, and a few are undecided.

The majority of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents also support joining a multi-state purchasing pool (Republicans—81%, Democrats—88%, and Independents—85%).

**Support for Colorado's Medicaid Program Joining a Multi-State Purchasing Pool for Prescription Drugs (n=400)**



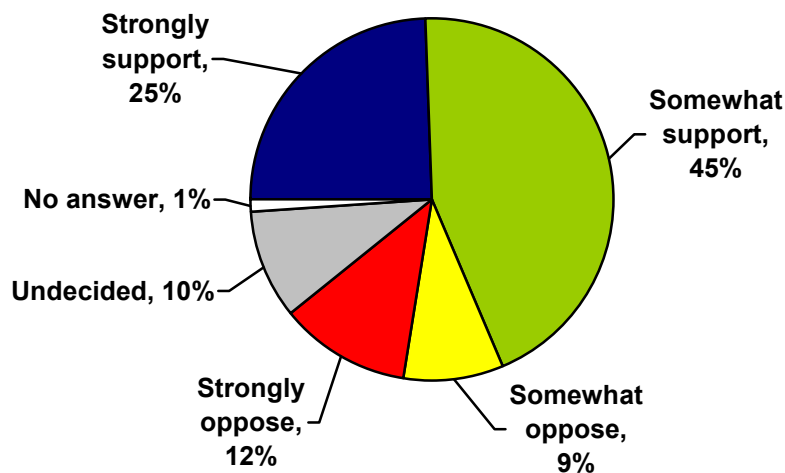
## LONG-TERM CARE AND TABOR

**About seven in ten AARP members in Colorado support a shared approach whereby both government and individuals pay for long-term care.**

About two in ten members oppose such an approach, and one in ten is undecided.

At least two in three Republicans, Democrats, and Independents also support this approach (Republicans—64%, Democrats—73%, and Independents—70%).

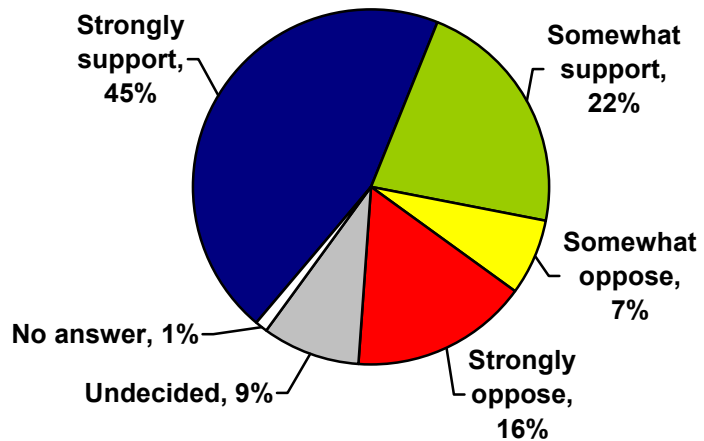
**Support for a Shared Approach Involving Both Government & Individuals Paying for Long-Term Care (n=400)**



**Two in three AARP members in Colorado support changing the TABOR Amendment to increase state funds for long-term care services that would keep seniors at home and independent.**

About one in four members oppose such a change, and about one in ten is undecided. At least half of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents also support this change (Republicans—57%, Democrats—80%, and Independents—63%).

**Support for Changing the TABOR Amendment to Increase State Funds for Long-Term Care Services (n=400)**

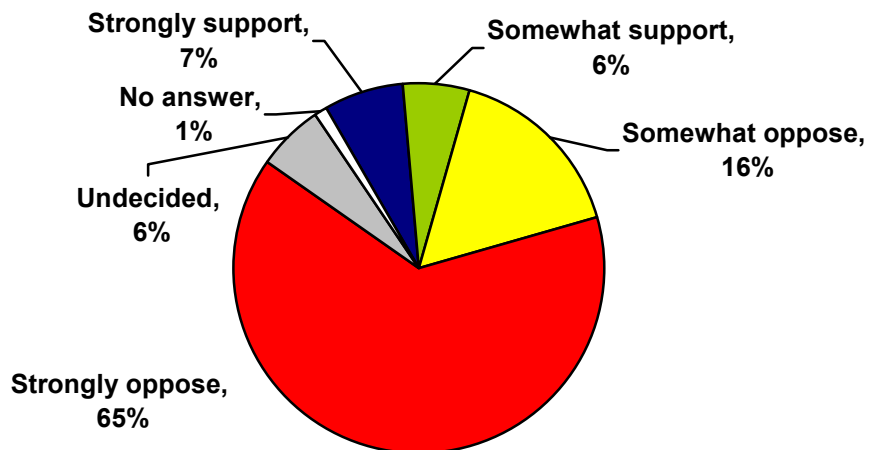


**SOCIAL SECURITY**

**Over eight in ten AARP members in Colorado oppose using Social Security taxes to fund private accounts.**

About one in eight members supports using Social Security taxes to fund private accounts. Across all political parties, at least six in ten members oppose using Social Security taxes this way (Republicans—63%, Democrats—93%, and Independents —83%).

**Support for Using Social Security Taxes to Fund Private Accounts (n=400)**

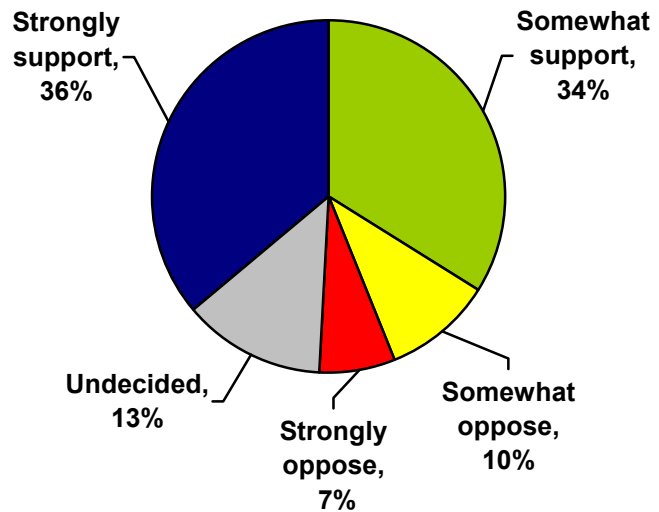




**Seven in ten AARP members in Colorado would support a Social Security plan that provides guaranteed benefits to future generations by balancing additional contributions from higher income workers with modest reductions in future benefits.**

The majority of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents alike would strongly or somewhat support such a Social Security plan (Republicans—55%, Democrats—80%, and Independents—72%).

**Support for Guaranteed Social Security Benefits for Future Generations by Balancing Contributions (n=400)**



## Conclusion

AARP members in Colorado have strong opinions about issues facing the upcoming elections in November. In this survey, AARP members in Colorado have shared their opinions on these critical issues.

AARP members are pessimistic about where things are headed in this country. Seven in ten of them feel that things in this country have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track. This sentiment is shared by Democrats and Independents.

AARP members strongly support allowing Colorado's Medicaid program to join a drug purchasing pool with other states to lower the cost of prescription drugs for Medicaid recipients. The majority of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents also support joining such a multi-state purchasing pool.

AARP members support changing the TABOR Amendment to increase state funds for long-term care services that would keep seniors at home and independent. At least half of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents also support this change.

AARP members are opposed to using Social Security taxes to fund private accounts, but would support a Social Security plan that provides guaranteed benefits to future generations by balancing additional contributions from higher income workers with modest reductions in future benefits.

In summary, AARP members in Colorado across the political parties support the policy positions AARP considers important in the upcoming November election.

## Methodology

In June 2006, AARP commissioned Woelfel Research, Inc., a national survey research firm, to conduct a list-assisted, telephone survey of 1,000 randomly selected AARP members nationally and 400 randomly selected AARP members in Colorado. The response rate for the national survey is 15 percent, and has a sampling error of  $\pm 3$  percent.<sup>4</sup> The response rate for the Colorado survey is 13 percent and has a sampling error of  $\pm 4.9$  percent.<sup>5</sup> In the Colorado data, survey responses were weighted to reflect the actual distribution of age for the population of AARP members in Colorado. The national data was not weighted.

For presentation purposes, percentage points have been rounded off to the nearest whole number. As a result, percentages may total slightly higher or lower than 100 percent. For questions that permit multiple responses, percentages may total to more than 100 percent, depending on the number of different responses offered by each respondent.

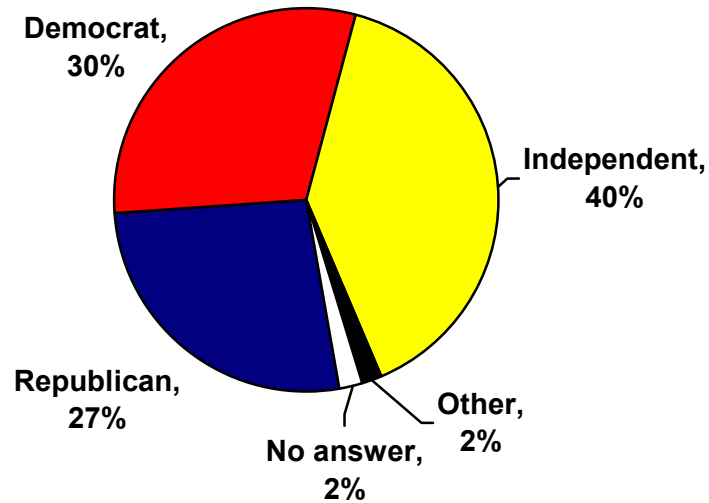
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<sup>4</sup>National sample: The response rate is 15 percent, and the cooperation rate is 88 percent. The response rate is Response Rate 3, the cooperation rate is Cooperation Rate 3 (AAPOR, 2004).

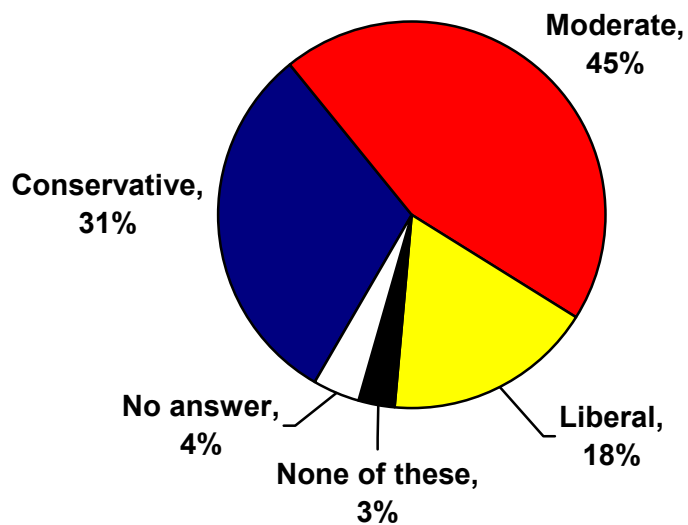
<sup>5</sup>Colorado sample: The response rate is 13 percent, and the cooperation rate is 89 percent. The response rate is Response Rate 3, and the cooperation rate is Cooperation Rate 3 (AAPOR, 2004).

# Demographic Profile of AARP Members in Colorado

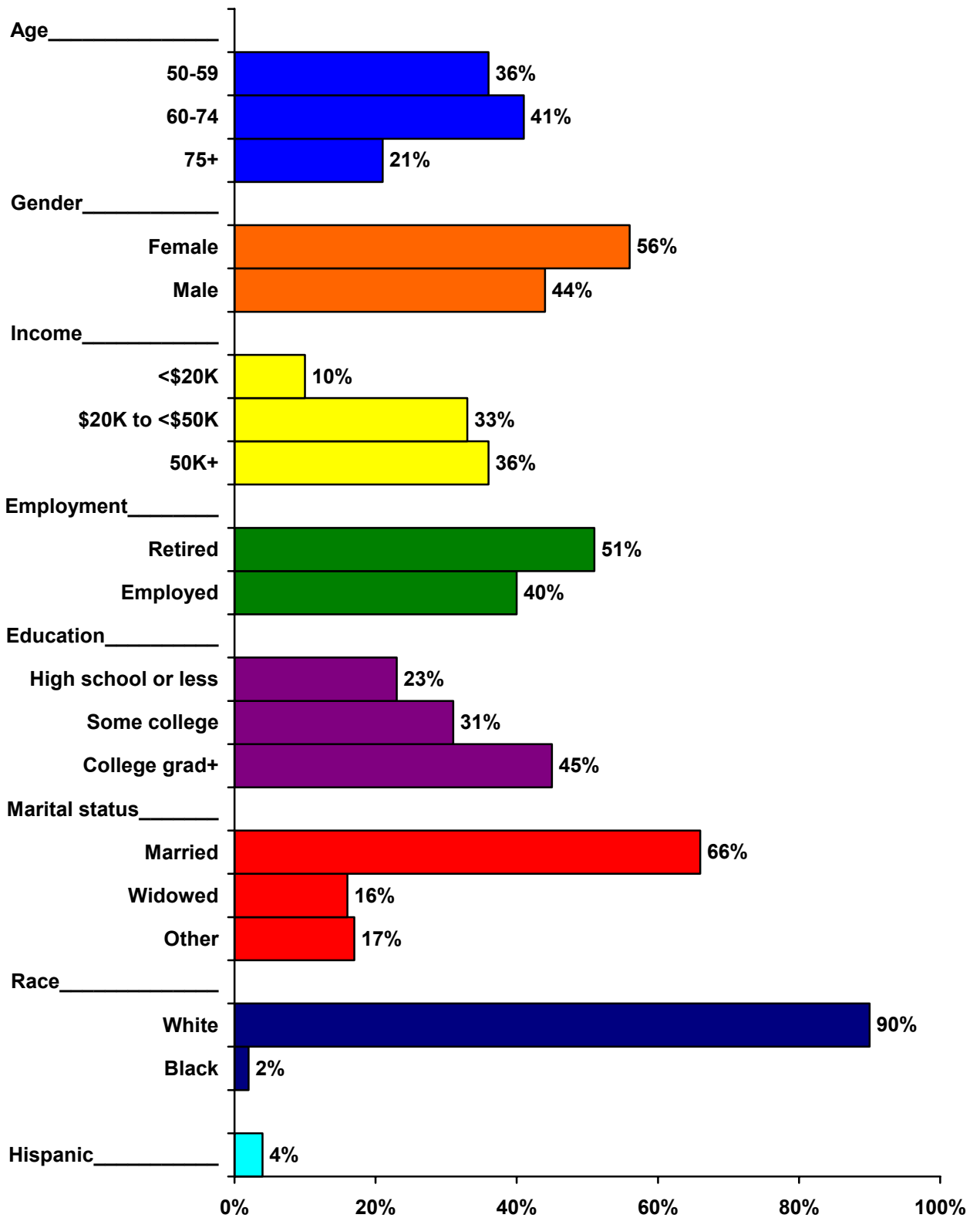
**Political Party Affiliation**  
(n=400)



**Political Ideology**  
(n=400)



## Demographic Profile of AARP Colorado Members (n=400)



## **ANNOTATED QUESTIONNAIRES**

## 2006 COLORADO STATEWIDE ELECTION SURVEY

**Weighted n=400; Response Rate=13%; Sampling Error=±4.9%**

**Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple responses**

[ASK TO SPEAK TO NAME ON SAMPLE]

[MAY SPEAK TO SPOUSE IF THEY CONSIDER THEMSELVES A MEMBER OF AARP]

Hello, this is \_\_\_ calling from Woelfel Research, Inc., a national opinion research firm. I am calling on behalf of AARP (American Association of Retired Persons). We are not telemarketers and are not trying to sell you anything. We would like to find out your opinions on various topics of interest. Your views are important and we would greatly appreciate your participation. All your responses will be kept entirely confidential. This survey should take 5-10 minutes of your time.

{IF ASKED, "Where did you get my name?" SAY "AARP provided a list of members for us to call."}

1. Do you feel things in this country are going in the right direction today, or do you feel that things have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Right direction	18
2.	Wrong track	71
3.	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	10
4.	(DO NOT READ) Refused	1

2. In your opinion, what is the most important problem facing the U.S. today?

### Code List

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	War with Iraq (any mentions about Iraq)	24
2.	Terrorism/Terrorist attacks/Homeland Security	4
3.	National Security/Other foreign affairs issues	1
4.	Health Care	6
5.	Medicare	<.05
6.	Social Security	1
7.	Immigration	12
8.	Energy prices (electricity, home heating fuel, etc.)	1
9.	Gas prices	3
10.	The Federal Deficit	3
11.	Taxes/Tax Cuts	1
12.	Economy (unspecified)	7
13.	Unemployment/Jobs/Outsourcing	2
14.	Education	1
15.	Environment	1

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
16.	Crime/Drugs	1
17.	Honesty/Corruption in Government/Morality	4
18.	Other domestic issues	1
19.	All/Everything	<.05
20.	Bush/George Bush/President Bush	1
21.	Congress	<.05
22.	Elderly/Seniors	1
23.	Going away from God	1
24.	Government	2
25.	Jobs	<.05
26.	Lack of morals/Morality	2
27.	Leadership	<.05
28.	Liberalism	<.05
29.	Oil	<.05
30.	Politics	1
31.	Spending	<.05
32.	Taking care of our own	1
33.	Unity	1
34.	Youth	<.05
35.	Value of Family	<.05
36.	Inflation	1
37.	Global warming	1
38.	Economy	1
39.	Foreign policy	2
40.	Health insurance	1
41.	National debt	1
42.	Illegal immigration/border control	1
43.	Other	6
44.	Nothing	<.05
45.	Not sure	5



3. I am going to read you a list of domestic issues that affect people ages 50 and older and for each I would like you to tell me how important that issue in your decision about which U.S. Congressional/Senate candidates to vote for this November. Let's start with (INSERT FIRST ITEM)...would you say it is 'Very Important', 'Somewhat Important', 'Not Very Important' or 'Not At All Important' in your decision about which candidates to vote for? (INSERT NEXT ITEM)?

**(ROTATE ITEMS)**

Preventing Social Security funds being used to fund private accounts

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	72
2 Somewhat important	12
3 Not very important	6
4 Not at all important	5
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	5
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	<.05

Ensuring a balanced Social Security plan to provide guaranteed benefits for future generations

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	72
2 Somewhat important	22
3 Not very important	2
4 Not at all important	2
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	2
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	<.05

Making prescription drugs more affordable

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	71
2 Somewhat important	23
3 Not very important	4
4 Not at all important	1
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	0

Guaranteeing affordable health care coverage for all

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	68
2 Somewhat important	23
3 Not very important	5
4 Not at all important	3
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	0

Providing quality long-term care services to all who need them

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	55
2 Somewhat important	34
3 Not very important	6
4 Not at all important	3
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	2
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	0

Ensuring the long-term strength and availability of Medicare

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	74
2 Somewhat important	24
3 Not very important	1
4 Not at all important	1
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	0

Energy prices (electricity, home heating fuel, etc.)

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	53
2 Somewhat important	37
3 Not very important	8
4 Not at all important	2
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	0

### Gas prices

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	52
2 Somewhat important	34
3 Not very important	10
4 Not at all important	4
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	0

### The Federal Deficit

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	67
2 Somewhat important	26
3 Not very important	5
4 Not at all important	2
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	2
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	0

### Taxes/Tax Cuts

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	48
2 Somewhat important	35
3 Not very important	12
4 Not at all important	3
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	2
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	0

### Economy/Unemployment/Jobs/Outsourcing

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	63
2 Somewhat important	31
3 Not very important	5
4 Not at all important	<.05
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	0

## Education

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	74
2 Somewhat important	23
3 Not very important	2
4 Not at all important	1
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	0
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	0

## Environment

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	59
2 Somewhat important	34
3 Not very important	5
4 Not at all important	2
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	0

## Crime/Drugs

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	59
2 Somewhat important	34
3 Not very important	6
4 Not at all important	1
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	<.05
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	<.05

## Immigration

Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1 Very important	59
2 Somewhat important	27
3 Not very important	10
4 Not at all important	2
D (DO NOT READ) Don't know	2
R (DO NOT READ) Refused	<.05

Honesty/Corruption in Government/Morality

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1	Very important	85
2	Somewhat important	11
3	Not very important	2
4	Not at all important	1
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	<.05

**NATIONAL ISSUES**

4. Do you support or oppose using Social Security taxes to fund private accounts? Is that strongly or somewhat?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Strongly support	7
2.	Somewhat support	6
3.	Somewhat oppose	16
4.	Strongly oppose	65
5.	Undecided/don't know	6
6.	No answer/refused	1

5. Do you support or oppose a Social Security plan to provide guaranteed benefits for future generations by balancing additional contributions from higher income workers with modest reductions in future benefits? Is that strongly or somewhat?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Strongly support	36
2.	Somewhat support	34
3.	Somewhat oppose	10
4.	Strongly oppose	7
5.	Undecided/don't know	13
6.	No answer/refused	<.05

6. Do you support or oppose a shared approach whereby the federal government, employers, and individuals together pay for providing health care coverage for everyone? Is that strongly or somewhat?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Strongly support	34
2.	Somewhat support	32
3.	Somewhat oppose	13
4.	Strongly oppose	11
5.	Undecided/don't know	9
6.	No answer/refused	<.05

7. Do you support or oppose requiring individuals to purchase health insurance? Is that strongly or somewhat?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Strongly support	28
2.	Somewhat support	25
3.	Somewhat oppose	23
4.	Strongly oppose	15
5.	Undecided/don't know	8
6.	No answer/refused	1

8. Do you support or oppose allowing Medicare to use its bargaining power to negotiate lower prices for prescription drugs? Is that strongly or somewhat?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Strongly support	64
2.	Somewhat support	23
3.	Somewhat oppose	3
4.	Strongly oppose	6
5.	Undecided/don't know	5
6.	No answer/refused	<.05

9. There have never been limits placed on federal Medicare spending. Proposals have now been made in Congress to limit the amount of money the federal government spends on the Medicare program. Do you support or oppose changing the traditional Medicare program by imposing an annual limit on federal Medicare spending?

9. (continued) Is that strongly or somewhat?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Strongly support	8
2.	Somewhat support	13
3.	Somewhat oppose	24
4.	Strongly oppose	40
5.	Undecided/don't know	13
6.	No answer/refused	1

10. Do you support or oppose a shared approach that involves both government and individuals paying for long-term care? Is that strongly or somewhat?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Strongly support	25
2.	Somewhat support	45
3.	Somewhat oppose	9
4.	Strongly oppose	12
5.	Undecided/don't know	10
6.	No answer/refused	1

11. Do you support or oppose requiring individuals to purchase long-term care insurance? Is that strongly or somewhat?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Strongly support	13
2.	Somewhat support	23
3.	Somewhat oppose	24
4.	Strongly oppose	35
5.	Undecided/don't know	5
6.	No answer/refused	<.05

12. Do you support or oppose requiring employers to provide workers with automatic payroll deductions so that they can open personal Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs)? Is that strongly or somewhat?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Strongly support	32
2.	Somewhat support	29
3.	Somewhat oppose	14
4.	Strongly oppose	14
5.	Undecided/don't know	9
6.	No answer/refused	1

13. If a candidate for Congress or the U.S. Senate supported using Social Security taxes to fund private accounts, would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for that candidate, or wouldn't it make a difference in your vote?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	More Likely	6
2.	Would Not Make a Difference	20
3.	Less Likely	69
4.	Don't know	4
5.	Refused	1

14. If a candidate for Congress or the U.S. Senate opposed allowing Medicare to use its bargaining power to negotiate lower prices for prescription drugs, would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for that candidate, or wouldn't it make a difference in your vote?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	More Likely	23
2.	Would Not Make a Difference	20
3.	Less Likely	53
4.	Don't know	4
5.	Refused	0

15. If a candidate for Congress or the U.S. Senate opposed a shared approach by the federal government, employers, and individuals, to provide health care coverage for everyone, would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for that candidate, or wouldn't it make a difference in your vote?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	More Likely	31
2.	Would Not Make a Difference	27
3.	Less Likely	36
4.	Don't know	6
5.	Refused	1

## STATE ISSUES

- 15a. One proposal to lower the costs of prescription drugs purchased by Medicaid, the government program that provides health and long-term care for people in Colorado with low incomes, is for Colorado to join a drug purchasing pool with other states. Through bulk buying, this pool would negotiate with drug companies for lower prices.



15a. Do you support or oppose Colorado’s Medicaid program joining a multi-state purchasing pool to lower the cost of prescription drugs for Medicaid recipients?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Strongly support	57
2.	Somewhat support	28
3.	Somewhat oppose	4
4.	Strongly oppose	5
5.	Undecided/don’t know	6
6.	No answer/refused	1

15b. The Colorado Constitution contains an amendment that currently limits state spending, commonly referred to as TABOR. Do you support or oppose changing the TABOR amendment to increase state funds for long-term care services that would keep seniors at home and independent? (Interview prompt: we are talking about a permanent change to the TABOR amendment, not the temporary 5 year repeal of TABOR that was recently voted for in the November 2005 election. This change would last beyond 5 years.) Is that strongly or somewhat?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Strongly support	45
2.	Somewhat support	22
3.	Somewhat oppose	7
4.	Strongly oppose	16
5.	Undecided/don’t know	9
6.	No answer/refused	1

15c. Do you consider AARP to be a trusted source of information about issues in the upcoming election for Governor?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Yes	77
2.	No	13
3.	Don’t know	10
4.	Refused	1

16. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as...? (READ LIST. ENTER ONE ONLY)

Base: Total Respondents		400 %
1.	A Republican	27
2.	A Democrat	30
3.	An Independent	40
4. (DO NOT READ)	Other	2
5. (DO NOT READ)	Don't know	1
6. (DO NOT READ)	Refused	1

(SCRAMBLE CODES 1-3)

17. Generally speaking, would you characterize your political views as being...?  
(READ LIST. ENTER ONE ONLY)

Base: Total Respondents		400 %
1.	Conservative	31
2.	Moderate	45
3.	Liberal	18
4. (DO NOT READ)	None of the Above	3
5. (DO NOT READ)	Don't know	3
6. (DO NOT READ)	Refused	1

### Demographic questions:

D1. What is your age as of your last birthday? [RECORD IN YEARS] \_\_\_\_\_

Base: Total Respondents		400 %
1.	50-59	36
2.	60-74	41
3.	75+	21
4.	Refused	2

D2. What is your marital status? Are you currently....

Base: Total Respondents		400 %
1	Married,	66
2	Divorced,	11
3	Separated,	2
4	Widowed,	16
5	Or have you never been married?	5
6	Don't know	<.05
7	Refused	1

D3. What is the highest level of education you have completed? [READ LIST]

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1	Less than high school	4
2	High school graduate or equivalent	19
3	Some college or technical training beyond high school	31
4	College graduate	22
5	Or, Post-graduate or professional degree	23
6	Don't know [DO NOT READ]	<.05
7	Refused [DO NOT READ]	1

D4. Which of the following best describes your current employment status? Are you currently....[READ LIST]

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1	Employed full-time	27
2	Employed part-time	11
3	Self-employed	2
4	Retired and not working	51
5	Unemployed and looking for work	2
6	Homemaker	3
7	Disabled	3
8	Student	0
9	Or something else [Specify: _____]	0
10	Don't Know [DO NOT READ]	0
11	Refused [DO NOT READ]	1

D5. Would you say that you always vote in presidential elections, usually vote, sometimes vote, rarely vote, or never vote)

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Always	81
2.	Usually	9
3.	Sometimes	4
4.	Rarely	2
5.	Never	3
6.	Refused [DO NOT READ]	1

D6. For statistical purposes only, please stop me when I get to the category That includes your household's income before taxes in 2004. Was it... [READ LIST]

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Less than \$10,000	3
2.	\$10,000 but less than \$20,000	7
3.	\$20,000 but less than \$30,000	11
4.	\$30,000 but less than \$40,000	12
5.	\$40,000 but less than \$50,000	10
6.	\$50,000 but less than \$75,000	18
7.	\$75,000 but less than \$100,000	8
8.	\$100,000 or more	10
9.	Don't know [DO NOT READ]	3
10.	Refused [DO NOT READ]	19

D7. Are you Spanish, Latino, or Hispanic?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Yes	4
2.	No	94
3.	Don't know	1
4.	Refused	2

D8. Which of the following groups best describes your race? [READ LIST]

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	White	90
2.	Black or African-American	2
3.	Asian	<.05
4.	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0
5.	American Indian or Alaska Native	1
6.	Other	4
7.	Don't know	<.05
8.	Refused	3

D9. [RECORD STATE] \_\_\_\_\_

D10. What is your gender?

	Base: Total Respondents	400 %
1.	Male	44
2.	Female	56

D11. Finally, what is your 5-digit zip code? \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING! YOUR OPINION COUNTS!**

# AARP NATIONAL MEMBER SURVEY ABOUT 2006 ELECTION ISSUES

**n=1,000; Response Rate=15%; Sampling Error=±3%**  
*(Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple responses)*

[ASK TO SPEAK TO NAME ON SAMPLE]

[MAY SPEAK TO SPOUSE IF THEY CONSIDER THEMSELVES A MEMBER OF AARP]

Hello, this is \_\_\_\_ calling from Woelfel Research, Inc., a national opinion research firm. I am calling on behalf of AARP (American Association of Retired Persons). We are not telemarketers and are not trying to sell you anything. We would like to find out your opinions on various topics of interest. Your views are important and we would greatly appreciate your participation. All your responses will be kept entirely confidential. This survey should take 5-10 minutes of your time.

{IF ASKED, "Where did you get my name?" SAY "AARP provided a list of members for us to call."}

- 1. Do you feel things in this country are going in the right direction today, or do you feel that things have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	Right direction	17
2.	Wrong track	73
3.	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	10
4.	(DO NOT READ) Refused	1

- 2. In your opinion, what is the most important problem facing the U.S. today?**

**Code List**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	War with Iraq (any mentions about Iraq)	28
2.	Terrorism/Terrorist attacks/Homeland Security	6
3.	National Security/Other foreign affairs issues	1
4.	Health Care	10
5.	Medicare	1
6.	Social Security	1
7.	Immigration	7
8.	Energy prices (electricity, home heating fuel, etc.)	1
9.	Gas prices	3
10.	The Federal Deficit	2
11.	Taxes/Tax Cuts	1
12.	Economy (unspecified)	7
13.	Unemployment/Jobs/Outsourcing	2
14.	Education	1
15.	Environment	0
16.	Crime/Drugs	2
17.	Honesty/Corruption in Government/Morality	3

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
18.	Other domestic issues	1
19.	Other	20
20.	Nothing	0
21.	Not sure	5

3. I am going to read you a list of domestic issues that affect people ages 50 and older and for each I would like you to tell me how important that issue in your decision about which U.S. Congressional/Senate candidates to vote for this November. Let's start with (INSERT FIRST ITEM)...would you say it is 'Very Important', 'Somewhat Important', 'Not Very Important' or 'Not At All Important' in your decision about which candidates to vote for? (INSERT NEXT ITEM)? (READ LIST. ENTER ONE ONLY)

**(ROTATE ITEMS)**

Preventing Social Security funds being used to fund private accounts

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1	Very important	76
2	Somewhat important	11
3	Not very important	6
4	Not at all important	3
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	4
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0

Ensuring a balanced Social Security plan to provide guaranteed benefits for future generations

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1	Very important	80
2	Somewhat important	17
3	Not very important	1
4	Not at all important	1
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0

Making prescription drugs more affordable

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1	Very important	79
2	Somewhat important	17
3	Not very important	3
4	Not at all important	1
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0

Guaranteeing affordable health care coverage for all

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1	Very important	76
2	Somewhat important	18
3	Not very important	3
4	Not at all important	1
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	1

Providing quality long-term care services to all who need them

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1	Very important	68
2	Somewhat important	24
3	Not very important	5
4	Not at all important	1
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	2
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0

Ensuring the long-term strength and availability of Medicare

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1	Very important	84
2	Somewhat important	13
3	Not very important	1
4	Not at all important	1
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0

Energy prices (electricity, home heating fuel, etc.)

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1	Very important	68
2	Somewhat important	26
3	Not very important	5
4	Not at all important	1
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0

Gas prices

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1	Very important	65
2	Somewhat important	27
3	Not very important	5
4	Not at all important	1
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0

The Federal Deficit

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1	Very important	67
2	Somewhat important	25
3	Not very important	4
4	Not at all important	1
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	3
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0

Taxes/Tax Cuts

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1	Very important	56
2	Somewhat important	33
3	Not very important	8
4	Not at all important	2
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	2
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0



### Economy/Unemployment/Jobs/Outsourcing

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1	Very important	72
2	Somewhat important	23
3	Not very important	3
4	Not at all important	1
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0

### Education

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1	Very important	79
2	Somewhat important	17
3	Not very important	3
4	Not at all important	1
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0

### Environment

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1	Very important	59
2	Somewhat important	34
3	Not very important	6
4	Not at all important	1
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0

### Crime/Drugs

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1	Very important	75
2	Somewhat important	20
3	Not very important	3
4	Not at all important	1
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0

## Immigration

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1	Very important	57
2	Somewhat important	31
3	Not very important	7
4	Not at all important	2
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	3
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0

## Honesty/Corruption in Government/Morality

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1	Very important	89
2	Somewhat important	8
3	Not very important	2
4	Not at all important	1
D	(DO NOT READ) Don't know	1
R	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0

## NATIONAL ISSUES

- 4. Do you support or oppose using Social Security taxes to fund private accounts? Is that strongly or somewhat?**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	Strongly support	6
2.	Somewhat support	5
3.	Somewhat oppose	15
4.	Strongly oppose	66
5.	Undecided/don't know	7
6.	No answer/refused	0

- 5. Do you support or oppose a Social Security plan to provide guaranteed benefits for future generations by balancing additional contributions from higher income workers with modest reductions in future benefits? Is that strongly or somewhat?**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	Strongly support	43
2.	Somewhat support	28
3.	Somewhat oppose	9
4.	Strongly oppose	8
5.	Undecided/don't know	11
6.	No answer/refused	1

- 6. Do you support or oppose a shared approach whereby the federal government, employers, and individuals together pay for providing health care coverage for everyone? Is that strongly or somewhat?**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	Strongly support	43
2.	Somewhat support	29
3.	Somewhat oppose	11
4.	Strongly oppose	9
5.	Undecided/don't know	7
6.	No answer/refused	1

- 7. Do you support or oppose requiring individuals to purchase health insurance? Is that strongly or somewhat?**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	Strongly support	26
2.	Somewhat support	28
3.	Somewhat oppose	20
4.	Strongly oppose	18
5.	Undecided/don't know	8
6.	No answer/refused	1

- 8. Do you support or oppose allowing Medicare to use its bargaining power to negotiate lower prices for prescription drugs? Is that strongly or somewhat?**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	Strongly support	73
2.	Somewhat support	17
3.	Somewhat oppose	5
4.	Strongly oppose	3
5.	Undecided/don't know	3
6.	No answer/refused	0

- 9. There have never been limits placed on federal Medicare spending. Proposals have now been made in Congress to limit the amount of money the federal government spends on the Medicare program. Do you support or oppose changing the traditional Medicare program by imposing an annual limit on federal Medicare spending?**

**9. (continued) Is that strongly or somewhat?**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	Strongly support	9
2.	Somewhat support	14
3.	Somewhat oppose	18
4.	Strongly oppose	47
5.	Undecided/don't know	11
6.	No answer/refused	1

**10. Do you support or oppose a shared approach that involves both government and individuals paying for long-term care? Is that strongly or somewhat?**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	Strongly support	30
2.	Somewhat support	39
3.	Somewhat oppose	10
4.	Strongly oppose	12
5.	Undecided/don't know	9
6.	No answer/refused	0

**11. Do you support or oppose requiring individuals to purchase long-term care insurance? Is that strongly or somewhat?**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	Strongly support	15
2.	Somewhat support	20
3.	Somewhat oppose	28
4.	Strongly oppose	30
5.	Undecided/don't know	7
6.	No answer/refused	0

**12. Do you support or oppose requiring employers to provide workers with automatic payroll deductions so that they can open personal Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs)? Is that strongly or somewhat?**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	Strongly support	41
2.	Somewhat support	26
3.	Somewhat oppose	10
4.	Strongly oppose	15
5.	Undecided/don't know	8
6.	No answer/refused	1

13. If a candidate for Congress or the U.S. Senate supported using Social Security taxes to fund private accounts, would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for that candidate, or wouldn't it make a difference in your vote?

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	More Likely	7
2.	Would Not Make a Difference	17
3.	Less Likely	71
4.	Don't know	4
5.	Refused	1

14. If a candidate for Congress or the U.S. Senate opposed allowing Medicare to use its bargaining power to negotiate lower prices for prescription drugs, would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for that candidate, or wouldn't it make a difference in your vote?

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	More Likely	33
2.	Would Not Make a Difference	18
3.	Less Likely	45
4.	Don't know	4
5.	Refused	0

15. If a candidate for Congress or the U.S. Senate opposed a shared approach by the federal government, employers, and individuals, to provide health care coverage for everyone, would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for that candidate, or wouldn't it make a difference in your vote?

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	More Likely	34
2.	Would Not Make a Difference	25
3.	Less Likely	33
4.	Don't know	7
5.	Refused	1

16. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as...?  
(READ LIST. ENTER ONE ONLY)

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	A Republican	27
2.	A Democrat	35
3.	An Independent	32
4. (DO NOT READ)	Other	2
5. (DO NOT READ)	Don't know	2
6. (DO NOT READ)	Refused	2

(SCRAMBLE CODES 1-3)

17. Generally speaking, would you characterize your political views as being...?  
(READ LIST. ENTER ONE ONLY)

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1.	Conservative	37
2.	Moderate	43
3.	Liberal	14
4. (DO NOT READ)	None of the Above	2
5. (DO NOT READ)	Don't know	3
6. (DO NOT READ)	Refused	1

**Demographic Questions:**

- D1. What is your age as of your last birthday? [RECORD IN YEARS]\_\_\_\_\_

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1.	50-59	25
2.	60-64	16
3.	65+	56
4.	Refused	2

- D2. What is your marital status? Are you currently....

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1	Married,	63
2	Divorced,	11
3	Separated,	1
4	Widowed,	20
5	Or have you never been married?	5
6	Living with partner [DO NOT READ]	0
7	Don't know [DO NOT READ]	0
8	Refused [DO NOT READ]	1

- D3. What is the highest level of education you have completed? [READ LIST]

Base: Total Respondents		1000 %
1	Less than high school	6
2	High school graduate or equivalent	31
3	Some college or technical training beyond high school	26
4	College graduate	20
5	Or, Post-graduate or professional degree	17
6	Don't know [DO NOT READ]	0
7	Refused [DO NOT READ]	1

**D4. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?  
Are you currently....[READ LIST]**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1	Employed full-time	23
2	Employed part-time	9
3	Retired and not working	55
4	Unemployed and looking for work	2
5	Homemaker	4
6	Disabled	4
7	Student	0
8	Or something else [Specify: _____]	3
9	Don't Know [DO NOT READ]	0
10	Refused [DO NOT READ]	1

**D5. Would you say that you always vote in presidential elections, usually vote, sometimes vote, rarely vote, or never vote)**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	Always	81
2.	Usually	10
3.	Sometimes	5
4.	Rarely	2
5.	Never	2
6.	Refused [DO NOT READ]	1

**D6. For statistical purposes only, please stop me when I get to the category  
That includes your household's income before taxes in 2004. Was it...**

	Base: Total Respondents [READ LIST]	1000 %
1.	Less than \$10,000	5
2.	\$10,000 but less than \$20,000	10
3.	\$20,000 but less than \$30,000	10
4.	\$30,000 but less than \$40,000	13
5.	\$40,000 but less than \$50,000	9
6.	\$50,000 but less than \$75,000	15
7.	\$75,000 but less than \$100,000	9
8.	\$100,000 or more	9
9.	Don't know [DO NOT READ]	3
10.	Refused [DO NOT READ]	17

**D7. Are you Spanish, Latino, or Hispanic?**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	Yes	1
2.	No	97
3.	Don't know	0
4.	Refused	2

**D8. Which of the following groups best describes your race? [READ LIST]**

	Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1.	White	86
2.	Black or African-American	7
3.	Asian	0
4.	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0
5.	American Indian or Alaska Native	1
6.	Other	3
7.	Don't know	0
8.	Refused	2

**D9. [RECORD STATE]**

**D10. What is your gender?**

Base: Total Respondents	1000 %
1. Male	45
2. Female	55

**D11. Finally, what is your 5-digit zip code? \_\_\_\_\_**

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING! YOUR OPINION COUNTS!**



**AARP**  
**Knowledge Management**  
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