



# **AARP Election Watch: Pulse of a Generation**

**October 23, 2006**



October 2006



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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 our 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.

## Executive Summary

In early October 2006, AARP commissioned a national telephone survey (titled AARP Election Watch: Pulse of a Generation) of a representative sample of boomer+ (people ages 42 and older), who constitute the segment of the population who are most likely to vote. In fact, 90 percent of respondents in the current survey report they are already registered to vote and 87 percent are likely voters. A total of 1,503 interviews were conducted.

### Issue of the Week: Social Security

Seven in 10 respondents oppose private accounts (72%). The percentage of respondents who *strongly oppose* private accounts (58%) is seven times greater than those who *strongly support* private accounts (8%).

Nearly two-thirds of likely voters (65%) said they are either *not at all likely* (39%) or *not very likely* (26%) to vote for a candidate who supports using Social Security taxes to fund private accounts.

When given the choice, an overwhelming 80 percent of all respondents want candidates for both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate to work to strengthen the existing Social Security program rather than work to create private accounts (11%).

### Voting Participation

Self reported voter registration is very high (90%). Respondents say that they are also *very likely* to vote this November (87%).

Survey respondents report voting with regularity – 59 percent say they *always* vote and 27 percent say they *nearly always* vote. Sixty-three percent of those over 60 say that they *always* vote compared to 51 percent of younger boomers (ages 42 to 50) and 57 percent older boomers (ages 51 to 60).

Interest in the upcoming election is high. Six in 10 (61%) say they are *very interested* in this year's election.

As of October 13<sup>th</sup>, with just three weeks before the election, 52 percent say they have given *quite a lot* of thought to the upcoming election, and a majority say they have not yet decided which candidate they will vote for in their House of Representatives race (52%). Four in 10 (43%) have not yet decided which candidate they will vote for in their U.S. Senate race.

Americans are narrowly divided between basing their vote for congressional candidates on “bringing home the bacon” to their congressional district (41%) and agreement with the candidate's position on major national issues (46%).

On the other hand, more say a candidate's position on one or two key issues (46%) matters most when they vote rather than the personal qualities of the candidates (33%).

## **AARP Election Watch: Pulse of a Generation**

### **October 23, 2006**

As the upcoming mid-term elections draw near, AARP wanted to take the pulse of the public's opinion on issues that our members have indicated they want to hear about in the national and state public discourse. AARP also wanted to determine how much attention people are paying to the elections and what they consider when making their voting decisions.

This *AARP Election Watch: Pulse of a Generation* survey is the seventh in a series of 9 surveys scheduled for release each week leading up to the mid-term elections. The first six reports dealt with the issues of ID theft, affordability of prescription drugs, Social Security, consumer privacy, healthcare coverage and long-term care. This report is about Social Security and is the second time AARP has asked questions about Social Security in this series of surveys. A different issue will be featured in each of the surveys, in addition to consistent weekly tracking of changes in boomer+ voters' level of interest and opinions up to Election Day.

The current schedule is below:

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Week of 9/11  | Identity Theft **RELEASED                 |
| Week of 9/18  | Rx Affordability **RELEASED               |
| Week of 9/25  | Social Security **RELEASED                |
| Week of 10/2  | Privacy **RELEASED                        |
| Week of 10/9  | Healthcare Coverage **RELEASED            |
| Week of 10/16 | Long-term Care **RELEASED                 |
| Week of 10/23 | Social Security **CURRENT                 |
| Week of 10/30 | Government Spending/Fiscal Responsibility |
| Week of 11/6  | Medicare                                  |

In early October 2006, AARP commissioned a national telephone survey of a representative sample of people ages 42 and older, who constitute the segment of the population who are most likely to vote. In fact, 90 percent of respondents in the current survey report they are already registered to vote and 87 percent are likely voters. Moreover, 59 percent say they *always* vote and another 27 percent say they *nearly always* vote. A total of 1,503 interviews were conducted.

The survey methodology is described at the end of this report, and a tabulated questionnaire is appended.

AARP is non-partisan and we do not support, oppose or give money to any candidates or political parties. We educate Americans on peace-of-mind issues important to our families so that they can make informed choices when they vote.

## Key Findings

### Opposition to Private Accounts

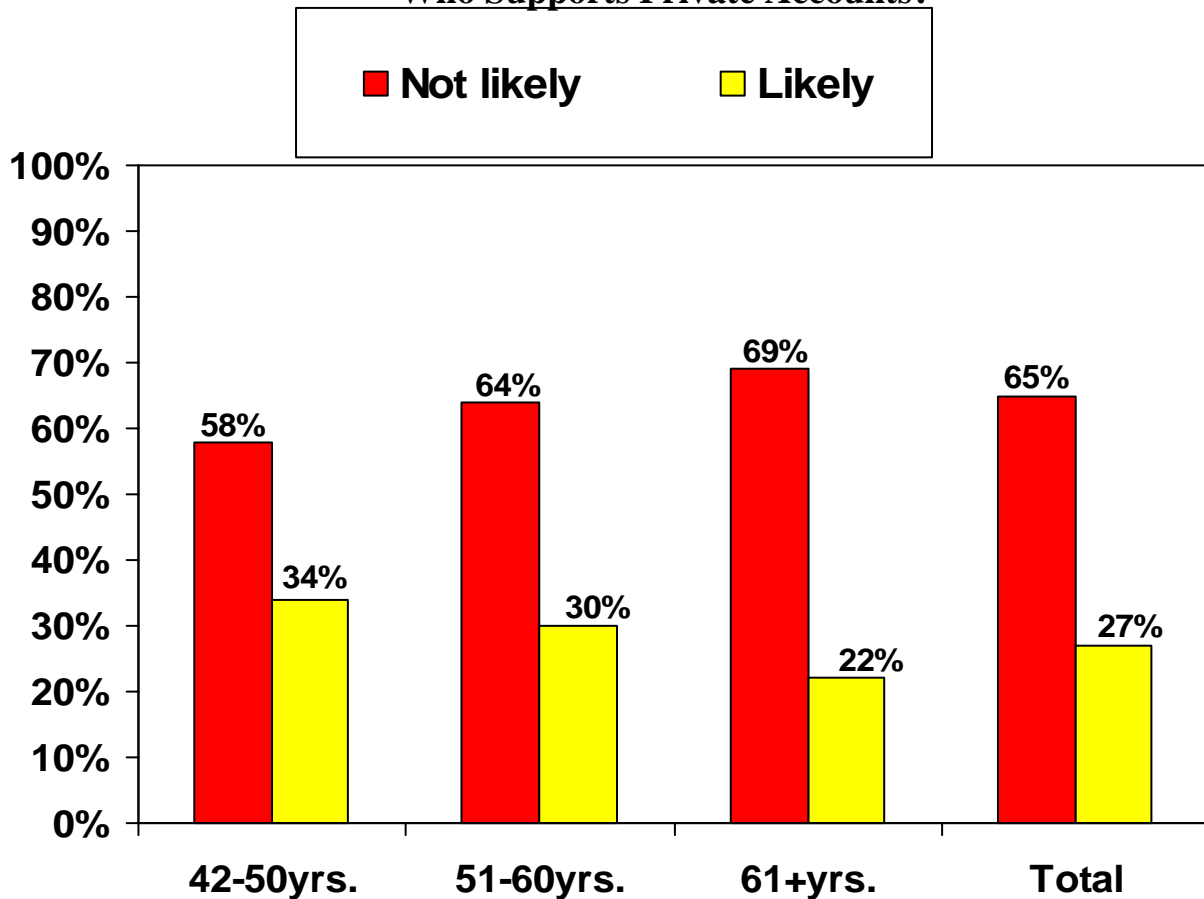
Opposition to private accounts is high among likely voters and will be a consideration in their voting decisions for this mid-term election. Nearly two-thirds of likely voters (65%) said they are either *not at all likely* (39%) or *not very likely* (26%) to vote for a candidate who supports using Social Security taxes to fund private accounts (see Figure 1). Older respondents (45% ages 61+) were more likely than younger respondents (29% ages 42-50 and 36% ages 51-60) to report they are *not at all likely* to vote for a candidate who supports private accounts.

A greater percentage of younger boomers (24% ages 42-50) than older age groups (22% ages 51-60 and 13% ages 61+) report they are *somewhat likely* to vote for a candidate who supports using Social Security taxes to fund private accounts. A small percentage of respondents across all age groups report they are *very likely* to vote for a candidate who supports private accounts (10% ages 42-50, 8% ages 51-60, and 9% ages 61+).

**Figure 1**

**\*\* Includes only likely voters  
(n=1,355)**

#### How Likely Are You to Vote For a Candidate Who Supports Private Accounts?

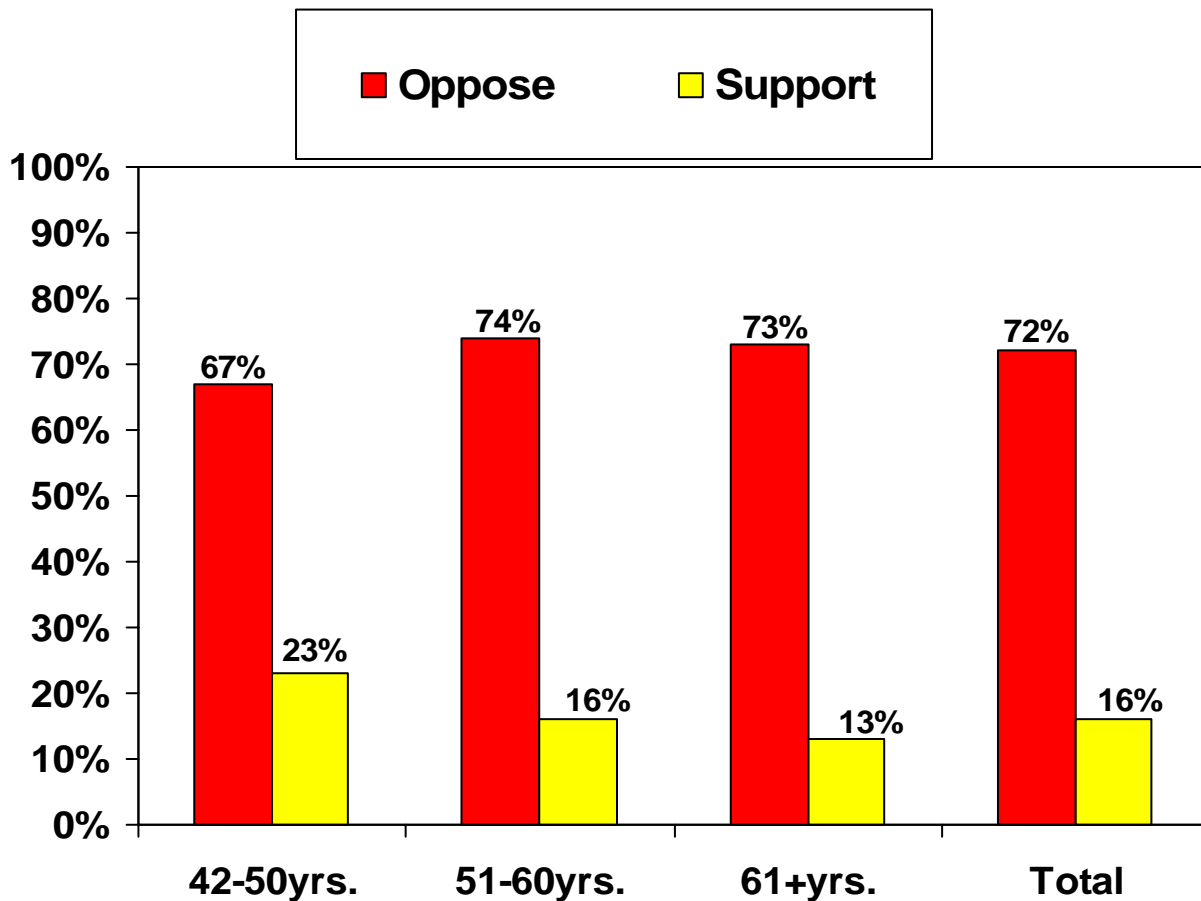


A total of 7 in 10 respondents oppose private accounts (72%) (see Figure 2). In fact, while respondents who support private accounts were evenly divided between *strongly support* (8%) and *somewhat support* (8%), whereas those who *oppose* private accounts were more than four times as likely to *strongly oppose* private accounts (58%) as to *somewhat oppose* them (14%). That is, intensity in opposition to private accounts is greater than the intensity in support of private accounts.

A greater percentage of respondents ages 61+ (62%) than younger boomers ages 42 to 50 (51%) and older boomers ages 51 to 60 (59%) *strongly oppose* private accounts. Less than one-fifth of respondents across all age groups said they *somewhat oppose* private accounts (16% ages 42-50, 15% ages 51-60, and 11% ages 61+).

Additionally, younger boomers (13%) are more likely than older age groups (7% ages 51-60 and 6% ages 61+) to report they *somewhat support* private accounts. A small percentage of respondents across all age groups report they *strongly support* private accounts (10% ages 42-50, 9% ages 51-60, and 7% ages 61+).

**Figure 2**  
(n=1,503)  
**Do You Support or Oppose Using Social Security Taxes to Fund Private Accounts?**

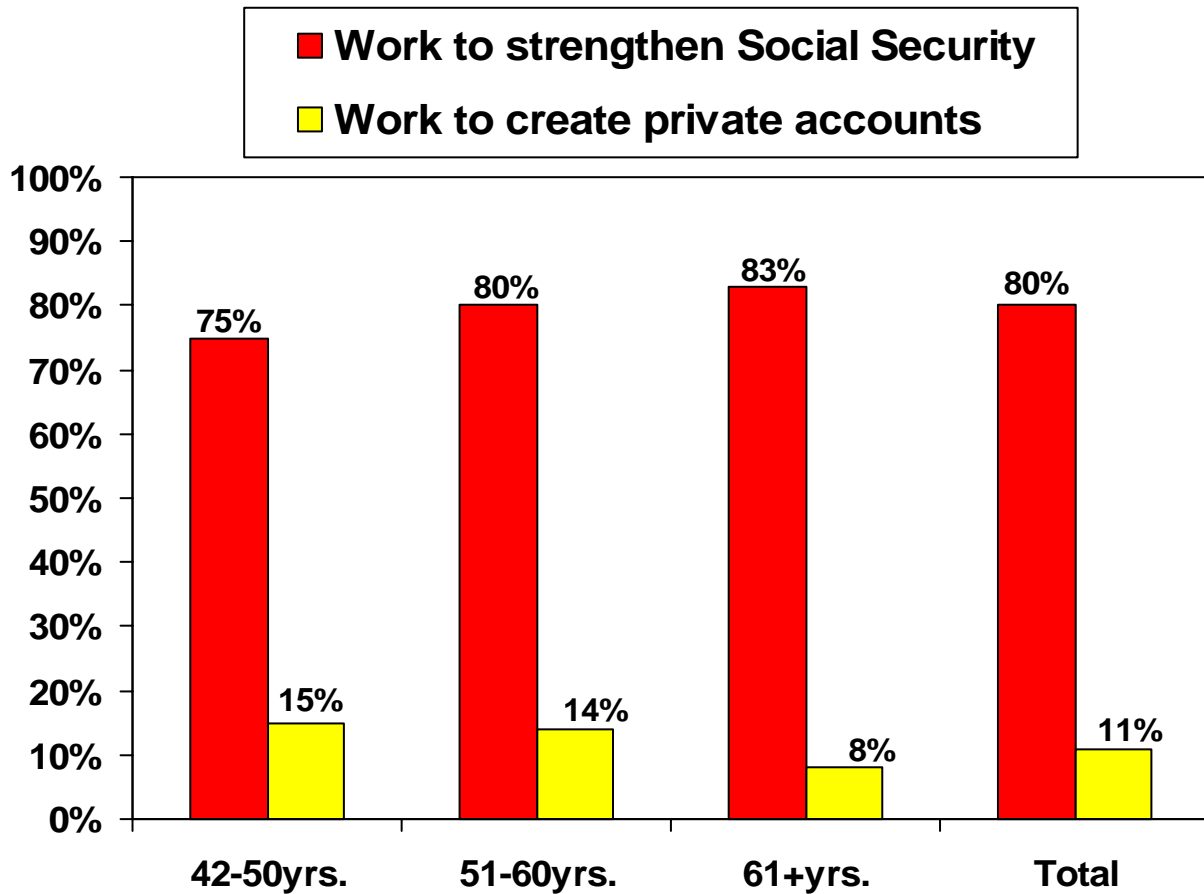


Approximately half of all respondents are not clear where candidates stand on the issue of private accounts (49%). The remaining respondents are either *somewhat clear* (28%), *very clear* (10%) or *don't know* (13%).

While a considerable percentage of respondents do not know where candidates stand on the issue of private accounts they certainly have expressed how they want their elected officials to address issues with Social Security. An overwhelming 80 percent of all respondents want their elected officials for both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate to work to strengthen the existing Social Security program (see Figure 3). Only 11 percent of respondents want candidates to work to create private accounts funded with taxes from Social Security.

**Figure 3**  
(n=1,503)

**When it Comes to Social Security  
What do You Want Candidates to do?**





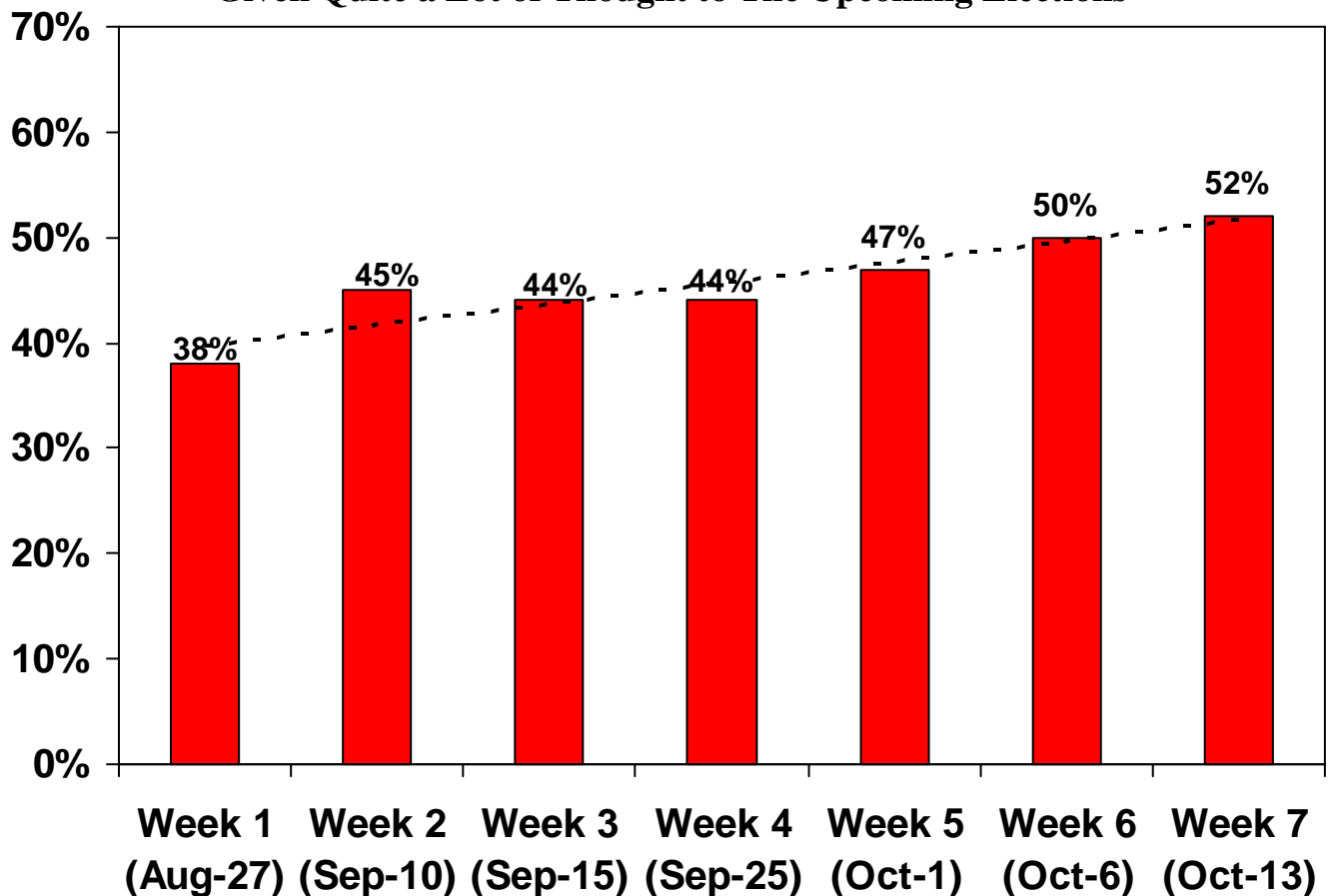
## Interest in the Mid-Term Elections

There is a considerable amount of interest in the mid-term elections. Nearly 9 in 10 respondents (89%) are interested in the upcoming elections. Six in 10 are *very interested* (61%) and nearly 3 in 10 are *somewhat interested* (28%). Respondents ages 51 and older are more likely to say they are *very interested* in the upcoming election than younger respondents (58% ages 42-50, 62% ages 51-60, and 62% ages 61+).

Furthermore, a greater percentage of respondents report they have given *quite a lot* of thought (52%) to these upcoming elections than those who have given *only a little* thought (33%) or no thought at all yet (13%) to the elections. In fact, over the past two months the percentage of respondents who say they have given *quite a lot* of thought to the upcoming elections has risen from 38 percent in late August to 52 percent in early October (see Figure 3). In the last four weeks of polling, the percentage of respondents who have given *quite a lot* of thought to the upcoming elections has risen 8 percentage points from 44 percent to 52 percent.

Figure 3  
(n=1,503)

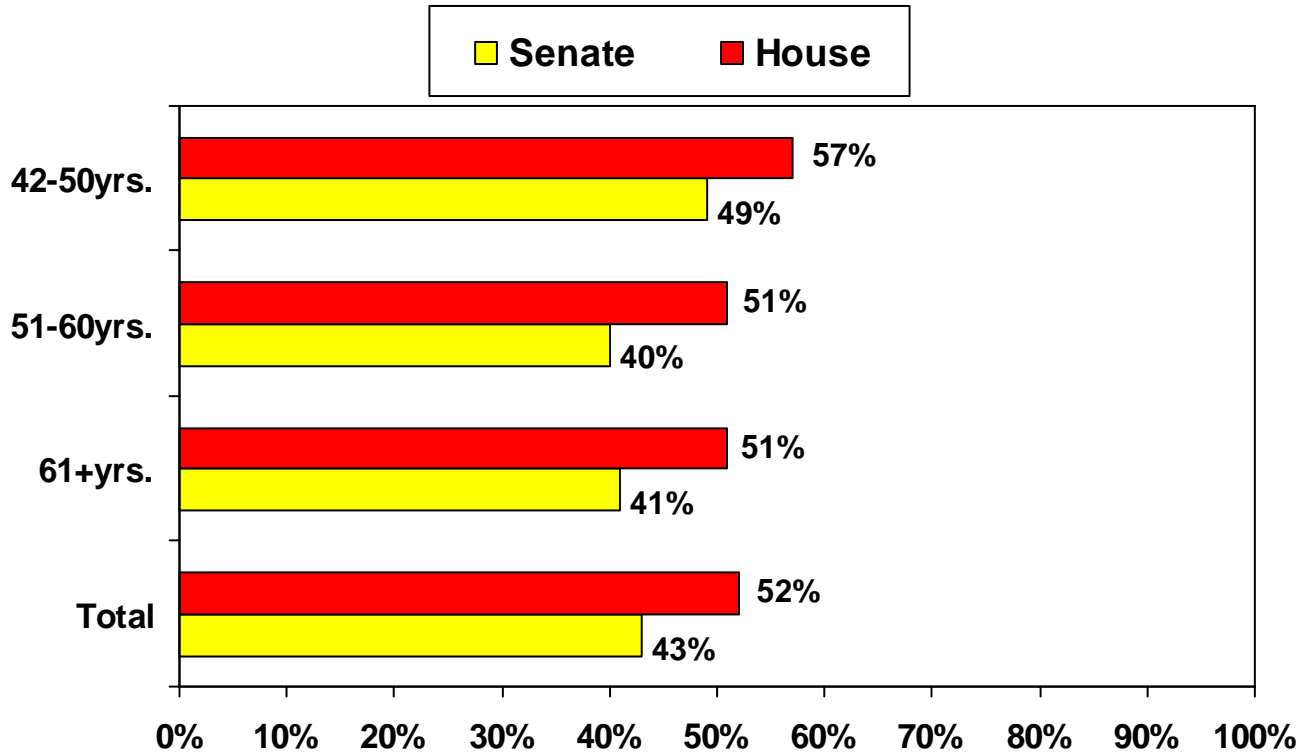
### Given Quite a Lot of Thought to The Upcoming Elections



While there is a sizeable level of interest in the mid-term elections, findings suggest that a significant percentage of likely voters have not made up their minds about for whom to vote. Slightly more than half of respondents (52%) have not yet decided for which U.S. House candidate to vote and 43 percent have not yet settled on a U.S. Senate candidate (see Figure 4).

Younger boomers are more likely than respondents 51 and older to be undecided in their voting decisions. Fifty-seven percent of younger boomers, ages 42 to 50 have not yet decided for which U.S. House candidate to vote compared to 51 percent of respondents ages 51 to 60 and 61+ (see Figure 4). For U.S. Senate, 49 percent of younger boomers have not yet decided for which candidate to vote compared to 40 percent of older boomers ages 51 to 60 and 41 percent of respondents ages 61 and older.

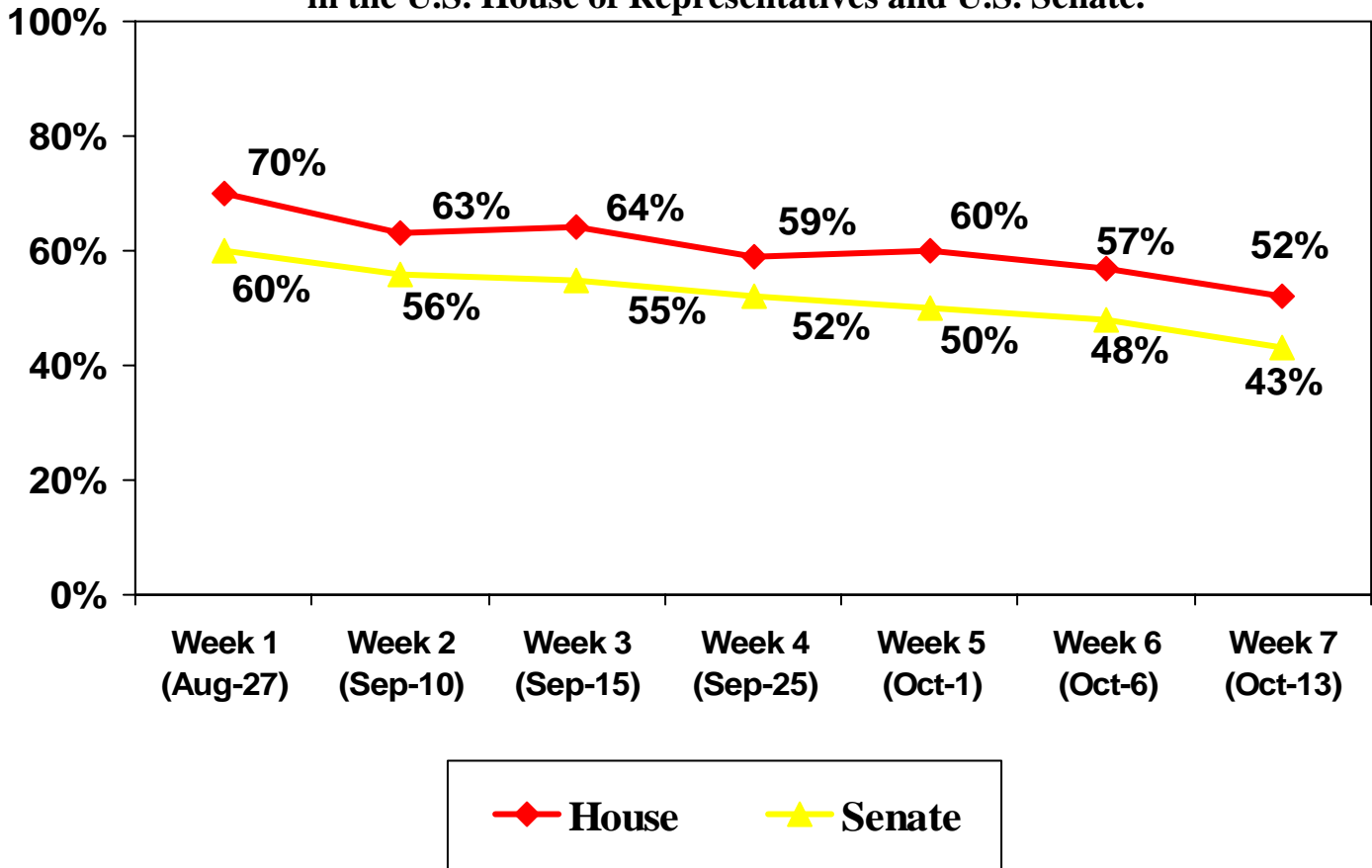
**Figure 4**  
**\*\* Includes only likely voters**  
**(Senate: n=1,015; House: n=1,355)**  
**Likely Voters Who Have Not Yet Decided for Whom to Vote**  
**in the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.**



Findings suggest that over the past two months of polling there has been a decrease in the percentage of voters who have not made a decision about which candidate to vote for in the U.S. House of Representatives and in the U.S. Senate races. In late August, 70 percent of respondents had not yet decided for which U.S. House candidate to vote (see Figure 5). Currently, the percentage of respondents who have not decided for which U.S. House candidate to vote stands at 52 percent, its lowest since polling started. This is a full 18 percentage point decrease since week 1. The largest decrease in the percentage of respondents who have not made their voting decision for House candidates occurred between the first and second polling period from 70 percent in week 1 to 63 percent in week 2.

In late August 60 percent of respondents had not yet decided for which U.S. Senate candidate to vote (see Figure 5). There has been a steady decline of no more than 5 percentage points from one polling period to the next in this figure ever since. Currently, the percentage of respondents who have not decided for which U.S. Senate candidate to vote is at 43 percent, its lowest since polling started in late August. This is a full 17 percentage point decrease since week 1.

**Figure 5**  
**\*\* Includes only likely voters**  
**(Senate: n=1,015; House: n=1,355)**  
**Likely Voters Who Have Not Yet Decided for Whom to Vote**  
**in the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.**



## **Candidate Attributes Considered**

While there are numerous things voters will consider before casting their vote in the mid-term elections, findings suggest that a key consideration will be whether or not voters agree with a candidate's position on major issues. When compared to other attributes such as a candidate's political party (11%), or even personal qualities of the candidate (33%), agreement on key issues (46%) is what matters most to a greater percentage of respondents. In fact, when compared to a more pertinent attribute such as a candidate's ability to help people in their own congressional district (41%), agreement with a candidate's position on major issues still came out slightly ahead (46%).

## **Conclusions**

Social Security is likely to be an important election issue this year for boomers and older Americans, given the high percentage of those who oppose private accounts, and want candidates to work on strengthening Social Security.

Boomer+ voters will likely play a key role in this year's elections, and are certainly worth paying attention to. They are the most likely of any age group to be registered to vote, to always vote, to be the most interested in this year's election, and to have given quite a lot of thought to the upcoming elections for Congress.

## **Methodology**

AARP commissioned Woelfel Research, Inc., a national survey research firm, to conduct a national random digit dial (RDD) telephone survey of 1,503 people ages 42 and older. Interviews were conducted between October 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006. This survey has a sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points. This means that in 95 out of 100 samples of this size, the results obtained in the sample would fall in a range of 3 percentage points of what would have been obtained if every person in the continental United States ages 42 and older had been surveyed.

For presentation purposes, percentage points have been rounded off to the nearest whole number. As a result, percentages in a given table column may total slightly higher or lower than 100%. For questions that permit multiple responses, columns may total to significantly more than 100%, depending on the number of different responses offered by each respondent. Similarly, when only selected responses are shown, percentages may total less than 100%.

**AARP Takes the Pulse of the Public:  
2006 Frontrunner Election Survey  
October 23, 2006  
(n= 1,503)**

**AARP Weekly Election “Pulse” Surveys – Waves 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7**

Hello, this is \_\_\_\_\_ calling from Woelfel Research, a national opinion research firm. We are not telemarketers and are not trying to sell you anything. We would like to find out your opinions on some important issues. Your views are important and we would greatly appreciate your participation. All of your responses will be kept entirely confidential. The survey should take about 5 minutes of your time.

QSA. Are you between the ages of 18-41, or are you 42 or older?

|   |             | <b>Wave<br/>1</b> | <b>Wave<br/>2</b> | <b>Wave<br/>3</b> | <b>Wave<br/>4</b> | <b>Wave<br/>5</b> | <b>Wave<br/>6</b> | <b>Wave<br/>7</b> |
|---|-------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|   | Base:       | 1502              | 1003              | 1504              | 1500              | 1501              | 1501              | 1503              |
|   |             | %                 | %                 | %                 | %                 | %                 | %                 | %                 |
| 1 | 18-41       | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 |
| 2 | 42 or older | 100               | 100               | 100               | 100               | 100               | 100               | 100               |
| 3 | Under 18    | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 |
| 4 | Refused     | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 |

GENDER. [INTERVIEWER -- RECORD GENDER]

|  |        | <b>Wave<br/>1</b> | <b>Wave<br/>2</b> | <b>Wave<br/>3</b> | <b>Wave<br/>4</b> | <b>Wave<br/>5</b> | <b>Wave<br/>6</b> | <b>Wave<br/>7</b> |
|--|--------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|  | Base:  | 1502              | 1003              | 1504              | 1500              | 1501              | 1501              | 1503              |
|  |        | %                 | %                 | %                 | %                 | %                 | %                 | %                 |
|  | Male   | 46                | 46                | 46                | 46                | 46                | 46                | 46                |
|  | Female | 54                | 54                | 54                | 54                | 54                | 54                | 54                |

1. These days, many people are so busy they can't find time to register to vote, or move around so often they don't get a chance to re-register. Are you already registered, do you plan to register, or do you not plan to register to vote in your precinct or election district?

|   |                         | <b>Wave 1</b> | <b>Wave 2</b> | <b>Wave 3</b> | <b>Wave 4</b> | <b>Wave 5</b> | <b>Wave 6</b> | <b>Wave 7</b> |
|---|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|   | Base:                   | 1502<br>%     | 1003<br>%     | 1504<br>%     | 1500<br>%     | 1501<br>%     | 1501<br>%     | 1503<br>%     |
| 1 | Already registered      | 89            | 90            | 90            | 90            | 93            | 91            | 90            |
| 2 | Plan to register        | 4             | 4             | 4             | 3             | 3             | 3             | 3             |
| 3 | Do Not Plan to register | 6             | 5             | 5             | 6             | 4             | 5             | 6             |
| 4 | Don't Know              | 1             | 1             | 1             | 1             | 1             | 1             | 1             |

- 1A. How likely are you to vote this November?

|   |                   | <b>Wave 1</b> | <b>Wave 2</b> | <b>Wave 3</b> | <b>Wave 4</b> | <b>Wave 5</b> | <b>Wave 6</b> | <b>Wave 7</b> |
|---|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|   | Base:             | 1417<br>%     | 953<br>%      | 1429<br>%     | 1414<br>%     | 1444<br>%     | 1407<br>%     | 1414<br>%     |
| 1 | Very Likely       | 84            | 87            | 86            | 85            | 86            | 87            | 87            |
| 2 | Somewhat Likely   | 9             | 8             | 8             | 9             | 8             | 8             | 7             |
| 3 | Not Very Likely   | 3             | 2             | 2             | 2             | 2             | 2             | 2             |
| 4 | Not At All Likely | 2             | 2             | 2             | 2             | 2             | 2             | 2             |
| 5 | Don't Know        | 2             | 1             | 2             | 1             | 2             | 2             | 1             |
| 6 | Refused           | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             |

2. In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent? [READ]

|   |             | <b>Wave 1</b> | <b>Wave 2</b> | <b>Wave 3</b> | <b>Wave 4</b> | <b>Wave 5</b> | <b>Wave 6</b> | <b>Wave 7</b> |
|---|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|   | Base:       | 1502<br>%     | 1003<br>%     | 1504<br>%     | 1500<br>%     | 1501<br>%     | 1501<br>%     | 1503<br>%     |
| 1 | Republican  | 29            | 28            | 30            | 31            | 29            | 28            | 28            |
| 2 | Democrat    | 32            | 34            | 34            | 32            | 33            | 32            | 34            |
| 3 | Independent | 30            | 29            | 28            | 26            | 29            | 30            | 29            |
| 4 | Don't Know  | 5             | 6             | 5             | 6             | 5             | 6             | 6             |
| 5 | Refused     | 4             | 4             | 4             | 5             | 3             | 4             | 4             |

3. In general, would you describe your political views as... [READ]

|   |              | Wave 1    | Wave 2    | Wave 3    | Wave 4    | Wave 5    | Wave 6    | Wave 7    |
|---|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|   | Base:        | 1502<br>% | 1003<br>% | 1504<br>% | 1500<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1503<br>% |
| 1 | Conservative | 38        | 37        | 38        | 37        | 37        | 37        | 35        |
| 2 | Moderate     | 40        | 42        | 41        | 38        | 40        | 40        | 42        |
| 3 | Liberal      | 15        | 14        | 12        | 15        | 14        | 14        | 13        |
| 4 | Don't Know   | 6         | 6         | 7         | 8         | 7         | 8         | 8         |
| 5 | Refused      | 2         | 2         | 2         | 2         | 2         | 2         | 1         |

4. How often would you say you vote? Is it ...[READ]

|   |                  | Wave 1    | Wave 2    | Wave 3    | Wave 4    | Wave 5    | Wave 6    | Wave 7    |
|---|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|   | Base:            | 1502<br>% | 1003<br>% | 1504<br>% | 1500<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1503<br>% |
| 1 | Always           | 54        | 56        | 57        | 57        | 56        | 56        | 59        |
| 2 | Nearly Always    | 29        | 30        | 28        | 28        | 31        | 30        | 27        |
| 3 | Some of the time | 8         | 7         | 8         | 9         | 7         | 8         | 8         |
| 4 | Seldom           | 4         | 3         | 2         | 3         | 2         | 3         | 3         |
| 5 | Never            | 5         | 4         | 4         | 4         | 4         | 4         | 3         |
| 5 | Don't Know       | 0         | 1         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| 6 | Refused          | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |

5. This November there will be elections for Congress and other offices. Right now, how interested are you in this year's elections? Are you ...[READ]

|   |                       | Wave 1    | Wave 2    | Wave 3    | Wave 4    | Wave 5    | Wave 6    | Wave 7    |
|---|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|   | Base:                 | 1502<br>% | 1003<br>% | 1504<br>% | 1500<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1503<br>% |
| 1 | Very Interested       | 53        | 57        | 56        | 56        | 57        | 58        | 61        |
| 2 | Somewhat Interested   | 33        | 29        | 31        | 30        | 30        | 31        | 28        |
| 3 | Not Very Interested   | 8         | 8         | 7         | 7         | 7         | 7         | 6         |
| 4 | Not At All Interested | 6         | 6         | 5         | 5         | 4         | 5         | 5         |
| 5 | Don't Know            | 1         | 0         | 1         | 1         | 1         | 1         | 1         |
| 6 | Refused               | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |



6. How much thought have you given to the upcoming elections for Congress? Is it ...[READ]

|   |                | Wave 1    | Wave 2    | Wave 3    | Wave 4    | Wave 5    | Wave 6    | Wave 7    |
|---|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|   | Base:          | 1502<br>% | 1003<br>% | 1504<br>% | 1500<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1503<br>% |
| 1 | Quite a lot    | 38        | 45        | 44        | 44        | 47        | 50        | 52        |
| 2 | Only a little  | 40        | 36        | 36        | 36        | 37        | 34        | 33        |
| 3 | Not at all yet | 22        | 17        | 18        | 18        | 14        | 15        | 13        |
| 4 | Don't Know     | 1         | 1         | 1         | 1         | 1         | 1         | 2         |
| 5 | Refused        | 0         | 0         | 0         | 1         | 1         | 0         | 0         |

7. Have you already decided for whom to vote in your House of Representatives election? [SKIP IF Q1=3, OR IF Q1A=3 or 4]

|   |            | Wave 1    | Wave 2   | Wave 3    | Wave 4    | Wave 5    | Wave 6    | Wave 7    |
|---|------------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|   | Base:      | 1356<br>% | 914<br>% | 1500<br>% | 1358<br>% | 1383<br>% | 1377<br>% | 1355<br>% |
| 1 | Yes        | 28        | 36       | 35        | 39        | 39        | 41        | 47        |
| 2 | No         | 70        | 63       | 64        | 59        | 60        | 57        | 52        |
| 3 | Don't Know | 2         | 1        | 1         | 2         | 1         | 2         | 1         |

8. (If applicable) Have you already decided for whom to vote in your Senate election? [SKIP IF Q1=3, OR IF Q1A=3 or 4]

|   |            | Wave 1   | Wave 2   | Wave 3   | Wave 4   | Wave 5    | Wave 6   | Wave 7    |
|---|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
|   | Base:      | 960<br>% | 643<br>% | 976<br>% | 946<br>% | 1016<br>% | 987<br>% | 1015<br>% |
| 1 | Yes        | 39       | 44       | 44       | 46       | 48        | 50       | 55        |
| 2 | No         | 60       | 56       | 55       | 52       | 50        | 48       | 43        |
| 3 | Don't Know | 1        | 1        | 1        | 2        | 2         | 2        | 2         |

9. When you vote for a candidate for the House of Representatives [or Senate – if applicable], which is more important to you ... [READ]

(ROTATE)

|   |   | Wave 1    | Wave 2    | Wave 3    | Wave 4    | Wave 5    | Wave 6    | Wave 7    |
|---|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|   | Base:   | 1502<br>% | 1003<br>% | 1504<br>% | 1500<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1503<br>% |
| 1 | His or her ability to do things that help people in your congressional district | 43        | 41        | 43        | 41        | 43        | 42        | 41        |
| 2 | That you agree with his or her positions on major national issues               | 45        | 45        | 46        | 45        | 46        | 44        | 46        |
| 3 | Don't Know  | 10        | 12        | 9         | 12        | 9         | 12        | 11        |
| 4 | Refused   | 2         | 2         | 2         | 2         | 3         | 2         | 2         |

10. Which of the following matters most when you vote for a candidate for a national office... [READ]

(ROTATE)

|   |   | Wave 1    | Wave 2    | Wave 3    | Wave 4    | Wave 5    | Wave 6    | Wave 7    |
|---|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|   | Base:   | 1502<br>% | 1003<br>% | 1504<br>% | 1500<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1503<br>% |
| 1 | The candidate's political party                   | 10        | 14        | 11        | 11        | 12        | 12        | 11        |
| 2 | The candidate's position on one or two key issues | 44        | 43        | 46        | 48        | 46        | 44        | 46        |
| 3 | The personal qualities of the candidate           | 37        | 34        | 36        | 33        | 34        | 35        | 33        |
| 4 | Don't Know  | 7         | 7         | 6         | 7         | 7         | 8         | 8         |
| 5 | Refused   | 2         | 1         | 1         | 1         | 2         | 1         | 2         |

11. Do you think elected officials in Washington care about your opinions when they make decisions or vote on legislation?

|   |            | Wave 1    | Wave 2    | Wave 3    | Wave 4    | Wave 5    | Wave 6    | Wave 7    |
|---|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|   | Base:      | 1502<br>% | 1003<br>% | 1504<br>% | 1500<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1503<br>% |
| 1 | Yes        | 29        | 28        | 27        | 30        | 30        | 26        | 26        |
| 2 | No         | 62        | 63        | 64        | 62        | 62        | 65        | 65        |
| 3 | Don't Know | 8         | 8         | 8         | 7         | 8         | 9         | 8         |
| 4 | Refused    | 1         | 1         | 1         | 1         | 1         | 1         | 1         |

**SOCIAL SECURITY**

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

|   |                  | <b>Wave 3</b> | <b>Wave 7</b> |
|---|------------------|---------------|---------------|
|   | Base:            | 1504<br>%     | 1503<br>%     |
| 1 | Strongly support | 9             | 8             |
| 2 | Somewhat support | 8             | 8             |
| 3 | Somewhat oppose  | 14            | 14            |
| 4 | Strongly oppose  | 57            | 58            |
| 5 | Don't know       | 11            | 11            |
| 6 | Refused          | 1             | 1             |

13. How clear have candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives in your district been or U.S. Senate (state) about where they stand on the issue of using Social Security taxes to fund private accounts?

|   |                  | <b>Wave 3</b> | <b>Wave 7</b> |
|---|------------------|---------------|---------------|
|   | Base:            | 1504<br>%     | 1503<br>%     |
| 1 | Very clear       | 9             | 10            |
| 2 | Somewhat clear   | 27            | 28            |
| 3 | Not very clear   | 30            | 28            |
| 4 | Not at all clear | 20            | 21            |
| 5 | Don't Know       | 13            | 13            |
| 6 | Refused          | 0             | 0             |

14. When it comes to Social Security, what do you want elected officials in the U.S. House of Representatives (or U.S. Senate) from your state to do...?:

|   |  | <b>Wave 3</b> | <b>Wave 7</b> |
|---|--|---------------|---------------|
|   | Base:  | 1504<br>%     | 1503<br>%     |
| 1 | Work to create private accounts funded with taxes from Social Security | 12            | 11            |
| 2 | Work to strengthen the existing Social Security Program                | 79            | 80            |
| 3 | Don't know   | 7             | 8             |
| 4 | Refused  | 2             | 1             |

15. How likely are you to vote for a candidate who supports using Social Security taxes to fund private accounts?

|   |                   | <b>Wave 3</b> | <b>Wave 7</b> |
|---|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
|   | Base:             | 1367<br>%     | 1355<br>%     |
| 1 | Very likely       | 9             | 9             |
| 2 | Somewhat likely   | 19            | 18            |
| 3 | Not very likely   | 26            | 26            |
| 4 | Not at all likely | 38            | 39            |
| 5 | Don't know        | 7             | 8             |
| 6 | Refused           | 1             | 1             |

Now, just a few questions for classification purposes only.

QD1. What is your age as of your last birthday?

|   |          | <b>Wave 1</b> | <b>Wave 2</b> | <b>Wave 3</b> | <b>Wave 4</b> | <b>Wave 5</b> | <b>Wave 6</b> | <b>Wave 7</b> |
|---|----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|   | Base:    | 1502<br>%     | 1003<br>%     | 1504<br>%     | 1500<br>%     | 1501<br>%     | 1501<br>%     | 1503<br>%     |
| 1 | Under 50 | 20            | 19            | 21            | 19            | 19            | 20            | 21            |
| 2 | 50 – 59  | 26            | 27            | 27            | 29            | 29            | 28            | 28            |
| 3 | 60 – 74  | 32            | 32            | 32            | 31            | 32            | 32            | 32            |
| 4 | 75+      | 19            | 19            | 17            | 17            | 17            | 16            | 15            |
| 5 | Refused  | 3             | 3             | 4             | 3             | 3             | 4             | 3             |

QD2. What is your current marital status?

|   |                                    | <b>Wave 1</b> | <b>Wave 2</b> | <b>Wave 3</b> | <b>Wave 4</b> | <b>Wave 5</b> | <b>Wave 6</b> | <b>Wave 7</b> |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|   | Base:                              | 1502<br>%     | 1003<br>%     | 1504<br>%     | 1500<br>%     | 1501<br>%     | 1501<br>%     | 1503<br>%     |
| 1 | Married                            | 59            | 64            | 58            | 59            | 60            | 61            | 60            |
| 2 | Not married, living with a partner | 2             | 2             | 2             | 2             | 2             | 1             | 2             |
| 3 | Separated                          | 1             | 1             | 2             | 2             | 1             | 3             | 2             |
| 4 | Divorced                           | 13            | 12            | 13            | 14            | 12            | 12            | 12            |
| 5 | Widowed                            | 16            | 15            | 17            | 15            | 17            | 15            | 16            |
| 6 | Never Married                      | 7             | 6             | 8             | 7             | 8             | 7             | 8             |
| 7 | Refused                            | 1             | 1             | 1             | 2             | 1             | 1             | 2             |

QD3. Are you/Are you or your spouse a member of A-A-R-P formerly known as the American Association of Retired Persons? [PROGRAMMING: DISPLAY 'Are you' OR 'Are you or your spouse' DEPENDING ON THE ANSWER FROM QD2]

|   |            | Wave 1    | Wave 2    | Wave 3    | Wave 4    | Wave 5    | Wave 6    | Wave 7    |
|---|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|   | Base:      | 1502<br>% | 1003<br>% | 1504<br>% | 1500<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1503<br>% |
| 1 | Yes        | 43        | 43        | 42        | 40        | 41        | 43        | 41        |
| 2 | No         | 57        | 56        | 57        | 59        | 59        | 56        | 58        |
| 3 | Don't Know | 1         | 1         | 0         | 1         | 0         | 1         | 1         |
| 4 | Refused    | 0         | 0         | 0         | 1         | 0         | 0         | 1         |

QD4. What is the highest level of education that you completed?  
{READ LIST IF NEEDED}

|   |   | Wave 1    | Wave 2    | Wave 3    | Wave 4    | Wave 5    | Wave 6    | Wave 7    |
|---|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|   | Base:   | 1502<br>% | 1003<br>% | 1504<br>% | 1500<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1501<br>% | 1503<br>% |
| 1 | Less than high school                                 | 9         | 8         | 8         | 7         | 7         | 7         | 9         |
| 2 | High school grad or equivalent                        | 29        | 28        | 29        | 30        | 29        | 26        | 26        |
| 3 | Some college or technical training beyond high school | 20        | 19        | 18        | 21        | 20        | 21        | 19        |
| 4 | College Graduate (2 year degree)                      | 10        | 11        | 10        | 9         | 11        | 11        | 10        |
| 5 | College Graduate (4 year degree)                      | 17        | 17        | 19        | 17        | 17        | 20        | 19        |
| 6 | Post-Graduate or Professional degree                  | 14        | 16        | 15        | 16        | 15        | 14        | 17        |
| 7 | Refused   | 1         | 2         | 1         | 1         | 0         | 1         | 1         |

QD5. What is your race? {READ LIST IF NEEDED}

|   |                                   | <b>Wave 1</b> | <b>Wave 2</b> | <b>Wave 3</b> | <b>Wave 4</b> | <b>Wave 5</b> | <b>Wave 6</b> | <b>Wave 7</b> |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|   | Base:                             | 1502<br>%     | 1003<br>%     | 1504<br>%     | 1500<br>%     | 1501<br>%     | 1501<br>%     | 1503<br>%     |
| 1 | White or Caucasian                | 86            | 86            | 84            | 86            | 86            | 84            | 84            |
| 2 | Black or African American         | 8             | 7             | 9             | 6             | 7             | 10            | 8             |
| 3 | Asian                             | 1             | 1             | 1             | 1             | 1             | 1             | 1             |
| 4 | American Indian or Alaskan Native | 1             | 1             | 1             | 1             | 2             | 1             | 1             |
| 6 | Other                             | 2             | 2             | 2             | 3             | 1             | 2             | 2             |
| 7 | Refused                           | 2             | 3             | 4             | 3             | 3             | 3             | 4             |

QD6. Are you of Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino origin?

|   |            | <b>Wave 1</b> | <b>Wave 2</b> | <b>Wave 3</b> | <b>Wave 4</b> | <b>Wave 5</b> | <b>Wave 6</b> | <b>Wave 7</b> |
|---|------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|   | Base:      | 1502<br>%     | 1003<br>%     | 1504<br>%     | 1500<br>%     | 1501<br>%     | 1501<br>%     | 1503<br>%     |
| 1 | Yes        | 3             | 4             | 4             | 4             | 3             | 4             | 5             |
| 2 | No         | 96            | 95            | 94            | 94            | 95            | 94            | 93            |
| 3 | Don't Know | 1             | 2             | 2             | 2             | 1             | 2             | 2             |

QD7. We realize income is a private matter and so rather than ask anything specific about your income, I'd like to ask you to please stop me when I get to the category that includes your annual household income before taxes in 2005? {READ LIST UNTIL RESPONDENT ANSWERS}

|   |                                 | <b>Wave<br/>1</b> | <b>Wave<br/>2</b> | <b>Wave<br/>3</b> | <b>Wave<br/>4</b> | <b>Wave<br/>5</b> | <b>Wave<br/>6</b> | <b>Wave<br/>7</b> |
|---|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|   | Base:                           | 1502<br>%         | 1003<br>%         | 1504<br>%         | 1500<br>%         | 1501<br>%         | 1501<br>%         | 1503<br>%         |
| 1 | Less than \$10,000              | 7                 | 7                 | 6                 | 5                 | 7                 | 7                 | 6                 |
| 2 | \$10,000 but less than \$20,000 | 11                | 11                | 10                | 11                | 11                | 9                 | 10                |
| 3 | \$20,000 but less than \$30,000 | 10                | 10                | 11                | 11                | 11                | 12                | 9                 |
| 4 | \$30,000 but less than \$40,000 | 12                | 10                | 12                | 10                | 9                 | 12                | 11                |
| 5 | \$40,000 but less than \$50,000 | 8                 | 8                 | 9                 | 10                | 9                 | 8                 | 10                |
| 6 | \$50,000 but less than \$75,000 | 15                | 14                | 13                | 13                | 15                | 13                | 14                |
| 7 | \$75,000 Or more                | 21                | 20                | 21                | 23                | 22                | 21                | 24                |
| 8 | Don't Know                      | 4                 | 4                 | 5                 | 3                 | 4                 | 3                 | 3                 |
| 9 | Refused                         | 13                | 17                | 13                | 16                | 13                | 14                | 14                |

QD8. What is your zip code?

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for participating! Your opinion counts