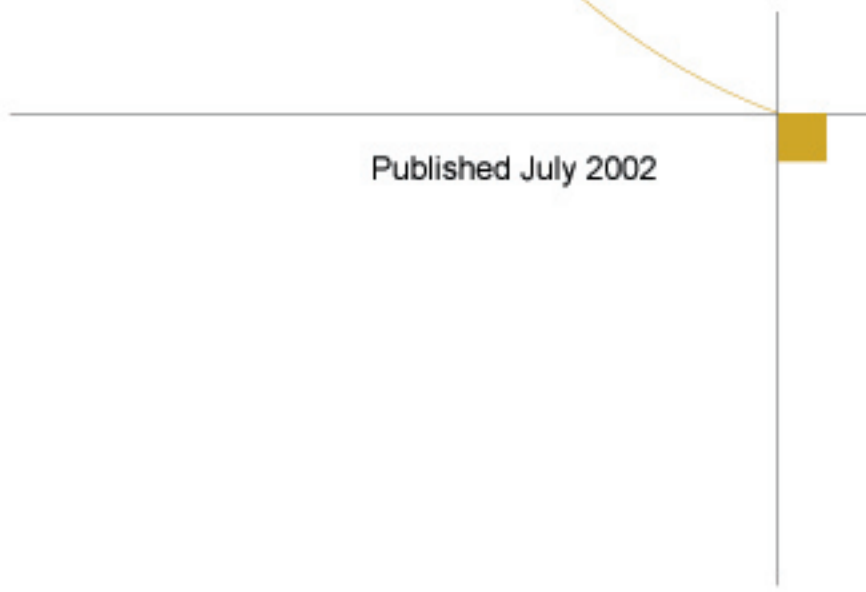


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**Medicare Prescription
Drug Benefits:
Results of
a National Survey**

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Medicare Prescription Drug Benefits: Results of a National Survey

**Data Collected by Market Facts
Report Prepared by
Jeffrey Love, Ph.D.**

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AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization for people 50 and over. We provide information and resources; advocate on legislative, consumer, and legal issues; assist members to serve their communities; and offer a wide range of unique benefits, special products, and services for our members. These benefits include AARP Webplace at www.aarp.org, *AARP Modern Maturity*, and *My Generation* magazines, the monthly *AARP Bulletin*, and a Spanish-language newspaper, *Segunda Juventud*. Active in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP celebrates the attitude that age is just a number and life is what you make it.

Background

The U.S. Senate is considering expansion of Medicare to include a prescription drug benefit. This nationally representative survey explores opinion about Medicare prescription drug legislation. Specifically, it explores reactions to “a permanent Medicare drug benefit that has an affordable premium, has some cost sharing, has no gap in coverage, is voluntary, and is available to everyone eligible for Medicare.”

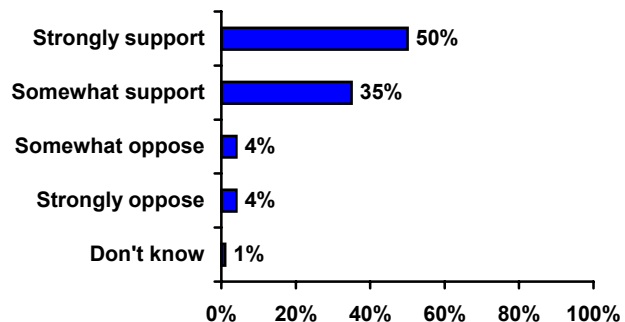
Key Findings

Medicare prescription drug coverage is important to the public, and there is strong support for the type of plan described in this survey.

Almost eight in ten say it is very important (52%) or somewhat important (27%) that the Senate passes permanent Medicare prescription drug legislation that with an affordable premium, some cost sharing, no gap in coverage, and is voluntary and available to everyone eligible for Medicare.

Not only does the public feel Medicare Rx to be important, they also strongly support this Medicare prescription drug legislation. Over eight in ten strongly support (50%) or somewhat support (35%) this benefit. Indeed, supporters outnumber opponents by a margin of more than 10 to 1 (85% vs. 8%).

Support for Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage
(n=2,013)



The public’s desire for a Medicare Rx plan can influence their voting behavior. Almost 6 in 10 people are more likely to vote for a Senatorial candidate who supports this Medicare prescription drug benefit (57%). Only 6% of the public says supporting this Medicare bill would make them less likely to vote for a Senatorial candidate. Almost one-third of the public (32%) says a Senatorial candidate’s position on this bill would make no difference in their support.

While the plurality of the public (44%) feels that a lack of action on this Medicare bill by *their Senator* would have no impact on their vote, almost 4 in 10 (38%) say they would be less likely to vote for *their Senator* if they did not act on this Medicare bill this year. Only 12% of the public says they would be more likely to vote for *their Senator* if they did not act on this Medicare bill this year.

Methodology

The questions on this survey were placed on the Telenation Omnibus survey conducted by Market Facts. A total of 2,013 interviews among adults aged 18 and over were completed from July 12 – July 14, 2002. The survey has a sampling error of plus or minus 2.2 percent. This means that in 95 out of 100 samples of this size, the results obtained in the sample would fall in a range of 2.2 percentage points of what would have been obtained if every person in the U.S. aged 18 and over had been surveyed. Responses to all survey questions are in the attached annotated questionnaire.

For more information about this study, contact Jeffrey Love, AARP Knowledge Management, (202) 434-6279.

**Annotated Questionnaire
AARP Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Survey**

N = 2,013

Sampling error = \pm 2.2 percent

*** indicates less than .5%; percents may not add up to 100 due to rounding**

Main Questionnaire

The U.S. Senate is currently considering Medicare prescription drug legislation that would provide a permanent Medicare drug benefit that has an affordable premium, has some cost-sharing, has no gap in coverage, is voluntary, and is available to everyone eligible for Medicare. [INSTRUCTION TO INTERVIEWER – READ THIS DESCRIPTION SLOWLY SO THAT RESPONDENT HEARS EACH PHRASE. REPEAT IF NECESSARY FOR CLARITY DURING FOUR FOLLOWING QUESTIONS]

1. How important is it to you that the Senate passes this legislation? Is it very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?

%	
52	Very important
27	Somewhat important
9	Not very important
9	Not at all important
1	Don't know (Volunteered)
3	Refused (Volunteered)

2. Would you support or oppose this Medicare prescription drug benefit? And would you strongly or somewhat (support/oppose) this benefit?

%	
50	Strongly support
35	Somewhat support
4	Somewhat oppose
4	Strongly oppose
1	Don't know (Volunteered)
6	Refused (Volunteered)

3. If a candidate for the U.S. Senate supported funding this Medicare prescription drug benefit, would it make you much more likely to vote for that candidate, make you somewhat more likely to vote for that candidate, make no difference in how you vote, make you somewhat less likely to vote for that candidate, or make you much less likely to vote for that candidate?

%

- 28 Much more likely to vote for
- 29 Somewhat more likely to vote for
- 32 Would make no difference
- 3 Somewhat less likely to vote for
- 3 Much less likely to vote for
- 1 Don't know (Volunteered)
- 4 Refused (Volunteered)

4. If your Senator did not act on this bill this year, would it make you much more likely to vote for your Senator, make you somewhat more likely to vote for your Senator, make no difference in how you vote, make you somewhat less likely to vote for your Senator, or make you much less likely to vote for your Senator?

%

- 5 Much more likely to vote for
- 7 Somewhat more likely to vote for
- 44 Would make no difference
- 20 Somewhat less likely to vote for
- 18 Much less likely to vote for
- 1 Don't know (Volunteered)
- 5 Refused (Volunteered)

5. (Asked among those aged 50+) Are you (or is your spouse) a member of AARP?
(n = 833)

%

- 49 Yes
- 48 No
- 3 Don't know/Refused

AARP
Knowledge Management
For more information contact Jeffrey Love (202) 434-6279