




2004 AARP Georgia Legislative Issues Survey



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Report Prepared by Rachelle Cummins

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AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization dedicated to making life better for people 50 and over. We provide information and resources; engage in legislative, regulatory and legal advocacy; assist members in serving their communities; and offer a wide range of unique benefits, special products, and services for our members. These include *AARP The Magazine*, published bimonthly; *AARP Bulletin*, our monthly newspaper; *AARP Segunda Juventud*, our quarterly newspaper in Spanish; *NRTA Live and Learn*, our quarterly newsletter for 50+ educators; and our Web site, www.aarp.org. 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

Georgia's aging population has a need for long-term care services right now. In Georgia, nearly one quarter of the population is over the age of 50. This translates into roughly 2 million people. Among the 50 plus in Georgia, ten percent are 65 or older. Currently, compared to other states, Georgia has a high percentage of people age 65 and older with activity limitations (Gregory and Gibson, 2002). Georgia ranks in the top ten states for percentage of persons 65 and older living with cognitive/mental limitations (rank=2), mobility limitations (rank=4), self-care or mobility limitations (rank=6), and self-care limitations (rank=6). Georgia also will have greater demands placed on its long-term care system in the future. In 2020, the proportion of Georgians 50 plus is expected to jump to 33 percent or 3,278,370 people with 14 percent age 65 or older.

The current needs and projected population growth in Georgia demand long-term care services. AARP Georgia believes that where those services are provided is critical. Long-term care is often associated with nursing homes. Indeed, over half of all women and a third of all men who reach the age of 65 are expected to spend some time in a nursing home (helpguide.org, 2003). However, three in four people in need of long-term care live in settings other than nursing homes, and family or friends provide the majority of care (ncsl.org, n.d.).

How health and long-term care services are provided and funded is also important to AARP Georgia. Like most states, Georgia has been experiencing an economic downturn characterized by lower state revenues and rising demand for state services. The 2004 General Assembly passed a budget for FY 2005, and during a special session, legislators raised the fees for indigent defense to balance the budget. However, the 2004 Assembly made cuts affecting Georgia's older population (Raymond, 2004). They include cuts to the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, the Georgia Council on Aging, nursing home hospice, and the Adult Medically Needy Program. Likewise, Georgia will institute an estate recovery program to recover money from the estates of deceased residents who received Medicaid while residing in a nursing home.

The AARP Georgia Legislative Issues Survey explores member experience with long-term care and attitudes toward legislative efforts around home and community-based services and nursing home quality. In addition, it examines member opinion about cuts in state services and raising state taxes to balance the budget. Finally, the survey measures the legislative priority members place on key aging issues. This mail survey, conducted between February and March 2004, has 1,070 member responses. With a margin of error of plus or minus three percent, it represents the views of approximately 888,575 AARP members in Georgia.

Report Organization

The highlights section provides a brief overview of the major survey results. The findings section presents the survey data. The results are reported as percentages.¹ The conclusion section follows a demographic profile of respondents. The methodology section describes the survey's fielding procedures, response rate, and sampling error. An annotated questionnaire, appended to the report, discloses all survey responses.

Highlights

Long-Term Care

- When rating five long-term care features, Georgia members think the most important features are: choosing and receiving services that allow you to stay at home for as long as possible (86% very important) and having high quality nursing home care available if it is needed (86% very important).
- Over 75 percent of Georgia members either strongly (52%) or somewhat support (25%) increasing state funding for programs that would allow people to stay in their own homes longer even if it meant reducing funding for nursing homes.
- Nearly two-thirds (65%) strongly support legislation to strengthen enforcement of state and federal standards to protect the health and safety of nursing home residents even if it required increased funding. Another quarter (25%) somewhat support such legislation.
- Sixty-six percent strongly support and 22 percent somewhat support requiring nursing homes to provide sufficient staffing levels for appropriate amounts of face-to-face and hands-on care to ensure quality care and meet the needs of nursing home residents even if it forced some nursing homes to close.
- Georgia members strongly support (75%) legislation to maintain the rights of nursing home residents and their families to take nursing homes to court for mistreatment, abuse, neglect, or injury.
- Members (86%) will vote for candidates who support improving nursing home care and protecting residents' rights.

State Budget

- Opposition to cuts in health and long-term care services (53% strongly oppose; 24% somewhat oppose) and to cuts in education including K-12 and higher (44% strongly oppose; 23% somewhat oppose) is greater than for cuts in public safety (33% strongly oppose; 29% somewhat oppose) or transportation (18% strongly oppose; 28% somewhat oppose) when balancing the state budget.

¹ Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding or multiple response.

- About two in three members strongly support increasing the state cigarette tax (67%) or closing tax loopholes (64%) to balance the state budget. Although overall support (72%) is high, roughly half as many members strongly support increasing corporate taxes (37%).
- There is support for raising taxes if the money prevents cuts to home and community-based health and long-term care: A third of members strongly support (34%) and a third somewhat support (35%) raising taxes if it prevents cuts in health and long-term care.
- Nearly half (45%) would vote for a candidate who supports maintaining home and community-based health and long-term care services even if it means raising taxes, while 14 percent would be less likely to vote for such a candidate.

State Legislative Priorities

- Access to affordable prescription drugs (63%); preventing elder abuse (60%); availability, cost, and quality of health care (53%); and how older persons can remain in their homes/communities as they age (53%) are the top legislative priorities for Georgia members.

Findings

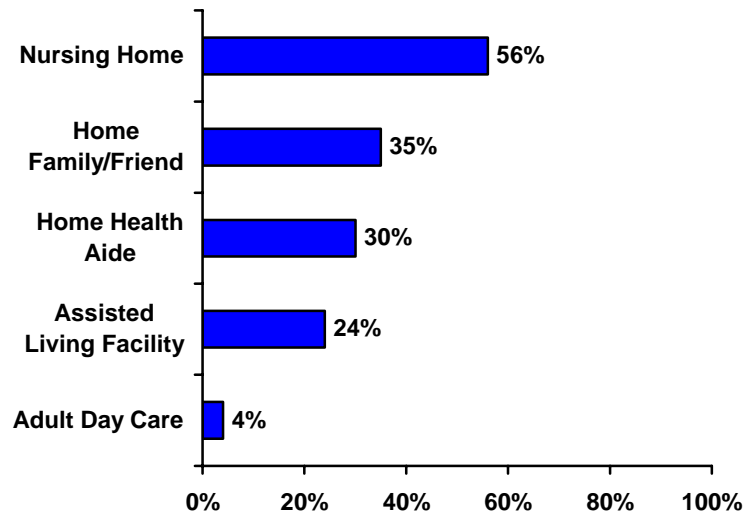
Long-Term Care

One in five Georgia members used long-term care in the last five years.

Just over one in five (22%) Georgia members or members of their families used long-term care services in the last five years. This translates into about 195,500 members who have had experience with long-term care.

Members who used long-term care for themselves or a family member within the last five years were asked to indicate what type of care they used. Over half report using a nursing home, while 35 percent say family and friends helped at home. Fewer received help at home from skilled health professionals or health aides (30%).

Type of Long-Term Care Services Used (Base n = 231 who used long-term care)



AARP asked those who used or had any member of their family use long-term care services about their experience with these services.² Members were most satisfied with the care given by family or friends while they remained in their own homes. Over nine in ten members rate this type of care as excellent (44%) or good (48%). Compared to other long-term care services used, more members rated nursing homes negatively. Over 30 percent rated care from nursing homes as fair (24%) or poor (9%).

Two in five Georgia members are likely to need long-term care in the next five years.

Two in five Georgia members indicate that it is very likely (17%) or somewhat likely (24%) that they or a member of their family will need long-term care within the next five years. If these projections hold true, just over 364,300 Georgia members will be touched by the long-term care system in this timeframe. However, roughly the same percentage of members believes that they are not at all likely (10%) or not very likely (30%) to need care. About one in five members is either uncertain about the possibility (17%) or did not respond to the question (2%).

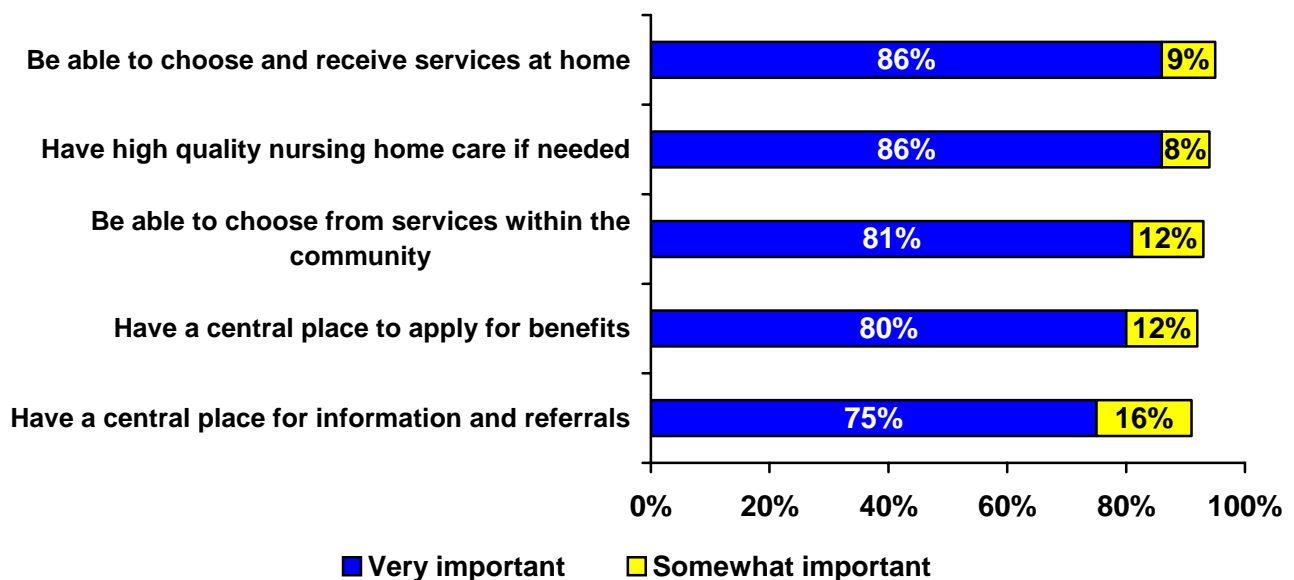
² Ratings of home professional health aides, assisted living, or adult day care can be found in the annotated questionnaire attached to this report; however, caution should be used in interpreting the results because the numbers of members who report experience with them are small.

Choice of services at home and quality of nursing homes are very important features of a long-term care system for Georgia members.

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

Georgia members view being able to choose and receive services that allow you to stay home as long as possible and having high quality nursing home care available if it was needed as the most important features. In addition, roughly 80 percent of members indicate that being able to choose from a variety of services within the community and having a central place to find out about and apply for services and benefits is very important.

“If you or a family member needed long-term care services, how important would it be to you to...”
(n = 1,070)



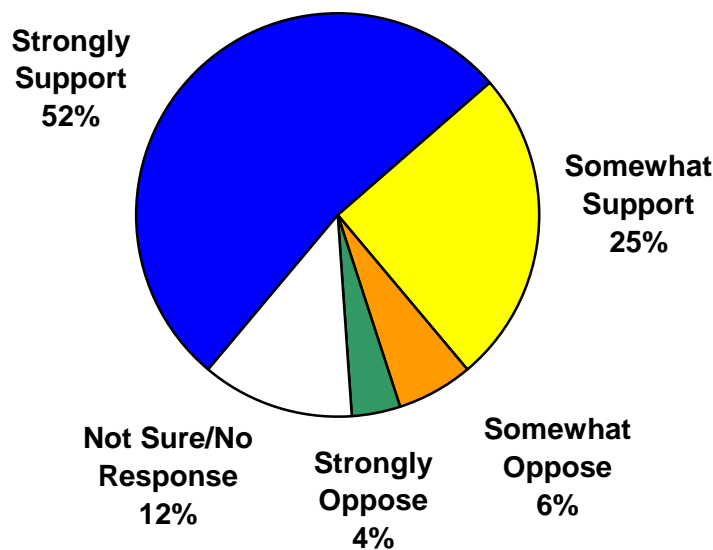
More Georgia members would move to a residential facility than with a family member or to a nursing home if they could not remain at home.

When asked to specify where they would move should the need arise from an inability to care for themselves, 60 percent of members say they would prefer to move into a residential facility that would provide the level of care needed. Fifteen percent would move in with a family member. Just two percent would move into a nursing home. One in five Georgia members are not sure what they would do if they could not remain in their own home.

A majority of Georgia members support funding for services that would allow people to stay in their own homes even if it reduces nursing home funds.

Georgia members were asked how much they would support increasing state funding for programs that would allow people to stay in their own homes longer even if it meant reducing funding for nursing homes. Such a program would most likely cut into Medicaid’s nursing home assistance, which currently pays for eight out of ten nursing home residents. Georgia members overwhelmingly support this idea. Seventy-seven percent of respondents either strongly or somewhat support it, while only ten percent oppose. The other 12 percent are unsure or did not answer this question.

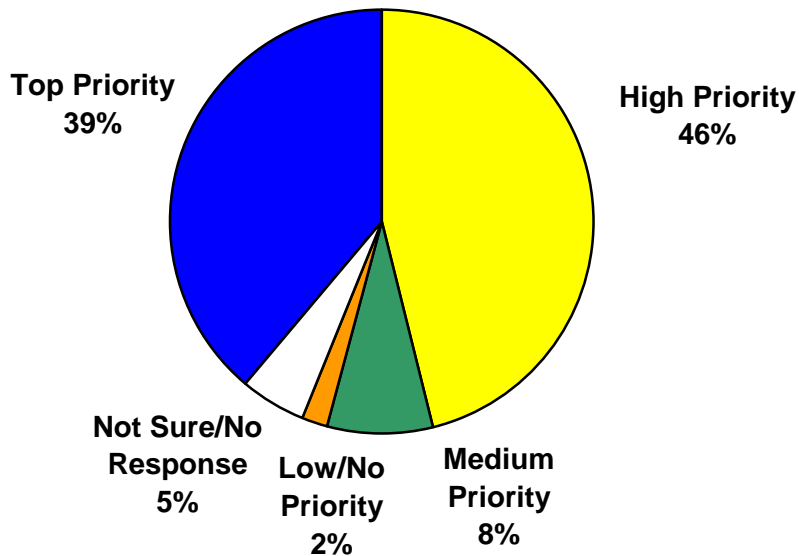
Views on Increasing Funding for Services That Allow People to Stay in Their Own Homes Longer
(n = 1,070)



Ensuring a range of long-term care services should be at least a high priority for AARP.

Over eight in ten Georgia members believe that ensuring a range of long-term care services throughout the state that will allow people to remain in their own homes should be a top (39%) or high priority (46%) for AARP. Only two percent rated this a low priority or not a priority.

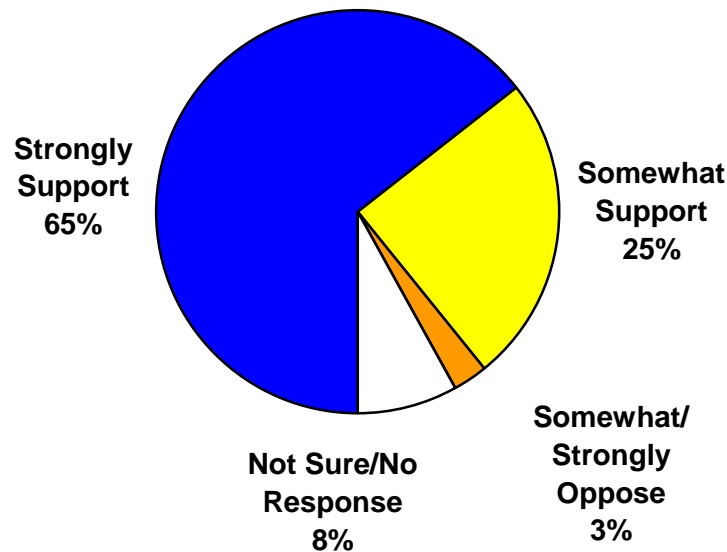
**Priority for Ensuring a Broad Range of Long-Term Care Services
That Allow Persons to Stay in Their Own Home
(n = 1,070)**



Most Georgia members support strengthening enforcement of state and federal standards for protecting nursing home residents even if it requires increased funding.

Nine in ten members strongly or somewhat support strengthening enforcement of state and federal standards to protect the health and safety of nursing home residents in Georgia even if it requires increased funding.

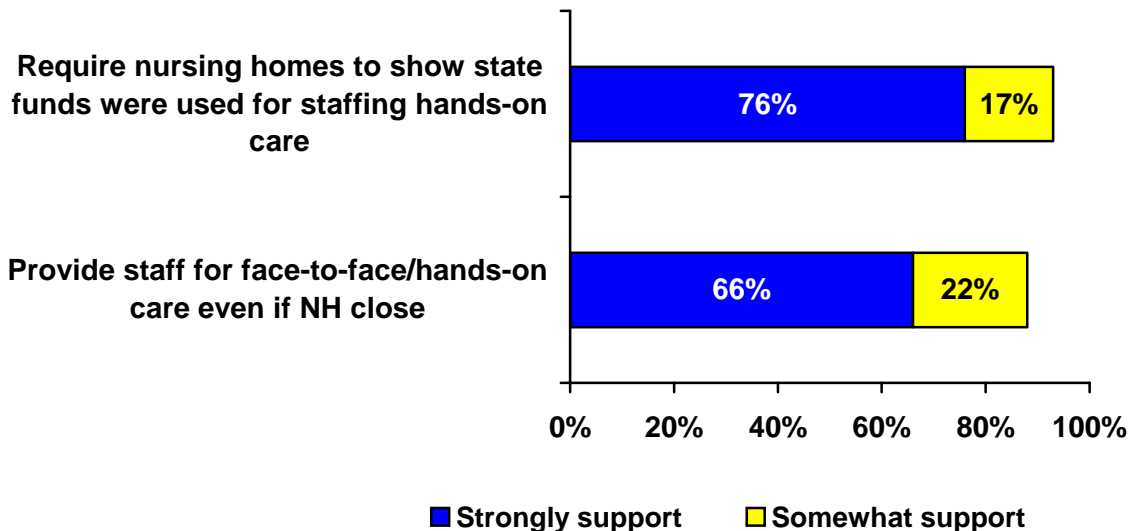
Support for Legislation to Strengthen Enforcement of State and Federal Standards to Protect the Health and Safety of Nursing Home Residents Even If It Requires Increased Funding
(n = 1,070)



A large majority supports legislation to require sufficient staffing levels for face-to-face and hands-on care of nursing home residents even if it forced some nursing homes to close.

Almost nine in ten Georgia members strongly or somewhat support legislation to provide sufficient staffing levels for appropriate amounts of face-to-face and hands-on care to ensure quality care and meet the needs of nursing home residents even if it forced some nursing homes to close. Similarly, over nine in ten strongly or somewhat support legislation to require nursing homes to show that state funds were used to provide sufficient staffing for appropriate amounts of face-to-face and hands-on care.

Support for Legislation to Provide Sufficient Staffing in Nursing Homes (n = 1,070)

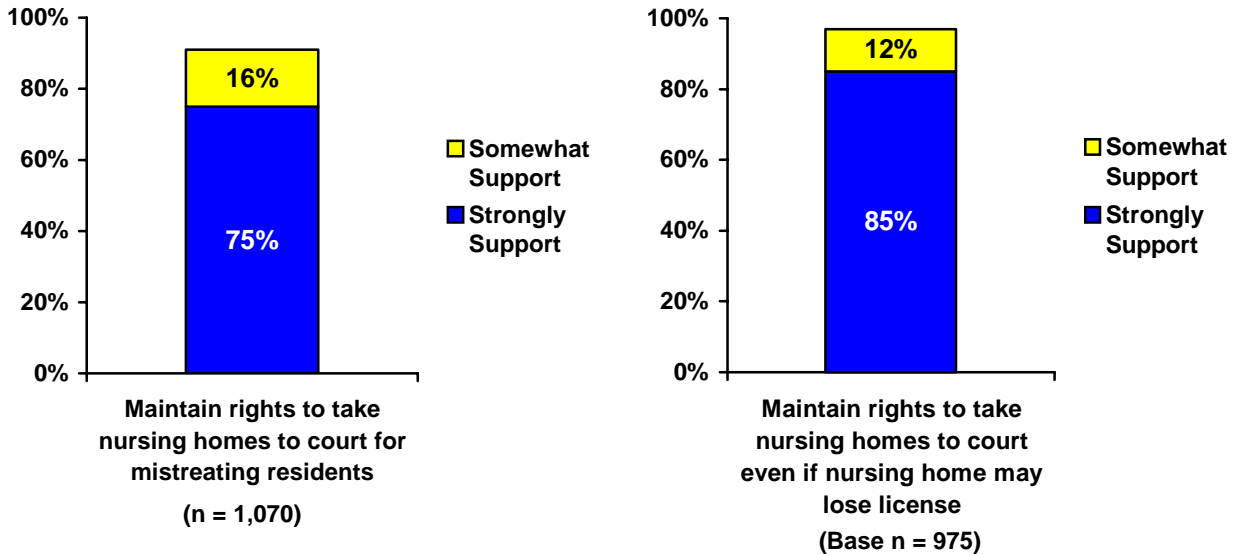


Support for the right to take nursing homes to court is nearly universal among Georgia members.

Three in four (75%) Georgia members strongly support legislation to maintain the right of nursing home residents and their families to take nursing homes to court for mistreating, abusing, neglecting, or injuring residents. Another 16 percent somewhat support this legislation.

Of those Georgia members who support maintaining the right of nursing home residents and their families to take nursing homes to court (n = 975), over four in five strongly support this measure even if it resulted in nursing homes with repeated evidence of abuse, neglect, and injury losing their license. Another one in ten somewhat support such legislation.

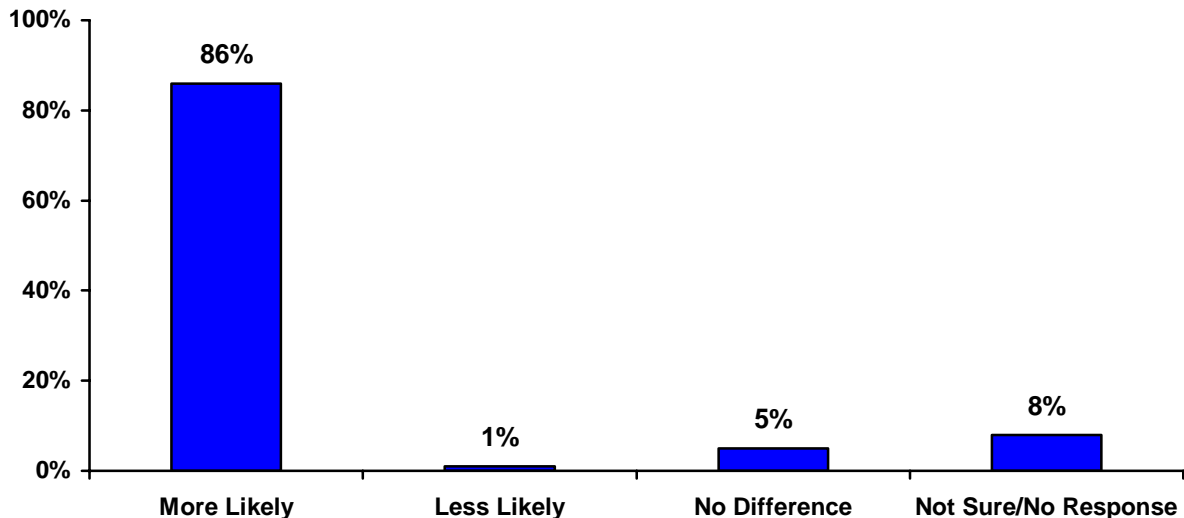
Support for Legislation to Maintain Rights of Nursing Home Residents



Georgia members would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supports legislation to improve the quality of nursing home care and protect residents' rights.

Over four in five members say they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supports legislation that improves the quality of nursing home care and protects residents' rights. Just one percent would be less likely to vote for a candidate who supports such legislation.

**Likelihood to Vote for Candidate Who Supports Improving
Nursing Home Quality and Protecting Residents' Rights
(n = 1,070)**



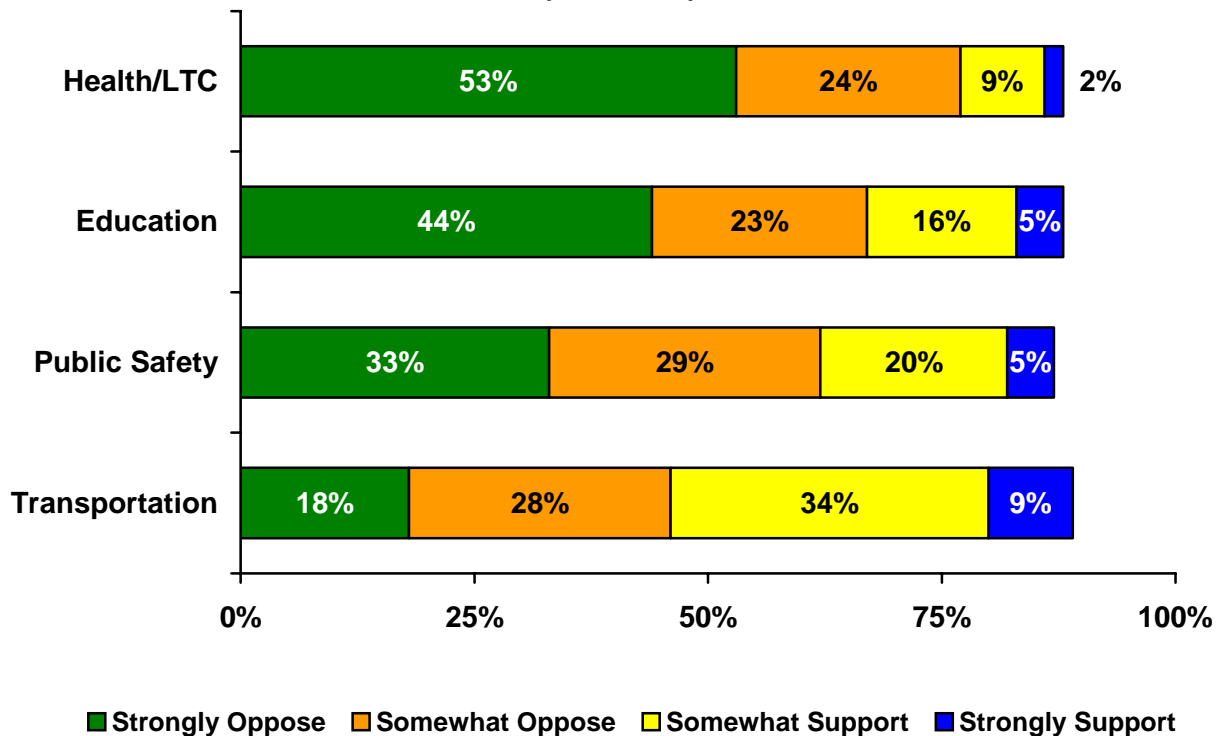
State Budget

Georgia members oppose cuts to health and long-term care and education as ways to balance the state budget.

Members were asked to consider ways to balance the state budget. One option is possible cuts to a variety of services funded by the state. Members were presented with four different types of state-funded services: health and long-term care; education, including K-12 and higher education; transportation, highways, and roads; and public safety and correction.

A least two in three Georgia members oppose cuts in health and long-term care services (77%) and education services (67%) as a way to balance the state budget. Fewer members oppose cuts in public safety and corrections (62%) and transportation services (45%).

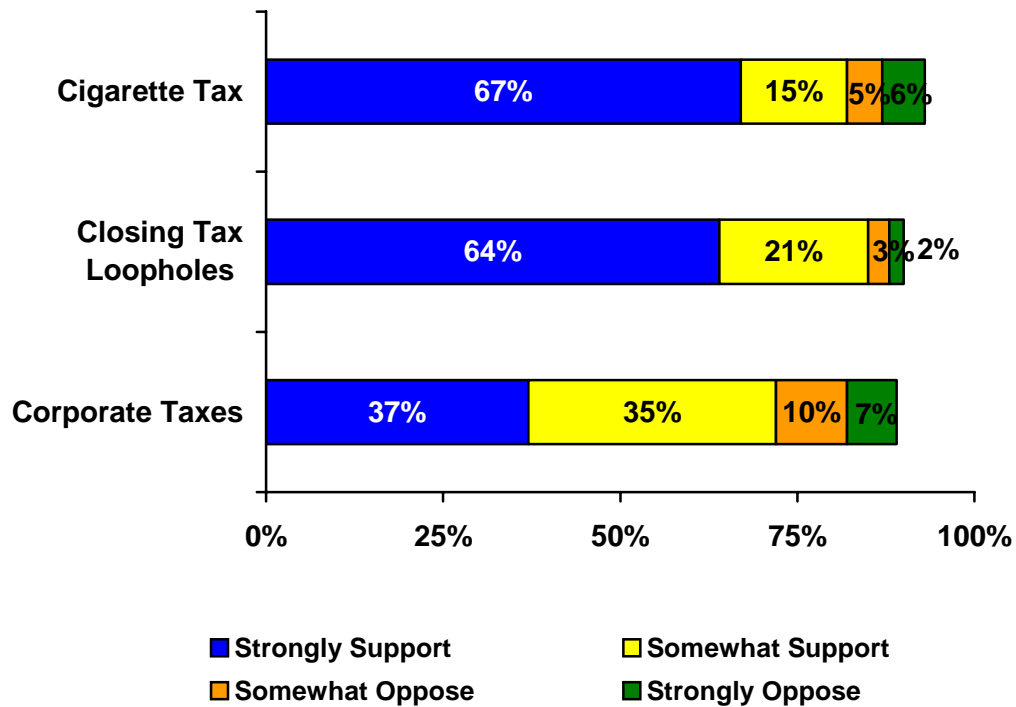
**Opposition to Cuts in State Services to Balance the Budget
(n = 1,070)**



Georgia members support increasing the cigarette tax and closing tax loopholes as ways to balance the state budget.

Members also were presented with three different ways to raise revenue: increasing corporate taxes, closing tax loopholes, and increasing the current tax on a pack of cigarettes. A majority of members are at least somewhat supportive of each of these options for raising revenues. About two in three strongly support increasing the current tax on a pack of cigarettes and closing tax loopholes. Far fewer strongly support increasing corporate taxes.

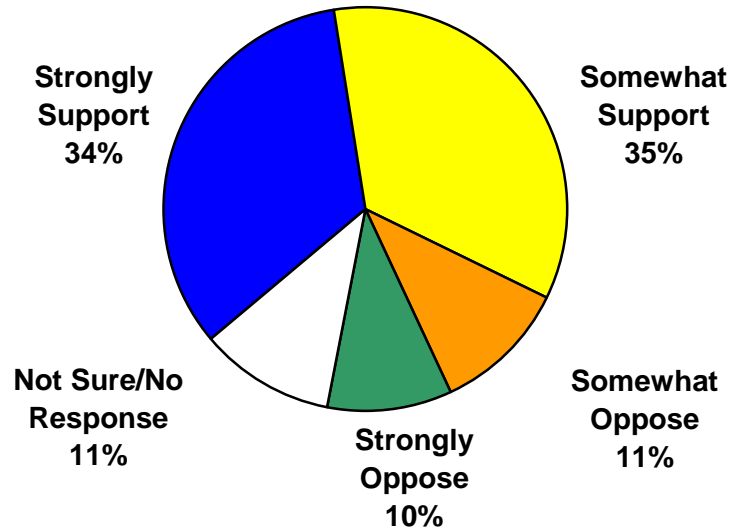
**Support for Raising Taxes
(n = 1,070)**



Georgia members support raising taxes if the money generated prevents cuts to home and community-based health and long-term care services.

Nearly seven in ten members strongly or somewhat support raising taxes if the money generated prevents cuts to home and community-based health and long-term care services. One in five oppose raising taxes to prevent health and long-term care service cuts.

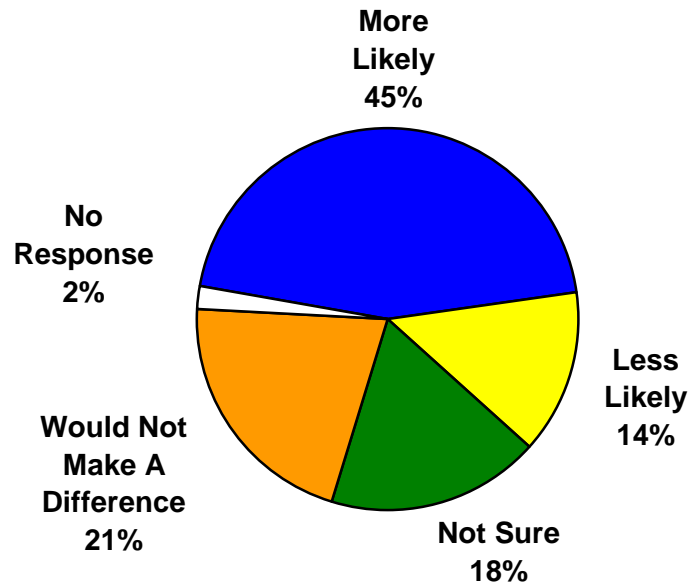
**Support for Raising Taxes If It Prevents Cuts to Home and Community-Based Health and Long-Term Care Services
(n = 1,070)**



Almost half of Georgia members are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports maintaining the delivery of home and community-based health and long-term care services, even if it means raising state taxes.

Nearly half (45%) of respondents say they are more likely to vote for a candidate for state office who supports maintaining the delivery of home and community-based health and long-term care services, even if it means raising state taxes. About one in five say it would not make a difference in how they vote or they are not sure. Only fourteen percent say they are less likely to vote for such a candidate.

**Likelihood of Voting For Candidates Who Support Maintaining Home and Community-Based Health and Long-Term Care Services
(n = 1,070)**

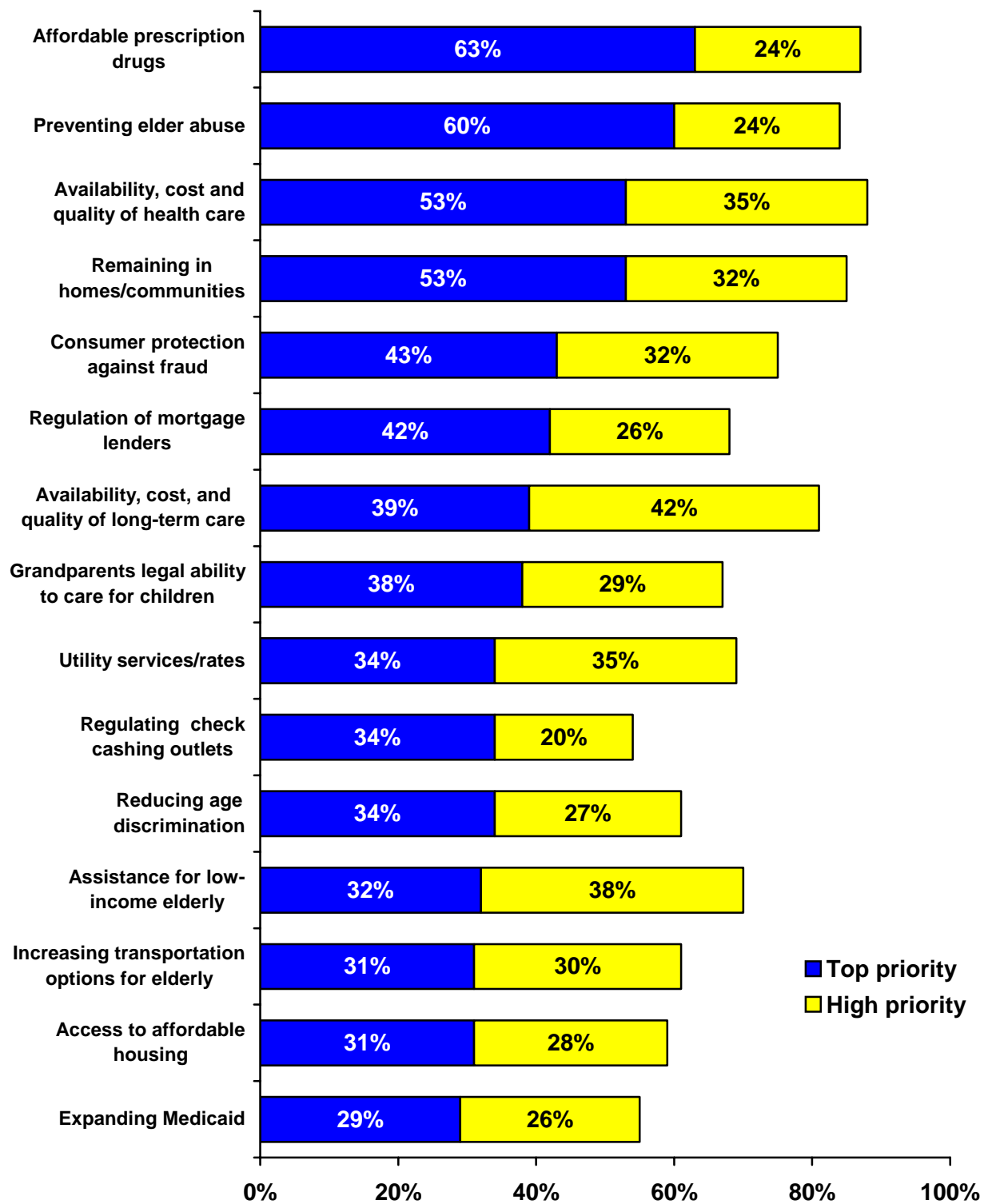


State Legislative Priorities

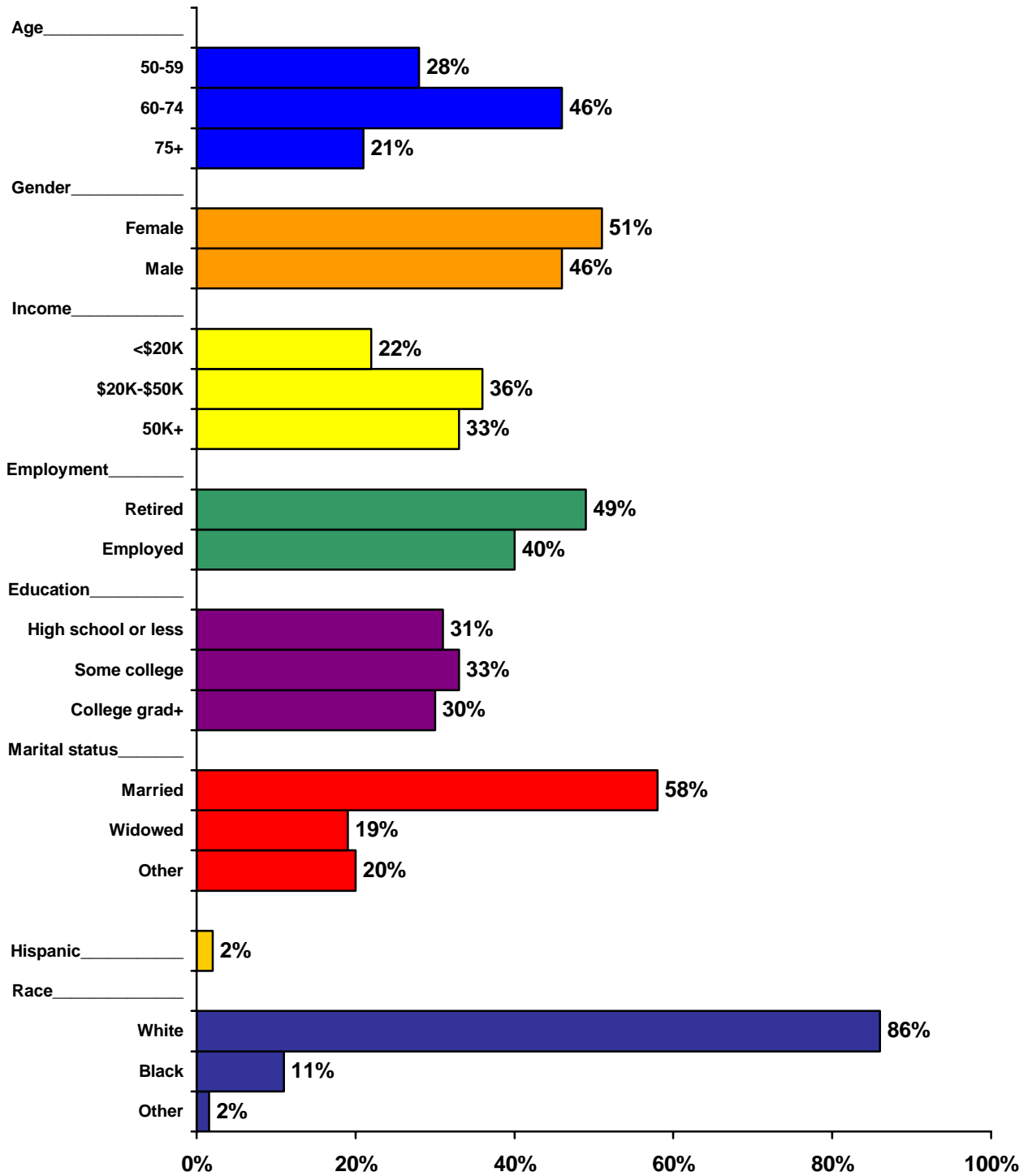
Access to affordable prescription drugs is the top legislative priority for Georgia members.

Out of fifteen legislative issues, Georgia members believe that AARP's top legislative priorities should be access to affordable prescription drugs; preventing elder abuse; availability, cost, and quality of health care; and helping older persons remain in their homes/communities as they age.

Top and High Priority Legislative Issues for Georgia Members (n = 1,070)



Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n = 1,070)



Conclusions

The top legislative priorities for Georgia members deal with health and long-term care issues. AARP members in Georgia want to stay in their own homes as long as possible. Members believe AARP Georgia should work on ensuring a broad range of long-term care services that allow people to remain in their own homes. They support legislative efforts to provide home and community-based health and long-term care services. Members think that the state should increase funding for home and community-based long-term care services even if it means that nursing homes will get less Medicaid funding. Likewise, they support raising taxes if the money generated prevents cuts to home and community-based health and long-term care services. Nearly half of members would vote for a state candidate who supports maintaining the delivery of home and community-based care even if taxes had to be raised.

Members also want quality nursing home care available if they need it. They support legislative efforts to strengthen nursing home quality. They want state and federal standards for nursing homes enforced to protect the health and safety of residents even if it requires increased funding. Members believe that Georgia should require nursing homes to provide sufficient staffing levels for appropriate amounts of hands-on and face-to-face care, and nursing homes should prove that they used state funds for staffing hands-on care. Additionally, members support legislation to maintain the right of nursing home residents and their families to take nursing homes to court for mistreatment, abuse, neglect, or injury. Members would vote for candidates for state office who support improving nursing home quality and protecting residents' rights.

Given their support of the specific health and long-term care legislative issues measured by this survey, it is no surprise that when it comes to balancing the state's budget, AARP members in Georgia oppose cuts to health and long-term care services. Many also oppose cuts in education while fewer oppose cuts to public safety and transportation. When looking at ways to balance the state's budget, members strongly support increasing the current tax on a pack of cigarettes and closing tax loopholes.

Methodology

This mail survey explores the opinions of Georgia AARP members. The survey includes questions about long-term care, the state budget, and legislative priorities. AARP conducted the AARP Georgia Legislative Issues Survey between February and March 2004. Researchers at AARP randomly selected 2,000 AARP members in Georgia making sure to select the appropriate proportion of members from each of three age groups: 50-59, 60-74, and 75+. Each selected member received a pre-notification postcard, the survey itself, a reminder postcard, and a second survey. One thousand and seventy members returned the survey, making the response rate 54 percent. The sampling error for this study is ± 3.0 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 three percentage points of what would have been obtained if every AARP member in Georgia, approximately 888,575, had been surveyed.

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Annotated Survey

2004 AARP Georgia Legislative Issues Survey

(AARP Members n = 1,070; Response Rate = 54%; Sampling Error = ± 3%)
 (Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple response.)

Long-Term Care

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

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

<u>%</u>	
22	Yes
71	No → SKIP TO QUESTION 3
1	Don't know → SKIP TO QUESTION 3
7	No Response

- 2a. What kind of long-term care service did you or your family member use during that time? (Check ALL services used)

(Base = 231 members/family who used long-term care in the last 5 years)

- 2b. How do you rate the quality of care that was provided?

<u>%</u>		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Response
56	Lived in a nursing home (base = 129) <i>If checked, rate the quality of care</i>	18%	47%	24%	9%	2%
24	Lived in an assisted living facility (base = 56) <i>If checked, rate the quality of care</i>	32%	54%	11%	2%	2%
30	Lived at home while receiving help with daily activities or personal care tasks from skilled health professionals or health aides (base = 70) <i>If checked, rate the quality of care</i>	33%	49%	14%	4%	0%

2a. (CONTINUED) What kind of long-term care service did you or your family member use during that time? (Check ALL services used)

(Base = 231 members/family who used long-term care in the last 5 years)

2b. How do you rate the quality of care that was provided?

<u>%</u>		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Response
35	Lived at home while receiving help from family or friends (base = 80) <i>If checked, rate the quality of care</i>	44%	48%	6%	0%	3%
4	Attended adult day care (base = 10) <i>If checked, rate the quality of care</i>	40%	50%	10%	0%	0%
14	No Response					

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

<u>%</u>	
17	Very likely
24	Somewhat likely
30	Not very likely
10	Not at all likely
17	Not sure
2	No Response

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

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not At All Important	Not Sure	No Response
a. Choose and receive services that allow you to stay home for as long as possible	86%	9%	1%	1%	2%	2%
b. Have a central place where you could get information or referrals for all types of long-term care services, both government and private	75%	16%	2%	1%	2%	5%
c. Have a central place where you could find out what services and benefits you are eligible for and apply	80%	12%	1%	1%	2%	4%
d. Be able to choose from a variety of services within your own community	81%	12%	1%	1%	1%	5%
e. Have high quality nursing home care available if it was needed	86%	8%	1%	<.5%	2%	4%

5. If you had to change your current living arrangements and could not remain at home because of an inability to care for yourself, what would you prefer to do?

%

- 60 Move into a residential facility that would provide the level of care you need
- 15 Move in with a family member
- 2 Move into a nursing home
- 19 Not sure
- 4 No Response

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

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

%

- 52 Strongly support
- 25 Somewhat support
- 6 Somewhat oppose
- 4 Strongly oppose
- 10 Not sure
- 2 No Response

7. How much of a priority should it be for AARP Georgia to work on ensuring the availability of a broad range of long-term care services throughout the state that will allow people to remain in their own homes?

%

- 39 Top priority
- 46 High priority
- 8 Medium priority
- 1 Low priority
- 1 Not a priority
- 3 Not sure
- 2 No Response

8. Would you support or oppose legislation in Georgia to strengthen enforcement of state and federal standards to protect the health and safety of nursing home residents even if it required increased funding?

<u>%</u>	
65	Strongly support
25	Somewhat support
2	Somewhat oppose
1	Strongly oppose
5	Not sure
3	No Response

9. Would you support or oppose legislation in Georgia to require nursing homes to provide sufficient staffing levels for appropriate amounts of face-to-face and hands-on care to ensure quality care and meet the needs of nursing home residents even if it forced some nursing homes to close?

<u>%</u>	
66	Strongly support
22	Somewhat support
2	Somewhat oppose
1	Strongly oppose
5	Not sure
2	No Response

10. Currently, nursing homes in Georgia are not required to show that state funds are used to provide sufficient staffing levels for appropriate amounts of face-to-face and hands-on care for nursing home residents. Would you support or oppose legislation in Georgia requiring nursing homes to show that state funds were used for that purpose?

<u>%</u>	
76	Strongly support
17	Somewhat support
1	Somewhat oppose
1	Strongly oppose
3	Not sure
3	No Response

11. **Would you support or oppose legislation in Georgia to maintain the right of nursing home residents and their families to take nursing homes to court for mistreating, abusing, neglecting, or injuring residents?**

<u>%</u>	
75	Strongly support
16	Somewhat support
3	Somewhat oppose → GO TO QUESTION 13
1	Strongly oppose → GO TO QUESTION 13
3	Not sure → GO TO QUESTION 13
3	No Response

12. **Would you still support maintaining the right of nursing home residents and their families to take nursing homes to court, even if it resulted in nursing homes with repeated evidence of abuse, neglect, and injury losing their license?**

(Base = 975 members who support taking nursing homes to court)

<u>%</u>	
85	Yes, strongly support
12	Yes, somewhat support
1	No
1	Not sure
1	No Response

13. **If a candidate for state office in Georgia supported legislation that improves the quality of nursing home care and protects residents' rights, how likely would you be to vote for that candidate?**

<u>%</u>	
86	More likely
1	Less likely
5	Would not make a difference
7	Not sure
1	No Response

State Budget

- 14. Georgia is facing difficult economic choices in the coming months as the governor and state legislators try to balance the state budget. There are a number of approaches to balancing the budget: cutting current services, increasing state taxes, or combining both cuts in services and increases in taxes.**

To balance the state budget, would you support or oppose....

		Strongly Support Cuts	Somewhat Support Cuts	Somewhat Oppose Cuts	Strongly Oppose Cuts	Not Sure	No Response
a.	Cuts to health and long-term care services?	2%	9%	24%	53%	8%	4%
b.	Cuts to education services including K-12 and higher education?	5%	16%	23%	44%	8%	4%
c.	Cuts to transportation, highways, and roads services?	9%	34%	28%	18%	10%	2%
d.	Cuts to public safety and correction services?	5%	20%	29%	33%	10%	4%

- 15. Another approach to balance the state budget is to look for new ways to raise revenue. To balance the state budget, would you support or oppose....**

		Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Not Sure	No Response
a.	Increasing corporate taxes?	37%	35%	10%	7%	8%	4%
b.	Closing tax loopholes?	64%	21%	3%	2%	7%	3%
c.	Increasing the current tax on a pack of cigarettes? (The current tax is 37 cents per pack while the national average is 67 cents per pack.)	67%	15%	5%	6%	4%	2%

16. Do you support or oppose raising taxes if the money generated prevented cuts to home and community-based health and long-term care services? These services, provided in the home or in community settings, include home delivered meals, help with chores and personal care, home health care, and adult day care.

<u>%</u>	
34	Strongly support
35	Somewhat support
11	Somewhat oppose
10	Strongly oppose
9	Not sure
2	No Response

17. If a candidate for state office in Georgia supported maintaining the delivery of home and community-based health and long-term care services even if it means raising state taxes, would you be more likely to vote for that candidate, less likely to vote for them, or would it not make any difference?

<u>%</u>	
45	More likely
14	Less likely
21	Would not make a difference
18	Not sure
2	No Response

State Legislative Issues

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

	Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not A Priority	Not Sure	No Response
a. Availability, cost, and quality of health care	53%	35%	6%	1%	1%	1%	4%
b. Consumer protection against fraud	43%	32%	16%	3%	2%	2%	4%
c. How older persons can remain in their own homes or communities as they age	53%	32%	9%	1%	1%	2%	2%

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

	Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not A Priority	Not Sure	No Response
d. Availability, cost, and quality of long-term care services	39%	42%	12%	1%	1%	1%	4%
e. Assistance programs for older, low-income state residents	32%	38%	20%	4%	2%	1%	4%
f. Access to affordable prescription drugs	63%	24%	8%	2%	1%	1%	2%
g. Expanding Medicaid, the government health insurance program for low income people	29%	26%	24%	10%	5%	3%	3%
h. Preventing elder abuse	60%	24%	9%	2%	1%	1%	3%
i. Access to affordable utility services and rates	34%	35%	20%	4%	2%	2%	3%
j. Regulation of mortgage lenders to prevent abusive practices	42%	26%	16%	7%	3%	2%	3%
k. Regulating the fees charged by check-cashing outlets and pay day lenders	34%	20%	18%	12%	10%	3%	4%
l. Enabling grandparents who are caring for grandchildren to obtain the necessary financial, medical, educational, and legal services for these children	38%	29%	18%	6%	4%	2%	3%
m. Increasing transportation options for the elderly and disabled	31%	30%	25%	7%	3%	2%	2%
n. Reducing age discrimination	34%	27%	23%	8%	4%	3%	3%
o. Access to affordable housing	31%	28%	25%	8%	5%	2%	2%

19. What other state legislative issues important to you should AARP Georgia work on?

<u>%</u>	
4	Tax reform/lower taxes/raise taxes
3	Prescriptions/affordable medicines/purchase from Canada
3	Comprehensive health care/health care reform/affordable rates
2	Increase Social Security/Social Security concerns
22	Other
73	No Response

About You

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

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

<u>%</u>	
64	Yes
31	No
5	No Response

20a. If YES: Do you have access to the Internet or the ability to use online services such as America Online (AOL)? (Base = 689 members who have access to a computer)

<u>%</u>	
88	Yes
7	No
1	Don't know
3	No Response

21. In the last 12 months, have you attended a local AARP Chapter meeting?

<u>%</u>	
3	Yes
94	No
<.5	Don't know
3	No Response

22. Are you male or female?

<u>%</u>	
46	Male
51	Female
4	No Response

23. What is your age as of your last birthday? _____ (in years)

<u>%</u>	
28	50-59
46	60-74
21	75+
5	No Response

24. What is your current marital status?

<u>%</u>	
58	Married
19	Widowed
14	Divorced/Separated
1	Separated
5	Never Married
4	No Response

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

<u>%</u>	
6	Less than high school
25	High school graduate or equivalent
33	Some college or technical training beyond high school
17	College graduate (4 years)
13	Post graduate or professional degree
6	No Response

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

<u>%</u>	
28	Employed or self employed <u>full-time</u>
12	Employed or self-employed <u>part-time</u>
49	Retired and not working
5	Other such as homemaker
2	Unemployed and looking for work
5	No Response

27. Are you of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino origin or descent?

<u>%</u>	
2	Yes
92	No
1	Don't know
6	No Response

28. What is your race?

<u>%</u>	
86	White or Caucasian
11	Black or African American
<.5	Asian
1	Native American or Alaskan Native
1	Other
2	No Response

29. What is your 5-digit zip code? (WRITE IN YOUR ZIP CODE.) _ _ _ _ _

30. What was your annual household income before taxes in 2003?

<u>%</u>	
7	Less than \$10,000
15	\$10,000 to \$19,999
14	\$20,000 to \$29,999
12	\$30,000 to \$39,999
10	\$40,000 to \$49,999
15	\$50,000 to \$74,999
18	\$75,000 or more
9	No Response

31. Do you currently smoke cigarettes on a regular basis?

<u>%</u>	
9	Yes
89	No
2	No Response

Thank you for completing this survey. Please use the postage-paid envelope and return it to State Member Research, AARP, 601 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20049, by **March 19, 2004**.

AARP
Knowledge Management
For more information, contact Rachelle Cummins
(202) 434-6297/rcummins@aarp.org