U.S. Senate Primary
Massachusetts

How to use the AARP Voters’ Guide:
Here’s how this Voters’ Guide works. AARP asked key questions about issues important to our members and their families of each major candidate for this race. Each candidate was allowed up to 125 words to answer each question. AARP did not edit or modify those answers. The candidates were asked to check the support or oppose circles. The candidates may have chosen not to check a circle.

AARP has provided a summary of our position for each of the issues.
• Pass this guide on to friends and family.
• Share your views with the candidates.
• Ask for clarification from any candidate whose answer seems unclear.

Be sure to vote on December 8.
www.aarp.org/elections
Q: What policies would you support to make health care and health insurance more affordable—particularly for the 50-64 age population? What policies would you support to protect and improve Medicare benefits as part of health care reform?

AARP’s Position: Affordable coverage for individuals age 50-64.
- [✓] Support
- [ ] Oppose

Guarantee that Medicare benefits will be protected in any health care reform legislation.
- [✓] Support
- [ ] Oppose

Closing the Part D coverage gap (the so-called “doughnut hole”) should be part of any health care reform legislation.
- [✓] Support
- [ ] Oppose

Michael Capuano (D):
Affordable coverage for individuals age 50-64.
- [✓] Support
- [ ] Oppose

Guarantee that Medicare benefits will be protected in any health care reform legislation.
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Martha Coakley (D):
Affordable coverage for individuals age 50-64.
- [✓] Support
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Guarantee that Medicare benefits will be protected in any health care reform legislation.
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Closing the Part D coverage gap (the so-called “doughnut hole”) should be part of any health care reform legislation.
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AARP believes that comprehensive health care reform legislation should strengthen and improve Medicare and ensure Americans age 50-64 have a choice of health insurance plans they can afford. Insurance companies should be prevented from denying people coverage because of a pre-existing condition or using age to price Americans age 50+ out of affordable, quality coverage. AARP also believes that health care reform should close the Medicare Part D coverage gap, or “doughnut hole,” that requires Medicare beneficiaries to continue to pay premiums but fails to assist them with their prescription drug costs. AARP recognizes and supports changes to Medicare that improve care and strengthen the program and we will oppose any legislative proposals that will cut benefits, raise out-of-pocket costs or reduce access to care.

I will fight to make sure that comprehensive health reform preserves all the benefits Medicare provides for senior citizens. I will work to insure affordable health care for all by offering a public plan. I voted against Medicare Part D because I thought it would not help seniors sufficiently. Its faults, like the doughnut hole, must be remedied. More fundamentally, I anticipated that adding a multi-billion dollar benefit without adding a penny of revenue would place the entire Medicare system in jeopardy. Medicare must be kept solvent. I will also insist that drug prices be negotiated for Medicare beneficiaries and for all drugs purchased through publicly funded health plans.

In Washington, I will work to expand access to those without insurance coverage by supporting: an individual mandate and a public insurance option that will complement the existing employer-sponsored insurance framework by providing coverage to those that lack it, a change in payment incentives so that we no longer reward volume and complexity, and greater transparency of health care cost and quality information. I believe that doctors and patients—not insurance companies—should be in charge of health care decisions. And as Senator, I will work to ensure that any health care reform package preserves and strengthens Medicare, gives seniors improved quality and access to care, and provides prescription drugs at lower prices.

Candidate Scott Brown (R) did not respond by the printing deadline.
What policies would you support to make health care and health insurance more affordable—particularly for the 50-64 age population? What policies would you support to protect and improve Medicare benefits as part of health care reform?

### Alan Khazei (D):
Affordable coverage for individuals age 50-64.
- **Support**
- **Oppose**

Guarantee that Medicare benefits will be protected in any health care reform legislation.
- **Support**
- **Oppose**

Closing the Part D coverage gap (the so-called “doughnut hole”) should be part of any health care reform legislation.
- **Support**
- **Oppose**

As the son of a surgeon and a nurse, health care reform is personal to me. Access to quality care is both a moral issue and an economic issue, and we must enact comprehensive health care reform that guarantees affordable coverage. I strongly support a public option. We must close the Medicare Part D coverage gap, increase federal funding for home and community based services, reduce prescription drug costs for those with Medicare by negotiating lower prices, and create systems that help individuals transition home after hospital stays. I will work to overhaul our medical malpractice system in a way that promotes cooperation, gives malpractice victims compensation through a choice of options in addition to the court system, and reduces errors by encouraging transparency.

### Stephen Pagliuca (D):
Affordable coverage for individuals age 50-64.
- **Support**
- **Oppose**

Guarantee that Medicare benefits will be protected in any health care reform legislation.
- **Support**
- **Oppose**

Closing the Part D coverage gap (the so-called “doughnut hole”) should be part of any health care reform legislation.
- **Support**
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I appreciate the AARP’s concerns about the problems facing adults age 50-64. They are spending too much of their income, and a growing number are without coverage. Without coverage, these people finally enter Medicare coverage in poorer health than those who were insured. The health care reform bill that finally emerges from Congress should recognize the unique set of problems facing this age group, especially for those without coverage through their employers, or who cannot afford private coverage.

### Jack E. Robinson (R):
Affordable coverage for individuals age 50-64.
- **Support**
- **Oppose**

Guarantee that Medicare benefits will be protected in any health care reform legislation.
- **Support**
- **Oppose**

Closing the Part D coverage gap (the so-called “doughnut hole”) should be part of any health care reform legislation.
- **Support**
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While I have been a long-time supporter of AARP, and will be eligible for membership myself next year, AARP’s recent endorsement of the House health care reform bill, which will include over $500 billion in Medicare cuts and over $300 billion in new taxes, is misguided. If elected as your next United States Senator, I will only vote for a health care bill that: (1) provides universal coverage; (2) minimizes costs; (3) does not include a single dime of cuts to Medicare; (4) does not raise taxes; and (5) does not saddle our grandchildren with multiple trillions of dollars of debt. For more information on my unique 12-Point Plan for Health Care Reform, please visit my web site.
Q: Our nation’s infrastructure is crumbling and must be repaired. In the course of fixing our roads and bridges, do you support policies to improve roadway design to make sure that streets are safe for all persons regardless of age, physical ability and mode of transportation?

AARP’s Position:
Create a Complete Streets safe design policy for users of all ages and abilities.

☐ Support ☐ Oppose

Fund roadway safety guidelines for older drivers and pedestrians.

☐ Support ☐ Oppose

As a member of the House Committee of Transportation and Infrastructure, I am committed to restoring our nation’s roads and bridges—and tunnels. I have introduced legislation that would mandate for tunnels the same inspection schedule that the Department of Transportation requires for bridges. I have secured for Massachusetts more than $6 billion dollars for highways and mass transit through the TEA-21 program. I support Complete Streets planning and design, and I have urged that provisions for it be included in the next Highway Bill.

Michael Capuano (D):
Create a Complete Streets safe design policy for users of all ages and abilities.

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Fund roadway safety guidelines for older drivers and pedestrians.

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Building safe roadways benefits everyone. As we rebuild our nation’s infrastructure, our roadways should be designed for everyone’s safe use. As Senator, I would support policies to improve roadway designs to accommodate drivers and pedestrians. Furthermore, I support policies that take into account various modes of transportation, degrees of experience in driving, and abilities of drivers from different age groups, from teenagers to seniors.

Martha Coakley (D):
Create a Complete Streets safe design policy for users of all ages and abilities.

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For the elderly and disabled, mobility is one of the key determinants of health and wellness and the main predictor of their ability to stay at home through infirmity. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act affords a unique opportunity to upgrade and fix our aged and obsolete infrastructure to conform to best practice guidelines developed in recent years. I am fully supportive of AARP’s “Complete Streets” initiative aimed to improve roadway design to make sure that streets are safe for all persons regardless of age, physical ability, and mode of transportation. I favor working closely with local, regional and state planning agencies to create multi-modal accommodations that strike the right balance in our transportation system.

Because both men and women are now outliving their driving abilities, we need to start making major changes in our country’s transportation options to avoid trapping older Americans in their homes. And all Americans can benefit from adopting the design principles of Complete Streets: streets that are designed to be safe for everyone using them—kids on bikes, bus riders, pedestrians, and motorists. To the maximum extent possible, Congress should push states to use complete streets principles on highway projects using the stimulus funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. I support S.584, Senator Harkin’s Complete Street Act, which will require all states and municipalities receiving federal transportation funds to adopt complete street principles by statute.

The candidate chose not to make additional comments.
**Q:** Will you support or oppose legislation that restores the full protections for older workers under the nation’s age discrimination laws?

**AARP’s Position:**
Restore the full protections of the age discrimination laws.

- **Support**
- **Oppose**

Strengthen rights and remedies for those who are victims of age discrimination.

- **Support**
- **Oppose**

**Michael Capuano (D):**
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The Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), enacted in 1967, protects workers who are 40 and older from age-based, work-related discrimination. The United States Supreme Court has recently issued a number of decisions that have limited the effectiveness of the ADEA, making it very difficult for older workers to prove unlawful discrimination on the basis of age. These decisions have also limited the relief that can be provided to older workers who prove age discrimination. Congress should pass legislation that restores the full protections of the age discrimination law and strengthen the rights and remedies for victims of age discrimination, similar to the relief provided to individuals who have been discriminated against based on race, sex, religion or national origin.

I would be proud to strengthen the rights of senior Americans to seek remedies for age discrimination as I was proud to co-sponsor HR 11, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 which became law in January of this year. That law strengthens protections and remedies for women who suffer from unjust employment practices. When courts act to diminish rights guaranteed by the Constitution or established by statute, it is incumbent upon Congress to restore those rights.

I believe the workplace should be free of all types of discrimination, including age discrimination. As Senator, I will work to restore the protections of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act and will protect the rights of our older citizens.

Candidate Scott Brown (R) did not respond by the printing deadline.
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In August, Experience Works reported a 69 percent increase in the number of people over 55 looking for work compared to the previous year. The report finds that the elderly are increasingly being forced back into the labor market to pay for housing, medical bills, and even food. These are alarming statistics that underscore the need for enforceable workforce protection for this vulnerable population.

My life’s work has focused entirely on creating opportunities for people to realize their full capabilities. I believe that we all have unique gifts to share that are essential for a vibrant life and healthy communities. As Senator, I will be a tireless supporter of the ADEA and all legislation that enables seniors to realize their full potential.

This conservative-led Supreme Court’s 5-4 decision in June in the case of Gross v FBL Financial Services Inc. upset decades of well-established precedents, holding victims of age discrimination to a higher standard of proof than discrimination based on race, sex, national origin or religious discrimination. This decision could not have come at a worse time for older workers. Unemployment among workers 55 or over is well over what it has been for decades, and age discrimination complaints to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in FY2008 were up 29% over the previous year. I strongly support the bill which Senator Harkin has recently introduced, the Protecting Older Workers Against Discrimination Act (S.1756), which I look forward to voting for to remedy the Court’s wrong-headed decision.

The candidate chose not to make additional comments.
**Social Security**

**Q:** Will you support or oppose a balanced Social Security plan to continue the program’s guaranteed benefits for future generations? Will you support or oppose diverting Social Security payroll taxes to fund private individual retirement accounts?

**AARP’s Position:**
Create a balanced Social Security plan to ensure guaranteed benefits.

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Divert Social Security payroll taxes to individual retirement accounts.

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Social Security has provided peace of mind for Americans for over 70 years. The program’s guaranteed, inflation adjusted benefit protects families when a worker retires, becomes disabled or dies. We all benefit from the shared responsibility of providing for today’s beneficiaries, with the knowledge that future generations will also share the responsibility for us. AARP believes that a bipartisan plan that balances additional contributions from higher income workers with modest adjustments in future benefits can maintain Social Security’s guaranteed benefits for future generations. AARP supports individual retirement accounts in addition to current guaranteed Social Security benefits, but believes diverting Social Security taxes from the Trust Fund to fund private individual retirement accounts instead of Social Security would weaken the program and create a mountain of new federal debt.

**Michael Capuano (D):**
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I will resist any attempt to privatize Social Security, our most important social legislation. It took the anxiety out of aging in the Great Depression and must be preserved for future generations. That said, average life expectancy in 1935 was about 60 years while today is approaches 80. This change may require fair and thoughtful adjustments in benefits. It may require, too, larger contributions from higher income workers. I will fight any attempt to privatize Social Security, including any attempt to divert payroll taxes to subsidizing individual retirement. Further, private employers must honor commitments to retirees. Pensions earned by years of steadfast work, and often secured in collective bargaining at the cost other concessions, must continue to supplement Social Security.

**Martha Coakley (D):**
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I understand that during this financial crisis, when countless numbers of our family members, neighbors, colleagues, and friends have seen their retirement savings disappear, the safety net of Social Security is more important than ever. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that next year, for the first time since 1975, beneficiaries will not get a cost of living adjustment. I support emergency measures to ensure that beneficiaries receive a cost of living adjustment increase, ensuring that social security’s promises are kept. As Senator, I will fight to keep the promise of Social Security and preserve it for future generations. I am committed to ensuring that benefits are not reduced, and that those paying into the system now will be guaranteed their benefits later.

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Candidate Scott Brown (R) did not respond by the printing deadline.
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We have a moral responsibility to meet the obligations set forth in this eight-decade-old program. I oppose diverting Social Security taxes from the Trust Fund to fund private individual retirement accounts. I support individual retirement accounts in addition to current guaranteed Social Security benefits.

There are valid concerns about the long-term feasibility of Social Security, but there are key steps we can take to strengthen it. I believe that higher-income workers should make additional contributions and that we should make modest adjustments in future benefits.

Social Security has been one of America’s most successful social programs, despite the repeated attempts by Republicans since its inception to weaken it. Social Security makes us all proud: its administrative costs are low, it’s progressive, and its benefits are especially helpful for women and minorities who have faced historic discrimination in pay and pensions. While Social Security was never intended to be the sole source for workers’ retirements, we should never allow money to be diverted from Social Security into individual retirement accounts. The surplus in Social Security will not be exhausted until 2041. By making small adjustments now, we can keep Social Security in surplus far beyond 2041.

The candidate chose not to make additional comments.
Q: How would you shift long-term care services and financing so that people can afford to stay in their homes and communities as long as appropriate?

AARP’s Position: Increase consumer choice and control for people needing long-term care.
- Support
- Oppose

Improve standards and incentives for quality care.
- Support
- Oppose

Provide family caregiving initiatives, such as respite care.
- Support
- Oppose

Michael Capuano (D): Increasing consumer choice and control for people needing long-term care.
- Support
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Improving standards and incentives for quality care.
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At some point, most Americans will need supportive services to help with daily activities (such as dressing or bathing). The vast majority strongly prefer receiving care in their homes and communities rather than in more costly nursing homes or other institutions. However, government programs for long-term care are often geared toward institutions, making home and community-based services much harder to receive. The caregiving burden—both physical and economic—is often overwhelming for millions of families. AARP supports shifting long-term care programs to more home and community services to help people stay in their homes and communities as long as appropriate. Consumers should have more choices and improved quality of care across all settings, and the caregiving burden on millions of families should be eased.

I support a continuum of medical care, and I share your conviction that home and community services contribute both to high quality care and to the dignity and autonomy of the patient. I co-founded, with another urban Democrat and two rural Republican colleagues, the bi-partisan House caucus on Community Health Centers. I have consistently supported Visiting Nurses and hospice care. I am proud to co-sponsor HR 2460, the Healthy Families Act, which adds paid time off to the protections of the Family and Medical Leave Act. I am aware of the responsibilities, lovingly borne, by family caregivers. As a Mayor, I negotiated flextime and job sharing to help employees fulfill their family responsibilities.

I support shifting long-term care services and financing so that people can afford to stay in their homes and communities as long as they are able. I believe in programs that encourage the growth of quality care for seniors, and incentives that promote the growth of home caregiving services, such as respite care, to ease the burden on families caring for loved ones in their home. Finally, as Attorney General, I targeted enforcement actions against corrupt long term care facilities, and as Senator, I will support legislation to strengthen oversight of the long term care workforce.

Candidate Scott Brown (R) did not respond by the printing deadline.
How would you shift long-term care services and financing so that people can afford to stay in their homes and communities as long as appropriate?

Alan Khazei (D):
Increase consumer choice and control for people needing long-term care.

- **Support**
- **Oppose**

Improve standards and incentives for quality care.

- **Support**
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Provide family caregiving initiatives, such as respite care.

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Stephen Pagliuca (D):
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- **Support**
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Improving standards and incentives for quality care.

- **Support**
- **Oppose**

Providing family caregiving initiatives, such as respite care.

- **Support**
- **Oppose**

I agree with AARP’s approach. I was honored to organize the Service Nation Summit and Coalition, of which AARP was a presenting sponsor and leadership member. Your support was essential in passing the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act. This legislation will greatly expand opportunities for national and community service, including more opportunities for older Americans to serve. It will provide for more service people who can work to support senior citizens staying in their own homes. This issue is personal for me as I have two elderly parents who but for the support of my sister, would not be able to stay in their home. With the great blessing of our population living longer, we must make adjustments to our long-term care system.

I support AARP’s goal of expanding the use of home and community-based long term care services (HCBS), which has the twin benefits of expanding consumer choice while lowering long-term growth in costs. At a time of tight budgets and the continuing growth of the over 65 population, we should embrace the expansion of HCBS. In Massachusetts, only 24% of Medicaid funding for long-term care goes to HCBS programs, below the national average. We know that the overwhelming majority of people want to stay in their own homes as long as possible. But we also know that the country’s estimated 34 million caregivers need the help that HCBS programs supply. I support the provisions in the Senate Finance bill expanding HCBS.

The candidate chose not to make additional comments.
If you are not registered to vote, go to www.aarp.org/makeadifference/politics/ and look under Tools for a form to fill out and send to your local voter registrar (the address will be there). Go to the same website if you need an application for an absentee ballot or to find out if your state allows early voting and what dates that will occur.

Candidate websites:
www.brownforusenate.com
www.mikecapuano.com
www.marthacoakley.com
www.alanforsenate.com
www.stevepagliuca.com
www.jackerobinson.com