There’s an old phrase — the world is run by those who show up.

Most people believe that phrase refers to our elected officials. In truth, it’s about all of us. Our nation and its government, at every level, are run by the people we elect. Our future depends on the active involvement of citizens.

This year, Oregonians and Americans are faced with many challenges — from soaring health care costs to a crumbling economy — that threaten our financial security. The importance of evaluating the impacts and potential consequences of ballot measures as well as electing solid leaders at the local, state and national levels are critical to our future.

AARP Oregon produced this guide to help voters make informed decisions about ballot measures and the candidates’ stand on issues important to our members and their families. AARP is strictly nonpartisan, and our work on issues is most often done by uniting both sides of the aisle. AARP believes strongly in our founding principles: what we do, we do for all, and we really can have “the power to make it better,” by working together.

Your vote and civic participation are truly the keys to making a difference. If you never miss an election, make this the year you talk your friends, family and neighbors into taking a stand for what you and they believe in. If you haven’t voted in a few years, make 2008 the year you recommit to the future of our nation.

Be sure to vote, and make sure that your ballot is received on or before Nov. 4. Our communities, state and country depend on it.

Jerry Cohen Ray Miao
State Director Volunteer State President

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AARP is nonpartisan and does not endorse political candidates or contribute money to political parties or political candidates’ campaigns. AARP strives to raise awareness of issues of concern to older Americans and their families and communities through items like this guide. We hope you’ll find these pages helpful as you make your voting decisions.
AARP Oregon urges a “NO” vote because older Oregonians, their families and their communities can’t afford Measure 59 and its unintended consequences.

Most older adults and their families will receive no benefit from Measure 59. In fact, analysis shows that three-quarters of Oregon taxpayers of all ages would save less than a dollar a year if this measure were enacted.

Funding would have to be slashed for vital services that all Oregonians rely on — public safety, education, health care, and home and community-based care — because Measure 59 would cut $1.3 billion in revenue from the state budget over the next two years. And from there, the impact just grows and grows, eventually reducing state revenues by $1.2 billion a year.

Most people will have to pay more out of pocket for fewer and fewer services, and will likely lose access to an array of invaluable, cost-effective programs. For older Oregonians and their family caregivers, this could mean the loss of Oregon Project Independence and other critical services that help older adults maintain independence, choice and dignity in their homes and communities.

Measure 59 is a flawed formula that will hurt Oregon. Let’s make sure Oregon’s older residents, families and communities have the care and services they need and deserve. Join AARP Oregon in voting “NO” on Measure 59.

Please join AARP Oregon in supporting Measure 57 and opposing Measures 59 and 61.

“NO” votes on Measures 59 and 61 are critical to keep the state from having to play musical chairs with vital public services like schools, public safety, health care and home and community-based care for older adults and those with disabilities.

Measure 57 – Ballot Title: Increases sentences for drug trafficking, theft against elderly and specified repeat property and identity theft crimes; requires addiction treatment for certain offenders.

Measure 61 – Ballot Title: Creates mandatory minimum sentences for certain theft, identity theft, forgery, drug, and burglary crimes.

AARP Oregon is dedicated to enhancing quality of life for all as we age. That includes building safe and more livable communities.

Measure 57

☐ Is a better way to help ensure public safety and livable communities and to fight crime.

☐ Is far less costly — projected at up to $29 million less in the first budget cycle and up to $300 million less per budget cycle after the fourth year.

☐ Has provisions that will help older adults and our most vulnerable citizens, like tougher sentences for those who steal $10,000 or more from anyone older than 65, and for crimes like identity theft.

☐ Is a more efficient use of limited and crucial taxpayer dollars because of its provisions to help address and stop repeat property crime offenders and to require drug treatment (nearly 85 percent of repeat offenders are addicted to drugs or alcohol but less than 15 percent get intensive drug treatment now).

☐ Is a wiser investment and will bring better, smarter security for our older residents, families and communities.

Measure 61

☐ Is a rigid, one-size-fits-all, more expensive approach to fighting crime.

☐ Is much more costly — projected at $87 to $112 million the first budget cycle $342 to $586 million per budget cycle after the fourth year and over $1 billion in new prison construction costs.

☐ Doesn’t include the kinds of changes we need, like extra penalties for those who steal from vulnerable populations like older adults or for drug traffickers who push drugs on Oregon’s kids and grandkids.

☐ Is wasteful of Oregon’s resources because it doesn’t do anything to stop repeat offenders and end the revolving door.

☐ Would lead to vital services in our communities getting cut to cover the costs of a bad idea.
Key Issues: Candidates’ Views

Each election year, AARP asks major candidates in selected races key questions about the issues that are most important to our members and their families.

This year, candidates were asked five questions, ranging from their top priorities to their stances on reforming Social Security, enhancing retirement security, making health care more affordable and expanding long-term care.

Specifically, here’s what AARP asked:

1. What will be your top domestic issue priorities if elected? How will you work to break the gridlock to get things done on these issues?

2. 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 individual retirement accounts?

3. What options do you support to make saving for retirement easier for American families? Do you support or oppose guaranteeing employees’ access to automatic payroll deductions in the workplace to fund an IRA? Do you support or oppose creating retirement accounts in addition to Social Security?

4. What policies would you support to make health care and health insurance more affordable and accessible for everyone? What policies would you support to make Medicare more affordable?

5. 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?

Visit www.aarp.org/or for the complete guide to AARP's positions on each question and issue, and the candidates' answers to them. You'll find out where U.S. Senate candidates Jeff Merkley (D) and Gordon Smith (R), all the major party candidates for Oregon's five congressional seats and presidential candidates John McCain (R) and Barack Obama (D) stand on the issues. You can also call us toll free at 1-866-554-5360 or e-mail us at oraarp@aarp.org for your free copy.
Election Information

- The 2008 general election is Nov. 4.
- Ballots are mailed to all registered voters 14 to 18 days before Election Day, so expect them in mid-October.
- Ballots can be mailed or dropped off at county election offices or designated drop sites. Ballots must be received by 8 p.m. on Nov. 4. Postmarks do not count, so make sure your ballot is received by the deadline.
- Any voter with a disability is eligible for assistance by contacting his or her county election official or a designated care provider.
- If you do not receive a ballot or have further questions, please contact the Oregon Secretary of State’s Elections Division or your local county election official.

E-mail: elections.sos@state.or.us
Phone: 1-866-ORE-VOTES (1-866-673 8683) toll free
Web: www.oregonvotes.org

Tracking Where Oregon State Legislators Stand

As you vote for Oregon state senators and representatives this election, AARP Oregon encourages you to check out a report — available at www.aarp.org/or under the “Advocacy” link on the left-hand side — that compiled the votes of state legislators on issues deemed especially important to older Oregonians, our communities and all generations during the 2007 legislative session.

This vote tracking program was designed to meet the call of AARP members across the state who want to know more about the policy debates in Salem and where their elected officials stand on the issues.

Tracked votes were based on stringent AARP guidelines:
- The subject was a key AARP issue that would make a positive social difference.
- AARP had a clear position on the legislation that the organization was actively advocating.
- AARP outlined its position in advance of the vote.
- Legislators were assured that the issue — and not politics — was AARP’s only concern.

Legislators’ votes were recorded nine times on six bills that would provide health insurance to Oregon children and reform the state’s health care system, as well as on three consumer protection measures to prevent identity theft and predatory payday and mortgage lending.

AARP’s vote tabulations are for information purposes only and do not reflect an endorsement or censure of any legislator. AARP is a strictly nonpartisan organization. How a legislator votes on issues is only one factor in evaluating his or her legislative performance, an effort that should also include such factors as constituent services and committee work.

Visit www.aarp.org/or and click the “Advocacy” link on the left-hand menu to view the full report and see how your legislators voted. To get more information or contact your legislator, visit www.leg.state.or.us.

House bills 2201 and 2967 — Providing medical coverage for uninsured children up to age 18 by adding 84.5 cents per pack to Oregon’s cigarette tax (two votes, first as House bill 2201, then as House bill 2967).

Both bills failed to pass.

House bill 2871 — Halting predatory interest rates of 500 percent, instead instituting a 36 percent cap.

Bill passed and became law.

Senate bill 329 — Establishing the Oregon Health Fund Board to develop a comprehensive plan that will provide all Oregonians with access to quality health care.

Bill passed and became law.

Senate bill 583 — Setting standards for safeguarding personal information and allowing consumers to place security freezes on credit files.

Bill passed and became law.

Senate bill 965 — Eliminating predatory mortgage lending practices and helping consumers preserve their status as homeowners.

Bill failed to pass.

Whether it’s fighting for affordable health care or working to ensure retirement security for all Americans, we can’t do it without you.

Sign up for free e-mail updates and action alerts from AARP. We’ll keep you informed about what’s really going on in the White House, Congress and the Oregon State Legislature. Visit www.aarp.org/getinvolved and sign up today, or e-mail us at oraarp@aarp.org.

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