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NEW AARP POLL: WISCONSIN CANDIDATES SHOULD PAY ATTENTION TO VOTERS 50+ IN KEY CONGRESSIONAL BATTLEGROUND

*Voters in competitive districts, including WI-01 and WI-03, say
rising prices and affordability are driving their decisions*

MADISON, WI – With control of Congress potentially running through competitive districts like Wisconsin's 1st and 3rd Congressional Districts, [new AARP polling](#) sends a clear message to candidates: listen to voters age 50-plus.

The new survey of voters across 43 competitive congressional districts, including WI-01 and WI-03, finds that older voters are highly motivated, focused on pocketbook issues, and positioned to play a significant role in determining the outcome of the midterm elections.

Among voters 50+, rising prices and affordability rank as the top issue, with grocery and gasoline costs their biggest price concerns. And 21% of voters 50+ remain persuadable, meaning they are not firmly committed to either party.

That matters, especially in Wisconsin. Voters 50+ accounted for nearly 60% of all ballots cast in Wisconsin's 2024 general election, totaling more than 1.9 million voters.

"Candidates should pay close attention to what voters 50+ are saying because they consistently show up and make the difference in close elections," said **Raj Shukla, AARP Wisconsin State Director**. "These voters are telling us very clearly what matters to them: the rising cost of everyday necessities, protecting the Social Security they've earned, affordable health care and prescription drugs, and support for family caregivers. Candidates who want to earn their votes need to be talking about solutions to those concerns."

The survey underscores just how engaged older voters are heading into November. Eighty-three percent of voters 50+ said they are extremely motivated to vote, compared with 66% of voters under 50.

Amongst target congressional district voters, the poll also found:

- 85% say they are more likely to support a candidate who would protect Social Security from cuts, including reductions to the annual cost-of-living adjustment.
- 85% of voters 50+ say they are more likely to support a candidate who would expand Medicare's ability to negotiate drug prices to help lower prescription drug costs.
- 80% of voters 50+ say rising prices are an important factor in deciding their vote, with groceries and gasoline ranking as their two biggest price concerns.
- Among persuadable voters 50+, the top three issues are: rising prices and affordability, Social Security and Medicare, and taxes.
- 50% are or have been family caregivers, and 77% would be more likely to support a candidate who would provide a tax credit to help cover costs for unpaid family caregivers.
- 58% say Social Security is or will be a major source of household income, and 94% are more likely to support a candidate who will ensure they receive the Social Security they have earned.

"Wisconsin candidates don't have to guess what older voters care about," **Shukla** said. "They're telling us. The question is whether candidates are listening."

Methodology

AARP commissioned the bipartisan polling team of Fabrizio Ward (R) and Impact Research (D) to survey 1,368 likely voters across the 43 congressional districts rated Toss Up or Lean Republican/Democrat by the Cook Political Report. The survey was conducted October 1-5, 2026, using live interviews on cell phones and landlines as well as SMS-to-web interviews. The margin error for the full sample is $\pm 2.7\%$.

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