



AARP Endorses Affordable Health Care for America Act

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WASHINGTON—Today AARP announced its endorsement of the Affordable Health Care for America Act (H.R. 3962) and the accompanying Medicare Physician Payment Reform Act (H.R. 3961). The Association’s support follows nearly two years of work with lawmakers on both sides of the aisle to craft a health care reform plan that meets the needs of AARP’s nearly 40 million members and all older Americans. Among those needs are reforms that strictly curb insurance companies’ discrimination against older Americans and Medicare improvements that strengthen benefits while protecting the program for future generations.

“We started this debate more than two years ago with the twin goals of making coverage affordable to our younger members and protecting Medicare for seniors,” said AARP CEO Barry Rand. “We’ve read the Affordable Health Care for America Act and we can say with confidence that it meets those goals with improved benefits for people in Medicare and needed health insurance market reforms to help ensure every American can purchase affordable health coverage.”

Today’s endorsement marks the first time in this legislative battle that AARP has put its full weight behind a comprehensive health care reform package. In the coming days, AARP will be educating its members about the health care reform package through its publications, paid advertising and more than five million calls and e-mails to its grassroots activists.

“As members of the House gear up for this historic vote, they will hear from older Americans,” Rand said.

The Affordable Health Care for America Act and the Medicare Physician Payment Reform Act contain critical components AARP has been fighting for on behalf of its members and all older Americans to improve health care for them and their families. They include:

- Protecting and strengthening Medicare for today's seniors and future generations of retirees;
- Ensuring seniors can see the doctor of their choice or find a doctor if they need one by improving Medicare's payments to doctors;
- Lowering drug costs for seniors by closing the Medicare Part D "doughnut hole" and allowing Medicare to negotiate with drug makers for lower drug prices;
- Taking steps to reduce waste, fraud, abuse and inefficiency in the Medicare program;
- Requiring Medicare and insurance companies to provide for important preventive services like screenings for diabetes, cancer and osteoporosis free of charge;
- Stopping insurance companies from denying you affordable coverage because of your age;
- Preventing insurance companies from denying you coverage if you have a pre-existing condition or dropping your coverage if you get sick;
- Limiting how much your insurance company can make you pay out-of-pocket;
- Providing affordable health insurance options for those who don't have insurance; and
- Providing benefits to help seniors and people with disabilities live in their own homes and communities by establishing the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) program.

Rand added: "We cannot continue to let insurers price older Americans out of the market, just as we cannot stand idle while millions of seniors are forced to choose between their groceries and their prescriptions. AARP is proud to endorse the Affordable Health Care for America Act and the Medicare Physician Payment Reform Act, and we urge members of the House to pass this critical package in the coming days to help fix our broken health care system."

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that helps people 50+ have independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to either political campaigns or candidates. We produce AARP The Magazine, the definitive voice for 50+ Americans and the world's largest-circulation magazine with over 35.5 million readers; AARP Bulletin, the go-to news source for AARP's nearly 40 million members and Americans 50+; AARP Segunda Juventud, the only bilingual U.S. publication dedicated exclusively to the 50+ Hispanic community; and our website, AARP.org. AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. We have staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

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