

AARP Idaho

For Immediate Release
Thursday, May 20, 2010

AARP MEMBER SURVEY FINDS CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE IN IDAHO POLITICS

Election Survey Shows 85% Cast Vote of “Little to No Confidence,” Reveals Top 5 Issues the 50-plus Want the Candidates to Address

BOISE, Idaho – With Idaho’s primary election just a few short days away, a new AARP survey finds the most powerful voting population in the state, the 50 plus, has already cast a surprising vote – one of no confidence. According to a new AARP member survey released this morning, 85% said they had little to no confidence in Idaho state lawmakers to tackle the issues they care most about. This election year, roughly 56% of all votes are expected to come from Idahoans aged 50 or older.

“The low public confidence in state lawmakers is very alarming– it’s not good for anyone in Idaho, businesses, retirees and especially those elected to serve in office,” said Jim Wordelman, State Director for AARP in Idaho.

What are the issues the candidates should be talking about?

The AARP pulse survey, conducted between April 28th and May 17th, also detailed the top issues AARP members want the candidates to address. AARP plans to ask the candidates their positions on the issues and include the answers in voter guides for every statewide and state legislative race in Idaho. The issues as ranked by AARP members are:

1. Resolving Idaho’s state budget problems: 72% said this should be a top priority issue
2. Ensuring health care workers honor living wills and advance directives by repealing Idaho’s new “conscience” law which takes aim at end of life care – 61%
3. Taking large campaign contributions from special interest groups out of Idaho politics: 55%
4. Top three issues candidate will commit to addressing: 34%
5. Tackling Idaho’s worsening shortage of physicians: 33%

“Some of the issues that matter most to our members aren’t the ones being talked about on the campaign trail,” added Wordelman. “The candidates are asking for your vote, we’re urging people to find out where the candidate’s stand on the issues that matter most.”

Other issues AARP members said they want the candidates to address:

AARP members also noted several other issues they’d like to learn the candidates’ positions on including: restoring education funding (46%); opposing the state lawsuit against the new federal health insurance law (14%); restoring budget cuts to critical programs and services for the elderly and families (11%); supporting term limits (9%); environmental issues (8%); reducing tax exemptions (7%); and bringing more jobs to Idaho (6%).

50 plus voters by the numbers: 90% of all AARP members are registered to vote, and 56% of all Idaho voters will be 50 or older this year. In 2008, 93% of registered voters 50 plus hit the polls in Idaho, nearly 10% more than registered voters under 50.

#####