Protecting Public Pension Solvency
AARP is working to protect promised retiree pension benefits, specifically preserving cost of living adjustments, and encouraging improved funding to ensure pension system sustainability. Retirees have paid into the system over a lifetime of work and are counting on Kentucky to keep its promise.

Protecting Retirement Financial Security
AARP Kentucky is urging lawmakers to hear the voices of Kentuckians and take action to protect retirees by calling on the General Assembly and Governor Beshear to reject the 2018 tax increases on retirement income and restore deductions for medical expenses.

Working Kentuckians and today’s retirees did not create the current state fiscal crisis. AARP believes it’s unfair to balance a state budget on the backs of Kentuckians’ with high health care expenses or those who have worked hard saving for retirement. Taxing retirement income fails to acknowledge the vast number of older Kentuckians who contribute financially to the well-being of their children and grandchildren, and act as primary caregivers.

Taxing retirement income will minimize retirees’ ability to care for their loved one’s needs and provide assistance with food, housing, transportation, and medical costs.

Longevity and Kentucky Economy
Kentucky is home to 1.5 million citizens age 50-plus—a powerful force driving economic growth and value. The contributions of this age group are known as the Longevity Economy. It is the sum of all economic activity driven by the needs of Kentuckians 50-plus, including both the products and services they purchase directly and the economic activity this spending generates.

The Longevity Economy is poised to become the driving force not only in Kentucky, but across the United States and globally. While government officials are formulating policy in Frankfort, AARP Kentucky is urging lawmakers to recognize the Longevity Economy and envision it as a foundation for future economic prosperity and innovation. “The 50-plus across Kentucky are making a substantial and positive contribution to our economy—far more than people realize,” according to AARP Kentucky State Director Ron Bridges. “Policymakers need to recognize the value of contributions made by older Kentuckians.”

Learn More: aarp.org/2017longevityecon

Livable & Age-Friendly Communities
AARP Livable Communities supports efforts of neighborhoods, towns, cities and rural areas to be great places for people of all ages. We believe livable communities provide safe, walkable streets; age-friendly housing and transportation options; access to needed services; and opportunities for residents of all ages to participate in community life.

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AARP KENTUCKY 2020 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Introduction

AARP Kentucky remains one of the Commonwealth’s largest membership organizations with some 450,000 Kentucky members. Since 2001, AARP Kentucky is working to advance policies that help its members live with dignity and purpose. Those policies are determined by our national volunteer Board of Directors with member input - surveys, focus groups and field hearings.

The AARP Kentucky legislative priorities that matter most to our members in 2020:

- Affordable Prescription Drugs
- Family Caregiver Support
- Quality Long-Term Services & Supports (LTSS)
- Independent Living Options
- Retirement Security

Our Priorities

Affordable Prescription Drugs

It’s unfair that Americans pay the highest prescription drug prices in the world. We must crack down on price gouging and the greedy practices that keep prices artificially high. It’s time our leaders stick up for people 50+ and their families.

Prescription drugs don’t work if you can’t afford them. And access to affordable prescription drugs, like insulin, are a top priority for older Kentuckians. Older Americans are hit especially hard. Medicare Part D enrollees take an average of 4.5 prescriptions per month, and their average annual income is around $26,000. One in three Americans has not taken a medication as prescribed because of the cost.

Current drug prices are not sustainable. AARP is urging state governments and Congress to pass legislation that would help seniors with high drug costs—NOW.

Learn More: aarp.org/stoprixgred

Family Caregiver Support

Nearly 600,000 Kentuckians care for older parents, spouses, children with disabilities or other loved ones, helping them live independently at home and in their communities—where they want to be. These family caregivers take on huge responsibilities that can be overwhelming, stressful and exhausting. Many also juggle full- or part-time jobs and some are still raising their families. As these family caregivers face physical, emotional and financial challenges, we can take some commonsense legislative steps that would help make their lives a little bit easier.

- 648,000 family caregivers in Kentucky help their loved ones live independently—keeping them out of more costly nursing homes, saving taxpayer dollars.
- In Kentucky, family caregivers of adults provide 603 million hours of unpaid care — valued at $6.9 billion annually.
- Caregiver Tax credit would provide family caregivers—who pay for expensive care to help their older loved ones—with a modest tax credit.

- Guardianship Program funding support for more caregivers. Assuming guardianship of another person's property, medical decisions, and finances is a large responsibility. To ensure that the process protects our most vulnerable at such a critical time, AARP has been working with organizations and state leadership to improve guardianship and conservatorship practices in Kentucky.
- Paid sick and family caregiver leave: Paid family leave policies are a sound investment, from both the perspective of employers and America’s working families. Workers should not have to choose between keeping their jobs and providing care to a seriously ill family member.

Helping Kentuckians Live Independently

More than three-quarters (77%) of Kentucky registered voters age 45 and older believe that being cared for at home with caregiver assistance is the ideal situation when the basic tasks of life become more difficult due to aging or illness. AARP supports improving the balance of funding for home and community-based services (HCBS) by redirecting spending away from costly institutional care and towards supports and services in the community. These vital and cost-effective services promote consumer choice, help Kentuckians live independently, and can save taxpayer dollars.

Long-term Services & Supports (LTSS)

AARP seeks appropriate priority funding for community senior services to meet growing demands and reducing waiting lists for services. These include: home delivered meals, in-home care, local senior centers and stable funding for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program.

Join Us & Take Action: aarp.org/getinvolved

Learn More: aarp.org/stoprixgred

Learn More: aarp.org/valuing

In 2017, 28% of Kentucky Residents stopped taking medication as prescribed due to cost.

487,537 Kentucky Residents have been diagnosed with cancer.

508,321 Kentucky Residents have pre-diabetes or diabetes.

212,639 Kentucky Residents have heart disease.

1 in 4 workers age 25+ are family caregivers.

72% workers 40+ that say allowing work flexibility for caregiving would help improve work/life balance.

Real Possibilities in Kentucky