

SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, February 2, 2016

ATTACHMENT 3

## AARP Testimony – SB 1205

February 2, 2015 – Senate Health & Welfare

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Chairman Heider and Members of the Committee,

My name is Yvette Ashton. I am from Boise, Idaho and I am a volunteer with AARP Idaho. AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, representing 177,000 members across the state helping older Idahoans have independence, choice and control.

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before your committee on this important matter.

I speak today in support of Senate bill 1205.

Several years ago, I learned a valuable lesson in my life, and it was how to look at things in a different perspective. I used to look at people who lived in poverty and people who used assistance as taking advantage. My perspective now has changed.

Life is unpredictable. No one wants to get sick from a catastrophic illness and then go on to sell off their possessions, their house, and live on assistance. Nobody wakes up and wants to lose their job and not be able to afford their prescriptions. But it happens. Thousands of hard-working Idaho families, including my daughter and her family, are struggling with basic needs. She's younger but there are more than 26,000 Idahoans 50 to 64 who are currently in the coverage gap. Many of these folks are AARP members and have lost their jobs while still trying to find new ones.

We can build a healthy Idaho and lower barriers to preventive care. Healthy citizens mean we have healthy taxpayers. Idahoans who have access to health services can be productive members of the workforce, focus more time on family and have income and resources to put back into the economy.

Instead of being stuck in our perceptions about what Medicaid is politically, let's change our perspective to a healthy Idahoan is a contributing Idahoan.

Thank you for your time and your consideration. It is greatly appreciated.