

# COMMITMENT<sup>✓</sup>to SENIORS

April 30, 2024

The Honorable Ron Wyden, Chairman  
Senate Committee on Finance  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Crapo, Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Finance  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Wyden and Ranking Member Crapo:

I am writing you today to bring your attention to a [report](#) conducted by [Juniper Research Group](#) that was recently released by [American Commitment](#) as part of our [Commitment to Seniors](#) project. The report examines the significant financial partnership held between AARP and UnitedHealth Group, the largest health insurer and pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) corporation in the nation. In view of the Senate Finance Committee's hearing this week in which UnitedHealth Group's CEO, Andrew Witty, will be testifying, we believe the report is both timely and informative.

The findings of the report add to many older Americans' concerns on whether AARP and UnitedHealth's financial relationship influences AARP's policy positions and advocacy initiatives. UnitedHealth is the nation's largest issuer of Medicare Advantage plans – most of which are AARP branded – and this partnership, among others with AARP, has generated billions of dollars in revenue in recent years for the non-profit organization.

AARP is visibly engaged on some issues of concern to older Americans, such as the organization's campaign to pass the insurer-friendly Inflation Reduction Act. Yet on many other issues -- notably those requiring greater accountability from large health insurers and health services companies like UnitedHealth -- AARP is largely silent. Recent examples include bipartisan insurer-PBM reforms, premium increases, and allegations of insurer overcharges to Medicare and using AI technologies to deny patient care.

Even as it relates to the cyberattack on UnitedHealth's subsidiary, Change Healthcare, we do not know if AARP has undertaken any efforts to respond to a data breach that may have affected people it purports to represent.

Key financial findings of the report include:

- AARP has received an estimated \$9 billion in tax-free revenue from UnitedHealth alone since 2007.
- AARP was paid more than \$1.1 billion in corporate royalties in 2022 – three times more than AARP's own members pay in membership dues – the majority of which is attributable to UnitedHealth.
- AARP royalties now account for nearly 60 percent of all AARP annual revenues combined.
- AARP member dues revenue fell by over \$5 million in 2022, yet royalty revenues grew by \$47 million.

AARP's continued revenue growth through declining membership dues is evidence that its interests are more aligned with its corporate partner UnitedHealth and other commercial sources of revenue than with seniors. Older Americans continue to have more questions than answers in terms of who exactly AARP advocates for these days. We urge you to inquire about this potential conflict of interest with UnitedHealth's CEO as part of your hearing this week.

Sincerely,

Phil Kerpen, President  
American Commitment