SENATE BUSINESS & INDUSTRY
EXHIBIT NO. 5
DATE 2/15/05
BILL NO. SB 380

AARP Montana

February 15, 2005

TO: Senator Vicki Cocchiarella and Members of Senate Business and Labor Committee

FROM: Del Lonnquist, Volunteer Advocate, AARP Montana

RE: Support of SB 380

Madame Chair and Members of the Senate Business and Labor Committee, my name is Del Lonnquist and I am here representing AARP Montana and it's 143,000 members in Montana.

We are here in support of SB 380 because it addresses an issue that will become more and more important as the number of discount cards on the market increase. AARP currently offers one of the many Medicare-approved discount drug cards to eligible Medicare beneficiaries, through its contract with United HealthCare Insurance Company. Since Medicare Modernization took effect, AARP has taken many steps to inform and educate potential Medicare beneficiaries regarding the new Medicare-approved discount drug program. We have hosted consumer outreach efforts and distributed educational materials and publications nationwide.

However, many of our members have expressed confusion due to the variety of discount drug cards available to them. We believe it is very important to enact legislation that would ensure the cards that are being offered are legitimate. Seniors are especially vulnerable to fraud, especially in the area of health care. Valid discount cards offer help to those who cannot afford insurance, but a fraudulent card can be a disaster for lower income seniors.

We encourage your support of SB 380 and thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Mary L Williams
for Del Lonnquist

30 West 14th Street, Suite 301| Great Northern Addition| Helena, MT 59601| toll-free 866-295-7278| 406-441-2230 fax| toll-free 877-434-7598 TTY
Marie F. Smith, President| William D. Novelli, Chief Executive Officer| www.aarp.org/mt