



To: Chair Lyons and Members of Senate Committee on Health and Welfare
From: Colin Hilliard (chilliard@aarp.org | 802-238-5693) Advocacy
Director, AARP Vermont
Re: **H. 577 – Establishing the Vermont Prescription Drug Discount Card Program**
Date: April 15, 2026

Dear Chair Lyons and Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare,

AARP Vermont appreciates the opportunity to comment on H.577, an act relating to establishing the Vermont Prescription Drug Discount Card Program. AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, non-partisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. On behalf of the nearly 38 million members nationwide and 110,000 members here in Vermont, **we want to express our support for this bill and the benefits it will have for older Vermonters.**

Prescription drug prices in the United States are among the highest in the world, and for older adults and others on fixed incomes, increasing prescription drug prices can lead to difficult decisions and fatal outcomes. According to a recent [AARP survey](#), 82% of adults 50 and older report taking prescription medication regularly. Yet [a 2024 report](#) from the CDC highlights that accessing these necessary drugs isn't always simple — about 1 in 5 older adults do not have insurance coverage for prescription drugs. And even for those with a prescription drug plan, paying for medications can be expensive. As a result, some older Americans are skipping doses or delaying refills to save money.

Just this last year, [AARP Vermont's 2025 Vital Voices Survey of Vermonters 45+](#) found 84% of adults mentioned being able to afford prescription drugs was an important financial and retirement issue, just as important as being able to travel independently. Prescription medication doesn't work if you can't afford to take it. H.577 offers a way for the state to take action to lower costs for consumers.

AARP Vermont strongly supports bulk purchasing because it's a smart, proven way to lower prescription drug costs. By joining forces with other states, we amplify our negotiating power, reduce administrative waste, and create real savings that strengthen Medicaid and other health programs. These savings can help lower premiums and out-of-pocket costs for Vermonters, making essential medications more affordable and accessible for everyone.

Furthermore, this program could not come at a more critical time. The loss of ACA premium tax credits has impacted thousands of older Vermonters ages 50-64. Many of these folks have become uninsured or underinsured in recent months. Access to a free drug discount card would provide real financial relief.

In conclusion, AARP Vermont fully supports H.577. If passed, we look forward to the opportunity to be a partner in raising awareness about the program to our 110,000 Vermont members to ensure its success.

Sincerely,

Colin Hilliard
Associate State Director – Advocacy and Outreach, AARP Vermont