

## AARP Applauds House for Passing Two Bills to Better Combat Elder Abuse and Financial Exploitation

Written by Ann Black  
Friday, 28 March 2014 08:03

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**Des Moines, March 26, 2014** – AARP applauds today’s action by members of the Iowa House for their unanimous passage of much-needed uniform power of attorney legislation, Senate File 2168, a bill creating a Uniform Power of Attorney Act (UPOAA). This vote follows yesterday’s House passage of legislation defining financial exploitation of a vulnerable elder, Senate File 2239. AARP advocated for enactment of both measures to help curb the growing problem of elder financial abuse in Iowa.

“We commend members of the Iowa House of Representatives for working through the complexities of the issue of elder abuse and coming up with two very strong bills to better protect vulnerable Iowans and their families from this growing problem,” said AARP State President Tony Vola. “AARP advocated passage of a Uniform Power of Attorney Act as the most important tool Iowa can use to combat the devastating problem of financial exploitation of elders. Together these bills give Iowans greater peace of mind with the assurance stronger protections against financial abuse and exploitation,” said Vola.

Multiple national studies have found that financial exploitation is the most common and under-reported type of elder abuse, with estimates that one of every six adults over age 64 has been a victim of financial abuse.

A power of attorney is a legal document that allows someone to make decisions on behalf of someone else. A power of attorney document can be a useful tool in the event of future incapacity and can avoid the need for court appointment of a guardian or conservator. But power of attorney misuse and abuse can lead to dire consequences for the person it was meant to benefit.

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Many Iowans are fortunate to have a power of attorney agent who fulfills their responsibilities. This legislation addresses the unfortunate cases where an agent representing an older Iowan either fails to understand his or her responsibilities, misuses the power of attorney, or outright abuses the power of attorney, all of which hurt the individual and his or her family.

For the past two years, AARP Iowa has been active on the Iowa Elder Abuse Taskforce, working with state leaders, advocates and other organizations appointed by the Iowa General Assembly to study the issue of elder abuse in our state and recommend actions to combat it. Passage of a strong Uniform Power of Attorney Act (UPOAA) was a consensus taskforce recommendation and a legislative priority of Iowa Bar Association.

AARP urges the Iowa Senate to pass and the Governor to sign SF 2168 to more effectively address the growing problem of elder financial abuse in our state and help older Iowans and their families have the protections they need to take action against current and future abuse.

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AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of more than 37 million, that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment security and retirement planning. We advocate for consumers in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name as well as help our members obtain discounts on a wide range of products, travel, and services. A trusted source for lifestyle tips, news and educational information, AARP produces AARP The Magazine, the world's largest

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