

Written by Ann Black  
Friday, 05 August 2011 09:24

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**- Activities Include Saturday Straw Poll Interactive Listening Posts to Engage Voter Opinions and Sole Sponsorship of GOP Presidential Debate Surrogate Spin Rooms -**

DES MOINES — AARP will launch its nationwide presidential voter education engagement efforts next week in Ames, Iowa, listening to the concerns and priorities of 2011 Iowa Straw Poll participants. Visitors to **AARP's First in the Nation: Your Right, Your Decision, Your Vote Speak Out Tent**

will have the opportunity to share their views on pocketbook and retirement issues through interactive and instant audience response technology. It's all part of AARP's national efforts to make sure presidential candidates and other elected officials hear the voices of voters 50+ throughout the 2012 election campaign.

"For the first time, voters at the 2011 Iowa Straw Poll in Ames not only have the first chance to determine which candidates rise to the top in the early days of the 2012 campaign cycle, but they also will have the opportunity to discuss what they think the next president should do to address pocketbook and retirement security issues at our cutting-edge, interactive **Listening Posts** and **Speak Out Stage**

," said Tony Vola, AARP Iowa State President. Vola said AARP will be conducting voter engagement efforts in Iowa as well as other primary and caucus states at both Republican and Democratic events throughout the 2012 election cycle.

AARP's **First in the Nation Speak Out Tent**, co-hosted by Mediacom, is centrally located adjacent to Scheman Hall and Hilton Coliseum. The day's program features a series of events including:

## AARP Kicks Off 2012 Presidential Voter Education Campaign During Iowa Straw Poll Week

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- ***Your Pocketbook*** and ***Your Retirement Listening Posts*** utilizing interactive and instant audience response technology with Republican pollster Leslie Sanchez, who's appeared on Fox News, CNN and Oprah Radio, on the ***AARP Speak Out Stage***

;

- Leadership recognitions on the ***AARP Speak Out Stage*** for Iowa's Republican elected officials, including Gov. Terry Branstad, Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds, and Congressmen Steve King and Tom Latham;

- An ***AARP/Mediacom Speak Out Corner*** for participants to weigh in on what should be the top priority for America's presidential candidates;

- Individual photographs with American historical figures and past Republican Presidents in front of backdrops featuring the beautiful Iowa State Capitol; and,

- Refreshing snacks, beverages, WiFi café and relaxation lounge areas.

In addition to the ***First in the Nation Speak Out Tent*** activities during the Straw Poll on Saturday, Aug. 13, AARP also is the Republican Party of Iowa's (RPI) sole sponsor of the post-debate Campaign Surrogate/Media Spin Rooms for RPI's Presidential Candidate Debate Series currently scheduled for Aug. 11 in Ames, Dec. 10 in Des Moines and Feb. 1 in Sioux City.

AARP's participation in the Iowa Straw Poll is part of the Association's 25+-year tradition of focusing candidate attention on the issues of concern to older Americans and their families, and helping voters know where the candidates stand on those issues. AARP is nonprofit and nonpartisan. The Association does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to either political campaigns or candidates. For more information on AARP visit [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org)

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