



Engaging Voters 50+

The evolution of AARP's election season social strategy

Jen Beam, AARP

About AARP

- Nonprofit
- **Nonpartisan!!**
- Never endorse, oppose or donate to candidates, parties or PACs
- Advocate on issues including Social Security, family caregiving
- 53 state offices including DC, VI, PR
- Social footprint includes flagship, states, advocacy

Election 2026

- Voters 50+ are the largest and most reliable voters in the country
- Made up 61% of the electorate in battleground districts in 2022
- Empower voters 50+ with trusted nonpartisan information
- Members of Congress we elect in 2026 will be making critical decisions that directly impact the future of Social Security

The Challenge: Reaching an audience that feels overlooked

#InMyShoes 

“In My Shoes” in 2026

- Updated, building on 2022 and 2024 successes
- Meets users’ expectations on more open-ended and participatory social channels
- Integrated with our broader advocacy storytelling

**Hey candidate, take a
walk in my shoes.**



Speaking directly to voters, centering the voter:

What do you wish the candidates knew about your life? What do the candidates vying for your vote need to know about your life?

Understand challenges:

Voters 50+ want politicians to understand their lives and to focus on the issues that matter to them.

Themes we're hearing

Voters 50+ worry about their day-to-day realities, including:

- Cost of living, affordability
- Worrying about their savings
- Concern for their kids and grandkids—and the future
- Making sure Social Security will be there when they need it



#InMyShoes in 2022



 Linda · NV

I wear my shoes until I wear a hole in the sole, because I can't afford to buy them more often than that. (But boy, is that bad for my feet and my back.) I utilize the local food bank.

#InMyShoes 

Diann
told us:

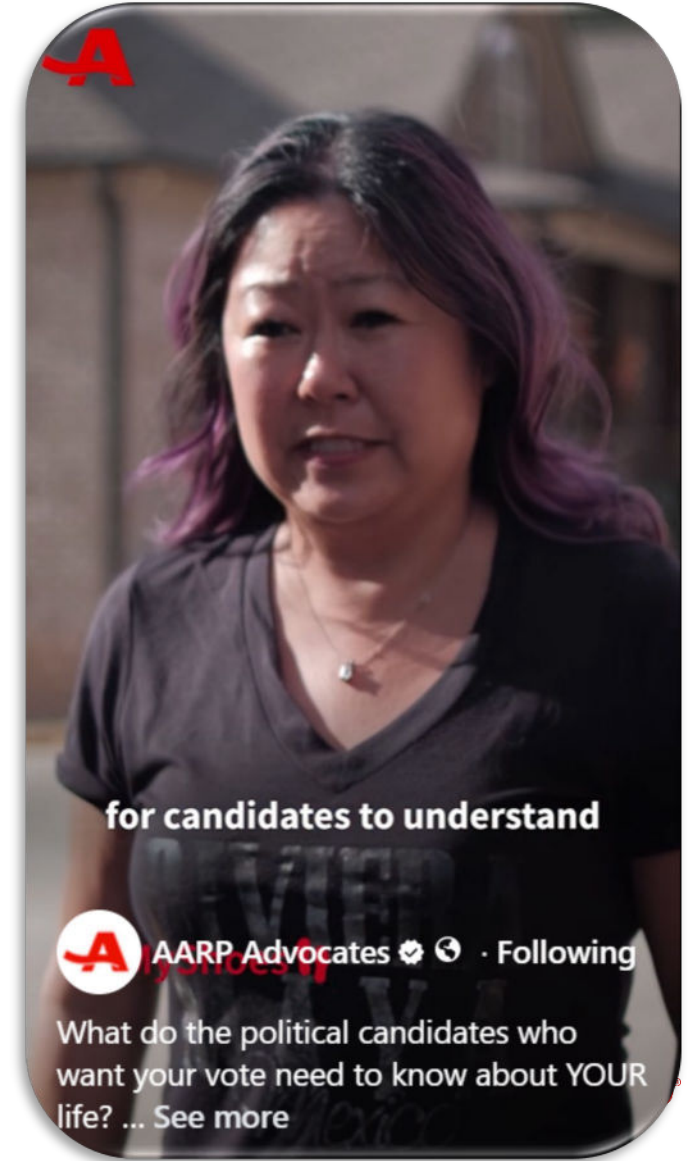
Worring about family
medical Expenses
Keeping my Retirement funds

#InMyShoes 

#InMyShoes in 2024



#InMyShoes in 2026



How In My Shoes has evolved

2022

Launch

We launch with a simple action page, a digital spot and an email campaign resulting in 38,000 responses.

2024

Refine

We updated and refined the content strategy with a social-first video focus. Starting earlier helped with planning and integration.

2026

Scale

Fully integrated social, digital, and storytelling

- Expanded content toolkit
- Larger creator-style content library
- Improved video format

Key Takeaways

- ❑ Don't get attached, but don't throw the baby out with the bathwater.
- ❑ Test and learn formats, tools & platforms, but keep what's working.
- ❑ Remember how social works, and adapt accordingly.
- ❑ Always take the time for a breath – and an after action report



Thank you!

Jen Beam, Senior Director, AARP
Social-Digital Storytelling

jbeam@aarp.org

@aarpadvocates