

Dr. Debra Whitman

Chief Public Policy Officer at AARP

Washington, DC, US

Dr. Debra Whitman is an authority on aging issues with extensive experience in policymaking, research and the political process.

Biography

As AARP's chief public policy officer, Debra Whitman, leads policy development, analysis and research, as well as global thought leadership supporting and advancing the interests of individuals age 50-plus and their families. She oversees AARP's Public Policy Institute, AARP Research, Office of Policy Development and Integration, Thought Leadership, and AARP International.

Dr. Whitman is an authority on aging issues with extensive experience in national policymaking, domestic and international research, and the political process. An economist, she is a strategic thinker whose career has been dedicated to solving problems affecting economic and health security, and other issues related to population aging.

As staff director for the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, she worked across the aisle to increase retirement security, lower the cost of health care, protect vulnerable seniors, safeguard consumers, make the pharmaceutical industry more transparent, and improve our nation's long term care system.

Before that, Dr. Whitman worked for the Congressional Research Service as a specialist in the economics of aging. She provided members of Congress and their staff with research and advice, and authored analytical reports on the economic impacts of current policies affecting older Americans, as well as the distributional and intergenerational effects of legislative proposals.

From 2001 to 2003, she served as a Brookings LEGIS Fellow to the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. Earlier in her career, she conducted research on savings and retirement for the Social Security Administration, helping to establish the Retirement Research Consortium and serving as the founding editor of the Perspectives section of the Social Security Bulletin.

Dr. Whitman has been quoted by or appeared in numerous media outlets including The New York Times, Bloomberg, USA Today, NBC Nightly News, CBS News, The Huffington Post, The Washington Post, and Politico, among others. She serves on several boards, including the National Advisory Council on Aging for the National Institutes of Health's National Institute on Aging, the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, the National Coalition on Health Care, and the Pension Rights Center.

Dr. Whitman holds master's and doctorate degrees in economics from Syracuse University and a bachelor's degree in economics, math and Italian from Gonzaga University.

Industry Expertise

Public Policy, Non-Profit/Charitable

Areas of Expertise

Public Policy, Active Ageing, Elder Abuse, Retirement, Human Rights, Frailty, Aging, Elder financial exploitation, Financial security, Financial Services, Age-friendly banking, Employment Policy, Family Caregiving, Global aging, Health care financing, Health Policy, Long-term care policy, Long-term services and supports, Medicaid, Medicare, Prescription drug pricing, Prevention, Policy Analysis, Retirement Security

Education

Syracuse University, Maxwell School
Ph.D. Economics

Syracuse University, Maxwell School
M.A. Economics

Gonzaga University
B.A. Economics

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