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AARP Launches First Smart Speaker App to Empower Older Americans as Advocates, Voters

“Raise Your Voice” Informs on Drug Costs, Medicare, Polling Places and More

WASHINGTON, DC—AARP today announced the launch of “Raise Your Voice,” the nation’s first comprehensive advocacy and voting app for smart speakers. The voice-enabled experience is designed to help AARP’s 38 million members and all Americans age 50-plus to use their smart speakers to engage on a range of advocacy issues – including Social Security, Medicare, prescription drugs, Medicaid and caregiving – as well as in nonpartisan voter education and support. The app works on Amazon Alexa and Google Home.

“This groundbreaking skill empowers voters at a time when people are looking for trustworthy, accessible sources of information,” said John Hishta, AARP Senior Vice President of Campaigns. “AARP is setting a new standard for effective, technology-enabled advocacy nationally and in voters’ home states. Making your voice heard is now as easy as turning to your smart speaker.”

There are more than 54 million smart speakers in the United States ([source](#)). Further, with a 48% annual growth rate, it is expected that by the end of 2018 more than 90 million Americans will use a smart speaker at least once a month ([source](#)). Americans 50 and over account for about a quarter of owners, according to Edison Research and NPR ([source](#)).

To invoke the app, the user simply says their smart speaker’s wake command, followed by “Open Raise Your Voice.” Beginning October 18, the user can direct “Raise Your Voice” to look up polling information and send it directly to the user’s cell phone. Similarly, the user can command the app to provide information on five AARP issue areas and receive detailed information via text. The development team is currently building out a contact-your-representative feature and additional issue areas.

“Traditional voter education is laudable and important work, but it’s a leap forward to develop technology that better supports voters as they seek out the location of their polling place, information on key issues, and the ability to contact their elected officials,” said Sami Hassanyeh, AARP Senior Vice President of Digital Strategy and Membership. “We pushed the boundaries of current technologies because we believe in the value of civic engagement and want to use the latest technology in service of it. A year ago we began offering a voice-enabled news briefing, so it was only natural to move from providing information to a deeper level of engagement.”

A demonstration of the app is available at www.aarp.org/raiseyourvoice. AARP also offers the AARP Now mobile app and a number of podcasts that are accessible through Amazon Alexa and Google Home.

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About AARP

AARP is the nation’s largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence and nearly 38 million members, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also produces the nation’s largest circulation publications: AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org or follow @AARP and @AARPadvocates on social media.

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