

Bio

Jilene Gunther, JD, MSW, is a national leader in financial exploitation prevention, bringing a rare combination of legal expertise, social work training, and policy innovation to her role as National Director of AARP's BankSafe Initiative—a cross-sector intervention platform credited with helping financial institutions prevent an estimated \$400 million in financial exploitation.

Gunther began her career in a prosecutor's office advocating for crime victims' rights and quickly rose through leadership roles at the state level, where she played a key role in legal compliance related to elder financial exploitation investigations and helped shape statewide legal strategies for consumer protection. At the national level, she has redefined how the financial industry prevents fraud, equipping banks, credit unions, and investment firms with tools to recognize and stop exploitation before the money leaves the account.

Her work is widely recognized for its measurable impact and systemic reach. A legal needs study she authored has been replicated in over 40 states, and her consumer protection and elder law research has informed U.S. Senate hearings and been cited in CFPB advisories, GAO reports, the NY Times and FTC findings.

Gunther's career has focused on building scalable, cross-sector solutions that bridge gaps between financial institutions, legal systems, and aging services. Her leadership has earned her over 15 national and state-level honors, including the Association of Women Technology Champions Social Impact Award and the Governor's Woman of the Year Award.

She holds a Juris Doctor from the University of Utah and a Master of Social Work from Washington University in St. Louis.

Areas of Expertise

BankSafe; financial exploitation; fraud; consumer law; consumer protection; banking; elder law; policy analysis; aging

Recent Publications

[*How Banks and Credit Unions Can Better Serve and Protect People 50-Plus*](#)

[*Fighting Financial Exploitation on Person-to-Person Payment Platforms: What Consumers Want*](#)

[*The Scope of Elder Financial Exploitation: What It Costs Victims*](#)

[*Responding to the Pandemic-Era Uptick in Financial Exploitation*](#)

[*AARP BankSafe: The Impact of Training Financial Professionals to Prevent Financial Exploitation*](#)

[*The Thief Who Knows You: The Cost of Elder Exploitation Examined*](#)

[*The Business Case: Why Financial Institutions Should Fight Exploitation and Protect Savings*](#)