Make Your Voice Heard

You may not need Medicare and Social Security now, but chances are very high you will in the future. That’s why AARP is taking the debate about the future of Medicare and Social Security out from behind closed doors in Washington—so you can have a voice. The next President and Congress will determine the future of Medicare and Social Security, and we need to make them understand:

• You and your fellow Americans earned your coverage and benefits and the protections and guarantees they provide.

• You have a right to speak up about how to protect and strengthen them for current and future generations.

You’ve earned a say in the future of Medicare and Social Security. Make your voice heard at:

earnedasay.org

Smartphone users can access and complete the questionnaire by downloading a free app for a QR code scanner and scanning the QR image above with your phone.
Today, Medicare and Social Security are the foundation of retirement security for millions of Americans. Workers pay into Medicare and Social Security over their working lives and they count on them to help protect their financial and health security in their later years. These health and retirement benefits become even more important as employer-based retirement plans and retiree health benefits decline, home values shrink, retirement savings decline, and health care costs rise.

But Medicare and Social Security face a number of challenges in the coming years, including changing demographics and rising health costs. We need to make sure that those working toward retirement will be able to count on receiving the Medicare and Social Security benefits they’ve earned when they are eligible to receive them.

- The Medicare trustees report that within 12 years, there will be a shortfall in the Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance) Trust Fund needed to pay the full amount of hospital costs. Adequate funding is needed to ensure Medicare can continue to pay for seniors’ hospital care and to prevent increases in seniors’ out-of-pocket costs.

- Social Security can pay full benefits for nearly 25 years, provided the U.S. Treasury pays back the money it’s borrowed from Social Security. After that, it will still be able to pay about 75 percent of promised benefits for the next 75 years and beyond, even if no changes are made. But that’s not good enough!

**Financial snapshot of today’s seniors**

- About half of seniors have an income that is under $20,000 a year.

- Out-of-pocket health care costs for Medicare beneficiaries soak up about $4,600 a year, on average.

- More than half of all older Americans rely on Social Security for 50 percent or more of their family income. For a quarter of seniors, Social Security provides 90 percent or more of family income.

**Future Retirees**

- Half of the workforce has no employer-provided retirement plan.

- Almost one-third of working households age 21 to 64 has no individual savings set aside specifically for retirement.

- Even those households age 50 to 59 with retirement savings do not have enough; one in four have less than $27,000 and half have less than $80,000.

These financial facts highlight the protective nature of key features of Medicare and Social Security.

**Social Security**

- Social Security provides a foundation of income security to retirees and their families, workers who have become disabled and their families, and the spouses and dependents of workers who have died.

- When an economic storm hits, it provides sturdy protection—benefits don’t tumble when the stock market drops.

- Social Security, unlike most private pension plans, protects against inflation through cost-of-living adjustments.

- Social Security provides a guaranteed benefit over a lifetime—no one can outlive their benefit.

**Medicare**

- Medicare provides guaranteed health coverage when Americans who qualify turn 65 years old. By law, it is required to provide a core set of benefits that helps pay for hospital and doctors bills.

- Medicare can’t deny coverage because of age or pre-existing conditions.

- You can’t lose Medicare if you accumulate a lot of health care bills.

- Medicare Part D helps pay prescription drug bills for those who choose to enroll.

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