April 21, 2020

The Honorable Steven T. Mnuchin
Secretary of the Treasury
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC, 20220

Dear Secretary Mnuchin:

On behalf of our 38 million members and all older Americans nationwide, AARP thanks you for your ongoing efforts to ensure tens of millions of Americans, including Social Security, Veterans Affairs, and Supplemental Security Income recipients, receive their economic impact payments as quickly as possible. These payments are lifelines to many individuals and families hit hard by the economic effects of the coronavirus, and we urge you to protect these funds from garnishment.

As the Treasury Department disburses these emergency payments, AARP is concerned that creditors and debt collectors may attempt to garnish all or part of these funds and prevent many Americans from purchasing the basic necessities they need. We are already seeing troubling reports in the news media highlighting this unfortunate reality.

In response, AARP notes separate letters from 25 State Attorneys General and 5 major banking organizations urging you and Congress to take actions to ensure stimulus payments are exempt from garnishment from creditors and debt collectors. AARP shares these concerns and respectfully urges you to use your authority under the CARES Act to that end. With 22 million Americans now out of work because of the coronavirus, we must ensure that the emergency payments provided under the CARES Act are used to help Americans buy the food, medicine, housing and basic essentials they need to survive.

Once again, AARP thanks you for your leadership in helping to ensure payments to most Americans in these difficult times. We urge you to help ensure these payments will reach all
individuals who need them. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or have your staff contact Tom Nicholls of our Government Affairs team at tnicholls@aarp.org or 202-434-3765.

Sincerely,

Bill Sweeney
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs