October 6, 2021

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Senate Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC  20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC  20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1236 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC  20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2468 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC  20515

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of our 38 million members and all older Americans nationwide, AARP writes to urge that you take the necessary steps to avoid default on our national debt in order to protect Social Security and Medicare beneficiaries as well the economic health of the nation.

Older Americans care deeply about our country and feel a sense of stewardship and responsibility to make sure that their children and grandchildren enjoy the same opportunities and benefits our great nation has provided to them. At the same time, millions of older Americans rely every day on their Social Security and Medicare benefits and deserve reassurance that the benefits they have worked over a lifetime to earn are secure. Therefore, it is critical that the United States does not default on its debt while protecting the Social Security and Medicare benefits of current retirees.

As you know, the United States government has never defaulted on its debt, and U.S. Treasury bonds are widely considered one of the safest – if not the safest – investments in the world. Honoring the full faith and credit of the United States is a core value of our country and fundamental to the economic security of all Americans, not just older Americans. The impact of defaulting on any U.S. debt obligation would be felt by all Americans, not just those on Social Security and Medicare. Consequently, we strongly urge that the debt limit of the United States
government not be breached and that the full faith and credit of the United States continue to apply to all debt obligations held by the government.

While we know older Americans are deeply concerned about the nation’s fiscal health, we also know that they want to make sure the promises made to them regarding Medicare and Social Security are honored. If no agreement is reached soon, they may not receive their Social Security checks and may lose access to their health care. AARP urges you to reach a quick resolution to the debt ceiling issue without putting at risk the Social Security and Medicare benefits that older Americans have earned and need. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, or have your staff call Bill Sweeney, our Senior Vice President of Government Affairs, at 202-434-3750.

Sincerely,

Jo Ann C. Jenkins
Chief Executive Officer