Why Social Security and Medicare Are Vital to Older Americans in Arizona

Social Security and Medicare provide income and health security to older Americans aged 65 and older. Growing debt burdens, dwindling pensions, and increasing health care costs make these programs more important than ever. Here’s what they do for Arizona.

Social Security in Arizona

Older Arizonans count on Social Security benefits earned through a lifetime of work
- A total of 85 percent, or 820,651, of older Arizona residents received Social Security in 2012. The average annual benefit was $15,300.
- Social Security accounted for 49 percent of the typical older Arizonan’s family income.
- Low- and middle-income older adults in Arizona are even more reliant on Social Security’s earned benefit, typically receiving 71 percent of their family income from Social Security.

Social Security keeps middle-income older Arizonans from falling into poverty
- Census data show about 9 percent, or 72,826, of older Arizonans living in poverty.
- Without Social Security income, an additional 33 percent of older Arizonans, or 262,567 people, would fall into poverty.

Social Security plays an important role in Arizona’s economy
- Social Security provided $16.1 billion in benefits to all Arizonans and $12.3 billion in benefits to Arizonans aged 65 and older in 2012.

Medicare in Arizona

Medicare provides guaranteed health coverage, but out-of-pocket costs are high
- On average, Arizona’s Medicare beneficiaries spent an estimated $4,323 on out-of-pocket health care costs in 2012.
- In 2012, older Arizona adults enrolled in Medicare spent, on average, an estimated 14 percent of their income on out-of-pocket health care costs.

Medicare provides peace of mind for older Arizonans
- Nearly 97 percent of older Arizonans were enrolled in Medicare in 2011.

Medicare plays an important role in Arizona’s economy
- The Medicare program spent an estimated $7.6 billion on health care services for 857,719 older Arizonans in 2012.