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

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 Connecticut.

Social Security in Connecticut

Older Connecticut residents count on Social Security benefits earned through a lifetime of work
- A total of 91 percent, or 484,396, of older Connecticut residents received Social Security in 2012. The average annual benefit was $16,500.
- Social Security accounted for 44 percent of the typical older Connecticut resident’s family income.
- Low- and middle-income older adults in Connecticut are even more reliant on Social Security’s earned benefit, typically receiving 70 percent of their family income from Social Security.

Social Security keeps middle-income older Connecticut residents from falling into poverty
- Census data show about 6 percent, or 29,708, of older Connecticut residents living in poverty.
- Without Social Security income, an additional 31 percent of older Connecticut residents, or 149,014 people, would fall into poverty.

Social Security plays an important role in Connecticut’s economy
- Social Security provided $9.7 billion in benefits to all Connecticut residents and $7.8 billion in benefits to Connecticut residents aged 65 and older in 2012.

Medicare in Connecticut

Medicare provides guaranteed health coverage, but out-of-pocket costs are high
- In 2012, older Connecticut adults enrolled in Medicare spent, on average, an estimated 12 percent of their income on out-of-pocket health care costs.

Medicare provides peace of mind for older Connecticut residents
- Nearly 96 percent of older Connecticut residents were enrolled in Medicare in 2011.

Medicare plays an important role in Connecticut’s economy
- The Medicare program spent an estimated $5.5 billion on health care services for 513,509 older Connecticut residents in 2012.