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

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 Illinois.

Social Security in Illinois

Older Illinoisans count on Social Security benefits earned through a lifetime of work

- A total of 89 percent, or 1,513,697, of older Illinois residents received Social Security in 2012. The average annual benefit was $15,400.
- Social Security accounted for 49 percent of the typical older Illinoisan’s family income.
- Low- and middle-income older adults in Illinois are even more reliant on Social Security’s earned benefit, typically receiving 77 percent of their family income from Social Security.

Social Security keeps middle-income older Illinoisans from falling into poverty

- Census data show about 8 percent, or 119,335, of older Illinoisans living in poverty.
- Without Social Security income, an additional 37 percent of older Illinoisans, or 579,361 people, would fall into poverty.

Social Security plays an important role in Illinois’s economy

- Social Security provided $29.6 billion in benefits to all Illinoisans and $22.9 billion in benefits to Illinoisans aged 65 and older in 2012.

Medicare in Illinois

Medicare provides guaranteed health coverage, but out-of-pocket costs are high

- In 2012, older Illinois 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 Illinoisans

- Nearly 96 percent of older Illinoisans were enrolled in Medicare in 2011.

Medicare plays an important role in Illinois’s economy

- The Medicare program spent an estimated $16.5 billion on health care services for 1,642,164 older Illinoisans in 2012.