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

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 Maryland.

Social Security in Maryland

Older Marylanders count on Social Security benefits earned through a lifetime of work
- A total of 85 percent, or 649,913, of older Maryland residents received Social Security in 2012. The average annual benefit was $15,500.
- Social Security accounted for 35 percent of the typical older Marylander’s family income.
- Low- and middle-income older adults in Maryland are even more reliant on Social Security’s earned benefit, typically receiving 64 percent of their family income from Social Security.

Social Security keeps middle-income older Marylanders from falling into poverty
- Census data show about 8 percent, or 56,888, of older Marylanders living in poverty.
- Without Social Security income, an additional 27 percent of older Marylanders, or 190,954 people, would fall into poverty.

Social Security plays an important role in Maryland’s economy
- Social Security provided $12.8 billion in benefits to all Marylanders and $9.9 billion in benefits to Marylanders aged 65 and older in 2012.

Medicare in Maryland

Medicare provides guaranteed health coverage, but out-of-pocket costs are high
- On average, Maryland’s Medicare beneficiaries spent an estimated $5,390 on out-of-pocket health care costs in 2012.
- In 2012, older Maryland adults enrolled in Medicare spent, on average, an estimated 13 percent of their income on out-of-pocket health care costs.

Medicare provides peace of mind for older Marylanders
- Nearly 95 percent of older Marylanders were enrolled in Medicare in 2011.

Medicare plays an important role in Maryland’s economy
- The Medicare program spent an estimated $8 billion on health care services for 721,713 older Marylanders in 2012.