Why Social Security and Medicare Are Vital to Older Americans in New Mexico

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 New Mexico.

Social Security in New Mexico

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

- A total of 88 percent, or 258,328, of older New Mexico residents received Social Security in 2012. The average annual benefit was $13,900.
- Social Security accounted for 44 percent of the typical older New Mexican’s family income.
- Low- and middle-income older adults in New Mexico are even more reliant on Social Security’s earned benefit, typically receiving 73 percent of their family income from Social Security.

Social Security keeps middle-income older New Mexicans from falling into poverty

- Census data show about 10 percent, or 29,621, of older New Mexicans living in poverty.
- Without Social Security income, an additional 32 percent of older New Mexicans, or 90,785 people, would fall into poverty.

Social Security plays an important role in New Mexico’s economy

- Social Security provided $4.9 billion in benefits to all New Mexicans and $3.5 billion in benefits to New Mexicans aged 65 and older in 2012.

Medicare in New Mexico

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

- On average, New Mexico’s Medicare beneficiaries spent an estimated $3,605 on out-of-pocket health care costs in 2012.
- In 2012, older New Mexico 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 New Mexicans

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

Medicare plays an important role in New Mexico’s economy

- The Medicare program spent an estimated $2 billion on health care services for 274,665 older New Mexicans in 2012.