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

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 Nevada.

Social Security in Nevada

Older Nevada residents count on Social Security benefits earned through a lifetime of work
- A total of 88 percent, or 316,633, of older Nevada residents received Social Security in 2012. The average annual benefit was $15,000.
- Social Security accounted for 44 percent of the typical older Nevada resident’s family income.
- Low- and middle-income older adults in Nevada are even more reliant on Social Security’s earned benefit, typically receiving 74 percent of their family income from Social Security.

Social Security keeps middle-income older Nevada residents from falling into poverty
- Census data show about 9 percent, or 30,445, of older Nevada residents living in poverty.
- Without Social Security income, an additional 33 percent of older Nevada residents, or 105,667 people, would fall into poverty.

Social Security plays an important role in Nevada’s economy
- Social Security provided $6.2 billion in benefits to all Nevada residents and $4.7 billion in benefits to Nevada residents aged 65 and older in 2012.

Medicare in Nevada

Medicare provides guaranteed health coverage, but out-of-pocket costs are high
- On average, Nevada’s Medicare beneficiaries spent an estimated $4,854 on out-of-pocket health care costs in 2012.
- In 2012, older Nevada adults enrolled in Medicare spent, on average, an estimated 16 percent of their income on out-of-pocket health care costs.

Medicare provides peace of mind for older Nevada residents
- Nearly 94 percent of older Nevada residents were enrolled in Medicare in 2011.

Medicare plays an important role in Nevada’s economy
- The Medicare program spent an estimated $3.4 billion on health care services for 335,915 older Nevada residents in 2012.