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

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 Oregon.

Social Security in Oregon

Older Oregonians count on Social Security benefits earned through a lifetime of work
- A total of 94 percent, or 544,547, of older Oregon residents received Social Security in 2012. The average annual benefit was $15,100.
- Social Security accounted for 48 percent of the typical older Oregonian’s family income.
- Low- and middle-income older adults in Oregon are even more reliant on Social Security’s earned benefit, typically receiving 71 percent of their family income from Social Security.

Social Security keeps middle-income older Oregonians from falling into poverty
- Census data show about 7 percent, or 38,053, of older Oregonians living in poverty.
- Without Social Security income, an additional 34 percent of older Oregonians, or 183,416 people, would fall into poverty.

Social Security plays an important role in Oregon’s economy
- Social Security provided $10.5 billion in benefits to all Oregonians and $8.1 billion in benefits to Oregonians aged 65 and older in 2012.

Medicare in Oregon

Medicare provides guaranteed health coverage, but out-of-pocket costs are high
- On average, Oregon’s Medicare beneficiaries spent an estimated $3,597 on out-of-pocket health care costs in 2012.
- In 2012, older Oregon adults enrolled in Medicare spent, on average, an estimated 11 percent of their income on out-of-pocket health care costs.

Medicare provides peace of mind for older Oregonians
- Nearly 98 percent of older Oregonians were enrolled in Medicare in 2011.

Medicare plays an important role in Oregon’s economy
- The Medicare program spent an estimated $4.2 billion on health care services for 570,101 older Oregonians in 2012.