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African-American Survey Results

(Direct all inquiries about this survey to AARP Media Relations at 202-434-2560)

This national survey of African-American adults at least 18 years old finds that when it comes to Medicare and Social Security, African-Americans believe Washington is trying to make too many decisions behind closed doors and Washington needs to spend more time listening to ordinary citizens like them. African-Americans feel that both Medicare and Social Security are important to people's health and financial security in retirement, however confidence in the programs being there throughout retirement is not very strong. The survey was conducted by Woelfel Research, Inc., an independent research firm, among 506 African-Americans age 18+ from February 13 – March 4, 2012. The survey has a margin of sampling error of +/- 4.4%.

Medicare

- **African-American adults (100%) believe Medicare is *important* to people's health in retirement, including over nine in ten who believe it is *very important* (93%).** This sentiment holds true across political ideology (100% of Liberals, 99% of Moderates, and 99% of Conservatives) and age groups (99% of adults under age 50, 99% of 50-64 year-olds, and 99% of adults age 65+) with nearly all believing the program is *important* to people's health in retirement.
- **Nearly two-thirds (66%) of African-American adults are *confident* that Medicare will be there for them throughout their retirement. However, less than a quarter (24%) are *very confident* about this.** Younger adults are less confident: 62% of adults age 18-49, 71% of 50-64 year-olds, and 74% adults age 65+ express confidence that Medicare will be there for them.

Social Security

- **Over nine in ten African-American adults (97%) believe Social Security is *important* to people's financial security in retirement, including over nine in ten who believe it is *very important* (91%).** This sentiment holds true across political ideology (100% of Liberals, 96% of Moderates, and 98% of Conservatives) and age groups (97% of adults under age 50, 99% of 50-64 year-olds, and 98% of adults age 65+) with nearly all believing the program is *important* to people's financial security in retirement.
- **Over half (58%) of African-American adults are *confident* that Social Security will be there for them throughout their retirement. However, less than a quarter (21%) are *very confident* about this.** Younger adults are less confident: 55% of adults age 18-49, 65% of 50-64 year-olds, and 70% adults age 65+ express confidence that Social Security will be there for them.

Views about Washington

- **Seven in ten African-American adults (70%) agree Washington is trying to make too many decisions behind closed doors when it comes to Medicare and Social Security.** Agreement is seen across political ideology (69% of Liberals, 71% of Moderates, and 69% of Conservatives) and age groups (72% of adults under age 50, 71% of adults age 50-64, and 59% of adults age 65+).
- **Over nine in ten African-American adults (95%) agree Washington needs to spend more time listening to ordinary citizens like them when it comes to decisions about Social Security and Medicare, including over eight in ten (81%) who *strongly agree*.** Agreement is seen across political ideology (94% of Liberals, 95% of Moderates, and 96% of Conservatives) and age groups (96% of adults under age 50, 95% of adults age 50-64, and 93% of adults age 65+).

METHODOLOGY

The national survey of African-American adults was conducted by Woelfel Research, Inc., an independent research firm, among 506 adults age 18+ from February 13 - March 4, 2012. A combination of landline and cellular random digit dial (RDD) samples were used to represent all African-American adults nationwide who have access to either a landline or cellular telephone. A three-stage weighting procedure was used to weight this dual-frame sample. The first stage weight adjusts for the probability of selection within a household and for phone use (overlapping landline and cellular sample frames). The second stage weight combines the cell phone and landline usage to be consistent with national African-American statistics. The third stage weight adjusts the age and gender to be consistent with the distribution nationwide among African-Americans. The survey has a margin of sampling error of +/- 4.4%.

DATA TABLES

Notes:

Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding

Less than 0.5% shown as “-“

N's shown are unweighted

1. How important would you say Social Security is to people's financial security in retirement? Would you say it is [READ LIST]

	ALL	AGE			POLITICAL IDEOLOGY		
	Total N=506	18-49 N=224	50-64 N=167	65+ N=115	Lib N=109	Mod N=182	Cons N=144
Very important	91%	90%	95%	94%	94%	89%	92%
Somewhat important	6	7	4	4	6	7	6
Not too important	1	1	1	-	-	2	-
Not at all important	1	1	-	2	-	1	2
Don't know [DON'T READ]	1	1	1	-	-	2	-
Refused [DON'T READ]	-	-	-	1	-	-	-

2. How confident are you that Social Security will be there for you throughout your retirement? Would you say you are [READ LIST]

	ALL	AGE			POLITICAL IDEOLOGY		
	Total N=506	18-49 N=224	50-64 N=167	65+ N=115	Lib N=109	Mod N=182	Cons N=144
Very confident	21%	16%	23%	49%	24%	16%	29%
Somewhat confident	37	39	42	21	34	44	30
Not too confident	22	23	23	13	23	24	20
Not at all confident	16	20	10	10	19	13	19
Don't know [DON'T READ]	3	2	3	7	2	3	2
Refused [DON'T READ]	-	-	-	1	-	-	-

3. How important would you say Medicare is to people's health in retirement? Would you say it is [READ LIST]

	ALL	AGE			POLITICAL IDEOLOGY		
	Total N=506	18-49 N=224	50-64 N=167	65+ N=115	Lib N=109	Mod N=182	Cons N=144
Very important	93%	92%	94%	94%	96%	94%	89%
Somewhat important	7	7	5	5	4	5	10
Not too important	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Not at all important	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Don't know [DON'T READ]	-	1	-	-	-	1	-
Refused [DON'T READ]	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

4. How confident are you that Medicare will be there for you throughout your retirement? Would you say you are [READ LIST]

	ALL	AGE			POLITICAL IDEOLOGY		
	Total N=506	18-49 N=224	50-64 N=167	65+ N=115	Lib N=109	Mod N=182	Cons N=144
Very confident	24%	20%	20%	49%	22%	23%	27%
Somewhat confident	42	42	51	25	45	43	39
Not too confident	19	21	19	10	15	24	18
Not at all confident	14	16	9	11	16	9	16
Don't know [DON'T READ]	2	1	2	5	1	2	1
Refused [DON'T READ]	-	-	-	1	-	-	-

5. Please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: When it comes to Medicare and Social Security, Washington is trying to make too many decisions behind closed doors.

	ALL	AGE			POLITICAL IDEOLOGY		
	Total N=506	18-49 N=224	50-64 N=167	65+ N=115	Lib N=109	Mod N=182	Cons N=144
Strongly agree	41%	43%	39%	37%	44%	38%	40%
Somewhat agree	29	29	32	22	25	33	29
Somewhat disagree	13	14	13	9	6	18	15
Strongly disagree	12	11	11	19	21	7	13
Don't know [DON'T READ]	4	3	5	12	4	4	3
Refused [DON'T READ]	1	1	1	2	-	-	-

6. Please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: When it comes to decisions about Social Security and Medicare, Washington needs to spend more time listening to ordinary citizens like me.

	ALL	AGE			POLITICAL IDEOLOGY		
	Total N=506	18-49 N=224	50-64 N=167	65+ N=115	Lib N=109	Mod N=182	Cons N=144
Strongly agree	81%	80%	84%	83%	81%	79%	83%
Somewhat agree	14	16	11	10	13	16	13
Somewhat disagree	2	2	2	4	3	3	3
Strongly disagree	2	2	3	-	3	2	1
Don't know [DON'T READ]	1	1	1	4	1	2	-
Refused [DON'T READ]	-	-	1	-	-	-	-