



**Insider's Report: The GOP Wants to Slash Social Security**

On Tuesday, older Americans won a significant victory for their earned benefits! Senator Raphael Warnock's win over Herschel Walker in the Georgia runoff means seniors will have another strong advocate for Social Security and Medicare seated in the Senate prepared to fight for their retirement security.

Yet, despite strengthening our firewall in the Senate against benefit cuts, a significant battle is now looming over the future of Social Security and Medicare. Already, some lawmakers are lining up behind [dramatic proposals](#) that would slash benefits, raise the retirement age, hike the eligibility age for Medicare and even means test Social Security benefits which would change the fundamental nature of this program.

In fact, Senator John Thune (South Dakota), a high-ranking Senate Republican, is now joining growing calls among the GOP to use the looming debt ceiling debate as an "opportunity" to slash funding for Social Security and Medicare. Of course, the presumed next Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy was already vying to use the debt ceiling as leverage to force through devastating cuts to seniors' earned benefits.

As a reminder, if Congress fails to increase or suspend the debt limit (essentially if they refuse to uphold our government's financial obligations) — and a default occurs — it's likely that payment of your Social Security benefits would be disrupted. And that would be disastrous for millions of older Americans who live benefit check to benefit check just to pay the bill!

That's why we need you and our one million+ members and supporters — who carry enormous clout in Washington, DC — to be fully engaged in this fight to protect Social Security and Medicare. We must be prepared to challenge any bill or amendment that gets introduced in the new Congress that would reduce the benefits you earned in order to pay for other fiscal priorities, like deficit reduction and massive tax cuts for the wealthy and huge corporations.

[JOIN](#) Become a member now to help us keep the pressures on Congress. Your continued support is essential to the National Committee's mission.

**Good Bills**

The National Committee endorses the ["Safe Guarding American Families and Extending Social Security Act" \(SAFE Social Security Act\)](#), S. 3075, which would: 1) Increase benefits across the board by an average monthly benefit of \$115 and provide a new minimum benefit; 2) Improve the Social Security Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA); 3) Provide caregiver credits; 4) Increase benefits by 5% for older seniors receiving benefits for 20 years; and 5) Eliminate the current wait period for disability insurance and surviving spouse benefits. This bill would also strengthen Social Security's finances by requiring the wealthy to pay their fair share into the program.

**Ask Web**

Our resident Social Security expert, Webster Phillips — a Senior Policy Analyst for the National Committee and a 33-year veteran of the Social Security Administration — is here to answer your questions about Social Security.

You can either search our [archives](#) for valuable advice on a broad range of concerns or submit your question [here](#).


**This week's question is:** Please advise if, after the death of a husband, the surviving wife is entitled to receive her deceased husband's full benefit? This was a recent discussion we had today with others.

[Click here to read the answer.](#)

**Take Our Poll**

Do you believe the newly elected House majority will make it a top priority to target Social Security and Medicare with cuts and "reform" early on in the new Congress?

[Take our poll now!](#)




**Ask Web**

Whether you're currently retired or approaching retirement, we can help answer your questions and provide valuable advice on Social Security.



**Join Now**

Your support sustains our campaigns in Washington to protect and strengthen Social Security and Medicare.



**Aging, Health and Care**

Find useful resources on everything from caregiving and hearing care to long-term care and transportation.

**Social Security Setbacks: How Lack of Funding Could Severely Impede Services**

As noted by the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, a Washington, D.C.-based advocacy group, increased funding should help the SSA "cope with its long-standing customer service backlog, which was greatly exacerbated by the pandemic." (November 29, 2022, Yahoo! Finance, Venice Carriage)

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**People Had Trouble Accessing Social Security During The Pandemic and GAO Wants Them to Develop a Plan to Do Better**

The Social Security Administration struggled with higher demand for its services during the pandemic, and according to a new Government Accountability Office report, the agency did not do enough to reach vulnerable populations or make its services more accessible. (November 29, 2022, Government Executive, Michael Gernaro)

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**Bloomberg Analysis Frames Social Security and Medicare as Debt Reduction Issues. That's Misleading.**

Fiscal conservatives continue to promote the narrative that Social Security and Medicare must be "reformed" to reduce the federal debt, which basically means cutting seniors' earned benefits. The latest foray in this propaganda campaign came in the form of an 'analysis' piece from Bloomberg's Karl W. Smith, published last week in the Washington Post. (November 30, 2022, www.nccspn.org, [Entitled to Know blog](#))

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**If you're 'unretiring,' review your Social Security benefits. There's a 'surprise that people want to avoid'**

Social Security beneficiaries who go back to work may stand to earn more in the short term and also may eventually increase their monthly benefit checks. But they could also be subject to short-term benefit changes. (November 29, 2022, CNBC, Lore Kania)

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**Medicare Advantage or taking advantage? Deadline for enrollment nears. [column]**

I am sure many of you, like me, are tired of all the television ads, junk mail, robo-calls and emails extolling the virtues of Medicare Advantage plans, the dental care and vision benefits, SilverSneakers programs, etc., all with \$0 or low monthly premiums. (November 27, 2022, Lancaster Online, Dr. Edward T. Chory)

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**Audits reveal millions in Medicare Advantage overcharges**

The government's audits uncovered about \$12 million in net overpayments for the care of 18,000 patients sampled, though the actual losses to taxpayers are likely much higher. Medicare Advantage, a fast-growing alternative to original Medicare, is not primarily by major insurance companies. (November 28, 2022, The Philadelphia Inquirer, Fred Schulte, Hedy Hacker and Kaiser Health News)

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