



## ***Insider's Report: Congress Set to Vote on Averting Government Default***



Lawmakers are expected to soon vote on a [debt ceiling](#) deal struck between Speaker McCarthy and President Joe Biden. The way things stand now, the agreement will freeze current spending levels for the next two years (with a 1% increase for each year), which takes us through the next presidential election. As you know, the National Committee has been calling on Congress to pass a clean debt ceiling bill without the kind of draconian cuts to seniors' programs demanded by hardliners in the GOP.

As a reminder, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen's latest estimate is that we'll now reach our debt limit as early as June 5 — at which time our government would be unable to pay all of its bills for the first time *ever*. **As we've warned before, this could result in delays to your Social Security and Medicare payments.**

If this deal falls through or is delayed and a government default happens on June 5 and lasts through June 14, it could impact Social Security beneficiaries whose birthdate is between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. According to Maria Freese, the National Committee's Senior Legislative Representative, *"Even if all we're talking about is a delay, you could end up with significant hardship on a large number of people."*

Fortunately, the deal as it stands avoids the kind of callous spending cuts GOP hardliners were demanding, which would have gutted services and programs that seniors rely on in

exchange for raising the debt ceiling. For example, those cuts would have devastated the Social Security Administration (SSA) which for years has lacked the essential funds it needs to adequately serve millions of older Americans. While the reduction in funding for SSA's operating budget could have been far worse, the agency will not get the money they need to improve customer service.

GOP hardliners, many of whom say they will not vote for this deal, also demanded slashing seniors' programs under the Older Americans Act, including home delivered meals, in-home services, transportation, legal services, elder abuse prevention and caregiver support. In addition, they sought cuts to the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program that helps low-income seniors keep their homes heated in the winter and cool in the summer.

Lawmakers still need to vote on this deal and it's unclear whether they can pass it in time to avoid a government default. And as you know, *anything can happen in Washington, DC*, so we are closely monitoring this evolving situation.

Please help the National Committee continue to put pressure on members of Congress by [signing our EMERGENCY PETITION TO CONGRESS today to raise the debt ceiling without making draconian cuts to the programs and services that seniors rely on.](#)

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Make a donation now to help us keep the pressure on Congress. Your continued support is essential to the National Committee's mission.



## Good Bills

Last week U.S. Representative John Larson (CT-01) announced he will reintroduce his landmark [“Social Security 2100: A Sacred Trust Act”](#) in the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress (2023-2024). As you know, the National Committee strongly endorses this important bill which gives seniors an across-the-board benefit increase, improves survivor's benefits, adopts a more accurate and fairer Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) formula, repeals the unfair GPO and WEP, and requires the wealthy to pay their fair share into Social Security to extend the program's solvency.



## Ask Us!

Whether you're retired or approaching retirement, our team of experts in the field of Social Security policy is available to answer your questions about benefits.

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**This week's question is:** Would you be kind enough to tell me the maximum monthly Social Security benefit one can receive?

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



### Ask Us

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



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## Social Security benefits for oldest and poorest could be first at risk in debt default, expert says

The National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare has warned that Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and other payments "may not be made on time and in full" without a debt limit increase. (May 24, 2023, CNBC, Lorie Konish)

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## 'It's not their money': Older Americans worried debt default means no Social Security

"I'm pretty confident that payments would be fulfilled," said NCPSSM President Max Richtman. "That's not much comfort to people who won't be able to pay for their groceries,

utilities or rent while they're waiting to receive a back payment." (May 23, 2023, ABC News, Peter Charalambous)

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## House Democrats, looking to renew plan to expand Social Security, say debt ceiling fight ‘hurts seniors the most’

"At a time when the House Majority has taken the country to the brink of default... Congressman Larson offers a common sense, fair and forward-looking plan to ensure that the 88 year-strong promise of Social Security remains fulfilled," Max Richtman, president and CEO of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, said in a statement. (May 23, 2023, CNBC, Lorie Konish)

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## Medicare Advantage supplemental health plans draw scrutiny

Medicare Advantage plans lure customers with (misleading) television ads promising plans with dental, vision and hearing benefits that traditional Medicare doesn't offer. (May 22, 2023, Roll Call, Jessie Hellmann)

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## New Bill Would Exclude Social Security from Income Tax

Dan Adcock, director of government relations and policy at NCPSSM, said that "while we support providing seniors relief on their obligation to pay taxes on their Social Security benefits, we don't support using general revenue to replace Social Security funds forgone as a result of offering such relief." (May 22, 2023, Think Advisor, Melanie Waddell)

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