

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 23, 2012

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## AARP Statement on 2012 Social Security and Medicare Trustees' Reports

Reports underscore the need for a national conversation on strengthening retirement security for Americans.

WASHINGTON – AARP Executive Vice President Nancy LeaMond offered the following statement in reaction to the Social Security and Medicare Trustees' reports released today:

"For the millions of Americans who have paid into Social Security and Medicare and are counting on their benefits, today's reports offer a clear assessment of the true status and long-term challenges facing these critical programs. The reports underscore the need for an open, national conversation focused on strengthening retirement security for today's seniors and future generations.

"The Social Security Trustees reaffirm that the program can pay full benefits until 2033, and roughly three-quarters of promised benefits beyond that time. It is important to note that the report also confirms that Social Security's Trust Funds continue to grow and the payroll tax holiday has had no impact on the program's solvency, as the Treasury has repaid all borrowed funds.

"However, the Trustees also make clear that Social Security's long-term financial challenges must be addressed. While Social Security is not in crisis, it will require modest changes to ensure current and future generations will receive the benefits they've earned. The longer Washington waits to address these challenges, the more difficult it will become for workers who are trying to plan for their future.

"The Trustees' report points to an even shorter timeframe for action to shore up Medicare's Hospital Insurance Trust Fund. AARP believes that any serious effort to strengthen Medicare must recognize that Medicare is but one part of our health care system, and that we must take steps to reduce costs throughout the entire system. By improving patient safety and care coordination, encouraging delivery system reforms, and eliminating waste and inefficiency, we can reduce the growth in health care costs for those in Medicare and for all Americans.

"In reviewing these reports, we must remember that Medicare and Social Security provide the basic foundation of retirement security for millions of Americans today, and will be just as important – if not more so – to future retirees. After more than a year of listening to Washington talk about these programs as line items in a budget, people want politicians to

understand how any changes to Social Security and Medicare will impact them and their families.

“Now is the time for a national conversation about strengthening health and retirement security in America. As we consider how best to protect and strengthen these vital programs, AARP will continue to ensure that our members – and all Americans – have a say in the future of Social Security and Medicare.”

For more information, please visit [www.earnedasay.org](http://www.earnedasay.org).

#### About AARP

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with a membership that helps people 50+ have independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to either political campaigns or candidates. We produce AARP The Magazine, the definitive voice for 50+ Americans and the world's largest-circulation magazine with nearly 35 million readers; AARP Bulletin, the go-to news source for AARP's millions of members and Americans 50+; AARP VIVA, our bilingual multimedia platform for Hispanic members; and our website, AARP.org. AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. We have staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.