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AARP Volunteers from Every State Head to Capitol Hill to Push Robust Agenda on Family Caregiving, Social Security

Today, volunteers and staff from every state, Washington, DC, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands have come to Washington to advocate on behalf of AARP members and all older Americans on the crucial issues of **Family Caregiving** and **Social Security**. While meeting with members of Congress, these volunteers and staff will carry crucial asks:

- **AARP advocates** will ask members of Congress to support two pieces of bipartisan legislation to help family caregivers, the *Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage (RAISE) Family Caregivers Act*, and the *Credit for Caring Act* and will also enlist members of the House and Senate to join the bipartisan Assisting Caregivers Today (ACT) Caucus.
- On the important issue of Social Security AARP will continue to ask legislators to take action and promote a dialogue about what we can do to keep it strong for future generations.

Family Caregiving

“Most of us have been or will be a family caregiver, or will need help to live independently. And, since family caregivers make up the backbone of services for most people, we need more private and public sector solutions that help support those who give care and the people they care for” said AARP Executive Vice President Nancy LeaMond. “We expect this ageless, nonpartisan issue to continue to grow in importance”.

In recent years, about 40 million family caregivers in the United States have provided unpaid care valued at **\$470 billion annually**, more than total Medicaid spending. Family caregivers also help delay or prevent more costly institutional care and unnecessary hospitalizations, saving taxpayer dollars. They help with daily activities including bathing, dressing, meal preparation, managing medications, and transportation.

There are several efforts on Capitol Hill to help give family caregivers the support they need.

The bipartisan **RAISE Family Caregivers Act** would require the development of a national strategy to support family caregivers. The bill, introduced by Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), has already passed in the Senate and the House bill, introduced by Representatives Gregg Harper (R-MS) and Kathy Castor (D-FL) and has over 60 cosponsors. AARP is urging the House to pass the legislation.

The bipartisan **Credit for Caring Act** would provide a federal tax credit for eligible working family caregivers caring for loved ones of all ages. The legislation has been introduced by US Senators Joni Ernst (R-IA), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) in the Senate and Representatives Tom Reed (R-NY) and Linda Sánchez (D-CA) in the House.

Additionally, the congressional **ACT Caucus** serves as a forum to engage members of the House and Senate on family caregiving and living independently, exchange ideas, and build bipartisan relationships that can lead to solutions. Co-chaired by US Senators Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) and Michael Bennet (D-CO) and, Representatives Diane Black (R-TN) and Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-NM), it has over 40 bipartisan members in the House and Senate. AARP staff and volunteers will seek to expand this important group.

Social Security

AARP volunteers and staff have been on Capitol Hill today asking legislators if they would *take action to update Social Security so it is financially sound and provides adequate retirement income for current and future generations*.

“Social Security remains a key issue for AARP members and older Americans,” added LeaMond. “Anyone who serves in Congress and who runs for federal office owes it to voters to tell them if they plan to work toward solving the issues that impact Social Security’s future.”

AARP has been a long-time champion of Social Security. We have always stood for Social Security because it is so important to our members, older Americans, their families and future generations. Our proactive work to ensure Social Security’s Trust Fund solvency and adequate benefits continues on this day of issue advocacy.

We want to promote what we can do together to bring about legislative action in the near future to ensure Social Security is financially sound and provides adequate benefits for future generations. To help spur that dialogue going forward, we have shared our principles for Social Security adequacy and solvency with members

of Congress.

And, in addition to advocating in Congress, as the election unfolds AARP volunteers will seek to engage all candidates running for federal office, including those running for President and Congress on the issue of ensuring Social Security solvency and adequacy for current and future generations.

This article was originally posted as an AARP blog and can be found here: <http://blog.aarp.org/2016/06/08/aarp-volunteers-from-every-state-head-to-capitol-hill-to-push-robust-agenda-on-family-caregiving-social-security/>

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About AARP AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million, that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse. We advocate for individuals in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name as well as help our members obtain discounts on a wide range of products, travel, and services. A trusted source for lifestyle tips, news and educational information, AARP produces AARP The Magazine, the world's largest circulation magazine; AARP Bulletin; www.aarp.org; AARP TV & Radio; AARP Books; and AARP en Español, a Spanish-language website addressing the interests and needs of Hispanics. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates. The 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. AARP has staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Learn more at www.aarp.org.
