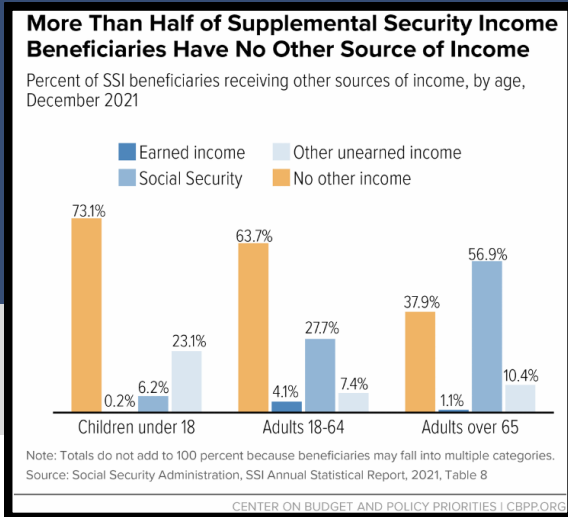


Supplemental Security Income Restoration Act

BACKGROUND INFORMATION



Nearly 7 million Americans, age 65 and older or with significant disabilities, rely on the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program for their survival.

Unfortunately, at present, SSI provides income that is below the poverty line. Over time, SSI has become an increasingly important program for seniors, and persons with disabilities, including children.

SSI was created to replace the patchwork system of federal grants to states that aided the aged, blind, or disabled. For disability applications, state agencies called Disability Determination Services (DDSs) screen the medical and related evidence to judge whether the applicant meets the criteria set in law — essentially, whether one suffers from a severe impairment that will last at least 12 months or result in death and that makes it impossible to engage in substantial work. A basic problem is that the program is still designed for 1972, the year it was signed into law by President Nixon. The financial constraints are so stiff that a growing number of older SSI recipients are homeless.

The SSI Restoration Act restores a program that plays a key role in the security of millions of Americans. Specifically, it modernizes and improves SSI by streamlining and simplifying the claiming process, expanding the resource and income limits, and eliminating punitive reductions in benefits.



FIVE REASONS TO SUPPORT THE BILL

1. The bill increases “income disregard” amounts that have not changed since 1974. Social Security Administration (SSA) currently reduces benefit amounts based on these out-of-date amounts.
2. It updates the asset limit to \$10,000 / \$20,000 for an eligible couple so people are not excluded for responsibly saving money.
3. Increases the benefit rate to 100% of the Federal Poverty Level and repeals the marriage penalty. More than half of those on SSI have no other source of income and the current benefit rates are so meager that they leave many people with disabilities living in poverty.
4. Repeals punitive penalties for family support, resource transfers, state taxes, and tribal benefits
5. Streamlines lump-sum and back payments, which reduces administrative burdens for SSA and helps families access their funds.

Endorsed by over 100 Organizations

Including: AARP, AFL-CIO, AFSCME Retirees, American Association of People with Disabilities, American Society on Aging, Center for Independent Living, Easterseals, Justice in Aging, Medicare Rights Center, Mental Health America, National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, National Committee to Preserve Social Security & Medicare, National Council on Aging, National Women's Law Center, Paralyzed Veterans of America, SEIU, Social Security Works, Strengthen Social Security Coalition, The Arc, The Special Needs Alliance and more