What is SJR 11, and why do we need it?

The California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA), one of the state’s foremost grassroots senior and disability advocacy organizations, representing over 1 million Californians, is a proud sponsor of SJR 11 (Skinner), which affirms the State Legislature’s support for expanding Social Security benefits by calling upon our state’s congressional delegation to call for a vote, and vote in favor of, HR 5723 (Larson) “The Social Security 2100 Act: A Sacred Trust.”

We all want to be able to age with dignity, respect and independence and Social Security is integral to achieving this, being an essential source of retirement income, keeping thousands of Californians out of poverty. Protecting and expanding Social Security is imperative to help solve the burgeoning retirement security crisis facing our nation. Defined benefit pension plans are declining; the regressive system of funding social security puts the system at risk; and income disparities leave most Americans unable to save for retirement. Too many Californians are already unable to retire without a drastic drop in their standards of living. The last time Congress expanded Social Security and increased benefits was during the presidency of Richard Nixon. More recently in 1983, cuts were made by raising the eligibility age.

HR 5723 (Larson) “The Social Security 2100 Act: A Sacred Trust”, will cut the projected long-range shortfall by more than half, by requiring the highest paid earners to contribute to Social Security on earnings over $400,000 at the same rate as other workers. It will also increase Social Security’s benefits by 2 percent across the board, to make up for the inadequate past COLAs; improve the COLA formula; raise the new minimum benefit to 25 percent of the poverty line; eliminate the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset, improve benefits for widows and widowers; end the 5 month waiting period for disability benefits; provides caregiver credits; among other changes. It also provides a tax cut for middle-income beneficiaries, by raising the thresholds for taxation of Social Security benefits to $35,000 (single) and $50,000 (married).

Social Security expansion has broad support among Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. In 2021 over 65 million Americans received Social Security benefits, totaling over $94 billion with $8.6 billion going to 6 million Californians. Social Security expansion will strengthen the economy and create jobs as most beneficiaries spend their benefits immediately, in their local communities. This is especially true for rural communities, home to a larger percentage of seniors (one in four rural Californians received benefits in 2014).

To win social and economic justice, full civil rights, and a better, more secure life for ourselves, our families, and future generations are guiding principles of CARA. SJR11 is a step to ensuring that those with the least will be given a step-up to economic security.

Where is SJR 11 in the legislative process?

SJR 11 was recently introduced in the Senate and is awaiting committee assignment. We expect the bill will be assigned to Senate Labor, Public Employment and Retirement Committee in early March.

CARA/ 1675 7th St. PO Box 23754/ Oakland, CA 94623/ 510-662-4086/ www.californiaalliance.org
SJR 11 (Skinner)
The Social Security 2100 Act: A Sacred Trust

What Can You Do to Help Pass SJR 11?

SJR 11 will likely be assigned to the Senate Labor, Public Employment and Retirement committee in the coming weeks. Letters of support in addition to calls to the Chair and or members serving on this committee who represent your district will help instrumentally.

- Find your local Senator: Use the lookup tool by clicking [HERE](#).
- Call the Chair of the Senate Labor, Public Employment and Retirement committee, Dave Cortese, in addition to the members from each committee who represent your district; advocating on behalf of SJR 11 and why you - as a member of CARA - support the legislation.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair, Dave Cortese (D)</td>
<td>408-558-1295</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice Chair, Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh (R)</td>
<td>909-335-0271</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maria Durazo (D)</td>
<td>213-483-9300</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Laird (D)</td>
<td>831-425-0401</td>
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<td>Josh Newman (D)</td>
<td>714-525-2342</td>
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- Ask your organization to schedule a presentation by CARA about why seniors should support SJR 11.
- Get your organization to write a letter of support. You can download CARA's letter as model (click [HERE](#)). Send your letter to the Legislature using the "Position Letter Portal" (click [HERE](#)) at: [https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates/](https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates/)

Have questions? Want to get more involved?

For more information on CARA's legislative advocacy please contact Hene Kelly or Keith Umemoto, CARA Legislative Committee Co-Chairs:

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