



SENATOR HARRY REID, MAJORITY LEADER WORKING FOR NEVADA'S SENIORS



Senator Reid has always fought for Nevada's seniors, and as our nation struggles in these difficult times his leadership is needed now more than ever. Senator Reid's record demonstrates his iron-clad commitment to protecting and strengthening Social Security, Medicare, and disability assistance. Senator Reid successfully blocked a proposal to privatize Social Security and make deep cuts in benefits. He successfully took the lead to close the prescription drug "donut hole" for seniors. And with the passage of the new Health Care Reform law, he led the effort to protect and strengthen Medicare for future generations. Senator Reid continues to work to secure millions of dollars for facilities in our communities, provide transportation and health services for seniors, and provide tax relief for Nevada's seniors. Senator Reid has led the charge to shield Nevada retirees from the source tax. Nevada's seniors could have no more determined and effective champion than Harry Reid.

Senator Reid is the Senate's Strongest Advocate for Protecting Social Security from Privatization, Deep Benefit Cuts, and the Misuse of Social Security Trust Funds. When the Bush Administration tried to push an unpopular and fiscally irresponsible privatization of Social Security into law, Senator Reid led the successful opposition. Senator Reid's leadership helped prevent a policy which would have resulted in deep benefit cuts and increased debt. Senator Reid refuses to support any measure that would weaken Social Security or threaten the retirement security of the many seniors in Nevada and around the country. He also has consistently supported efforts to protect the sanctity of the Social Security Trust Fund. The Social Security Trust Fund is intended to protect the security of American workers who have worked hard and contributed to their communities – it should not be used for other government spending. Senator Reid believes that Social Security should not be included in the rest of the federal budget, and none of its funds should be diverted to other programs. [Reid/Baucus letter to President Bush, 09/20/06; S.Amdt. 703 to H.R. 1836, Senate Vote 122, 05/21/01; S.Amdt. 2857 to H.R. 2646, Senate Vote 27, 02/13/02; S.Amdt. 207 to H.R. 2, Senate Vote 27, 01/25/07; H.R. 5835, Senate Vote 326, 10/27/90, P.L. 101-508]

HIGHLIGHTS OF SENATOR REID'S RECORD ON SENIORS

- ★ Senator Reid is the Senate's Strongest Advocate for Protecting Social Security from Privatization, Deep Benefit Cuts, and the Misuse of Social Security Trust Funds
- ★ Senator Reid Led Efforts to Pass Health Care Reform that will Close the Prescription Drug "Donut Hole"
- ★ Senator Reid Insisted that Seniors Receive Recovery Rebates as part of the Economic Stimulus Act of 2008
- ★ Senator Reid Championed Legislation that Ended the Source Tax on Retiree Pensions
- ★ Senator Reid Secured Over \$1 Billion for Upgrades and Improvements to Social Security's Infrastructure and Other Significant Benefits for Seniors in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
- ★ Senator Reid Prevailed Over a Bush Veto and Successfully Passed Legislation to Ensure Doctors Who See Medicare Patients are Fairly Compensated
- ★ Senator Reid Authored the Stop Senior Suicide Act
- ★ Senator Reid Introduced the Notch Fairness Act to Ensure Fair Benefits for All Seniors
- ★ Senator Reid Has Worked Hard to Make Sure Seniors Have Access to Affordable Housing and Essential Services
- ★ Senator Reid Has Fought for Improved Transportation Services for Senior Citizens Who are Unable or Prefer Not to Drive

Senator Reid Led Efforts to Pass Health Care Reform that will Close the Prescription Drug “Donut Hole.” Currently, seniors who need a significant amount of prescription drugs find themselves in a “donut hole” in which they lose access to federal assistance. Senator Reid recognized this forces too many seniors to bear the burden of high drug costs, which is why he helped pass a comprehensive health care reform bill that will close the Medicare donut hole. This year, seniors who fall into that donut hole will get a \$250 rebate. In 2011, they will receive a 50 percent discount on brand-name drugs and biologics. They will also receive a 7 percent discount on generic drugs, which will increase 7 percent every year thereafter. In 2020, the donut hole will close completely, meaning seniors will receive no gap in coverage. [H.R. 3590, Senate Vote 165, 12/24/09, P.L. 111-148]

Senator Reid Insisted that Seniors Receive Recovery Rebates as part of the Economic Stimulus Act of 2008. In February 2008 President George W. Bush signed into law the Economic Stimulus Act of 2008 which, among other things, provided Recovery Rebates to Americans to help stimulate the economy. When originally passed by the House, however, the legislation excluded many seniors from receiving these rebates. Senator Reid offered the amendment in the Senate that made Recovery Rebates available to seniors receiving Social Security and other governmental pensions. The bill signed by the President included Recovery Rebates totaling \$250. According to AARP, Senator Reid’s effort made sure that the nearly 150,000 Nevada seniors who otherwise would not have received rebates under the House bill got them. [H.R. 5140, Senate Vote 10, 02/07/08, P.L. 110-185]

Senator Reid Championed Legislation that Ended the Source Tax on Retiree Pensions. Senator Reid successfully protected Nevada retirees from taxes imposed by other states. The legislation Senator Reid helped pass into law ended taxation without representation by prohibiting states from taxing the retirement benefits of nonresidents. This was a huge victory for all taxpayers and retirees. [H.R. 394, Voice Vote, 12/22/95, P.L. 104-095]

Senator Reid Secured Over \$1 Billion for Improvements to Social Security’s Infrastructure and Other Significant Benefits for Seniors in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act), championed by Senator Reid, included crucial funding to allow the Social Security Administration (SSA) to overhaul its aging infrastructure. This included \$500 million to upgrade SSA’s 30 year-old National Computer Center and an additional \$500 million for the SSA to improve processing of new disability claims, reduce the backlog of disability hearings, and conduct health information technology systems research and development. These measures will improve the quality of service provided by the SSA to seniors in Nevada and nationwide. The Recovery Act also included a \$250 payment to seniors to help them meet their daily needs. It also included nearly \$250,000 that Senator Reid secured to support meals programs for Nevada’s senior centers, helping to provide 15,000 meals annually. Finally, the Act includes over \$125,000 that Senator Reid secured for Nevada’s Senior Community Service Employment Program, which provides high-quality job training and employment assistance to integrate older Americans into the 21st Century workforce. [H.R. 1, Senate Vote 64, HR 1, 02/13/09, P.L. 111-005]

Senator Reid Prevailed Over a Bush Veto and Successfully Passed Legislation to Ensure Doctors Who See Medicare Patients are Fairly Compensated. Senator Reid has long worked to ensure stable and fair compensation for Nevada providers who serve Medicare patients. In 2008, he led the Senate in overriding a Bush veto of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008. This bill stopped the looming 10.6% Medicare physician pay cut and provided a 1.1% physician fee increase for 2009. It helped ensure care for seniors and people with disabilities, extended the Physician Quality Reporting Initiative for

two years, and increased reporting incentive payments, while reducing administrative costs. By encouraging physicians to transition to electronic prescribing, this legislation helps to prevent serious medical errors and save taxpayer dollars. It also includes measures to improve benefits for Nevada's seniors by promoting beneficiary access to primary care services, providing Medicare mental health parity, and increasing coverage for preventative services. Senator Reid has led efforts to stave off additional cuts and continues to work for a permanent solution to physician payment in Medicare. [H.R. 6331, Senate Vote 177, 07/15/08, P.L. 110-275]

Senator Reid Authored the Stop Senior Suicide Act. Senator Reid introduced this comprehensive legislation in an effort to take on the tragically high suicide rates among seniors. The suicide rate for citizens over 65 in Nevada is more than double the national average. This issue is extremely personal to the Senator, who lost his father to suicide in 1972, and he has become an advocate for prevention campaigns nationwide. It is our duty to care for our seniors, and this bill would have made significant improvements to elderly suicide intervention and prevention strategies. [S. 1854, Introduced 07/23/07]

Senator Reid Introduced the Notch Fairness Act to Ensure Fair Benefits for All Seniors. Senator Reid has offered his strong support for the elimination of injustices towards "notch" seniors, fighting to secure additional Social Security money of up to \$5,000 for workers who reached age 65 after 1981 but before 1992. Senator Reid's legislation would not only provide these seniors with the benefits they deserve, but also offered them a choice in payment schedules. [S. 390, Introduced 02/8/99; S.825, Introduced 05/3/01; S.1418, Introduced 07/16/03]

Senator Reid Has Worked Hard to Make Sure Seniors Have Access to Affordable Housing and Essential Services. Nevada's housing situation is dire and many seniors, especially those on fixed incomes, are in desperate need of affordable housing. To help seniors weather this economic storm, Senator Reid supported more than \$7 million in grant funding in 2009 for Nevada HAND, Inc. to build 50 housing units for low-income Nevada seniors. This year, he directed more than \$680,000 in funding to the Silver Sky at Deer Springs Affordable Senior Assisted Living project. This facility allows low-income seniors who can no longer live independently to maintain their dignity at home, and avoid costly and premature nursing home placement. [H.R. 3288, Senate Vote 374, 12/13/09, P.L. 111-117]

Throughout his time in Washington, Senator Reid has worked hard to bring direct funds back to the state for a wide variety of projects directly benefitting seniors. Here are just a few more examples of Senator Reid delivering for Nevada's seniors by directing funds to the State:

- Nearly \$500,000 to Nevada Rural Senior Volunteer Programs, which provide relief to elderly caregivers, along with essential services to seniors across rural Nevada [H.R. 3288, Senate Vote 374, 12/13/09, P.L. 111-117; H.R. 1105, Voice Vote, 03/10/09, P.L. 111-008; H.R. 2764, Senate Vote 441, 12/18/07, P.L.110-161]
- \$200,000 for the Henderson Senior Center to provide diabetes screening, education, and counseling programs for seniors [H.R. 2764, Senate Vote 441, 12/18/07, P.L.110-161]
- More than \$800,000 to Senior Lifeline, which delivers a wide range of social services to seniors in Clark County, Nevada [H.R. 4818, Senate Vote 215, 11/20/04, P.L. 108-447; H.R. 2764, Senate Vote 441, 12/18/07, P.L.110-161]
- Funding for a number of centers across Nevada, including \$150,000 to develop a Senior Center in Las Vegas, \$900,000 for the Reno Senior Center, and \$300,000 for a new senior center facility in Elko [H.R.2764, Senate Vote 441, 12/18/07, P.L.110-161; H.J.RES. 2, Senate Vote, 34, 02/13/03, P.L. 108-007; H.R. 2673, Senate Vote 3, 01/22/04, P.L. 108-199; H.R. 4818, Senate Vote 215, 11/20/04, P.L. 108-447]

- To ensure that Nevada does not have to compete for limited resources with other western states, like California, Senator Reid fought for a separate allocation of HUD Section 202 funding, which provides housing assistance to the elderly. [H.R. 1105, Voice Vote, 03/10/09, P.L. 111-008]

Senator Reid Has Fought for Improved Transportation Services for Senior Citizens who are Unable or Prefer Not to Drive. Senator Reid has used his position as Majority Leader to bring federal funds to Nevada. For instance, in the FY2006 Transportation/HUD Appropriations Bill, Senator Reid ensured \$300,000 was included to provide bus service at the Pahrump Senior Center, and \$3 million for statewide bus transit systems. Two years later, he secured \$750,000 to construct the Sunset Maintenance Facility to service Citizens Area Transit (CAT) buses in the north valley; \$750,000 for improvements to the Statewide Bus Mark Program throughout Nevada to improve access to public transportation for elderly, disabled, and rural Nevadans; and an additional \$100,000 for transit vehicles for seniors. Senator Reid also played a vital role in the opening of the new Silver Rider/Laughlin Transit Facility by securing \$1 million for its completion in the 2005 Highway Bill. Understanding how important transit options are for seniors, Senator Reid also included a provision in the 2005 Highway Bill that ensured public transit funding for Nevada received a 152% increase over 1998 levels.

Continuing to ensure Nevada receives its fair share in transit funding, Senator Reid secured \$1,425,000 for the Nevada Department of Transportation to improve statewide bus facilities in the FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act, and \$500,000 for the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County to construct satellite transfer centers and additional Park and Ride facilities in the FY2010 Transportation Appropriations Bill. [H.R. 3058, Senate Vote 264, 10/20/05, P.L. 109-115; H.R. 2764, Senate Vote 441, 12/18/07, P.L. 110-161; H.R. 3, Senate Vote 220, 07/29/05, P.L. 109-59; H.R. 1105, Voice Vote, 03/10/09, P.L. 111-8; H.R. 3288, Senate Vote 374, 12/13/09, P.L. 111-117]

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