

# Majority of Americans think they pay more toward social security and medicare than they do

June 29 2011

---

According to a newly released Stony Brook Poll conducted in association with Left Right Research, a Long Island based Marketing Research supplier, more than 81 percent of approximately 7,000 people surveyed believe that they had contributed enough to Social Security to support themselves in retirement, or more than they will receive during their lifetime. The numbers were similar for Medicare; nearly 80 per cent of those surveyed believed that their total contribution to Medicare would carry them through their retirement years.

When asked about how much they believed they had contributed to either [Medicare](#) or Social Security during their best paid year, more than 2 in 5 individuals surveyed were wrong by 50 percent or more regarding Social Security contributions; more than half were wrong by 50 percent or more regarding their highest annual contribution to Medicare. Approximately 30 percent were wrong by more than 100 percent in terms of their perceived annual contribution to Medicare.

Finally, when asked if they were confident or “just guessing” regarding their response to the above questions, approximately two out of three individuals indicated that they had simply guessed.

"This is astonishing," said Duffy Mich of Left Right Research. "U.S. taxpayers do not know what they are contributing to Social Security and Medicare, but they are convinced they're paying enough into these two

systems...despite all the publicity regarding the impending insolvency of both programs.”

## **Poll methodology, questions and results:**

In December, 2010, the Stony Brook Poll surveyed 6,988 individuals nationwide via a web-based survey. Respondents were asked the following:

1. By the time you retire, how much will you have paid into Social Security:
  - a. More than enough to cover my benefits for life and some left over
  - b. Enough to cover my benefits, but none left over
  - c. Not enough to cover my benefits
2. By the time you retire, how much will you have paid into Medicare:
  - a. More than enough to cover my benefits for life and some left over
  - b. Enough to cover my benefits, but none left over
  - c. Not enough to cover my benefits
3. Thinking about the year in which you made the most money...
  - a. What year was it?
  - b. How much did you make? (ranges)
  - c. How much did you pay into Social Security?
  - d. How much did you pay into Medicare?
4. Thinking about your answers to question #3...
  - a. I was confident in my answers
  - b. I was just guessing

## **The Findings**

- Two-thirds of respondents said they were just guessing

- 50% of respondents said they will have paid more than enough into both Social Security and Medicare to cover their benefit costs for life with some left over
- 30% of respondents said they will have paid enough in to both Social Security and Medicare to cover their benefit costs with none left over
- Only 20% said they will not have paid enough into either [Social Security](#) or Medicare to cover their own benefits.
- More than 50% of respondents over- or under-estimated their actual contribution to Medicare by 50%
- More than 30% of [respondents](#) over-estimated their actual contribution to Medicare by more than 100%

**More information:**

[www.stonybrook.edu/sb/docs/medicarebigpicture.pdf](http://www.stonybrook.edu/sb/docs/medicarebigpicture.pdf)

Provided by Stony Brook University

Citation: Majority of Americans think they pay more toward social security and medicare than they do (2011, June 29) retrieved 20 March 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-06-majority-americans-social-medicare.html>

|  |
|--|
| <p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p> |
|--|