

FOUR FREEDOMS PARK CONSERVANCY ANNOUNCES MONUMENTAL ILLUMINATED MESSAGE  
STARTING AUGUST 14: "SOCIAL SECURITY: YOU EARNED IT"

AARP Sponsors Weeklong Effort to Highlight the Importance of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's  
1935 Social Security Act on its 88th Anniversary



August 14, 2023, New York -- To mark the 88th anniversary of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's iconic Social Security Act of 1935, the words "Social Security: You Earned It" will shine brightly over the Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) Four Freedoms State Park (FFPC). This bold message underscores the relevance of FDR's New Deal, a cornerstone in the daily lives of countless Americans. Sponsored by AARP, the luminous message spans 75 feet by 10 feet and will first light up at sunset on Monday, August 14, 2023. This week-long beacon, until August 21, stands as a testament to AARP's national commitment to spotlight the role of Social Security in the lives of individual Americans, says Howard Axel, CEO of Four Freedoms Park Conservancy

**Julia Ireland, Four Freedoms Park Conservancy Trustee and great-granddaughter of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, stated,** "Social Security isn't just policy, it's a promise. With threats of potential cuts in 2033, only a decade away, we're reminded today of its pivotal role and we must continue the work of my great-grandparents by safeguarding this commitment for future generations.

**Quote from Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt Jr.** “The Social Security Act was not only a keystone of FDR’s New Deal, aimed at addressing the daily adversities of the Great Depression, but it was also a testament to the nation’s capacity for bold innovation in 1935. Of course, the act was both hailed and criticized for its progressive nature, which did not necessarily endear the President to friends and family. And let us also all remember that Social Security stands as the true achievement of then Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, the first woman to be appointed as United States Cabinet Secretary.”

**Howard Axel, CEO of Four Freedoms Park Conservancy, remarked,** “FFPC is profoundly honored to be a part of AARP’s vital initiatives surrounding Social Security. New York City, in its grandeur, was the biggest beneficiary of the New Deal public works. Our city was shaped by monumental endeavors such as the Triborough Bridge, LaGuardia Airport, the Lincoln Tunnel, and the East River (FDR) Drive. We are exceptionally excited and proud to help cast this light from the FDR Four Freedoms State Park on one of Franklin Roosevelt’s crowning achievements. ”

Viewing of the illumination is best from New York City’s Midtown East and along the FDR Drive from the United Nations to the Ed Koch Bridge.

#### **Four Facts About the Importance of Social Security**

- Nearly one in five New York residents — 3,680,264 people — received Social Security income as of last year, injecting more than \$64.3 billion into the state’s economy.
- The average retired New Yorker on Social Security received about \$19,100 a year in 2022.
- Nationally, nearly one in five U.S. residents — 65 million people — received Social Security income as of last year, injecting more than \$1.1 trillion into the national economy.
- The average retired American on Social Security received about \$18,530 a year in 2022. 42% of Americans 65 and older live in families that rely on Social Security for at least half of their income; 20% live in families that rely on the program for at least 90 percent of their income.

#### **ABOUT FOUR FREEDOMS PARK CONSERVANCY**

Four Freedoms Park Conservancy (FFPC), founded in 2011, operates under a Friends Agreement with New York State Parks to produce and curate public programs at Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms State Park. The park, designed by the groundbreaking American modernist architect Louis Kahn, is among the greatest architectural masterpieces in New York City. By leveraging this spectacular architecture and the unique location of the park, FFPC strives to produce events, installations and public art and works with nonprofit partners that can ignite the conversations about the Four Freedoms and the legacy of President Franklin D. Roosevelt

For more information about Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms State Park please visit:

<https://parks.ny.gov/parks/186/details.aspx>

**ABOUT NEW YORK STATE OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION & HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation oversees more than 250 parks, historic sites, recreational trails, golf courses, boat launches and more, which in 2022 were visited by record 79.5 million people. For more information on any of these recreation areas, visit [www.parks.ny.gov](http://www.parks.ny.gov), download the free [NY State Parks Explorer mobile app](#) or call 518.474.0456. Also, connect on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

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