



## SOCIAL SECURITY

The Commissioner

October 10, 2019

The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510-4204

Dear Senator Alexander:

The Social Security Act provides the formula for determining whether we can apply a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. The formula links the COLA to the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). The CPI-W did increase over the applicable measuring period, thus triggering an automatic COLA of 1.6 percent. Accordingly, there will be a COLA increase in Social Security benefits beginning December 2019, as well as an increase in payments to SSI recipients beginning December 30, 2019.

For Social Security beneficiaries, the estimated average monthly benefit amount at the end of 2019 for all retired workers will rise from \$1,479 to \$1,503. The maximum Federal SSI monthly payment to an individual will rise from \$771 to \$783. For a couple, the maximum Federal SSI payment will rise from \$1,157 to \$1,175. The Social Security contribution and benefit base will also increase from \$132,900 to \$137,700 as a result of increases in national average wages. We have enclosed a copy of the press release with additional information.

We will publish details concerning the above amounts and related information in the *Federal Register*, and we will also make it available on our Internet site at:  
<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/OACT/COLA>.

Additional information regarding this issue is available on our Internet site at:  
<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/OACT/COLA/colasummary.html>.

If you have any questions, please contact Eric Skidmore, our Acting Deputy Commissioner for Legislation and Congressional Affairs, at (202) 358-6030.

Sincerely,



Andrew Saul  
Commissioner

Enclosure