



UNITED STATES SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON

**AGING**

RANKING MEMBER KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND

December 10th, 2025

## **Ranking Member Kirsten Gillibrand's Opening Statement “Aging with Purpose: The Positive Impact of Seniors in Today’s Economy”**

*Thank you, Chairman Scott, and thank you to the witnesses.*

*Older adults have tremendous wisdom, work ethic, skills, and contribute to the economy.*

*This was certainly the case with one of my former staffers. I had a staffer named Geri Shapiro who worked for Secretary Clinton when she was Senator, and then worked for me when I became Senator.*

*Geri worked well into her eighties, maybe even her nineties, for me as the head of our Westchester regional office.*

*She was the resident expert on the nuclear facility. She took all the meetings about Indian Point. She was one of the most knowledgeable, thoughtful, and wise leaders we had in our office.*

*So, I know that no matter what someone's age is, they can still contribute meaningfully to the work of any organization, any community, and any company.*

*Many people want to return to work for mental stimulation or community involvement, but too often, people return to work out of financial necessity.*

*This is especially true for 42 percent of private sector employees who do not have access to employer retirement plans, and 44 percent who do not participate regardless.*

*Another factor compounding this financial need is the reality that many people step back from working, and saving, to care for children or aging parents.*

*Today, you'll hear about the Senior Community Service Employment Program, or SCSEP. SCSEP is an Older Americans Act program that helps older adults who face the most pressing barriers to employment, such as those who are homeless or have a disability, find meaningful work that they enjoy.*

*SCSEP does fantastic work to train and place older adults in meaningful employment. It also serves as another reminder about why passing the Older Americans Act reauthorization is so important.*

*I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about the importance of the SCSEP program and the incredible contributions that older adults provide in our workforce.*