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New Research from EBRI:

**Older Americans Expect to Work Longer,
And Many Expect Never to Retire, Data Show**

WASHINGTON—Not only are older American workers (age 50 and over) expecting to work longer, but many now say they expect to never retire, according to the nonpartisan Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI). Data suggest the trend may be tied to the recent economic recession.

In 2006 (just before the recent recession), 11.2 percent of workers age 50 or over expected to retire at age 70, but by 2010 (after it had officially ended) that had increased to 14.8 percent. Even at higher ages, the expected retirement age has jumped: Just 1.7 percent of workers age 50 or over planned to retire at age 80 in 2006, while that more than tripled to 5.2 percent in 2010, EBRI found.

Expected retirement at earlier ages (62 and 65) also steadily declined over the four-year period of 2006–2010, the study found.

“The general trend shows that older Americans are expecting to retire later,” said Sudipto Banerjee, EBRI research associate and author of the study. “But the most striking finding is that nearly 20 percent of the sample expects never to stop working and more than 15 percent of the sample don’t know when they are going to retire.”

In addition, in 2008, during the recession, 22.4 percent of the workers age 50 or over said they plan to never retire. That declined to 16.3 percent in 2010. Over the 2006–2010 period, another 14–18 percent of workers said they don’t know when they will retire.

Full results are published in the December 2011 *EBRI Notes*, “Retirement Age Expectations of Older Americans Between 2006 and 2010,” online at www.ebri.org. The EBRI study examines data from the University of Michigan’s Health and Retirement Survey on how the expected retirement ages of older Americans changed during the period of 2006–2010, covering the periods just before, during, and after the recent economic recession.

The EBRI report notes that while the rising age of expected retirement may reflect a growing awareness of economic and fiscal reality among Americans workers (especially at a time of rising longevity), other research by EBRI indicates many of them will be unable to actually work longer: The 2011 Retirement Confidence Survey finds that a large percentage of retirees (45 percent in 2011) leave the work force earlier than planned.

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