

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 2, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are very concerned with reports that you are considering weakening Social Security by cutting or eliminating the source of its dedicated revenue: premiums, in the form of payroll deductions, paid by workers and their employers. Moving away from premiums supported by work would destroy the integrity of Social Security as a form of retirement, disability and survivor insurance and would open the door to significant Social Security cuts in the future. We urge you to reject this dangerous proposal to undermine Social Security.

As strong supporters of Social Security, we understand how important these earned benefits are to retirees who rely on Social Security as the foundation of a safe and secure retirement, as well as to workers and their families in the event of disability or premature death. Social Security keeps 22 million Americans—including one million children—out of poverty. Ending Social Security's connection between work and the benefits it provides would cut the legs out from the most resilient retirement program in America, and jeopardize the protections it provides to disabled Americans and families after the death of a provider. This proposal is a Trojan horse: under the guise of modest middle-class tax relief, it would open the door for large benefit cuts that would have devastating consequences for seniors, disabled workers and their families in the future.

Dedicated employee contributions, visibly deducted from paychecks and matched dollar-for-dollar by employers, have been a part of the structure of Social Security since its enactment in 1935. These payments are not mere taxes. Rather, they are premiums that purchase Social Security's insurance against the loss of wages in the event of disability, death, or old age. As President Roosevelt said, "We put those payroll contributions there so as to give the contributors a legal, moral and political right to collect their pensions."

Eliminating these direct payments would eliminate the visible link between contributions and benefits. Moreover, because Social Security's revenue is dedicated—meaning that the Social Security Trust Funds are exclusively used for the payment of benefits—and because Social Security has no borrowing authority, Social Security does not add a penny to the deficit. Substituting general revenue for Social Security's dedicated revenue would ensure that Social Security will be on the chopping block in every budget and deficit-reduction debate—a stark and destabilizing change.

Throughout your campaign for president you promised the American people that you would not cut Social Security. We strongly urge you to keep that promise. The promises we make as Americans through Social Security—to protect workers from a career-ending disability, to shield families after the death of a breadwinner, and to help retirees maintain their standard of living after they leave the workforce—are promises we have kept as a nation for over 80 years.

Instead of radically altering Social Security's financing, we urge you to build on the successes of Social Security as the greatest tool we have to protect the economic security of every American. We ask that you work with us to build a more secure middle class, strengthen America's greatest insurance program, and expand the benefits earned through Social Security.

Like so many of our constituents, we are proud of Social Security. This remarkably successful program binds us together as Americans and protects the financial security of American workers. Help us keep this sacred promise to our fellow Americans by refusing to sever the tie between hard-earned benefits and the hard work of the American people.

Sincerely,



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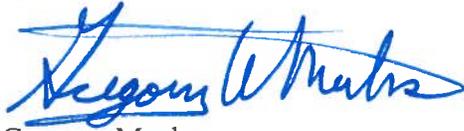
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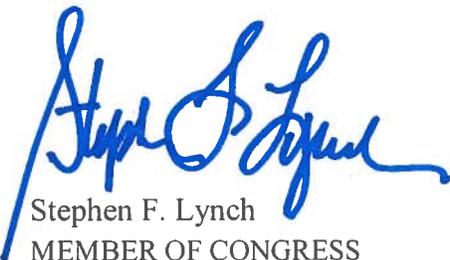
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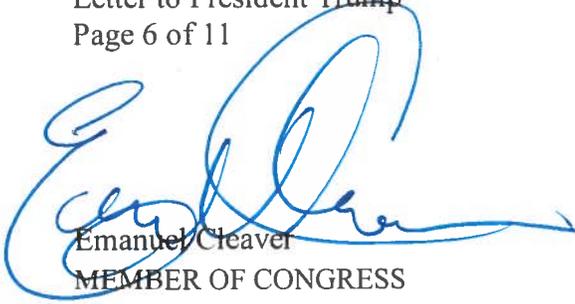
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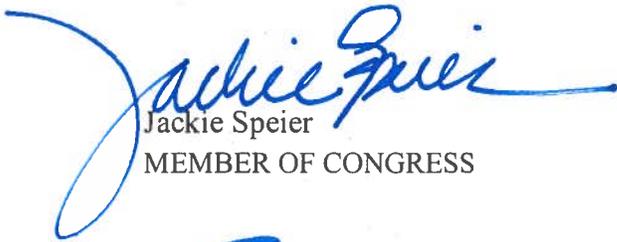
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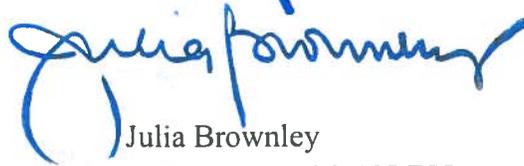

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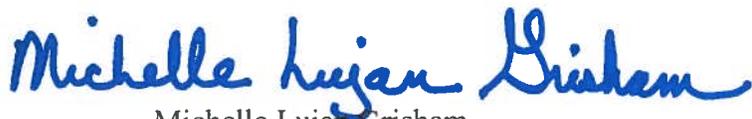

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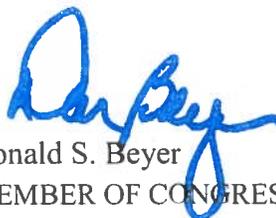
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