

As crime surges across the Nation, we simply cannot allow the growing anti-police sentiment to take any root. We must show unwavering support for those who stand ready to protect us and our families.

My colleagues and I support our law enforcement. They risk their lives so we can live in safety, and we will always be thankful.

#### ENHANCING SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STAUBER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening with my colleagues to have a discussion about the Nation's number one antipoverty program for the elderly and the Nation's number one antipoverty program for children. More veterans rely on Social Security disability than they do on the VA.

Mr. Speaker, we want to make sure that we are addressing this to our colleagues. Since you are in the chair from Minnesota, Mr. Speaker, I want you to know that you have more than 189,000 Social Security recipients in your district; more than 147,000 retirees; more than 20,000 disabled; 8,000 widows; 9,000 children.

Here is the key, Mr. Speaker, \$335 million a month comes into your district for those Social Security recipients. Where do they spend it? Right back in their district.

Yet, it has been more than 53 years since Congress has enhanced Social Security. Richard Nixon was President of the United States the last time Social Security was enhanced.

Democrats are bound and determined to make sure that we get something simple like a vote here in Congress to help out all of those people in your district, Mr. Speaker, as well as highlight why this is so important.

Seventy million Americans rely on Social Security. Ten thousand baby boomers a day become eligible for Social Security. Forty thousand Americans rely on Social Security in and of itself as their primary tenet for retirement.

It is the Nation's number one antipoverty program for the elderly and for children. That is why our colleagues have taken to the floor today, so that the American people understand that what is between them and enhancement to this program is a vote. It is a vote on Social Security 2100, that will extend the solvency of Social Security, but, as importantly, expand benefits, including making sure that the more than 23 million people that pay taxes on Social Security no longer have to do that.

What could be a better bipartisan plan than helping out every single individual in everyone's district and also providing for 23 million Americans, not

the wealthiest Americans but the everyday citizens who work weeklong to provide for their families and pay into a system and haven't received an enhancement in 53 years.

That is why JOE NEGUSE is here as part of leadership that has strongly endorsed this.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. NEGUSE).

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Mr. NEGUSE. Mr. Speaker, first and foremost, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Connecticut, our former Caucus chair, for his clarion call that he has issued year after year, month after month, and day after day to protect and strengthen Social Security.

It couldn't be more important, and we couldn't be more grateful for his leadership and the leadership of so many of my colleagues who have joined us tonight on the House floor to talk to the American people about the ways in which House Democrats are protecting critical programs like Social Security and Medicare and the myriad ways in which, unfortunately, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are doing the exact opposite.

I will give you but one example, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the latter. I know you are familiar with the Republican Study Committee, the largest caucus within the Republican Conference. I don't know if the American people are familiar with it.

Eighty percent of the Republican Conference consider themselves members of this committee. A hundred percent of House Republican leadership count themselves among the members of this committee. The former chairman of the Republican Study Committee is now the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Why do I bring up the Republican Study Committee? Well, it might interest you to know, Mr. Speaker, that just 2 months ago, the Republican Study Committee issued a budget for 2025. Again, this is a committee that has 80 percent of the Republican Conference in its membership. This backward budget plan is incredibly revealing.

What does it do? It upends critical programs that American families depend on, makes draconian cuts to Medicare and Social Security with a plan that increases the retirement age to 69, forcing Americans to work longer for less, a plan that cuts disability benefits and erodes care for children, making it more expensive to care for our families.

Their plan raises Medicare costs for seniors, takes away the program's ability to negotiate prescription drug costs, and repeals the \$35 insulin and the \$2,000 out-of-pocket caps that House Democrats, the Members gathered here on the floor this evening, fought so vigorously to enact in the 117th Congress.

Just to be clear, Mr. Speaker, although we are here tonight to talk

about Social Security and Medicare and our efforts to protect, strengthen, and expand both of those programs, and Republican efforts to dismantle them, it is worth noting that this is Police Week. Notwithstanding the many statements made by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle concerning their purported support of law enforcement, their budget tells a very different story. Why? How? I encourage every American to go to page 148 of the Republican Study Committee's budget. What you will find is clear, unambiguous, plain language that states that they would like to reduce funding for community-oriented policing services, the COPS Program, a program that the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania has fought to expand for years, a program that is funding the hiring of law enforcement officers in my district in Colorado and countless other jurisdictions across our great country, a program that is critical to law enforcement's abilities to provide for public safety in our country, and a program that they intend to cut.

Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, insofar as one were to glean essential observation from a review, a cursory review of their budget, it is simple: House Republicans are uninterested in tackling issues that matter to the American people.

We will not let them cut Social Security. We won't let them cut Medicare. We won't let them cut law enforcement funding. That much is clear.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado, our esteemed leader, for his contribution. I would point out as well that the repeal of WEP and GPO, which directly impacts police officers and firefighters, is contained within our proposal. It needs a vote.

Social Security has no impact on the debt or deficit and, as President Biden has proposed, is fully paid for by—most Americans don't even realize this—lifting the cap on people making over \$400,000. Doing so allows us to enhance the program for the first time in 20-plus years and also makes sure that we extend the solvency of the program.

Someone who knows that extraordinarily well is the gentleman from New Jersey, who also serves on the Social Security Subcommittee.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. LARSON for putting his work and soul on the line for the last several years.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the more than 124,000 constituents in the Ninth District of north Jersey who rely on Social Security each and every month.

Social Security is one of America's greatest success stories. After nearly 90 years, it still stands as a monument to decency, dignity, and the birthright of hardworking Americans.

Yet, throughout its storied history, it has been under attack. Going back

to 1935, it has been the subject of attacks and lies from day one. The Republican Study Committee just referred to, which represents three-quarters of the House Republicans, proposed slashing Social Security benefits by \$718 billion.

If I was sitting at home right now, I would be asking if that means me. Does that mean my benefits, which I have paid into? They are going to vote now and take it away? It is the only thing I live on.

Republican leadership wants to create a so-called fiscal commission in our government funding bill. That is a wolf in sheep's clothing. Without aggressive action, Social Security lurches toward insolvency. Congress has a sacred responsibility to fight for its future.

That is why I am standing with Representative LARSON on his Social Security 2100 Act to ensure the long-term strength and solvency of Social Security. I will keep standing as long as we have to fight. We are not going home. The Social Security 2100 Act provides paid-for benefit enhancements while not raising taxes on middle-class families. It is a no-brainer.

Our bill ends the painful 5-month disability waiting period. Imagine that. It would ensure Americans suffering with permanent disorders like Huntington's disease get the help they need without red tape or delay.

The bill eliminates the windfall elimination provision so that firefighters, police, teachers, and others get the full benefits that they have earned.

With the Social Security 2100 Act, we are fighting for our seniors who have worked their entire lives and rely on Social Security to make ends meet.

I remember the first congressional election I ran in, Mr. Speaker, in the year 1996—which wasn't yesterday. I remember I walked into the hall of seniors in the spring of that year before the election actually was on. I thought I knew everything about Social Security, but I never expected to get the first question about Social Security. I was asked: What are you going to do about Social Security? One of our seniors asked that question in 1996, and here we are, 28 years later. What do you know?

I will not vote for a convenient increase in the age requirement. They want seniors to work and drop dead so that they collect under the ground, I guess. They won't be above ground.

I will not vote for cuts of Social Security in order to pay for it.

We are fighting for working families. We must get this done for the American people. There are no excuses.

Those watching, call in. Let us know what you think. This is your money, our money.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to Speaker JOHNSON that he has 158,000 Social Security recipients in his district, and in Louisiana, they receive \$233 million in monthly benefits. Think about what

that does for economic development for those people. Where do they spend that money?

LINDA SÁNCHEZ knows this. LINDA SÁNCHEZ, who also serves on the Ways and Means Committee and on the subcommittee, understands how vitally important this is and also that more than 5 million of our Americans receive below-poverty-level checks from Social Security after having paid into the system all of their lives. The majority of them happen to be women, and the majority of them are women of color.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Ms. SÁNCHEZ).

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and colleague JOHN LARSON, who has been at the forefront of advocating for changes to the Social Security system that will ensure its longevity for the next generation and generations to come and will increase the benefits for those who currently receive Social Security.

In contrast, the Republicans are proposing cuts to Social Security, and those cuts will harm millions of Americans.

Make no mistake, cutting Social Security is a direct attack on the Latino population in this country. Social Security benefits are a significant portion of retirement income for Latinos. Forty-two percent of Latino couples and 59 percent of unmarried Latino individuals rely on Social Security for 90 percent or more of their retirement income.

Yet, my Republican colleagues are hellbent on cutting those Social Security benefits. Their proposed budget would cut Social Security benefits for 253 million people, and Latino communities, sadly, will pay the price.

Without Social Security, 47 percent of Latino retirees would be living in poverty. Mr. LARSON frequently says that Social Security is the most successful antipoverty program that this country has ever created.

In contrast to Republicans, who want to cut Social Security or increase the age at which you can begin to draw on it, Democrats are committed to protecting all people from living in poverty. Democrats want to invest in programs like Social Security so that more Americans, including Latinos, can afford to retire.

One of the ingenious parts of Social Security 2100 will increase the cap for those who pay into the Social Security system. I frequently give this example. I think it is important. Many Americans don't know that once you earn above a certain income, you stop paying into the Social Security system. That means that a professional athlete, like, say, a professional baseball player who makes millions of dollars a year in income, in their first at-bat of the season, they hit that cap and pay no more money into Social Security the rest of the year.

I think that we can fix Social Security, increase its longevity, and protect communities like the Latino commu-

nities and the women who depend predominantly on Social Security for their retirement income. All we are asking for is a vote on this legislation.

I have no doubt that if we put that bill on the floor, it would pass by a large margin. Give us a vote.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California for again highlighting what we are asking for: a vote. Imagine the United States Congress actually voting.

Here is the deal: If you have a better idea, please bring it to the floor. Let's vote on it. Don't we all agree that this is something that all Americans need?

Republicans in their hearts know that the American people desperately need this. I know Representative JODEY ARRINGTON understands this on the Budget Committee. More than 50 years since we have enhanced a program for the people of this country is outrageous.

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You can embrace tax cuts for billionaires as though they needed them, and yet, a tax cut for a person working, who still finds themselves working after they retire, is double taxed on their Social Security.

There should be outrage on this floor and demanding a vote. God only knows that if you have got a better idea or a better program, please put it forward. Let's do the democratic thing, and vote on it.

The gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. AMO) campaigned on this throughout his effort to be successfully elected to the United States Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. AMO).

Mr. AMO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that is deeply personal to me and many Americans, the sacred trust of Medicare and Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, I was raised by a mom who worked double shifts as a nurse in Rhode Island in nursing homes. I grew up understanding how critical Medicare and Social Security are for seniors in the Ocean State.

Now, as the Congressman for Rhode Island's First Congressional District, I am committed to expanding the promise of these critical programs.

Democrats know how to get this done.

Through the landmark Inflation Reduction Act, Congress authorized Medicare to negotiate the price of prescription drugs, capping the cost of insulin for seniors at just \$35 a month and limiting out-of-pocket expenses to \$2,000 a year.

This Congress, we have committed to Congressman LARSON's Social Security 2100 Act, a bill that would shore up benefits by ensuring the wealthiest Americans play by the same rules as everyone else.

Yet, as I stand here today, I can't help but contrast these essential measures with the callous budget proposal on the other side of the aisle.

Make no mistake, the Republican Study Committee's proposal is a backward budget. If enacted, it would cut Social Security benefits for more than 250 million Americans nationwide.

In my home State of Rhode Island, the Republican budget slashes benefits for 74 percent of the population, forcing three out of every four residents to work longer for less.

In a similar way, Republicans propose undoing the Inflation Reduction Act and jacking up the price of prescription drugs that seniors rely on.

No one, and I mean no one, should ever have to doubt if Social Security and Medicare will be there for them in their retirement. That is why I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to come together. Let's save Social Security together by passing Congressman LARSON's bill.

Let's expand, not repeal, the healthcare savings that Medicare seniors have seen under the Inflation Reduction Act.

Most importantly, let's abandon this misguided idea that punishing seniors, pushing austerity cuts, and raising costs is somehow the solution to the problems we face.

Mr. Speaker, we don't have to choose between ensuring solvency and safeguarding the benefits of millions of Americans. We can and we should do both. By having a vote on the Social Security 2100 Act, we will.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Rhode Island for his comments, and I wanted to say this, as well, that this is a bill that was constructed by more than 350 different groups across this great country and by Members of this body who put together their ideas.

The Ways and Means Committee merely took the great ideas of our colleagues and put them together—ideas that have been endorsed by the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, Social Security Works, the Alliance for Retired Americans, the California Alliance for Retired Americans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Strengthen Social Security Coalition, the NAACP, and the list goes on.

The gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. LOIS FRANKEL) understands this, and Florida probably leads the country in terms of the number of seniors that it has in their districts. As we pointed out before to the Speaker, every district receives money—\$364 million a month, but it has been that way for more than 50-plus years. These programs need to be enhanced and extended, not cut.

The provision by the Republican Study Committee, if there is nothing done by 2034, Social Security is cut by 20 percent. Instead, they are calling to raise the age now and cut Social Security by 21 percent today. How does that possibly make any sense?

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. LOIS FRANKEL) who understands this.

Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. LARSON for his leadership on this issue, and I thank Mr. NEGUSE for getting us here.

I think I have joined Mr. LARSON on this discussion for about 10 years or more now.

I want to tell you about one of my constituents. Her name is Janet Zweiback. She is in her eighties. She lives in Delray Beach, Florida. She is retired. She lost her dad at a very early age, and so, she watched her mom struggle with their own family bills. To help the family, Janet began working at the age of 17. Now, I have to get my math right. She has been working 50 years, so I guess that makes her—I don't know, someone add that up for me.

Here is the point: Let me tell you some of the things that she has done over these years. She was a nurse working in a hospital, working countless hours taking care of patients. She moved to Florida, and she became a director of a skilled nursing facility. Then she worked with Alzheimer's patients at Alzheimer's Community Care, probably one of the most difficult assignments a healthcare provider could have. She also managed one of the crisis center hotlines.

She retired about 8 years ago and now is one of the 66 million Americans, almost 200,000 seniors in my district—or as I like to say, seasoned adults; we are seasoned adults in my home district of Palm Beach County—relying on Social Security to meet their needs.

Mr. Speaker, I liked the point Mr. LARSON made that not only does Social Security meet the needs of so many of these seniors, but our seniors are great economic generators. I know where I live, if not for the seniors' economic activity, we would be in pretty bad shape.

Janet told me that she fears that without Social Security she would have to turn to her children somewhat like her mother turned to her when she was young.

Here it is. She has worked her whole life paying into Social Security to get benefits. She and millions of other Americans, nurses, schoolteachers, janitors, construction workers, they worked under the sacred promise that when they turned 65, they would be able to retire with comfort and dignity.

Now House Republicans want to break that promise.

Their recently proposed budget slashes Social Security benefits, raises the retirement age, raises Medicare costs, all while promising another giant tax break for their wealthy friends and large corporations. I will say this, and I hope we all agree, that no one who works their entire life should retire into poverty.

Social Security is an earned benefit that Americans have already paid for with each and every one of their pay-

checks, and President Biden and House Democrats and Senators are committed to defending it from Republican cuts and securing it with meaningful legislation that requires our wealthiest citizens to pay their fair share.

I am proud to stand here with my colleagues standing up for Social Security, keeping it secure, and honoring our most seasoned citizens.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Florida for her comments, and I reiterate that all we are asking for is a vote.

For those citizens tuned in to C-SPAN and listening tonight, if you are saying, What do you mean? Why is it that you can't get a vote on this in the United States Congress? Good question. Call your Representative and ask them why they aren't voting to improve a program that hasn't been enhanced in more than 50 years.

We hear from the other side all the time about what we need to do in terms of cuts. Imagine, this is what they would like to cut. If they have got a better idea, they should bring it to the floor. The way a democracy works is it is a debate about ideas, and then there is actually a vote that is cast.

The gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. STANSBURY) understands this and understands how important the money coming into her district is monthly, as well.

She understands how vitally important Social Security is to our economy, and not just to our retirees, but to our disabled and to their spouses and to children. The genius of Franklin Delano Roosevelt is what keeps entrepreneurialism and capitalism alive and allows people to take risks is because they know that there is a safety net there for its people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. STANSBURY).

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, in New Mexico, we care for our elders. It is a part of our culture. It is a part of who we are because our elders are the people who birthed us, who raised us, who cared for us. They are our grandparents and our parents, our aunts and our uncles, our veterans, the people who carry our histories, our cultures, our languages, and our traditions.

That is why it is so outrageous to me as a New Mexican that the House GOP would even consider, no less propose, to gut the critical programs that support our elders—Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

In New Mexico, thousands of New Mexicans depend on Social Security—our seniors, our elders, people living with disabilities. Over 450,000 New Mexicans depend on Medicare. That is over 20 percent of our State's population. New Mexicans depend on these programs to access lifesaving healthcare, to provide for their families, to put a roof over their head, to put food on the table.

Before Social Security, our elders were left with nothing. Before Medicaid and Medicare, our seniors and our low-income families could not access lifesaving healthcare.

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In New Mexico, over 12 percent of our seniors are considered low-income and living below the poverty line. Thousands are struggling to maintain housing, to have basic services, to have a roof over their head, and to put food on their table.

Let me be clear: these programs save lives, and they have secured our elders for generations.

New Mexicans and all Americans should be able to live without fear that politicians here in Washington are going to use their lives for political gain, but here we are on the House floor. The GOP is playing politics with the lives of our seniors proposing to gut the fundamental programs that have supported them for generations.

We already know what happens when Federal programs are cut. Hospitals close, food insecurity rises, and critical programs disappear. That is why we are fighting as House Democrats and the Biden administration to protect our seniors, to protect these programs, and to ensure that they are there for generations to come.

That is why we are fighting to protect Social Security and our healthcare services. It is why we took on Big Pharma 2 years ago and won. It is why we passed the Inflation Reduction Act which has the largest single expansion of Medicaid since the passage of the Affordable Care Act. It is why we fought to lower prescription drug costs. It is why we capped insulin prices for every American, and it is why I fought in the State legislature to end State taxes on Social Security benefits in New Mexico.

I ask my colleagues: Is this how you care for your elders?

Is this how they taught you and raised you?

Are these the values that you were raised with?

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that is not how we treat our elders in New Mexico because we know they depend on these programs and because we know about the lifesaving care and support that are necessary. We know that we cannot break the promises to those who cared for us and raised us.

Democrats understand, just like New Mexicans, that we must care for our seniors. That is why we are fighting back and working every day to make sure that we secure their well-being.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New Mexico for her eloquence.

There is no one more eloquent or well-versed on this subject than the deaness of the House of Representatives. She is someone who has lived and breathed this issue and has stood up when the other side has referred to Social Security as an entitlement. It is

not an entitlement. It is an earned benefit that people have paid for.

Mr. Speaker, the only thing they have to do is look at their pay stub, because on it, it says FICA. That stands for Federal insurance. It is not an entitlement. It is a Federal Insurance Contributions.

Whose?

The people of the United States of America who have paid into this program and that Congress has not enhanced.

This debate is not only about protecting Social Security, it is about expanding benefits that haven't been expanded in more than 50 years.

I commend President Biden for having the courage and the temerity on this floor in the State of the Union message to speak directly to the American people and even those colleagues on the other side who try to decry the efforts of Social Security and the President's plan to make sure that it is solvent by lifting the cap—imagine that, Mr. Speaker—on people making over \$400,000.

MARCY KAPTUR understands this thoroughly when she talks to people in Ohio who are infuriated and who say: Well, wait a minute, you are telling me that a person making \$50,000, \$75,000, and \$100,000 pays throughout the year, but somebody making over \$400,000 is done paying in January?

Or as Ms. SANCHEZ said, a baseball player after their first at bat?

Nobody has fought harder for working people than the gentlewoman from Ohio.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member, Mr. LARSON, for his persevering leadership on this critical issue to millions and millions and millions of Americans and Assistant Leader NEGUSE for his leadership. I thank them for being here this evening.

I appreciate Mr. LARSON yielding me time to highlight the importance of Social Security but also his tireless work to safeguard and ensure coverage in Social Security for all Americans who qualify for their earned benefits which the gentleman and every single Member who got up here tonight have talked about this evening.

This is not a welfare program. This is an earned benefit.

For nearly a century, America has made a sacred promise: Those who work hard throughout their lives will benefit from the fruits of their labor during their retirement.

Social Security promises the safe and secure retirement for tens of millions of Americans during their golden years. However, we are here tonight because without action by this House leading, that promise is at risk.

Like my colleagues, I represent probably over 150,000 retirees, the majority women, in northwest Ohio who want to see responsible solutions to protect Social Security going forward. For Ohio

that includes eliminating the windfall penalty.

I agree with Congressman LARSON. The billionaire class must join the vast majority of Americans in paying their fair share into this critical system. Yes, it is a retirement system, but it is also an insurance system, it is a disability system, and it is a survivorship system for children.

By making that happen, the Social Security 2100 Act championed by Congressman LARSON will increase benefits for current and new beneficiaries. It will protect retirees against inflation, and it will repeal the windfall elimination provision once and for all.

The Social Security 2100 Act is one of the most important bills before this Congress, and we must push leadership for a vote on this House floor as soon as possible. It impacts 68 million beneficiaries.

Already there are 184 House cosponsors of this bill, and Speaker JOHNSON could move this bill to the floor for a vote tomorrow. Additionally, the Social Security Fairness Act has 319 bipartisan cosponsors, more than two-thirds of the Chamber, and they can't get a vote. It is stopped up in the leadership.

America made a promise to workers, and Democrats are committed to making good on that promise.

I am a granddaughter of immigrants who worked at the lowest wage and worst jobs. First fired; last hired. They simply could not have existed if it were not for Social Security in their retirement years. The same is true for our parents.

You see, Mr. Speaker, Social Security is not just a program. It is a trust, a sacred trust, and that trust is intergenerational.

I may be the only Member here this evening who was present in the 98th Congress in April of 1983 to vote for the refinancing of Social Security Title 2 for the next generation. It was among the most critical votes I ever cast, and I remember it to this day. We stood on this floor, and we cheered. That vote was extremely important because it refinanced Social Security for the first time in a generation.

It left some work undone, which we must repair, but it resulted from a brokered compromise between Republican President Ronald Reagan and House Speaker Tip O'Neill. They knew how to compromise.

Now, Congress must meet its responsibility to do the same for this generation and those that follow.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make sure that we place in the RECORD information about that brokered compromise and also reports from U.S. News and World Report and other materials that attend to that extraordinary moment in history.

Let's get the job done. We ask Speaker JOHNSON to bring up H.R. 2100 for a vote.

I thank Congressman LARSON, Congressman NEGUSE, and Congressman

CARTWRIGHT, who are here this evening as part of this important messaging to the American people to say: The time is now. Bring up H.R. 2100.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his extraordinary and persevering leadership.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Ohio. She mentioned Mr. CARTWRIGHT who I think epitomizes the concern that exists in this body, in the Congress, for people who go back home every week and meet with their constituents.

The constituents of Pennsylvania are fortunate that they have someone who understands their needs and understands the neglect that Congress has shown in not addressing the number one anti-poverty program for elderly and for children in this country.

As difficult as times are now, we need to make sure that minimally we have a vote. I do not understand the reluctance on the other side to bring forward legislation and actually vote on it. If you have got a better idea, Mr. Speaker, or even if you object to the plan, please tell us what it is that you object to, and what it is about Social Security and making sure that nobody works all their lives and pays into a system and then retires into poverty.

MATT CARTWRIGHT understands that. He understands his district in Pennsylvania and the importance of getting this legislation done.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member LARSON for yielding. I wonder if he would submit himself to a few questions and engage in a colloquy.

Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. The first question I have, and we heard it tonight, we heard the statement, the assertion that Social Security for generations has been the single most important income support program in America and has lifted millions upon millions of seniors out of poverty.

Is that true?

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Yes, it is.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. We have also heard talk about this Republican Study Committee, which is a group of 80 percent of the Republicans here in the United States House of Representatives, and it is a committee that came up with a proposal about Social Security to raise the retirement age and require seniors to continue working into their senior years.

Is that true?

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Not only is it true, but I think what the general public needs to understand, and as you point out, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, the saying goes like this: Well, people are living longer, so, therefore, because they are living longer, what we ought to do is raise the age.

What the study committee doesn't tell you is that for every year you raise the age, that is a 7 percent cut in benefits. Oh, so if you raise the age to 70, that is a 21 percent cut in your benefits going forward.

How is it, from just mere logic, that if you are living longer you need to live on 21 percent less?

The American people understand this, and that is why they are so upset, but that is why, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, we need a vote.

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Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I have one final question for Ranking Member LARSON.

This idea of raising the retirement age, as the gentleman has explained very well, constitutes a cut in benefits for every year Republicans raise it. Economists have worked out how much that is going to cost out of the Social Security system.

The majority's plan is to raise the retirement age and cut Social Security benefits by \$1.5 trillion, with a t. That is what happens when you raise the retirement age to 69 the way Republicans want to. Is that right?

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. That is correct.

I guess the sad thing is that this needs a vote. It needs a debate. Philosophically, if you believe—and God bless, some on the other side do believe this is some form of socialism and that everybody ought to be able to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps and be able to make do for themselves, that you don't need the government to do anything for you even when you have paid in all of your life to a program that has been the greatest American program to sustain our elderly and children.

If you disagree with that, that is terrific, but let's then take that to the American people. Where do you do that? On the floor of the House of Representatives, where you actually will debate the issue and put forward your proposals versus ours.

Isn't that the way democracy is supposed to work, Mr. CARTWRIGHT?

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, Ranking Member LARSON has that right, and I thank the gentleman for answering my questions.

Tonight, I am here to speak on behalf of 191,000 people from northeastern Pennsylvania who depend on Social Security checks coming in to keep them alive. Probably over 40 percent of them look to those checks as the only visible means of support that they have.

Now, the Republican Study Committee's fiscal year 2025 proposal comes along and talks about raising the retirement age to 69. That is fine if, like us, you fly a desk for a living, but if you do what so many Americans do, the people who paid paycheck after paycheck after paycheck into this sacred promise, this insurance program, FICA, if you do what they do—they have to lift and climb and carry and

dig. These are the people doing manual labor, and they are expected to work well into their senior years, according to the Republican Study Committee.

Mr. Speaker, this is a breach of a promise. It is a betrayal of the Americans who paid into this system their entire working lives. It is unacceptable, and it is something that the Republicans have done year in and year out.

Remember when, in 2006, Republicans were proposing privatizing the entire Social Security system, saying that will free up people to invest their money in the stock market. Then what happened to the stock market a couple of years later? It cratered. People would have lost their entire lifesavings, and there would have been no checks of any nature coming into their post office boxes.

Mr. Speaker, the answer is not cutting benefits. The answer is Social Security 2100, Mr. LARSON's bill, something that I have proudly supported for over 10 years now.

This bill would increase benefits by 2 percent for all Social Security beneficiaries for the first time in 52 years. It would eliminate the WEP, which hurts policemen, firemen, prison correctional officers, all sorts of public employees.

Rather than cutting benefits, Representative LARSON and the Democratic Party have a plan to protect and enhance Social Security. It is a plan to put people over politics and make good on our promise to put American seniors first and pass Social Security 2100.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, my good friend JODEY ARRINGTON—and I sincerely mean that when I say that. A lot of times on this floor, we say "good friend," but I appreciate the effort that he puts into his work.

I bring these cards here this evening just to point out to our colleagues what it is. We made one for every Member of Congress. This is just a direct plea: Understand what is going on in your district because of Social Security.

Citizens have every right to ask why Congress hasn't done anything to enhance this program, Democrats and Republicans, in more than 50 years, especially when we know how vital this program is to our own system of capitalism and entrepreneurialism and what it means to every single one of our communities.

There is not a better economic development program that Texas will receive than the individuals in everyone's district receiving their Social Security checks. They are not going out and buying stock options. They are buying groceries. They are going to the pharmacy. They are going to the dry cleaners. They are paying their rent and mortgages. They are meeting the concerns in their communities. In doing so, those communities can thrive. It is long overdue—more than 50 years.

All we are asking for is a vote. If you have a better idea, in a democracy, the way I was brought up, you put it out there, and then, lo and behold, we actually have a vote—a vote that requires a debate and a discussion and then Congress demonstrating what it believes in by actually casting a vote.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. NEGUSE) for a final comment.

Mr. NEGUSE. Mr. Speaker, I would simply say one of the many privileges I have in serving as assistant Democratic leader is having the opportunity to see firsthand the way in which my colleagues in the House Democratic Caucus are able to convert their passion and conviction on consequential public policy issues into action. That is precisely what the gentleman from Connecticut has done for the better part of the last decade, from when he first introduced this legislation.

I am proud to support it. I am proud to support his efforts to protect and enhance Social Security and to do everything that we can to ensure that our colleagues' plans on the other side of the aisle to dismantle this program never see the light of day.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my distinguished colleague and friend from Connecticut for yielding.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to a perceived viewing audience.

#### DEMOCRATS ARE DESTROYING AMERICAN DREAM, RULE OF LAW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I notice it must be campaign season. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle are trotting out the age-old push-granny-off-the-cliff campaign talking points. It never fails.

If my colleagues want to have a conversation about how to save Social Security, the trustees just put a report out this week or last week pointing out that it is going to be underwater by 2033. The minority wants to ignore that reality. Instead of figuring out how we are actually going to deal with the problem, Democrats trot out the same old story about taxes.

By any objective measure, by any analysis by left, right, center, Libertarian, conservative, or liberal, you can tax literally the entirety of the top 1 percent of earners, but it can't possibly balance the budget. Literally, the math doesn't work.

We can throw all this around in election-year rhetoric, but the truth is our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are not just watching Social Security

go bankrupt, but they are bankrupt in ideas on what to do about it.

The fact is you have to actually constrain spending, discretionary spending, deal with the issues we ought to deal with on mandatory spending, and recognize the fact that we are \$34.5 trillion in debt. We are racking up \$1 trillion every 3 months. We are now going to crack \$1.1 trillion of interest this year alone—\$1.1 trillion of interest, which is far more than our entire defense budget.

The fact is our retirees are going to have a problem in 2033. In fact, this trustee's report pointed out that they will be getting 79 cents on the dollar in 2033. We can have a conversation about what you want to do about taxes, but my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are all too happy to regulate and crush the entire American economy to death and drive up inflation, making all those Social Security recipients have less value in their Social Security dollars. That is the truth.

The average American can't afford to live, whether they are earning money in the prime of their earning potential, in their earning years, or whether they are a retiree because the dollar value is decreasing because we are printing money because, frankly, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have no interest in actually being fiscally responsible—I am an equal opportunity basher of fiscal responsibility—nor do my colleagues on this side of the aisle, to be honest.

It is a repeating problem that never ends, but it is my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, my radical progressive Democratic colleagues—and there is no other way to characterize them—who want to use scare tactics in a campaign year rather than addressing any of the actual fiscal issues that affect our Nation.

The fact is that Democrats are destroying the American Dream, killing the ability of the average American family to prosper. Hardworking American families right now are struggling to pay bills, struggling to be able to buy a car. Why? Because we have regulated them to death. Why? Because, chasing climate fantasy, we are killing the ability of an American to go buy a car with an internal combustion engine.

We are piling up EVs on the lots of dealerships around the country. We are now embracing, because the Biden administration unilaterally embraced, a tailpipe rule that will mandate EV production, two-thirds of the fleet being produced by 2030.

My colleagues are crushing the American Dream before our very eyes.

That is what has happened. The so-called Inflation Reduction Act, mandating massive subsidies of so-called green programs, is actually subsidizing China and the massive corporations that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle decry.

Democrats want to increase the corporate tax rate, which will punish

hardworking Americans who are trying to create wealth relative to corporations around the world, but my colleagues on the other side of the aisle don't want to undo the massive corporate subsidies they gave to Green New Deal recipients.

That is the truth, and it is destroying the average American's ability to live. Let's be very clear. Right now, Americans are hurting because of Democratic policies. Right now, Americans can't buy a car, can't go out and afford groceries, can't pay their power bills. Why? Because of my radical progressive Democratic colleagues and their policies regulating our entire economy to death and destroying the average American family.

Let's not talk about the price of homes, the price of real estate. All these things are things that are increasingly highly and heavily regulated. That is problem number one.

Let's talk about what our radical progressive Democratic colleagues are doing to destroy the rule of law. The rule of law is the single greatest thing that attracts people to come to the United States, the single greatest thing that attracts capital to create wealth and to create opportunity. It is the single greatest thing that has distinguished the United States of America and Western civilization from the rest of the world for now centuries, particularly since the founding of this Nation.

□ 2000

The fact is, the rule of law is being destroyed by my radical, progressive Democratic colleagues, it is purposefully being destroyed. This week, we have bills on the floor, and we are talking a lot about our police, our law enforcement officers, but it is not about a week. Weeks are stupid.

We come down here and we do all these things. We do ribbons and we do all these things that say, Oh, we are going to have a week. The fact is every week is police week. Every week our cops are in danger. Every week our cops are being undermined by radical progressives in cities around this country, endangering the people in communities while endangering the law enforcement who are supposed to protect them every single week—not just this one—every week.

Last year, November 2023, in Austin—a city which defunded our police by \$150 million, driving down the number of cops. We are now at least 350, if not 500, below the level that we were supposed to be at, the level we were at before COVID because we don't have the ability to recruit law enforcement after decimating the budget. That was the radical city council, led by radical, progressive Democrats in Austin, which are reflected and mirrored by the radical, progressive Democrats sitting right here in this Chamber like CORI BUSH who said we should defund the police, like the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, Mr. NADLER,