Dear Speaker Johnson and Leader Jeffries,

As you work to finalize Fiscal Year 24 appropriations legislation and other must pass bills, we urge you to exclude the creation of a so-called fiscal commission, especially with language that creates a “fast-track” process around regular order.

Fiscal Commission legislation currently under consideration by the House Committee on Budget would create a process in which legislating would be done by a small group of individuals behind closed doors. The goal of these commissions would be to produce legislation that cuts benefits and calls for an up or down vote without hearings, and that is unamendable.

This is not a simple debate over process. Without member input and public review, fiscal commissions have historically recommended cutting or privatizing Social Security:

- The Greenspan Commission\(^1\) was the basis of the Social Security Amendments of 1983, which resulted in a raise in the retirement age that was the equivalent to a 13% benefit cut, a tax on benefits for middle income retirees, and the creation of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) which reduces the benefits of nearly 2 million public servants.
- The President's Commission to Strengthen Social Security, established by President George W. Bush, issued a report outlining three models of partial privatization of Social Security.\(^2\)
- Most recently, the Bowles-Simpson Commission\(^3\) recommended raising the retirement age, reducing the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), and reducing benefit amounts for many earners.\(^4\)

Given this track record, and the stated intention of the Republican Study Committee, a Commission would have fast-track authority to enact greater cuts to Social Security and other programs vital to the American people. This is no profile in courage, it’s a direct circumvention of the process to expedite cuts to Social Security.

Let’s be clear, a Commission is not the solution. There is no shortage of legislation that will improve the fiscal standing of the United States while directly benefiting the public. Democratic proposals include legislation that would extend Social Security’s solvency for another generation.

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\(^1\) Formally the National Commission on Social Security Reform
\(^2\) [https://www.ssa.gov/history/reports/pcsss/Final_report.pdf](https://www.ssa.gov/history/reports/pcsss/Final_report.pdf)
\(^3\) Formally the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform
while expanding benefits the American people rely on – benefits that haven’t been expanded in more than 50 years. It is Congress’s responsibility to conduct the oversight and recommend enhancements to solvency or cuts, and it should be done in the open and not behind closed doors.

We do not need a Commission to tell us what we must do, we need the political courage to take up these or any other proposals in regular order. Committees and subcommittees must have the ability to hold hearings to examine policy and mark-ups so that improvements can be made on behalf of our constituents.

We urge you to commit to regular order by opposing the creation of a fiscal commission in any must pass legislation.

Sincerely,

John B. Larson  
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress

Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress

Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Member of Congress
Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress

Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress

Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress

Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress

Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress

Judy Chu  
Member of Congress

Joseph D. Morelle  
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Donald Norcross  
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Jill Tokuda  
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Kweisi Mfume  
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John Garamendi  
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Dan Goldman  
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Robin L. Kelly  
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Kevin Mullin  
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Barbara Lee  
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Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez  
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Mark Pocan  
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Val Hoyle  
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Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
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Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
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Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress

Cori Bush  
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Maxwell Alejandro Frost  
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Becca Balint  
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Adam B. Schiff  
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Debbie Dingell  
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Stephen F. Lynch  
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Jimmy Gomez  
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Madeleine Dean  
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Joe Neguse  
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Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress