



AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO

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April 23, 2018

Honorable John B. Larson
Ranking Member, Social Security Subcommittee
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
1501 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member Larson:

We are writing to express our support for the legislation you have authored to strengthen and improve Social Security, the *Social Security 2100 Act* (H.R. 1902), and introduced in the Senate by Senators Richard Blumenthal and Chris Van Hollen as S. 2671. The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) is the largest federal employee union, representing 700,000 workers in the federal government and the government of the District of Columbia, including more than 48,000 Social Security Administration employees across the United States.

Social Security is the foundation of economic security for millions of retirees, widows and widowers, severely ill or injured workers, and children. Since its inception, Social Security employees have worked on the front lines to make sure Americans get the benefits they have earned, on time and in full. We know that Social Security reaches almost every family at some point in their lives, and we see daily its value to Americans.

That is why it is critical for our nation to continue to ensure that Social Security meets the needs of the American public and can do so for generations to come. At a time when too many Americans are facing retirement insecurity as a result of the decline in traditional pensions and low wages that leave little or no money for retirement savings, Social Security plays an ever more essential role in helping people retire with dignity and preventing poverty in old age.

The *Social Security 2100 Act* provides four vital improvements to strengthen Social Security:

- It provides an across-the-board benefit increase for both current and future beneficiaries. For a typical retiree, this would mean \$300 more in their pocket each year for medicine, food, and other necessities.
- It strengthens the Social Security cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), so that it better-reflects the higher costs seniors face for health care and other expenses.



- It provides tax relief for middle-income seniors, raising income thresholds to protect more seniors from paying taxes on their benefits.
- It helps people who have worked hard and played by the rules for their whole lives, by improving the minimum benefit to prevent retirees from falling into poverty.

The legislation guarantees solvency through the planning period: Social Security's independent actuary has certified that it protects the Trust Fund beyond the traditional 75-year evaluation period and into the next century. No longer will program detractors be able to scare Americans into believing that Social Security is going bankrupt. Confidence in the future of the program will be restored.

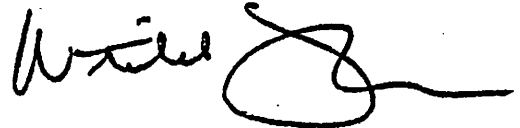
The legislation asks the wealthy to pay their fair share, by paying FICA taxes on all of their salary like everyone else. And it institutes a small, gradual increase in workers' and employers' contributions to the Social Security Trust Fund, phased in over 24 years. This is the first increase since 1983 in the premiums workers pay for Social Security's unmatched insurance protections, and is well worth it.

Again, AFGE is pleased to support and endorse the *Social Security 2100 Act*. We thank you for championing this bold effort and leading the fight to expand and strengthen Social Security.

Sincerely,



J. David Cox, Sr.
National President, AFGE



Witold Skwierczynski
President, National Council of SSA
Field Operations Locals, AFGE