

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-1317

January 21, 2015

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you finalize your Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 budget recommendations, I urge you to reject any proposals that could cut Social Security and Medicare benefits or shift costs to those who rely on these critically important programs. At a time when many seniors are struggling financially we need to work together to strengthen economic security for them, not to increase uncertainty and add to their economic burden. Specifically, I ask you once again this year to disregard using the chained Consumer Price Index (CPI) to calculate cost-of-living and inflation adjustments for federal programs such as Social Security.

This year, we will celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Social Security and commemorate the tremendous impact it has made in allowing seniors to live out their golden years with dignity. Close to 1 in 5 Americans or nearly 66 million people are currently receiving monthly benefits from Social Security and its earned benefits represent 90 percent or more of total income for one in three retirees.

Chained CPI would reduce these earned benefits over time because it fails to take into account inflation for older Americans. As you know, many seniors already face tight personal budgets, challenges that the recession only exacerbated. For many seniors living on a fixed income, any reduction in benefits would have a serious impact on their ability to afford basic necessities, like food, housing and medication.

I recognize that measures are required to address our nation's long-term budget challenges, and appreciate the difficult choices you face as you prepare a fiscal blueprint to promote economic growth. But, I respectfully ask that once again you choose not to place the burden of additional deficit reduction on the backs of seniors, veterans, federal retirees, disabled individuals and others by including chained CPI in your Budget for Fiscal Year 2016.

Sincerely,



Cheri Bustos  
Member of Congress