

August 31, 2001

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert
Speaker of the House

The Honorable J.C. Watts, Jr.
Chairman, Republican Conference

The Honorable Dick Armey
Majority Leader

The Honorable Jim Nussle
Chairman, House Budget Committee

The Honorable Tom DeLay
Majority Whip

Dear Sirs:

As you are aware, the Office of Management and Budget and the Congressional Budget Office have recently released their respective mid-session updates on the federal budget. While OMB and CBO arrive at different conclusions regarding the size of the surplus, it is clear that because of the economic downturn and the excessive levels of spending enacted last year, there is a significant risk that the federal government could dip into the Social Security Trust Fund Surplus for Fiscal Year 2001. In addition, depending upon the level of spending, the government could again dip into the Social Security Trust Fund surplus in Fiscal Years 2002 through 2004.

We believe it is critical that we protect the Social Security Trust Fund and ensure that the Social Security surplus is not used to finance excessive government spending. We respectfully request that when Congress reconvenes we proceed to the consideration of legislation that will ensure that we protect the Social Security Trust Fund for Fiscal Year 2001. We further request that prior to the consideration of any additional legislation that would impact the surplus for Fiscal Years 2002 through 2004, we develop a fiscal plan that takes into account the impact of the economic downturn on the surplus and permits us to fund our national priorities without dipping into the Social Security Trust Fund. This plan also must ensure that Medicare funds are only spent on Medicare.

One of the greatest accomplishments of the Republican Congress was ending the 20-plus year raid on the Social Security Trust Fund. We look forward to working with you to maintain our shared commitment to protecting the Social Security Trust Fund and the Medicare program.

Sincerely,

/s/

John Shadegg
Paul Ryan
Wally Herger
Pete Sessions

Pat Toomey
J.D. Hayworth
Virgil Goode, Jr.
Jim Ryun

Eric Cantor
Joseph Pitts
Nick Smith
Steve Chabot
Butch Otter
Melissa Hart
Pete Hoekstra
Pat Tiberi
David Vitter
John Doolittle
Walter Jones

Ron Paul
John Culberson
Jim DeMint
Jeff Flake
Mike Pence
Mark Green
Don Manzullo
Tom Tancredo
Cliff Stearns
Bob Schaffer
Van Hilleary