# Protecting Social Security: A Blueprint for Strengthening Social Security for All Americans

Prepared by:

Latinos for a Secure Retirement

January, 2011

Also available online at:
www.lulac.org/socialsecurity

## Executive Summary

Since 1935, Social Security has provided a vital safety net for millions of Americans who cannot work because of age or disability. The benefits are far from generous, the average benefit for seniors is just $14,040 a year and even lower for Latino seniors. Yet, these benefits represent nearly all the income for almost half of Latino seniors. Social Security is the bedrock of our nation's retirement security and must be protected and strengthened. The Latinos for a Secure Retirement coalition is being formed to oppose any cuts to benefits or increase in the retirement age.

Since its inception 75 years ago, Social Security has been an independent off budget program funded by a dedicated payroll (FICA) tax. Social Security has never contributed a single penny to the national deficit and it remains in strong financial condition today, currently with a $2.6 trillion dollar surplus that is projected to grow to over $4 trillion by the year 2023. Unfortunately, there are some who for political reasons have made false claims that Social Security is part of our nation's deficit problem and financially unsustainable. We urge them to put aside their dangerous political rhetoric and join us in a serious, grown up discussion on Social Security. The U.S. Senate agrees that Social Security should not be lumped in with conversations about the deficit, voting 97-0 to exclude Social Security from a proposed deficit commission.

The Protecting Social Security plan strengthens the program without any cuts to benefits or increase in the retirement age. On the contrary, the Protecting Social Security plan enhances benefits for those most in need. First, the plan would gradually raise the tax cap to cover 90 percent of all earnings. This will reduce the 75 year projected deficit by nearly 40 percent. Second, the plan gradually diversifies the Social Security trust fund reserves by investing in equities. This closes the projected 75 year deficit by a further third, while providing needed investments for America's economy and bolting shut Social Security's lock box. Third, the plan extends Social Security coverage to newly hired state and local employees to ensure that all Americans can benefit from Social Security. In addition to helping local and state employees, this has the further benefit of reducing the projected 75 year deficit by 9 percent. Fourth, the plan raises additional revenue by treating all salary reduction plans like 401(k) contributions, closing the 75 year projected shortfall by a further 13 percent. Additionally, Social Security can further be strengthened by increasing legal immigration.

This added revenue allows for more adequate benefits to those who need it most. The Protecting Social Security plan would raise the social insurance income floor for low wage workers with many years of employment by creating a new special minimum benefit. Furthermore, the plan invests in America's future by reinstating benefits to college students who are children to deceased or disabled parents up to the age of 22. Under Social Security Trustee estimates, the trust fund surplus will continue to grow over the next 75 years under the current system with a small increase in economic growth and employment, their optimistic projections. The Protecting Social Security plan recognizes the inherent uncertainty of making projections 75 years into the future and creates automatic triggers to adjust the system should revenue either decline to unsustainable levels or increase significantly above promised benefits.

This plan is based on several core principles. First, Social Security must retain its function as a social insurance program. It also must remain independent and apart from the general budget. Because of the importance of Social Security in providing a capped level of economic security to beneficiaries, there should be no benefit cuts and no increase in the retirement age, which is a benefit cut. The plan keeps a direct and meaningful correlation between Social Security contributions and benefits. This plan is consistent with what Americans say they want, surveys show that Americans don't mind paying for Social security because they understand its value for themselves, their families and millions of other Americans who depend on the benefits. This support for Social Security cuts across party lines – fully 93 percent of Democrats, 85 percent of independents, and 81 percent of Republicans agree.

The Protecting Social Security plan is reflects the core values of the American people and will strengthen benefits, invest in America's future, and increase the financial solvency of the system.

# Contents

# Foreword

Our organizations represent the more than 50 million Latinos in the United States, nearly one out of every six Americans, and the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States. While Latinos in the U.S. have a diverse range of backgrounds and characteristics, we share a strong cultural value of *La Familia*. These family values of caring for your parents, spouses and children are exemplified by Social Security.

Social Security is a vital safety net that protects American families. Children are protected in the event they are orphaned or their parents become disabled. Workers are protected if they can no longer work because of disability and parents and grandparents are protected when they become too old to continue working. Social Security is a sacred trust between generations and represents our Latino family values.

We are very concerned about some of the false misperceptions being perpetuated about Social Security. Social Security has not contributed to our deficit problem and is not in any crisis. It is fully funded through 2037 and will still be able to pay out about 76% of promised benefits after this date even if no changes to the program are made. With moderate tweaks to raise additional revenue, as in our Protecting Social Security plan, Social Security can continue to provide peace of mind for Latinos and all Americans for another 75 years and beyond.

Our hope is that this report will assist our elected leaders, their staffs, and the general public to better understand the importance of Social Security and work with us to further strengthen its finances without cutting benefits or increasing the retirement age.

We would like to thank the numerous people who generously took time to consult and assist us in developing this plan.

With warm regards,

Brent Wilkes
Executive Director
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)

Hector Sanchez
Executive Director
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA)

Dr. Yanira Cruz
President & CEO
National Hispanic Council on Aging

Dr. Carmen Lacayo
President & CEO
National Association of Hispanic Elderly

Suleika Cabrera Drinane
President & CEO

Lillian Rodriguez Lopez
President
Hispanic Federation

Alma Morales Riojas
President
MANA, A National Latina Organization

Ignacio Salazar
President & CEO
SER- Jobs for Progress National, Inc.

Albert Gonzales
US National Commander
The American GI Forum

# Introduction

Social Security is an essential social insurance program that covers nearly all Americans and enjoys widespread support. Americans support Social Security because it protects them and their families if they cannot work because of age or disability. Surveys report that Americans don't mind paying for Social security because they understand its value for themselves, their families and millions of other Americans who depend on the benefits. This support for Social Security cuts across party lines – fully 93 percent of Democrats, 85 percent of independents, and 81 percent of Republicans agree.[i] 84 percent of Hispanics agree that preserving Social Security for future generations is critical, even if it means increasing Social Security taxes on workers.[ii]

The Protecting Social Security plan outlines how essential Social Security is to average Americans, highlights basic principles vital to keeping Social Security strong, and puts forth a simple and straightforward plan that follows these principles to expand benefits while extending the program's solvency.

# Background on Social Security

Benefits

Roughly 53 million Americans receive monthly Social Security benefits, including 34 million retirees, 8 million disabled workers, 4.8 million dependents of disabled or retired workers and 6.4 million who collect survivor benefits. Social Security provides benefits to over 2 million Latino households, nearly 1 out of 6 (16 percent).[iii]

These benefits are far from generous. The average benefit for seniors is $14,040.[iv]
Yet these meager benefits are critical, 72 percent of unmarried seniors and 52 percent of married couples receive 50 percent or more of their income from Social Security. 41 percent of unmarried seniors rely on Social Security for 90 percent or more of their income.[v]

The story is much the same for Latinos, although the benefits are even more important. For Latinos over the age of 65, the average 2008 benefit for Latino men was $12,213 and only $9,536 for Latino women.[vi] These Social Security benefits compromise nearly all the income for almost half, 44.2 percent, of Latino elderly households and represent 75.4 percent of the total income of Latino elderly households receiving benefits.[vii] Without Social Security, the elderly Latino poverty rate would increase from roughly 1 out of 6 (17.9 percent) to 1 out of 2 (50.7 percent).[viii] Latinos receive a rate of return on their Social Security contributions that is 35 to 60 percent higher than the overall population, more than any other group. That's because they tend to have lower lifetime income, longer life expectancies, higher incidence of disability and larger families.[ix]

Social Security is clearly the bedrock of our nation's retirement security and an indispensable lifeline for our nation's seniors, disabled, widows and orphans. Any attempts at reforming Social Security must recognize the importance of these benefits.

Funding

Social Security has historically been funded through three sources, a payroll tax of 6.2 percent of earning matched by a 6.2 percent employer contribution for covered earnings (currently earnings under $106,800), interest earned on trust fund assets invested in special US Obligation Treasury Bonds and federal income taxes on the benefits of certain high income beneficiaries. Of the $807.5 billion of Social Security revenue in 2009, 82.6 percent came from payroll taxes, 2.7 percent from income taxes on benefits and 14.7 percent came from trust fund assets.[x] In 2011, a temporary one year tax payroll holiday will reduce trust fund revenue, but this lost revenue will be replaced by contributions from government's general operating budget.

Solvency

Social Security has annual projections of its fiscal future conducted each year by its trustees. The trustees make three separate projections to account for the high level of uncertainty in future economic growth, unemployment rates, inflation, etc., but the intermediate assumptions are considered the "best guess" projections and are the most frequently cited. Therefore, the intermediate trustee projections will be those used in this paper. However, it is worth noting that there is no shortfall over the next 75 years at all under the Trustees low-cost or optimistic projections. Under these optimistic projections, the trust fund surplus would increase to over 600 percent of annual costs by 2085.[xi] Increasing economic growth and reducing unemployment can reduce and solve any Social Security shortfall in absence of any other additional changes to the program.

Social Security has always been "off budget," independent from the general budget. It has a dedicated revenue stream and, by law, is prohibited from borrowing funds, going into debt and contributing to the deficit. Social Security will only pay benefits if it has the funds to do so. This also means the Budget Act prohibits changes made to Social Security as part of any budget reconciliation process, subjecting any change in Social Security to the filibuster.

The Social Security Trust Fund holds more than $2.5 trillion in assets, which is projected to grow to $4.2 trillion by 2025.[xii] In 2010, Social Security ran a $77 billion dollar surplus. However, the trust fund will begin to be spent down in 2025 and is expected to be exhausted in about 27 years if no changes are made. At this point, Social Security would pay about 76 percent of promised benefits, which would stay fairly consistent through 2085.

The main attacks by opponents of Social Security have focused on the solvency issue. Some argue that we need to cut benefits now to avoid cutting benefits in the future. Others have tried to link Social Security to our nation's federal deficit. However, being off-budget and independent of the general budget, Social Security has never contributed a single penny to the national deficit. The U.S. Senate recognized this, voting 97-0 to exclude Social Security from the proposed deficit commission.[xiii]

In February of 2010, President Obama established an executive Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform with Alan Simpson and Erskine Bowles as its chairmen. Simpson and Bowles evidently disagreed with both president Obama, who on the campaign trail opposed having a commission address Social Security and favored raising revenue to address any shortfall,[xiv] and the U.S. Senate, who voted unanimously to exclude Social Security from any debt commission. Instead, Simpson and Bowles made cutting Social Security benefits a centerpiece of their deficit reduction proposal. The commission wisely rejected the Simpson-Bowles plan. Although the Simpson-Bowles plan was not endorsed by the full commission, it has still received significant media attention and consideration from Washington policymakers, posing a severe threat to Social Security and the wellbeing of everyday hardworking Americans.

# Guiding Principles

In response to this threat to Social Security, Latino organizations including LULAC, LCLAA, The Hispanic Federation, MANA, the National Hispanic Council on Aging, the Institute for the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly, SER- Jobs for Progress National, Inc., the American GI Forum, and the National Association for Hispanic Elderly formed the Latinos for a Secure Retirement coalition to oppose any cuts to benefits or raising of the retirement age, and drafted the Protecting Social Security plan. The plan is based on the following set of principles:

Social Security must remain a social insurance program

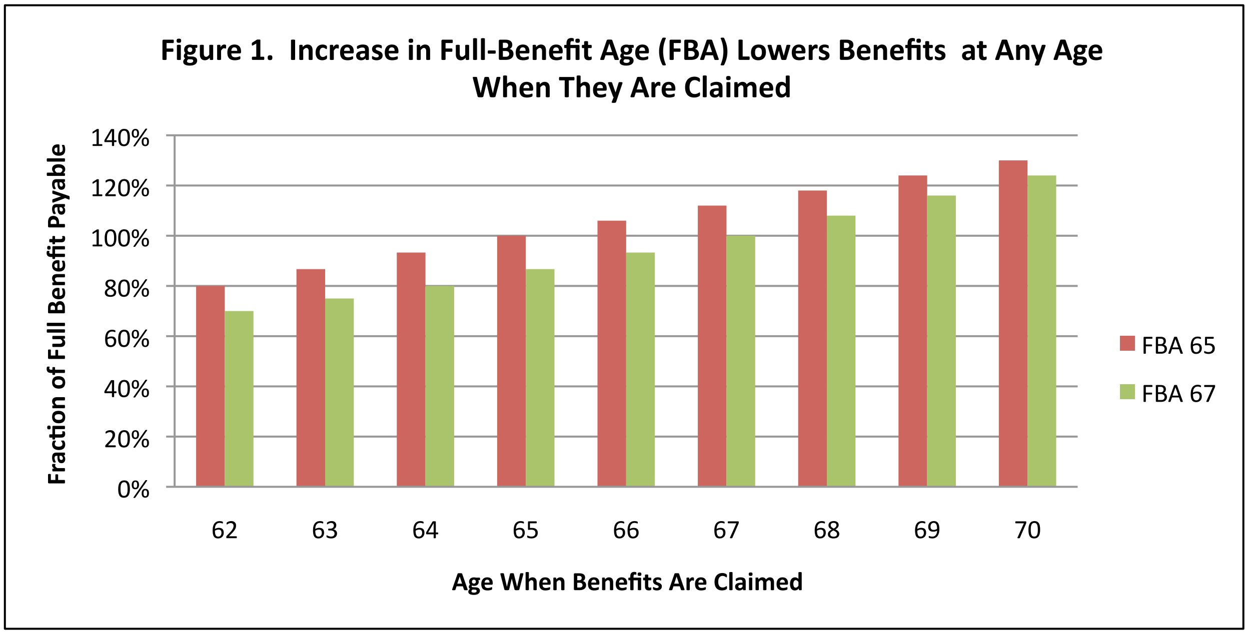
The great strength of Social Security is that it operates as an independent social insurance program, everyone contributes and everyone benefits. While seniors may outlive personal retirement savings, Social Security protects Americans in old age by providing an inflation protected benefit that is guaranteed to last for life. This insurance aspect of Social Security must remain not only for the oldest of Americans, but also for those who may become disabled and children of deceased and disabled parents.

No benefit cuts

The average age-old social security benefit is $14,040 a year. With so many seniors living off such a meager amount, benefits for low income seniors need to be increased, not cut. Some proposals would cut benefits only for the highest income seniors, which they define to include those with an income as low as $40,000 a year, but this should be opposed. The strength of Social Security is that it is a shared social insurance program and not a welfare program. Everyone pays into the program and everyone gets benefits, and both contributions and benefits are capped. If middle and upper class seniors do not benefit from this progressive program, in the long run Social Security will lose popular support and be at greater risk in the future.

No increase in the retirement age

Raising the full benefit age results in lower benefits no matter what age benefits are claimed at. For example, benefits claimed at 62 were reduced by 20 percent when the full-benefit age (FBA) was 65. With a full-benefit age of 67, those claiming at age 62 will see their benefits reduced by 30 percent. Raising the full-benefit age is particularly harmful to those in blue collar manual jobs who may not physically be able to work longer. Furthermore, in 2010 the retirement age just rose to 66 for those born in 1944 or later (who reached the age of 66 in 2010) and is already scheduled to rise to 67 by 2027.




Source: Reprinted with permission from the National Academy of Social Insurance Social Security Brief #35:
http://www.nasi.org/sites/default/files/research/SS_Brief_035.pdf

Such a drastic reduction in benefits from further increasing the retirement age would place an unacceptable burden on our nation's seniors. Most seniors are already not able to claim at the full-benefit age. In 2009 about 75 percent of new retirees, 2 million out of 2.7 million Americans, claimed reduced retirement benefits below the full-benefit age.[xv] The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has reported that 6 out of 10 workers over 55 retire following a job loss.[xvi] Many seniors find it difficult to find work, a study from the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College found 35 year-old female workers 40 percent more likely to receive a job interview than a 62-year old female worker with an identical resume.[xvii] Finally, nearly half of workers age 58 and older work in jobs that are either physically demanding or have difficult working conditions.[xviii] Raising the retirement age is a benefit cut and against the principles of the Latinos for a Secure Retirement coalition.

<u>The correlation between contributions and benefits must be maintained</u>

There should continue to be a direct correlation between an individual's contributions and the benefits received. Proposals that would either drastically cut benefits for high income seniors or completely eliminate the earnings cap without additional benefits threaten to weaken this correlation and therefore the future vitality of the system.

<u>Social Security must remain independent</u>

Social Security has operated for 75 years outside the budget, with a separate dedicated revenue stream largely from the FICA contributions. This independence should be further strengthened and institutionalized. The one year payroll tax holiday that begins in 2011 is a potential first step in weakening this independence. This must only be allowed to be a one-time exception, in the future Social Security should be completely separate from the general budget as it has been for the previous 75 years.

<u>No private accounts</u>

Privatization would cut benefits, change the social insurance nature of Social Security, put seniors at higher risk and actually decrease solvency. Social Security has always existed with the current working generation's contributions paying for the retirement of the older generation. This was done so that immediate benefits could be paid out during the great depression. Under privatization plans, the younger generation must save for their own retirement even while at the same time paying for the retirement of the older generation. Latinos tend to be a younger demographic and earn less than the population as a whole, making privatization proposals particularly disadvantageous. The American people overwhelmingly rejected previous privatization proposals.

## The Protecting Social Security Plan

The Protecting Social Security plan follows these principles and provides a blueprint to achieve full solvency beyond 75 years without cutting benefits or increasing the retirement age. In fact, the Protecting Social Security plan strengthens benefits for those who need it most.

<u>Raise the tax cap gradually over 10 years to cover 90 percent of earnings</u>

Social Security originally was designed to cover more than 90 percent of all earnings, for example it covered 92 percent of all earnings in 1937. [xix] In1977, after rising income inequality reduced the percentage of earnings covered, Congress set a goal and passed legislation to again collect 90 percent of earnings. However, continued rising income inequality over the past thirty years has again reduced the percentage of earnings covered so that today Social Security payroll taxes cover only about 85 percent of earnings.[xx] Wages above $106,800 are exempt from Social Security taxes, about 6 percent of all workers earn more than the cap.[xxi] We can eliminate 39 percent of the projected 75-year deficit by gradually increasing the taxable base over the next decade to again cover 90 percent of earnings.[xxii]

<u>Diversify trust fund investments</u>

The protecting Social Security plan would bolt the social security lock box and gradually invest 40 percent of the trust fund surplus in equities. This increases Social Security's independence from the general budget and provides investment capital for business and infrastructure vital to the future economic success of America.

U.S. Treasury Bonds are a safe investment, and most of the trust fund should remain invested in them, but having some diversity is a basic component of safe investing. In contrast to proposed private individual accounts, the government has an infinite time horizon and can spread the risk of a bear market over several generations to maintain promised benefits. Most other public and private pension plans, including for employees of the Federal Reserve System, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Railroad Retirement Board, have some portion of trust funds invested in private equities. According to a 2010 U.S. Senate Committee on Aging report, investing 40 percent of the Trust Fund Assets in a broad index of equity markets gradually over fifteen years could eliminate 33 percent of the 75-year projected deficit. The reduction in the projected deficit would be even larger when taking account the increased revenue the Trust Fund will take in from the other proposals in this report. We conservatively estimate that investing 40 percent of these new revenues could reduce the projected 75-year deficit by another 5 percent of the projected 75-year deficit. This increased investment in American companies and infrastructure will also have a positive effect on our economic growth, further helping reduce any shortfall in Social Security.

Cover all new local and state government employees

State and local government employees were among those exempted from Social Security coverage when the system was created in 1935. In the 1950's Congress changed the law to allow state and local government to voluntarily cover their employees. Now, most local and state government employees are covered by Social Security, but about 25 percent of such employees are not, most located in seven states.[xxiii]

Extending coverage to all newly-hired state and local government employees can reduce the projected 75-year deficit by nine percent[xxiv] and can be beneficial to embattled state and local government employees. Workers moving between covered and non-covered jobs can go through long periods of time, often five or more years, without the protections of social insurance because the different systems' eligibility requirements are non-portable. Several non-covered plans have caps on their Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs) and may not provide as generous spousal and survivors benefits. Additionally, many employees and their families who have worked in both covered and non-covered jobs believe that the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) provisions unfairly harm them. Finally, many local and state government pensions are being targeted as being unfairly generous, but very rarely is it noted that these employees do not receive Social Security benefits. Universal Social Security coverage will allow the public to make fair, apples-to-apples appraisals on the fairness of public pensions for hard working state and local government employees.

While making Social Security universal to all Americans appeals to treating everyone equally and can benefits employees, it must be noted that this change could cause additional expenses to local and state government undergoing this change at a time when local and state government are under severe financial strain. States and localities would need to adjust their pension plans to supplement Social Security as was done for federal employees when newly hired federal workers were first covered by Social Security as a result of legislation in 1983. Measures would be needed to ensure this transition was done fairly and equitably. It would be reasonable for the Federal Government to offer technical and financial assistance to states for their transitions.

Treat all salary reduction plans like 401(k)s

Employees pay Social Security taxes on their contributions to retirement accounts, such as 401(k), 403(b) and 457 plans, but do not pay Social Security taxes on other salary reduction plans or flexible spending accounts, such as for health care, dependent care or qualified commuting costs.[xxv] Employee contributions to both retirement savings plans and other salary reduction plans are exempted from personal income taxes. Ensuring all salary reduction plans cannot be used to avoid Social Security tax liability would reduce the projected 75-year deficit by about 13 percent.[xxvi]

Insure college and vocational students of deceased or disabled parents[xxvii]

Social Security historically paid benefits to children of retired, deceased, or disabled beneficiaries until the age of 22 if they were in college. However, the law was changed in 1981 to end benefits for student children once they either graduated high school or turned 19, in part because of the belief that higher education had become more affordable for disadvantaged youth. Since then, college costs have skyrocketed and higher education has become even more essential to long-term labor market success.

The Protecting Social Security plan would provide Social Security benefits for students of deceased or disabled parents. Latinos are more likely than the population as a whole to have a deceased or disabled parent. This change would help address college affordability for a disproportionately low-income group and provide additional incentives for them to stay in college. Polls show that 78 percent of Americans favor this option.[xxviii] The cost of providing this important new benefit would be modest, it would only add about 3.5 percent to the projected 75-year deficit. However, the ultimate benefit may be the future economic growth realized by investing in Americans. A college graduate will on average make about $26,000 more than someone with only a high school education, contributing $145,000 more into the Social Security trust fund over their lifetime.

Raise the income floor for vulnerable elders

A special minimum benefit was enacted in the 1970's to provide adequate benefits to workers with long careers at low pay. However, the special minimum benefit was not indexed to keep pace with wage growth and is no longer effective. To protect long service low wage workers, a special minimum benefit should be enacted to pay 125 percent of the poverty line for those who have worked 30 years and retire at the normal retirement age. It should be indexed to wage growth in the same way that other benefits are for those newly eligible. Strengthening the special minimum benefit would increase the projected 75-year deficit by about 6.5 percent.

Increase legal immigration

Another way to increase Social Security solvency that policymakers should consider is increasing the number of legal immigrants, which would increase the number of workers per retiree. The Social Security Administration estimates that each increase of 100,000 immigrants improves the long-term actuarial balance by 0.07 percent of taxable payroll, or about 3.5 percent of the projected 75-year deficit.[xxix]

Policy makers should also be wary of putting additional burdens on the Social Security Administration (SSA) in regards to immigration enforcement. One reason Social Security is so successful is low administrative costs under 1 percent. Expanding programs like the employee verification no-match letters would place costly administration burdens on SSA, which was never intended to enforce immigration laws. If SSA is utilized in this capacity, policy makers should provide funding to SSA from general revenue funds.

Automatic triggers to account for uncertainty of 75-year projections

In recognizing the inherent uncertainty in 75-year projections, the Protecting Social Security plan would have automatic triggers to help keep contributions and benefits in balance. If the Trustees annual report projected the trust fund to be exhausted within 20 years, the earnings cap would automatically rise to cover 92 percent of all earnings, with additional benefits accruing on these contributions. A second trigger would raise the earnings cap an additional 3 percentage point to cover 95 percent of all earnings if the trust fund was found to be within 16 years of exhaustion, with additional benefits once again accruing. Finally, a third trigger would completely abolish the earning cap if the trust fund was within 12 years of being exhausted.

If increased revenue and higher economic growth create a Social Security trust fund large enough to cover the next eight years of projected expenditures and that is projected to increase over the following 75 years under the Trustees intermediate assumptions, than a trigger would automatically increase benefits by increasing the average indexed monthly earnings *(*AIME) by 2 percent at each bend point for each year this occurs. These automatic triggers would only take effect if Congress did not take action to address any future solvency issues.

## Conclusion

Social Security protects Americans of all ages against economic insecurity. It is of critical importance to Americans of all backgrounds, including Latinos. It must remain an independent social insurance program and should be strengthened without any cuts to benefits or increase in the retirement age. Social Security has never contributed a single penny to the deficit and is projected to run a $77 billion surplus in 2010 alone.

The Protecting Social Security plan will raise additional revenue to make Social Security fully solvent for the next 75 years, increase the independence and fairness of Social Security, and strengthen benefits for those most in need. By investing in America's future with part of the trust fund and adding a benefit for college student children of deceased or disabled parents, we will help working families and ensure that Social Security remains strong to help all Americans. The Protecting Social Security plan offers a blueprint on how to achieve full solvency with enhanced benefits.

# End Notes

[i] "Strengthening Social Security for the Long Run," National Academy of Social Insurance Social Security Brief, 2010. Available at: http://www.nasi.org/sites/default/files/research/SS_Brief_035.pdf
[ii] "Tough Times Require Strong Social Security Benefits: View on Social Security among African-Americans, Hispanic Americans, and White Americans," National Academy of Social Insurance Social Security Brief, 2010. Available at: http://www.nasi.org/sites/default/files/research/SS_Brief_032.pdf
[iii] "The United States: Selected Population Profile," in *American Community Survey*, (Washington: US Census Bureau, 2009)
[iv] "Social Security Basic Facts," Social Security Administration, 2010. Available at: http://www.ssa.gov/pressoffice/basicfact.htm
[v] "Social Security Basic Facts," Social Security Administration, 2010. Available at: http://www.ssa.gov/pressoffice/basicfact.htm
[vi] "Social Security is important to Hispanics," Social Security Administration, 2010. Available at: http://www.ssa.gov/pressoffice/factsheets/hispanics.htm
[vii] Importance of Social Security relative to total income from "Table 9.A3 Percentage distribution of beneficiary units, by race, Hispanic origin, and marital status, 2008," in *Income of the Population 55 or Older, 2008*, (Baltimore: Social Security Administration, 2009)
[viii] Torres-Gil, Fernando et al. "The Importance of Social Security to the Hispanic Community," (Washington: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2005).
[ix] "Social Security is important to Hispanics," Social Security Administration, 2010. Available at: http://www.ssa.gov/pressoffice/factsheets/hispanics.htm
[x] "Fast Facts & Figures About Social Security," Social Security Administration, 2010. Available at: http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/chartbooks/fast_facts/2010/fast_facts10.html#generalinfo
[xi] Social Security Trustees, "The 2010 Annual Report of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance and Federal Disability Insurance Trust Funds," 2010, p. 16. Available at http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/TR/2010/tr2010.pdf
[xii] Social Security Trustees, "The 2010 Annual Report of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance and Federal Disability Insurance Trust Funds," 2010, p. 196. Available at http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/TR/2010/tr2010.pdf
[xiii] S.AMDT.3300 to H.J.Res.45 To Protect Social Security. Introduced by Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT) on 1/25/2010.
[xiv] "Barak Obama on Social Security," On The Issues, 2009. Available at: http://www.ontheissues.org/economic/barack_obama_social_security.htm
[xv] SSA, "Table 6.B3- Number and percentage distribution with and without reduction for early retirement, by sex and monthly benefit, 2009" in Annual Statistical Supplement, 2010. Available at: http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2010/6b.html#table6.b4
[xvi] Government Accountability Office (GAO), Raising the Retirement Ages Would Have Implications for Older Workers and SSA Disability Rolls," November 2010. P. 13. Available at http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11125.pdf
[xvii] Joanna Lahey, "Age, Women and Hiring: An Experimental Study," pre-publication, Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, 2006. Available at: http://escholarship.bc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1122&context=retirement_papers
[xviii] Hye Jin Rho, "Hard Work? Patterns in Physically Demanding Labor Among Older Workers," CERP, July, 2010. Available at: http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/older-workers-2010-08.pdf
[xix] "Fast Facts & Figures About Social Security," Social Security Administration, 2010. Available at: http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/chartbooks/fast_facts/2010/fast_facts10.html#generalinfo
[xx] "Fast Facts & Figures About Social Security," Social Security Administration, 2010. Available at: http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/chartbooks/fast_facts/2010/fast_facts10.html#generalinfo
[xxi] "Strengthening Social Security for the Long Run," National Academy of Social Insurance Social Security Brief, 2010. Available at: http://www.nasi.org/sites/default/files/research/SS_Brief_035.pdf
[xxii] "Strengthening Social Security for the Long Run," National Academy of Social Insurance Social Security Brief, 2010. Available at: http://www.nasi.org/sites/default/files/research/SS_Brief_035.pdf

[xxiii] Letter from Social Security Chief Actuaries, 2008. Available at: http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/solvency/Warshawsky_20080917.pdf

[xxiv] "Social Security Modernization: Options to Address Solvency and Benefit Adequacy," Senate Committee on Aging, 2010. Available at: http://aging.senate.gov/ss/ssreport2010.pdf

[xxv] Joint Committee on Taxation, Testimony of George K. Yin, Chief of Staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation at a Hearing of the Senate Committee on Finance on ''Social Security: Achieving Sustainable Solvency,'' JCX–38–05, May 25, 2005, available at *http://finance.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/gytest052505.pdf*

[xxvi] "Strengthening Social Security for the Long Run," National Academy of Social Insurance Social Security Brief, 2010. Available at: http://www.nasi.org/sites/default/files/research/SS_Brief_035.pdf

[xxvii] Please visit: http://www.nasi.org/sites/default/files/research/SS_Brief_033.pdf for more detailed information on this proposal

[xxviii] "New Deal for Young Adults: Social Security Benefits for Post-Secondary Students," National Academy of Social Insurance, 2010. *Available at: http://www.nasi.org/research/2010/new-deal-young-adults-social-security-benefits-post*

[xxix] Social Security Trustees, "The 2010 Annual Report of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance and Federal Disability Insurance Trust Funds," 2010, p. 166. Available at http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/TR/2010/tr2010.pdf