



CONGRESS INCREASES AMOUNT SENIORS CAN GET FROM

TAP YOUR AGE: 62-65 66-70 71-75 76+

©2019 NMLS ID 167283, 3396 nmlsconsumeraccess.org

SITE CONTENTS

DIRECTORY

SECTIONS

SUPPORT OPEDNEWS

SIGN-IN/SUBMIT

AD RATES



Like 0

Exclusive to OpEdNews:

OpEdNews Op Eds 3/12/2020 at 03:21:43

Social Security Threatened Once More--We Need Pepper's Courage Now

By Robert Weiner (Page 1 of 1 pages) [\(View How Many People Read This\)](#) [No comments](#)

By Robert Weiner and Zach Filtz

President Donald Trump has let the cat out of the bag: He announced his openness to a cut in social safety net benefits, including Social Security, at the World Economic Forum in Switzerland last month. When then-White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer was asked at his first press briefing in January 2017 if Trump would cut Social Security, Spicer replied, "He's been very clear what his priority is in terms of preserving and protecting this really important benefit to our seniors."

The President's latest actions, in addition to his words, are troubling. His White House released a federal budget with \$71 billion in cuts to Social Security, and according to Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer on March 4 (D-NY), changes to Disability which could make it harder for current and future recipients of SSD to continue receiving it. His words in Davos when asked if "entitlements will ever be on your plate," the President responded: "At some point, they will be."

Even Democrats are feuding over Social Security, with Bernie Sanders claiming Joe Biden has pushed cuts but Biden asserting his statements long ago are out of context, and "No, no, no, no," he "will not cut Social Security."



3 Signs You Have A Toxic Gut

[Watch The Video](#)

675

Promoted Content

Today's Refinance 2.66% APR 15 Year

Select Loan Amount

\$

\$225,000

Calculate

Terms & Conditions apply
NMLS#1136

▶ Floridians may remember the late Rep. Claude Pepper (D-Fl.), who helped protect Social Security and ended the mandatory retirement age of 65 with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act Amendments of 1978. Rep. Pepper and House Social Security Chairman James Burke jointly said they would "fight it til our death" in support of Social Security.

Social Security now keeps three in ten seniors out of poverty, according to a 2019 report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Despite misinformation that Social Security is broke, \$2.9 trillion is in the Social Security Trust Fund. Ninety-seven percent of Americans age 60 to 89 either do or will receive Social Security, according to Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Because of the Pepper-Tip O'Neill-Ronald Reagan deal of 1988, Social Security is solvent at least through 2037, and even then only is 25% short. It can be fixed in a finger-snap by raising the income level subject to the Social Security tax.

There are 52 million Americans 65 and older. The Census Bureau cites 4,358,784 Floridians age 65+. If we take the 3 in 10 statistic and apply

it to the Florida population, that calculates to 1,307,635 sinking into poverty.

Allowing Trump to cut Social Security would do a grave disservice to all Floridians and Americans who rely on the program. The time has come to stand up for Social Security. The time is now to show clarity and courage in the spirit of Claude Pepper to make Trump's White House aware the importance of this program - keeping it solvent for future generations without scaremongering about myths for the need for cuts. Pepper's museum and library are at FSU. Remembering what he said and how he fought may be the country's best protection of Social Security.

Robert Weiner was a Clinton and Bush White House spokesman, Chief of Staff of the House Aging Committee and Health Subcommittee under Chairman Claude Pepper, spokesman for the House Government Operations Committee, and senior staff for Congressmen John Conyers, Charles Rangel, Ed Koch, Sen. Edward Kennedy, and Four-Star Gen. Barry McCaffrey. Zachary Filtz is Senior Policy Analyst for Robert Weiner Associates and Solutions for Change.