Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 21, 2011

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As recovery efforts subside and unacceptably high unemployment continues to devastate our communities, we are pleased that the debt ceiling negotiations seem to be considering jobs as well as how to responsibly reduce spending. However, we remain gravely concerned that yet another, unacceptable cut to Social Security's revenue stream appears to be on the table.

Enemies of Social Security reject valid proposals to give the same level of tax relief to the same Americans or American businesses without using the Social Security revenue stream and resultant general fund transfers. As alternative measures would have the same net effect on deficits and the economy, there is simply no need to negotiate cuts to Social Security taxes.

Despite their strong support for the program itself, the American people are cynical when it comes to politicians' handling of Social Security. They have been told that the program is going bankrupt and that the only way to save the country from the debt crisis is to slash promised benefits. They have been told that Treasury securities, backed by the full faith of the United States government, are "worthless IOUs" by the people who want to turn Trust Fund investments over to Wall Street. We are concerned that a payroll tax cut may be used as the first step in a larger battle to fundamentally dismantle Social Security.

We strongly believe that Social Security revenues must not be used for anything other than Social Security benefits. Whether the calculations are economic, political, or simply out of a sincere effort to make a deal, the price paid in breaking faith with the American people is too high. Making it easier for enemies of Social Security to attack the program will surely outweigh any short term political or economic benefit of a deal that includes extending the current payroll tax cut or expanding it to include employers.

The current cut in Social Security contributions must be allowed to expire as scheduled. History instructs that any tax cut is politically difficult to terminate. As you know, although the Bush tax cuts were only supposed to last ten years, the debate of today is centered on whether to

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permanently extend *most* or permanently extend *all* of the Bush tax cuts. We are greatly concerned that a permanent extension of the 2011 payroll tax cut would double Social Security's long-range shortfall and make long-term solutions nearly impossible.

Americans' contributions to Social Security should be used for Americans' Social Security benefits. To do otherwise flies in the face of the time-tested wisdom of this program, which was established with an independent revenue stream to protect the retirement earnings of America's workers from budgetary politics. We respectfully request that you reject any proposal that includes an extension or expansion of the payroll tax cut.

Sincerely,

Theodore E. Deutch

Lloyd Doggett

Mark S. Critz

John Conyers, Jr.

George Miller

Edward J. Markey

Barney Frank

Marcy Kaptur

Peter J. Visclosky

Peter A. DeFazio

Louise McIntosh Slaughter

John Lewis

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Raúl M. Grijalva

Rush D. Holt

Rick Larsen

Barbara Lee

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David Wu

Joe Baca

Michael H. Michaud

Tim Ryan

Gwen Moore

Yvette D. Clarke

Steve Cohen

Keith Ellison

Betty Sutton

Peter Welch

André Carson

Donna F. Edwards

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Paul D. Tonko

Judy Chu

John Garamendi

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