



My Letter To Me, Social Security

by Social Security

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Dear Social Security,

Let me start from the beginning. For seventy years now I've been taking care of elderly Americans, making sure they had enough cash each month to buy their *TV Guides* and bulk cat food. I've floated rent checks and grocery money to generations of minors and handicapped individuals who, due to family tragedies, were unable to take care of themselves. And, other than that time Ted Kennedy left the 1982 Social Security deposits in the Capitol restroom and Jesse Helms swiped it to build his shantytown, Helmsville, I've done a pretty good job of keeping track of your money. \$1.5 trillion in the bank isn't chump change.

So why is everyone turning on me all of a sudden? Watching the news these days one gets the impression that I'm weird Uncle Billy, looking to rob young people of their beer money for my pyramid scheme in new-design plastics. Newt Gingrich says I'm "mired in unsustainable long term financial deficits, with [my] benefits already inadequate and well below historic market returns." Bill O'Reilly made the case in 2002 for "[doing] away with the payroll tax," which goes to fund me, "and [giving] everybody who works a twelve percent raise." Finally, the President says I'm "In crisis," and that drastic changes are necessary now for me to avoid insolvency.

Jesus people, what did I ever do to you?

The big thing I keep hearing is that instead of being used to fund me, people should be allowed to put their money into the stock market. To which I say, the stock market? The same stock market that crashed just a few years ago? Worldcom, Enron, and all that? That's the alternative to me? Hell, most Americans would be better off putting their retirement funds on black in Vegas. At least there's some credible oversight there.

Anyway, what's to keep workers from investing their money in the market if they want to? Haven't any of these guys heard of a 401K? Or are they too busy lining up the chips from their government pension? (O'Reilly excepted, although I think he'll be all right).

The worst thing about it is the timing. They wait for me to get into my old age, the time in a program's life when it's ready to set back and spend some time with the grandkids, and they try to pull the rug out from under me. Don't they know I count on the money promised me, that I need it to make my ends meet?

Come on people, don't buy the bridge they're selling you. You can trust me on this. After all, I've taken care of your grandparents, I'll be watching out for your parents soon enough, and when the time comes, I'll take care of you as well.

As long as Congress doesn't screw everything up.

Your friend,

Social Security