



THE VOICE OF MIDLIFE AND OLDER WOMEN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Bobbie Brinegar, Executive Director 1-877-653-7966

OWL – The Voice of Midlife and Older Women

OWL Opposes Dealmaking with Social Security Benefits

WASHINGTON, DC – OWL is gravely concerned about news reports that President Obama is willing to cut Social Security benefits as a compromise to Republicans in exchange for closing tax loopholes.

Social Security is a critical safety net for millions of Americans. The benefits it pays are earned as the result of a lifetime of hard work. It is the largest part of income for most recipients; for almost 80% of them, it is half or more: for 60% it is more than half, for 30% it is all their income. A majority of them are women. The average benefit is \$1100 a month. This successful, self-funded program becomes more vital every day and should not be part of any debt-reduction dealmaking.

OWL, along with a large majority of Americans, opposes cuts in Social Security, including changing its “cost-of-living adjustments” formula to a chained CPI which would result in a reduction of benefits. The “chained COLA” proposal reduces COLA by 3/10ths of one percent every year, a seemingly “small” reduction. However, it accumulates. After 5 years, benefits would be 1.5% behind price increases; after 10 years, 3%; after 20 years 6%. For the majority of beneficiaries dependent on Social Security’s modest benefits, small subtractions hurt - and will hurt more every subsequent year. “Chained COLA is a substantial benefit cut in sheep’s clothing,” said Bobbie Brinegar, Executive Director of OWL.

We urge President Obama and members of Congress not to sacrifice the security of current and future retirees, and to take Social Security off the bargaining table. OWL believes the debt must be addressed, but not at the expense of our nation's seniors.

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Founded in 1980, OWL – The Voice of Midlife and Older Women– is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that advocates in the areas of health, economic security, and quality of life for the 74 million American women who are midlife and older.

1025 CONNECTICUT AVE., NW, SUITE 701 | WASHINGTON, DC 20036

PHONE 877-OLDRWMN (653-7966) | FAX 202-833-3472

INFO@OWL-NATIONAL.ORG | WWW.OWL-NATIONAL.ORG