



# Harvard Model Congress Boston 2024

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## Social Security Sustainability Update

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Social security sustainability continues to be a pressing issue for lawmakers on both sides of the aisle. On January 25th, 2024, Representative Angie Craig introduced new legislation in Congress aimed at tackling this challenge. The proposed bill, titled the “You Earned, You Keep It Act,” seeks to eliminate federal taxes on Social Security benefits while expanding payroll taxes on wages exceeding \$250,000 (Cariaga, 2024). Representative Craig argues that this legislation would effectively delay the depletion of the program’s Old Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust Fund, extending its lifespan by 20 years. The Social Security Administration has analyzed the bill and confirmed its potential to prolong the viability of the OASI fund (Greenberg, 2024). However, despite its promising goals, the bill encountered obstacles after its initial introduction in August 2022 due to a lack of sufficient support, leading to its stalling.

The ongoing partisan divide regarding Social Security reform remains evident, highlighted by the House Republican Study Committee’s (RSC) budget proposal for 2024. This proposal suggests significant adjustments to Social Security, including raising the retirement age for eligibility to 69 years old. Such a change would result in a reduction of future benefits by 13% (Cohen, 2023). In total, the outlined measures in the RSC’s budget will reduce Social Security spending by \$718 billion over the span of ten years.

Moreover, U.S. Representatives Earl Blumenauer and Marie Gluesenkamp Perez have introduced H.R. 5779, also known as the Fiscal Commission Act of 2023. This legislation aims to establish a 16-member commission tasked with developing proposals to address the federal deficit, including reforms related to Social Security policy (Gruben & McIntosh, 2024). The commission would meet behind closed doors and its proposals would bypass regular legislative processes, going directly to the House and Senate floors without the possibility of amendment. The bill’s reception is split down the party line, with 116 lawmakers signing a letter addressed to House Speaker Mike Johnson and Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, urging them to exclude the commission from legislation funding the government (AFGE, 2024).

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