



U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

Washington, DC 20515

July 29, 2015

Dear Colleague,

Since the turn of the twentieth century, Americans have made commitments to one another within and across generations to maintain a sturdy and secure safety net available to all, and to guarantee that each new generation would be better off than the one before. These commitments support a distinctly American aspiration: to foster a Nation where the greatest number have the greatest opportunity to realize the greatest success achievable in a fair and compassionate way – where the greatest number of American dreams can be realized.

Regrettably, however, Washington's health, retirement, and economic security programs – Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and numerous others – are now failing the very people they were intended to serve. They are binding seniors and low-income families to a costly, centralized health care strategy that intrudes on the personal decisions of patients and their doctors; promising retirement income the government cannot provide; trapping the disadvantaged in a web of welfare programs that draw beneficiaries into long-term government dependency; and strapping college students with years of personal debt because of a government-run student loan program that drives up tuitions.

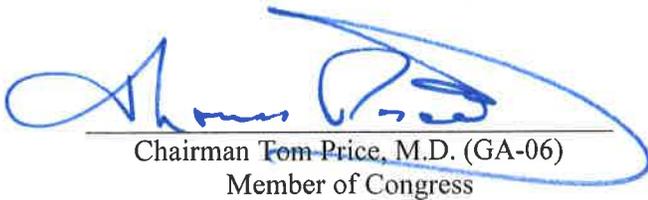
Moreover, the open-ended spending in the vast majority of these programs is unsustainable, and running up a huge national debt that today's children and grandchildren will bear – at the cost of enormously higher taxes and lower standards of living. Even now, the U.S. economy is struggling under the dead weight of excessive government spending, limiting opportunities for America's working families to get ahead.

All these facts are well known, and they lead to one conclusion. We must transform these benefits programs to ensure they are fiscally sound, and that they truly achieve their intended aims. To do so, we must change the way we think about how these programs can help fulfill America's commitments. Our benefits programs must offer reliable assistance for those in distress while guiding them toward self-sufficiency. They must ensure health and income security for those in retirement. At the same time, the federal government must foster an economy that expands opportunities for homeownership, a college education, and the many other pursuits available in a prosperous nation. We also must make sure to leave the next generation with a robust and growing economy in which they can fulfill their destinies.

“One of the great mistakes,” Milton Friedman observed, “is to judge policies and programs by their intention rather than their results.” When we look at the results, we know that we cannot simply preserve these programs; we must improve their underlying policies so the programs better serve the American people. This is a moral imperative.

Therefore, the Committee on the Budget urges our colleagues to make this a top legislative priority, now and over the next several years. We must commit to a sustained effort to save and strengthen appropriate benefits programs, large or small, while endeavoring to provide services in a more efficient and responsive manner – to restore Americans’ trust that the promises of these programs will be kept. We cannot afford to delay. The longer we wait to act, the more difficult becomes the challenge of ensuring America’s commitments are fulfilled, today and in the future.

Sincerely,



Chairman Tom Price, M.D. (GA-06)
Member of Congress



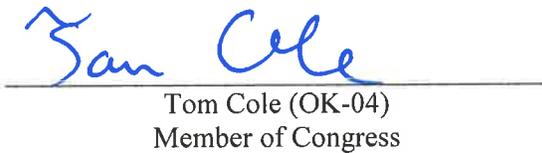
Vice Chairman Todd Rokita (IN-04)
Member of Congress



Scott Garrett (NJ-05)
Member of Congress



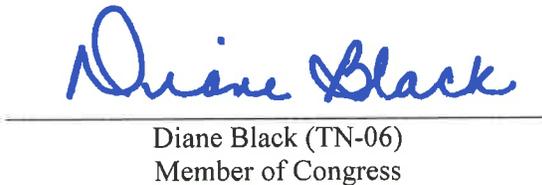
Mario Diaz-Balart (FL-25)
Member of Congress



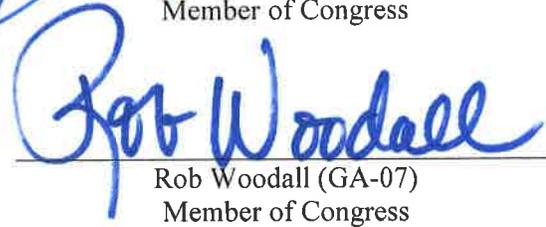
Tom Cole (OK-04)
Member of Congress



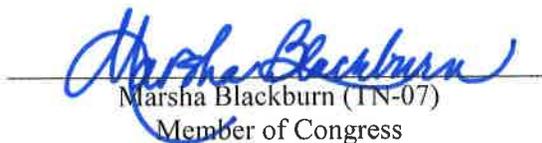
Tom McClintock (CA-04)
Member of Congress



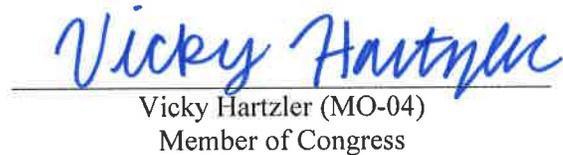
Diane Black (TN-06)
Member of Congress



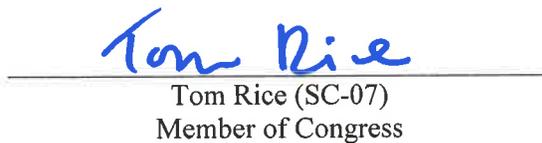
Rob Woodall (GA-07)
Member of Congress



Marsha Blackburn (TN-07)
Member of Congress



Vicky Hartzler (MO-04)
Member of Congress



Tom Rice (SC-07)
Member of Congress



Marlin Stutzman (IN-03)
Member of Congress



Vern Buchanan (FL-16)
Member of Congress



Mark Sanford (SC-01)
Member of Congress



Steve Womack (AR-03)
Member of Congress



Bruce Westerman (AR-04)
Member of Congress



Dave Brat (VA-07)
Member of Congress



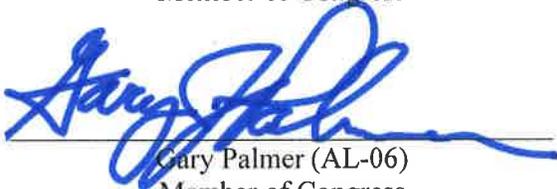
Rod Blum (IA-01)
Member of Congress



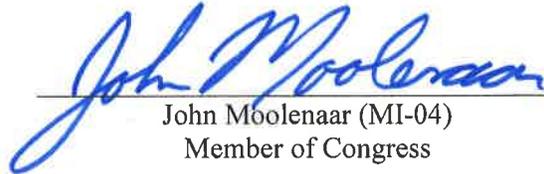
Alex Mooney (WV-02)
Member of Congress



Glenn Grothman (WI-06)
Member of Congress



Gary Palmer (AL-06)
Member of Congress



John Moolenaar (MI-04)
Member of Congress