

Eighty Members Sign on to Progressive Caucus Letter Demanding No Cuts to Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security

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Washington, D.C. – Eighty Member of Congress have now signed onto a letter spearheaded by Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC) leaders to Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi insisting that cuts Social Security, Medicare or Medicaid be off the table in any budget deal. Leaders of the Congressional Black Caucus and Congressional Asian Pacific American have also signed the letter and are encouraging their respective Caucus members to join them.

Originally sent by CPC co-chairs Reps. Raúl M. Grijalva and Keith Ellison on July 8, the letter is still open for signatures and has become the primary vehicle for House Democrats to express their support for the programs during budget negotiations. The letter says that middle-class families “have sacrificed enough, and a deal that pushes the American Dream further out of reach, in order to pay for extending tax breaks for the rich and corporations, is simply unacceptable.”

“We are united as Democrats in saying that it’s time to stand up to the Republican hostage-taking. We will not be forced to vote for a ‘final agreement’ that we do not agree to -- and that the American people do not agree to. We stand united with you in insisting that benefit cuts for working families, our seniors, children, and people with disabilities must be off the table, and we stand united with you in fighting for millions of Americans who need Democrats to be firmly on their side,” the letter says.

Signatories include CPC Co-Chairs Grijalva and Ellison, along with Reps. Baca, Karen Bass, Bordallo, Brown, Carson, Christiansen, Chu, Yvette Clarke, Hansen Clarke, Clay, Cleaver, Cohen, Conyers, Critz, Cummings, Danny Davis, DeFazio, DeLauro, Deutch, Doggett, Edwards, Farr, Fattah, Filner, Frank, Fudge, Garamendi, Al Green, Gutierrez, Hahn, Hinchey, Hirono, Holmes Norton, Holt, Jesse Jackson Jr., Sheila Jackson Lee, Hank Johnson, Eddie Bernice Johnson, Kaptur, Kildee, Kucinich, Barbara Lee, John Lewis, Lofgren, Lynch, Maloney, Markey, McCollum, McDermott, McGovern, Moore, Nadler, Napolitano, Olver, Pallone, Payne, Pingree, Rangel, Reyes, Richardson, Richmond, Rothman, Roybal-Allard, Tim Ryan, Sablan, Schakowsky, Serrano, Stark, Sutton, Bennie Thompson, Tierney, Tonko, Towns, Waters, Waxman, Frederica Wilson, Woolsey, and Wu.

The full text of the letter is below.

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Leader Pelosi,

We write in strong agreement with your unwavering defense of the Democratic programs that form the bedrock of America's middle and working classes, and which are overwhelmingly popular.

On July 7, you made very clear that "We are not going to balance the budget on the backs of America's seniors, women and people with disabilities" and that "we do not support cuts in benefits" for vital safety-net programs. We agree completely.

Especially in these tough economic times, we should not be cutting Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid benefits that millions of our constituents paid into and depend on. Such benefit cuts should be off the table in current debt discussions.

Our Republican colleagues should be embarrassed by their insistence that unless Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid benefits are cut, the nation will default on its debts. Middle-class families have sacrificed enough, and a deal that pushes the American Dream further out of reach, in order to pay for extending tax breaks for the rich and corporations, is simply unacceptable.

We are united as Democrats in saying that it's time to stand up to the Republican hostage-taking. We will not be forced to vote for a "final agreement" that we do not agree to -- and that the American people do not agree to.

We stand united with you in insisting that benefit cuts for working families, our seniors, children, and people with disabilities must be off the table, and we stand united with you in fighting for millions of Americans who need Democrats to be firmly on their side.

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