

-----Original Message-----

From: Little, Julie
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2002 6:20 PM
To: Katich, Steve
Cc: Fought, Steve
Subject: RE: Have at it...possible SS op ed

In response to your question: not entirely factually accurate. Here is my first pass.

Sue, I hope this is not under consideration for the pull out. Talk about scaring seniors- this may be a little over the top. But it is sooo fun to bash Republicans.:)

-----Original Message-----

From: Katich, Steve
Sent: Friday, March 22, 2002 1:49 PM
To: Fought, Steve; Little, Julie
Subject: Have at it...possible SS op ed

Does the rhetoric match the facts here?

Upon reviewing the Bush Administration's 2003 budget, it is clear that the Administration has failed to learn the lessons from the Enron scandal. The President's budget raids the Social Security trust fund to the tune of \$1.6 trillion dollars to pay for tax cuts for the wealthiest one percent of Americans and would give new tax breaks to corporations.

Americans want and deserve retirement security not retirement insecurity. Many senior citizens in America rely on the monthly Social Security checks that average \$874. This is not pocket change; it is a lifeline. Without Social Security and Medicare, many could not survive.

Privatizing Social Security- as Bush and most Republicans favor- is not the answer. The uncertainties of the market and corporate gambling with other people's money are no substitutes for the rock-solid guarantee of Social Security, an insurance program and a disability program. It should not be overlooked that any one of us, or any one of our family members, could be struck by a disability at any time.

How is this actually happening? Despite voting 5 times to put Social Security in a "lockbox" Republicans have just voted to raid the trust fund to pay for huge tax cuts. I voted against the Republican budget because I believe Social Security trust fund dollars should only be used for Social Security.

If raiding Social Security weren't bad enough, Republicans have also voted to pay huge tax rebates to some of the wealthiest and most profitable corporations in our country.

Not just little tax breaks and not just this year, but Republicans would pay these corporate giants hundreds of millions of dollars over the next 10 years.

Who would benefit most if Republicans had their way? Enron, General Electric, and Chevron to name a few. It is painfully obvious that the Administration's priorities are completely misguided: placing tax breaks for the wealthiest individuals and huge corporations above protecting the sacred funds in the Social Security trust funds is wrong.

What happened to the surplus and how did the Administration get to the point of raiding the Social Security trust fund? The single biggest cause of the depletion of the surplus and the return to deficit spending is again, tax cuts skewed to benefit the rich. Just one short year ago the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office projected a 10-year surplus, not including the Social Security surplus, of \$3.1 trillion; now, the projection has plunged to a deficit of \$742 billion, almost \$1 trillion.

For far too many of our nation's elderly and disabled, Social Security is the difference between absolute poverty and living their advanced years in dignity. Tax cuts for the wealthy and for huge, profitable corporations is not the answer to ensuring Social Security for generations to come. Neither is privatization. American families work hard and pay into the system, and they should be able to count on Social Security when they retire.