

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 9, 2009

Louis A. Ambrose
5235 Westview Drive, Suite 100
Frederick, Maryland 21703

Dear Louis:

Thank you for contacting me regarding Social Security. It's good to hear from you.

Social Security provides a critical source of income for retired and disabled workers. For one-third of Americans over the age of 65, Social Security benefits constitute 90% of their total income. While Social Security is safe for today's seniors, the system will likely be bankrupt before many of today's workers become eligible and may not exist at all for our grandchildren.

As you know, Social Security is a pay-as-you-go system with today's workers paying to support today's retirees. But each year, more retirees draw money from the system, and not enough workers support them

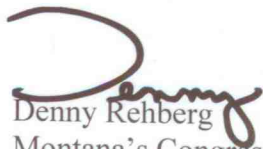
In the 1950's, approximately sixteen workers supported every one beneficiary. Today, there are about three – and eventually there will be only two workers to support each person on Social Security. In 2018, the government will begin to pay out more in Social Security benefits than it collects in payroll taxes -- and shortfalls then grow larger with each passing year. By 2042, when workers who are now in their mid-twenties begin to retire, the system likely will be bankrupt.

It is incumbent upon Congress to confront problems before they become a crisis, rather than pass them on to future generations. Unfortunately, the longer we wait to take action, the more difficult and expensive the changes will be.

Several plans have been proposed to reform Social Security, and I intend to study all proposals closely. But as Congress and the President address proposals to improve the program, we must work to preserve the current system for those receiving Social Security and those near retirement, so they experience no benefit changes. We must also be cautious of raising payroll taxes which would slow economic growth.

This nation must always strive to leave behind a better America for our children and grandchildren. If we address this problem now, we can leave them a more secure retirement for the future. Thanks again for contacting me. For further information or to sign up for my e-newsletter, please visit my website at www.house.gov/rehberg. Keep in touch.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Denny", written in a cursive style.

Denny Rehberg
Montana's Congressman