

**National
Committee to
Preserve
Social Security
and Medicare**



**Barbara B.
Kennelly
President &
Chief Executive
Officer**

January 23, 2007

The United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the more than 4 million members and supporters of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, I am writing to urge you to reject Sen. Gregg's line-item veto amendment to S. 2, the *Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007*.

We understand that this amendment would grant the President broad authority to request that Congress eliminate any discretionary spending or new mandatory spending that has been enacted within the previous year. This expansive authority allows the line-item veto to apply to programs that affect the well-being of millions of seniors, such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and veterans' health benefits.

We are particularly concerned about how the line-item veto could affect future efforts to reform Social Security. In the past, successful efforts to extend Social Security's solvency included a number of carefully crafted compromises involving both benefit enhancements and benefit cuts. Giving the President the power to unravel such compromises by later vetoing the benefit enhancements would make finding future concessions virtually impossible, and would poison the bipartisan atmosphere needed to enact meaningful reform.

We understand that this amendment also calls for rushed consideration of the President's proposed rescissions. This would undermine current Senate rules designed to protect Social Security by requiring extended debate on any legislation making changes to the program. Furthermore, the amendment offers a one-sided approach to budget discipline by giving the President expansive authority to veto spending, but provides him with only limited ability to veto tax provisions.

We share Sen. Gregg's commitment to restore budgetary discipline and to reduce our country's historically high level of federal debt. However, as many budgets experts have also concluded, we believe that reinstatement of the pay-as-you-go rules would do much more improve our budgetary situation without jeopardizing the future well-being of Social Security and Medicare.

We urge you to vote against the line-item veto amendment.

Cordially,

Barbara B. Kennelly
President and CEO