

GOP Immigration Bill Allows Looting of Social Security Trust Funds

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - House Republicans today moved forward with legislation that would allow Social Security trust fund money to be used for purposes other than paying Americans' guaranteed retirement benefits.

Legislation before the House today, the Border Security Act of 2005, calls for a study of the feasibility of issuing of state-of-the-art, forge-proof social security cards for all Americans. In support of this goal, the bill repeals a longstanding ban on spending Social Security trust fund money to change or update Social Security cards.

"House Republicans are pushing the Social Security panic button with one hand and unlocking these trust funds with the other," Congressman Nadler said. "That they are refusing to back away from this dangerous hypocrisy is even more staggering.

Congressman Nadler offered an amendment to close this loophole by extending the ban on spending from any trust fund established under the Social Security Act. That amendment was not made in order, meaning that it was rejected by the Republican majority. Instead, at almost midnight last night, the Republican chairman of the Ways and Means Committee offered a similar amendment.

Congressman Thomas's amendment was made in order - but it falls short of the Nadler amendment in three critical aspects:

- It does not apply to the Medicare Trust Fund or the Unemployment Trust Fund.
- It only bars trust fund spending with regard to one small section of this one bill.
- It still features a loophole that would allow, for the first time, the use of the trust fund for the previously prohibited purpose of developing a new card.

"This immigration bill was purposely kept from the scrutiny of the committee approval process and was brought to the floor in great haste, and now we know why," Nadler continued. "Its immigration provisions would be disaster enough without also compromising Americans' hard-earned benefits."

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