

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, D.C. 20515**

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**REPS. MATSUI AND WAXMAN INTRODUCE BILL TO OPEN  
SECRET SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION MEETINGS**

Washington, D.C.— Today Reps. Robert Matsui (D-CA) and Henry A. Waxman (D-CA), joined by other Members of Congress, introduced legislation – the Federal Advisory Committee Transparency (FACT) Act of 2001 – that will require the President’s Commission on Social Security to keep their meetings open to the public. Rep. Matsui, Ranking Member of the Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee, and Rep. Waxman, Ranking Member of the Government Reform Committee, have repeatedly called on the Commission to make subgroup meetings open and accessible to public scrutiny.

“Social Security reform affects the lives of millions of Americans. They have a right to know what decisions are being made behind closed doors,” Rep. Matsui said. “We are not satisfied with the Commission’s responses to our concerns. Holding secret meetings will only add to the perception that the Commission is driven by special interests in support of a predetermined outcome.”

“The intent of Congress was that all proceedings of advisory committees be open to the public,” said Rep. Waxman. “Regrettably, this legislation is necessary to ensure that the Social Security Commission, as well as other advisory groups, do not continue on a course of secrecy. There is no good reason why the public should not have access to these meetings. It is time we lift the veil of secrecy.”

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) requires government advisory committees to announce and make open to the public all hearings and committee meetings. Yet to circumvent the law, the President’s Social Security Commission has kept its subcommittee meetings secret. The Commission has been relying on an interpretation that FACA regulations apply only to full committee meetings. The Matsui-Waxman bill removes this loophole so that the Commission and other advisory committees must continue to abide by the spirit of the law.

The legislation is also sponsored by Rep. Janice D. Schakowsky (D-IL), Ranking Member of the Government Reform Subcommittee on Government Efficiency, Financial Management and Intergovernmental Relations, Rep. Major R. Owens (D-NY), Rep. Paul E. Kanjorski (D-PA), Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY), and Social Security Subcommittee members Rep. Lloyd Doggett (D-TX), Rep. Earl Pomeroy (D-ND), and Rep. Xavier Becerra (D-CA).