

WASHINGTON, DC—Today Congressman Xavier Becerra (CA-31), Ranking Member of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security, joined Democratic Members of Congress at a press conference to call attention to recent proposals that would reduce the deficit by cutting the Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for retired and widowed Americans who rely on Social Security benefits.

Rep. Becerra said: **“The budget deficits we face were created principally by the unpaid for Bush tax cuts, and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the Bush Recession—not Social Security. In fact, Social Security has never added a dime to our deficits. Yet, we are now seeing Republican proposals that target seniors and widowed Americans with cuts to their hard-earned benefits to pay for these past policy mistakes. It is unconscionable to make a radical change to the COLA—so that the older you get, the bigger the cut—in order to prop up irresponsible tax cuts for oil companies and billionaires. Let’s reduce the deficit responsibly, not on the backs of seniors and widows.”**

[A new analysis by Social Security’s Chief Actuary](#) on a proposal for Social Security to base Cost of Living Adjustments for current and future retirees and widows to a “chained Consumer Price Index (CPI)” shows that:

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“All individuals eligible for any OASDI benefit for December 2012 or later, regardless of their age or how long they may have received benefits prior to that date” would be affected by the benefit cuts.

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A chained CPI benefit cut would grow larger as Social Security recipients aged. The cut compounds over time. As a result, the Chief Actuary estimates that the COLA cut would reduce annual benefits for a typical 65-year-old by about \$130 a year (0.9 percent), but the size of the benefit cut grows every year, so by the time that senior is 95, the annual benefit cut will be almost \$1,400 (9.2 percent).