

[HUFFINGTON POST: SOCIAL SECURITY CUT OF \\$750 MILLION COULD END UP COSTING \\$6 BILLION](#)

A Republican push to cut Social Security integrity efforts by \$750 million could end up costing \$6 billion in increased waste and fraud, according to the independent official who monitors the program.

The House Republican budget appropriation for Social Security proposes to spend \$272 million on "program integrity" -- a huge cut from the more than \$1.024 billion that Congress agreed last year to spend combating waste in Social Security disability.

That was part of the Budget Control Act, and at the time Republicans touted the \$12 billion in savings that the beefed up integrity effort was expected to produce over 10 years.

But the new appropriation guts that initiative.

"With this reduction in funding for 2013 of about \$752 million, assuming that the funding levels assumed in all

other years in our baseline estimates are unaffected, we would expect program benefit/payments to be between \$5 billion and \$6 billion more," Social Security Chief Actuary Stephen Goss estimated in a letter to Rep. Xavier Becerra (D-Calif.) Thursday.

The funding goes toward what are called Social Security income redeterminations and continuing disability reviews. Redeterminations ensure no one is overpaid, while the latter makes sure someone is medically eligible for disability payments.

Becerra hammered Republicans for the planned cuts in a statement.

"First they voted to end Medicare. Now they have proposed slashing almost \$800 million from Social Security's operating budget," said Becerra, the top Democrat on the Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee. "What's worse, the bulk of this reckless cut would shortchange Social Security's ability to fight waste, fraud and abuse. In the end, as much as \$6 billion of the taxpayers' money could be lost. Social Security's money should be going towards the benefits of those who have earned it."

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