

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

June 15, 2023

Leaders Jeffries and Schumer,

We, the undersigned organizations, write today to urge you in the strongest possible terms to outright reject Speaker McCarthy's invitation to form a bipartisan commission to reform Social Security and Medicare.

Make no mistake about it: The goal of this commission is to cut Social Security and Medicare under the guise of "fiscal responsibility," against the will of the people, while avoiding political accountability. In other words, as President Biden has stated, commissions of this nature are "death panels" for these programs.

Despite deep political polarization, Americans are united in support of Social Security and Medicare. Americans consistently state that Social Security is more important than ever and should not be cut. There's nothing Republicans want more than to go behind closed doors with Democrats and emerge with Social Security cuts. This scheme relies on finding at least one Democrat who is willing to play along. If Democrats stand united and refuse to go behind closed doors, the commission will fail.

Democrats must make it clear that they are willing — and indeed happy — to debate Social Security and Medicare's future in the sunlight, through regular order. That is what has been done in the past and what should be done now, given how important these vital institutions are. The American people should be able to contrast Democratic plans to strengthen Social Security and Medicare, paid for by requiring millionaires and billionaires to pay their fair share, with Republican plans to gut these essential programs and further enrich the wealthy few.

Thank you for considering our request.

Respectfully,
AFL-CIO
Alliance for Retired Americans
American Federation of Government Employees
American Federation of Teachers
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action

California Alliance for Retired Americans

Economic Opportunity Institute

Economic Policy Institute

Indivisible

Justice in Aging

MoveOn

Our Revolution

P Street

Social Security Works

Strengthen Social Security Coalition

Working Families Party