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## Social Security: Ryan Or Ruin?

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**Fiscal Responsibility:** Facing historic electoral losses, big-spending Democrats have stooped to lying about Rep. Paul Ryan's innovative plan to save Social Security — aided and abetted by the establishment media.

"Ryan's Social Security plan would cut benefits for high earners," a Washington Post headline blared last Wednesday, based on a press release from Rep. Earl Pomeroy, D-N.D., chairman of the Ways and Means Social Security subcommittee chairman.

But the "analysis" Pomeroy was touting less than two weeks before Election Day isn't, it turns out, a study of Ryan's proposal at all — or any other GOP proposal. The information Pomeroy force-fed the Social Security chief actuary in requesting an analysis of Ryan's study was skewed, to put it charitably.

"They didn't score my plan," Ryan, the House Budget Committee's ranking Republican, told Investor's Business Daily on Friday. "I would have expected more from Earl Pomeroy," he added. "Usually you do this kind of thing as a last-ditch effort when you're losing, and that seems to be what's happening here."

Indeed, the latest polling shows Pomeroy in big trouble as he runs for re-election, some 10 points behind former North Dakota House Majority Leader Rick Berg, according to Rasmussen.

Pomeroy claims Ryan's approach means "benefits cuts ranging from 10% to as high as 50%." But Ryan notes that, among other distortions, Pomeroy manipulated the chief actuary to "ignore the minimum benefit increase in the plan, which improves low-income beneficiaries' Social Security benefits by 45% compared to payable benefits."

Pomeroy's garbled look at his proposal "further poisons the well as we try to fix Social Security's problems before it gets too late and current beneficiaries do indeed get hurt under France- and Greece-style austerity — before the very things liberal Democrats are running campaign ads against actually end up happening."

Economist Charles Blahous, author of the soon-to-be-published "Social Security: The Unfinished Work," and one of the two public trustees for Social Security and Medicare, described Pomeroy's manipulation in a lengthy article Friday for Economics21.org.

"Someone within Congress requests a study from one of the nonpartisan scorekeepers, whether the Congressional Budget Office or the Social Security Actuary. The study as dictated slants the issues fairly severely ... honest, public-spirited scorekeepers ... lacking the authority to reshape the contours of the study, must comply with the request as given." Then will come

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the hoped-for "echo both from credulous press and from sympathetic policy advocates."

In the Pomeroy/Social Security actuary travesty, Blahous notes that "the provisions analyzed in the study do not correspond to" Ryan's plan. "The study, for example, analyzes a provision to change the calculation of the annual Social Security" cost-of-living adjustment "by using a chain-weighted Consumer Price Index. That provision, however, is not in the Ryan plan."

Cato Institute senior fellow Michael Tanner's work over more than a decade on how to transform Social Security from a government dependency scheme destined for bankruptcy to an individually controlled program based on personal accounts has helped end Social Security's longtime status as political "third rail."

Tanner calls Pomeroy's claim that under Ryan "the average American worker" would "lose 30% of their Social Security" an assertion that is "just untrue." "Under Ryan's proposal," he told IBD, "no one in the future will receive lower Social Security benefits than anyone receives today — in real terms, after adjusting for inflation."

As Tanner emphasized, there are only three ways to save Social Security: raise taxes, cut benefits or establish private Social Security accounts. And the Cato scholar is encouraged that Republican Senate candidates like Sharron Angle in Nevada, Ron Johnson in Wisconsin, Rand Paul in Kentucky and Marco Rubio in Florida "have at least indicated an open mind on Social Security accounts." Pat Toomey, with a slim lead in the Pennsylvania U.S. Senate race, even endorsed Cato's bold Social Security reform.

American voters can face facts, and the facts on Social Security are as Paul Ryan says: We either repair it sooner or panic later. Demagogic fallacies about Social Security solutions coming from big-spending politicians whose seats are in grave danger can only encourage complacency in the short-term — leading to dangerous panic later on.

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Posted By: [czarrboro\(1430\)](#) on 10/25/2010 | 10:19 PM ET

Nearly 20 years ago, I wrote President Clinton. I made a simple proposal. Either guarantee me that I will get every cent I put into social security, or take what I have paid and take not a penny more. At that point in time, I had paid over \$60K in SS. Since then, another \$120K. I'll never see it. Clinton never replied. Who cares -- I didn't trust him then and don't trust PBO et al now -- I have taken care of myself. Boy did I get Fvcked, as did you. But I knew it was coming so I'll be OK.

Posted By: [MavenDog\(665\)](#) on 10/25/2010 | 9:51 PM ET

Bush lobbied very hard to put an end to the Social Security Ponzi scheme by privatization but was rebuffed by the Democrats. It is the only practical way to end the Ponzi scheme. The Dems continue to demonize that plan and yet offer no solution to the inevitable collapse of SS.

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