

# The Daily Record

## Fixing Health Care And Social Security

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If Donald Trump's stunning upset victory proved anything — aside from Hillary Clinton's remarkably durable lack of popularity — it is that millions of Americans don't feel like they are part of the economy.

Fortunately, there are some potential policy changes that would give workers a more direct stake in the economy. If President Trump wants workers to have a real chance to share in economic growth, he should consider bold reforms to Social Security and health care that would turn workers into the real owners of the economy.

Although Trump vowed not to tinker with Social Security, he is not going to be able to hold to that pledge in the face of the program's \$32 trillion shortfall. If he is at all serious about controlling our national debt, he will have to reduce benefits, at least for younger workers. But doing so will only further disaffect lower and middle-income workers, who have little in the way of private retirement savings.

A better approach would be to combine needed benefit reductions with a plan to allow younger workers to save a portion of their Social Security taxes in personal accounts. Investing their taxes privately — in stocks, bonds, annuities, and so forth — would enable them to earn much higher returns, potentially offsetting any reductions in benefits.

Creating personal accounts for Social Security would offer the chance to expand capital ownership to millions who are currently locked out of the investment market. When the economy grows, it would benefit everyone, rather than just those at the top.

Similarly, President Trump could use health-care reform to give workers more ownership and control over other aspects of their compensation. During the campaign, he vowed to repeal and replace Obamacare. Since his election, he has begun to hedge on this promise, suggesting he might keep parts of the law in place.

But why tinker around the edges and risk ending up with a proposal that would be Obamacare Lite when there is a bolder, smarter option available? Senator Jeff Flake and Rep. David Brat have a plan to radically expand health-savings accounts (HSAs), and Trump would be wise to support it.

Under the Flake/Brat plan, a family could save up to \$18,000 annually in a tax-free HSA, and use that money to pay for insurance premiums or out-of-pocket health-care costs. What they don't spend could be saved or invested.

More importantly, the type of HSA envisioned by Flake and Brat would put workers in control of their own health-care dollars.

As president, Trump is going to have to reform Social Security and health care. If he can do so while advancing the economic interests of his disaffected constituents, giving them more control and a greater stake in the world economy, it will be a win for everyone.

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