

The Delray Democrat

Social Security Is a Constitutional Imperative¹

Michael K. Cantwell

“If, as our Constitution tells us, our Federal Government was established . . . ‘to promote the general welfare,’ it is our plain duty to provide for that security upon which welfare depends.”
Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Donald Trump and Elon Musk are spreading lies about Social Security as a prelude to destroying the most successful government program ever enacted.

Social Security is not a Ponzi scheme, nor is it an “entitlement.” It is a constitutional imperative.

It is a contract working Americans have made with our government. While we are working we contribute a portion of our paychecks to fund the program and the government uses that money to pay benefits to current retirees. Our retirement is funded by current workers. That contract has been honored for nearly a century.

Social Security is not “going broke.” It currently has a [\\$2.5 trillion surplus](#), enough to pay full benefits until [2037](#). Even after the surplus is exhausted, contributions from workers will be sufficient to pay nearly 80% of future retirees’ benefits.

And there’s a simple way to address that shortfall – raise or, better, eliminate the payroll tax cap.

This would also address the deeply regressive nature of the payroll tax. Anyone earning less than the \$176,100 cap has the full 6.20% payroll tax deducted from his or her paycheck. but the effective tax rate paid by those earning more than the cap decreases with every dollar by which they exceed the cap.

For example, someone earning \$1,761,000 pays only the \$10,918 due for his or her first \$176,100, so his or her effective tax rate drops to 0.62%. And someone earning \$17,610,000 also pays only the same \$10,918, so his or her effective tax rate is 0.062%, one-hundredth the rate paid by most of us.

Democrats created Social Security and we will not allow it to be destroyed to fund more tax breaks for plutocrats and multinational corporations.

¹ [The Delray Democrat](#), March 2025, page 7.



Franklin Delano Roosevelt signing the Social Security Act, August 14, 1935, with inter alia, Robert Wagner, John Dingell Sr., and Frances Perkins, the greatest Secretary of Labor in American history.