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WASHINGTON, D.C., Feb. 4 -- U.S. Senator Bob Dole today cosponsored two bills to provide automatic cost-of-living increases for Social Security and Railroad Retirement recipients.

The bills, introduced by Senator Jack Miller (R-IOWA), seek to provide that whenever the consumer price index rises at least three percent and remains at that level three months, Social Security and Railroad Retirement benefits would be increased identically and automatically.

"Currently most older Americans are defenseless against higher living costs until Congress authorizes individual increases," Dole said. "Their incomes remain static and their spending power decreases each time the consumer price index goes up."

"Relief should be available to our senior citizens as soon as they are hit by a substantial dollar value loss," he said. "They should not have to wait months or even years for such help to come from Congress by individual general amendments to the Social Security and Railroad Retirement Acts."

"Passage of these bills," he added, "would be a giant step toward helping the elderly of America obtain and maintain their independence, dignity and opportunity for useful participation in our society -- goals they not only desire, but deserve."