

## Talking With Kansans

Senator Bob Dole



### SOCIAL SECURITY TAX DESERVES RETIREMENT -- TIME TO DUMP EARNINGS LIMIT FOR WORKING ELDERLY

If you are a working American between the ages of 65 and 70, you are painfully aware of a screwball tax that actually penalizes you for staying on the job.

It's called the Social Security Earnings Test, and it was apparently designed to prevent senior citizens from receiving Social Security benefits while they hold down jobs, thus saving Uncle Sam some money.

So what is this earnings limit? This new tax that will keep seniors from getting what they worked all their lives to collect? Surely it must be for those lucky working elderly making more than \$50,000 per year. Or perhaps \$100,000? Or even a million?

Well, guess again. According to current law, anyone between 65 and 70 years of age must forfeit \$1 of retirement benefits for every \$2 of income if they are working and earning -- believe it or not -- \$8,800 or more!!

Now that's one Social Security law that deserves its own well-deserved retirement. In fact, the Social Security Administration spends more than \$200 million and uses 8 percent of its employees just to police the income levels of senior citizens!

That's right, all that big government monitoring men and women earning \$8,800 or more. That's why I have introduced legislation to phase out this misguided Earnings Test, cooked up during the depths of the Depression to encourage early retirement.

However, eliminating this retirement tax does create a problem. It violates our recently enacted anti-budget buster law because, for the first time in decades, the Treasury will no longer be siphoning-off Social Security dollars which an employee has paid for throughout his or her working career.

Once the Earnings Test is on the way out, senior citizens will begin earning higher benefits, thus making our working friends between 65 and 70 part of an expanded government entitlement program. I am working with several other Senators to neutralize the budget and deficit impact of this Social Security fix.

Some people argue that the working elderly should not be able to work and also earn extra income. Well, I don't buy that one. With the cost of living, health care and retirement going through the roof, the least we can do is try to help our senior citizens get the proper return on their lifetime investment, while America benefits from their talents.

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