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CoMPASS Members Vow to Keep Pressure on for Social Security Reform Following Meeting with President Bush

Coalition Welcomes House Democratic “AmeriSave” 401(k) Reform Proposal; Calls on Democrats to Now Join Social Security Debate

Washington, DC – The leaders of organizations representing businesses, senior citizens and college students today vowed to keep the pressure on Congress to fix Social Security this year following a meeting with President Bush.

“The 450 member organizations of CoMPASS, representing all generations and all 50 states, remain united in our strong belief that Congress must act this fall to address Social Security’s fiscal challenges and to protect retirement security for all generations,” said John Castellani, Business Roundtable and CoMPASS President. “CoMPASS will carry the message of reform to Members of the House and Senate during the August recess – and we’ll be ready to press the case again when Congress returns in September.”

The meeting with President Bush and other White House officials was attended by more than 200 representatives of CoMPASS member organizations such as Students for Saving Social Security, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, National Federation of Independent Business, National Association of Manufacturers, National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors, Business Roundtable and FreedomWorks.

CoMPASS leadership also welcomed today’s proposal by House Democrats to increase personal savings through changes to 401(k) savings account rules as a sign that Democratic leaders were offering ideas, but said the alternative falls short of offering retirement security to all Americans.

“Retirement security has three equal pillars: a strong pension system, incentives for greater personal savings and a fiscally sound social security system,” said Derrick Max, CoMPASS Executive Director. “This plan does not address one of the greatest challenges facing the future retirement security of Americans – a Social Security system that is fiscally unsound. This is the equivalent of seeking to reform the space program without touching NASA. Congress must

address solvency and provide for additional savings mechanisms through personal savings accounts if it truly wants reform retirement security.”

“This proposal, while a good start, only provides help for those who can already afford to save,” Castellani said. “It does not provide help for those who rely on Social Security for their retirement income, and any reform bill must take care of these people as well.”

In a related development, CoMPASS today unveiled its new *Social Insecurity Counter* that shows the escalating cost of fixing Social Security as reform is delayed. The Social Security Trustees estimate that the cost of Social Security reform increases \$600 billion for each year that the reforms are delayed, and the counter measures that growing price tag of inaction. The counter can be found at www.generationstogether.net.

“The American people understand the need to fix Social Security – and they understand that failure to act will mean that the cost of reform will increase,” said Max. “It’s bad enough that the American people are being forced to watch their retirement future be compromised by partisan bickering – they shouldn’t have to pay for it, too. Our Social Insecurity counter keeps track of the cost to America of this political posturing.”

The broad and growing membership of CoMPASS believes that any final Social Security legislation must contain four elements. The reform legislation must protect benefits for seniors and those nearing retirement, give younger workers the option of personal retirement accounts, put the program on the path to long-term financial stability, and avoid raising taxes on employers or employees.

CoMPASS sponsors *Generations Together* (www.generationstogether.net), the leading voter education and grassroots mobilization campaign in support of Social Security reform.

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Generations Together (www.generationstogether.net) is a project of the *Coalition for the Modernization and Protection of America’s Social Security* (CoMPASS). CoMPASS is a 501 (c)(4) with the mission of educating the public on, and advocating for, fundamental Social Security reform.