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Personal account option should be part of reform

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Editor, the Tribune: After my retirement, I began to draw Social Security benefits. It provides an important supplement to other retirement income. The program is definitely valuable, providing an important source of post-retirement income, but it was never intended to be a sole source of income after retirement.

When I started working full time, more than 15 workers were paying into the system for each retiree. Today it is something like three workers for each retiree, and that trend isn't going to reverse unless we do something about it. I believe voluntary personal retirement accounts offer our best hope for the future as a part of a package of revisions. This option should be available to those who choose to use it. Note I use the word "option" - freedom of choice.

AARP made a great effort to convince the folks in Washington and the American people that personal retirement accounts will bankrupt the system and cut benefits. But AARP does not speak for me. I hope our representatives in Congress understand many seniors my age are not so selfish as to demand benefits for ourselves while younger workers pay into a system from which they will never benefit. By allowing younger generations to decide on their own whether to invest, we'll be able to empower them with personal ownership over their retirement.

Raising taxes is not the total answer. I urge Congress to support the concept of voluntary personal retirement accounts as part of the plan for reforming Social Security.

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