



March 23, 2005

John J. Sweeney  
President  
AFL-CIO  
815 16th St., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear John,

I know from our conversations that you share my concern, and the concern of Business Roundtable CEOs, about ensuring retirement security for American workers.

As President Clinton first made clear to the American people almost ten years ago, a major crisis is looming in Social Security. Unless action is taken, our children and grandchildren will face crippling tax increases and cruel benefit cuts the likes of which we've never seen before. Higher payroll taxes and lower benefits will hurt all Americans, but particularly the low and moderate-income working men and women for whom you have spent a lifetime advocating.

With that in mind, I would like to call your attention to a new national survey assessing union members' viewpoints on Social Security. The unmistakable conclusion is that labor union members support Social Security reform.

Among the poll's key findings poll are that:

- Members of labor unions think offering personal retirement accounts to workers under age 55 is a good idea by more than a two-to-one margin.
- Six out of ten union members say they are at least somewhat likely to create an account if given the opportunity.
- More than seven out of ten union members trust themselves rather than their union or the federal government to manage their retirement savings.
- Three-fourths of union members think the Social Security system is not financially sound and needs significant changes.
- By nearly a four-to-one margin, union members think it would be irresponsible if Congress does not make significant changes to Social Security.

This poll shows that union members are like most Americans: the more they learn about Social Security reform, the more they like it. And that is exactly what CoMPASS' *Generations Together* supporters are hearing throughout the country - day in, and day out.

*Generations Together* ([www.generationstogether.net](http://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.



These results make it very difficult to understand why you are directing your members to mount protests of policies that are supported by a majority of their union colleagues.

I urge you to reconsider your opposition to fixing Social Security and to advocate what is in the best interests of your members, their children and their grandchildren.

Social Security is on a path that will be devastating to future retirees. Let's work together to fix it for the workers of today and tomorrow.

Sincerely,

John J. Castellani