

March 20, 2002- Blue Dog Amendment For Social Security Protection/Balanced Budget

March 20, 2002 Rep. Sanchez Supports Blue Dog Amendment For Social Security Protection/Balanced Budget Legislation

WASHINGTON, D.C. - This week, Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez gave her support to the Social Security Protection/Balanced Budget Amendment [SSP/BBA] filed by Rep. Marion Berry (D-AR) of the Blue Dog Coalition last week. It would amend the U.S. Constitution to require Congress to balance the federal budget annually without using money from the Social Security trust fund.

"The membership of the Blue Dog Coalition has acted decisively to endorse this legislation in order to continue our leadership role in the fight to protect Social Security and balance the budget," said Rep. Sanchez (D-CA), a Blue Dog member.

"The House has repeatedly demonstrated its strong, bipartisan support for both a Balanced Budget Constitutional Amendment and for protecting Social Security trust funds," said Rep. Charlie Stenholm (D-TX), Blue Dog Budget/Social Security Task Force Co-Chair. "With this Amendment building on that established consensus between Republicans and Democrats, there is every reason for the House to now approve this resolution."

In order for the Blue Dog Coalition to take an official position and endorse legislation, the bill must receive support from 2/3's of the Coalition, at least 22 of the group's 33 members.

H.J. Res. 85 is similar to the BBA amendment that was supported by 300 House members in 1995, except that it would keep Social Security "off-budget," meaning that Congress could not use the Social Security trust fund surplus to balance the federal budget. In 2015, when the trust fund is projected to begin running a deficit, Social Security would be brought back "on-budget," and Congress would be required to fully fund our commitment to America's retired workers. The SSP/BBA, like the 1995 BBA, would allow Congress to suspend the balancing requirements in times of war.

"The hallmark of this legislation is security. It will protect Social Security and safeguard the financial security of our children and grandchildren without diverting resources from homeland security and the war on terror," said Berry.

The SSP/BBA was filed less than a month after the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office released an analysis of the Administration's budget plan which showed that it would spend \$1.6 trillion from the Social Security trust fund over the next 10 years.

For more information on the Blue Dogs visit them at their website:
<http://www.bluedogdemocrats.com>.