

In 1935, being old generally meant being poor. Yet today, only one in ten American seniors lives in poverty. Indeed, seniors today [are less likely than Americans in any other age group](#) to live in poverty.

What is responsible for this turnaround? The answer, of course, is Social Security, which marked its 77th anniversary last week. In its nearly eight decades of existence, Social Security has lifted tens of millions of Americans out of poverty – including about 13 million today. Social Security also assists many with disabilities and many children who survive the loss of a parent, as I did.

Although you would not know it from the hyperbole in Washington today, Social Security has never missed a payment and remains in pretty good financial shape. According to the two independent trustees overseeing the Social Security and Medicare programs, without any changes at all, the Social Security program can pay all benefits through at least 2036. Even after that, it could still pay out about 77 percent of scheduled benefits.

This modest long-term shortfall in Social Security is a good reason to take steps to shore up the program. Yet those who would use these challenges as an excuse to privatize Social Security, as Rep. Paul Ryan and others have proposed in recent years, are simply fear-mongering in hopes of advancing their impractical ideology. Worse still, they are threatening the guarantee that is at Social Security's heart.

As President Franklin D. Roosevelt said shortly after Social Security was created, “None of the sums of money paid out to individuals in assistance or in insurance will spell anything approaching abundance. But they will furnish that minimum necessity to keep a foothold; and that is the kind of protection Americans want.”

Ethnic Profiling Remains Ineffective and Offensive

In May, [I wrote to you](#) about the New York Police Department's wide-scale, warrantless surveillance of innocent Muslims in states across America. Muslims in New Jersey have told me that they felt the chill and intimidation from such profiling.

As I have said, profiling is a poor substitute for thinking, and it does not constitute good policing. Now, there is evidence that the NYPD's tactics were wholly ineffective. As the Associated Press [reported this week](#), the NYPD has acknowledged in court testimony that its six years of spying on Muslims never produced a lead or triggered a terrorism investigation.

Spending limited law enforcement resources profiling the innocent rather than investigating the guilty is not just wasteful; it presumes a separate class of Americans who can be placed under suspicion in the absence of reasonable, specific evidence, violating fundamental national principles of liberty and equality.

Thank You to Congressional Interns for Summer 2012

This month, [the latest group of Congressional interns](#) in my West Windsor and Washington, D.C. office finished their service. It was a pleasure to welcome these interns to my staff, and I was impressed by their intelligence, willingness to learn, and commitment to public service.

If you are a high school or college student interested in interning in my office, please [visit my website to learn more](#)

Sincerely,

Rush Holt
Member of Congress