

1259 Dryden Road
Ithaca, NY 14850
February 2, 2004

Congressman Sherwood Boehlert
45 Church Street
Cortland, NY 13045

Dear Congressman Boehlert,

I have been watching your recent comments on Social Security very closely, discussing them on my *Living in Dryden* weblog (<http://livingindryden.org>). I was very pleased when you told WAMC that:

"I don't want to gamble with Social Security trust fund money. And so I am very, very skeptical of the so-called plans to privatize. And I think a disservice is being done to a great many Americans by sort of sounding the alarm that everything's going to hell in a hand basket and we're going to be broke by 2018. That simply is not so."

I am much less pleased to find you described in today's *Poughkeepsie Journal* as:

Boehlert said he needs to hear more details before deciding whether to support the plan. But he praised Bush for trying to tackle the politically difficult issue.

I'm afraid that comments like these suggest that the importance of moderate Republicans you described so powerfully to WAMC - "the feeling that the moderates really spoke for the majority of the American people" - is being overwhelmed by the power of the conservative wing of your party and its relentless antipathy to one of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's remaining great accomplishments.

I would appreciate a reply explaining where you stand on these issues and whether we can hope that your initial principled response to sounding false alarms will prove to be your ultimate position.

I also never received a reply to my letter of November 24th asking for details about another run-in you had with the conservative wing of your party, and enclose a copy of that letter in the hope that you'll answer it as well.

Thank you very much,

Simon St.Laurent
<http://livingindryden.org>