Biden’s Record on Social Security

APRIL 25 1984 - BIDEN CALLS FOR FREEZES TO SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE, WARNING OF EVEN LARGER CUTS

“So, when those of my friends in the Democratic and Republican Party say to me, ‘How do you expect me to vote for your proposal? Does it not freeze social security COLA's for 1 year? Are we not saying there will be no cost-of living increases for 1 year?’ The answer to that is ‘Yes,’ that is what I am saying. But I believe if we do not do it for 1 year, we will be debating next year whether we will have it at all again. That will be the issue, not whether or not we stop it for a year. It will be whether or not it is going to be permanently reduced or permanently eliminated, and whether or not we make other significant changes in medicare and significant changes in social security generally’”

Click here to read the Congressional Record.

JANUARY 31, 1995 - BIDEN SAYS A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT COULD FORCE “DRASTIC REDUCTIONS IN SOCIAL SECURITY.” (HE VOTED FOR IT.)

“The balanced budget amendment makes no provision whatsoever for the unique characteristics of the Social Security trust fund. Instead, it treats Social Security revenues and outlays as ordinary Federal budget. This means in the years that Social Security is generating hundreds of billions of dollars in surplus revenues it will be used to cover hundreds of billions of dollars worth of deficits that the rest of the Federal budget is creating. After 2014, when the trust fund goes into deficit to the tune of tens or hundreds of billions of dollars a year, we in Congress will have to cut that much from the rest of the budget to make up for the deficit. What does it mean? It means that for the next 20 years or so, revenues from the Social Security trust fund will make it look like we have balanced the budget when in fact we have not, and after that the huge outlays from the trust fund will force drastic reductions in the rest of Federal spending, or drastic reductions in Social Security.”

FEBRUARY 9, 1995 - BIDEN SAYS THAT A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT “MEANS THAT SOCIAL SECURITY IS GOING TO GET HIT.” (HE VOTED FOR IT.)

“I want to thank the Senator for allowing me to interrupt him with all these questions. It seems pretty clear to me this is about two things: One, they need the Social Security dollars to make the deficit look like it is less than it is, and then the next step is they are going to need to try to deal with changing it to increase the amount of money they get in the trust funds to make the deficit look even less, which means that Social Security is going to get hit.”
Click here to read the Congressional Record.

FEBRUARY 24, 1995 - BIDEN BACKS BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT AFTER SAYING IT WILL CUT SOCIAL SECURITY

SEPTEMBER 31, 1995 -- IN SENATE FLOOR SPEECH, BIDEN BRAGS OF TRYING TO CUT SOCIAL SECURITY 4 TIMES

NOVEMBER 16, 1995 -- IN SENATE FLOOR SPEECH, BIDEN BRAGS OF TRYING TO CUT SOCIAL SECURITY 4 TIMES

“I am a Democrat that voted for the constitutional amendment to balance the budget. I have introduced on four occasions—four occasions—entire plans to balance a
budget…I tried with Senator Grassley back in the 1980’s to freeze all Government spending, including Social Security, including everything.”

Click here to watch the video, click here to read the Congressional Record.

**APRIL 27, 2007 -- ON MEET THE PRESS, BIDEN SAYS SOCIAL SECURITY CUTS MUST BE ON THE TABLE, DURING HIS CAMPAIGN IN WHICH HE WAS FLOATING THE IDEA OF RAISING THE RETIREMENT AGE**

RUSSERT: But, senator, we have a deficit. We have Social Security and Medicare looming. The number of people on Social Security and Medicare is now 40 million people. It’s going to be 80 million in 15 years. Would you consider looking at those programs, age of eligibility...

SEN. BIDEN: Absolutely.

MR. RUSSERT: ...cost of living, put it all on the table.

SEN. BIDEN: The answer is absolutely.

Click here to watch the video, click here to read the transcript

**SEPTEMBER 26, 2007 - BIDEN TOUTED HE WAS PART OF A DEAL TO RAISE THE SOCIAL SECURITY RETIREMENT AGE**

“I'm probably the only one up here who's going to say that. But the truth of the matter is, you've stated it. You're either going to cut benefits or you're going to go ahead and raise taxes above the first $97,000. And by the way, I was in that room with Pat Moynihan. It was Joe Biden, Pat Moynihan, Bob Dole -- it was also George Mitchell -- when we made that deal. I'll never forget Bob Dole turning to Pat Moynihan and saying, we all got to jump in this boat at the same time.”

Click here to watch the video. Click here for the 1983 vote Biden is discussing.

**NOVEMBER 2007 -- BIDEN REITERATES CALL FOR “TOUGH DECISIONS” ON SOCIAL SECURITY**

Biden: “The American people know we have to fix Social Security. They know we can’t grow our way to a solution. They know we’re going to have to make some tough decisions. They’re ready to make those decisions. They’re ready to step up. We have to be ready to straightforwardly tell them what we’re about to do.”

Click here to watch the video

**MAY 2018 - BIDEN CALLS FOR SOCIAL SECURITY “ADJUSTMENTS”**
Biden: “Paul Ryan was correct when he did the tax code. What’s the first thing he decided we had to go after? Social Security and Medicare. Now, we need to do something about Social Security and Medicare. That’s the only way you can find room to pay for it.”

Biden added in the speech that Social Security and Medicare “still needs adjustments.”

Click here to watch the video, click here to read the transcript.

The Week noted that in the Brookings speech, Biden “did indeed call for cuts to Social Security and Medicare in a 2018 speech at the Brookings Institution — part of a decades-long career of hawking pointless austerity.”

Alex Lawson, director of Social Security Works, recently wrote that “PolitiFact wrongly ranked the statement from the Sanders newsletter as ‘false’ because they willfully refused to understand what Biden said in the speech—and how it represents decades of Washington establishment consensus on cutting the American people’s earned Social Security and Medicare benefits.”

The Intercept wrote “after a Sanders campaign newsletter continued the attack on Biden’s Social Security record, the Biden campaign complained to fact-checkers at Politifact that his comments were being taken out of context. Placed in context, however, Biden’s record on Social Security is far worse than one offhand remark. Indeed, Biden has been advocating for cuts to Social Security for roughly 40 years.”

Click here for video. Click here to read the Congressional Record.