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## **Survey of Marylanders on How to Resolve Social Security Shortfall**

COLLEGE PARK, Md. -- Voice Of the People's first survey of its newly-established Maryland Citizen Cabinet finds overwhelming majorities of Republicans and Democrats agree on recommendations that would cover most of the looming Social Security shortfall. A modest majority recommends steps that would completely eliminate the shortfall.

The Maryland Citizen Cabinet is an online representative panel of Maryland registered voters, scientifically-selected and managed by the University of Maryland's Program for Public Consultation at the School of Public Policy. It will be consulted on a series of issues facing Congress in the months ahead.

Large majorities of the Cabinet recommend reducing benefits for the top quarter of earners (76 percent), raising the full retirement age to 68 years old (84 percent), raising the cap on income subject to the payroll tax (87 percent), and raising the payroll tax rate from 6.2 to 6.6 percent (76 percent). Together, these steps would eliminate two-thirds of the Social Security shortfall. Partisan differences are minor, with at least two in three Republicans and Democrats endorsing each of these steps.

"It's often said that Social Security is a third rail in politics, but given the right tools, majorities from both parties agree on how to fix most of the shortfall," said Steven Kull, VOP president and director of the Program for Public Consultation. "Marylanders are more united than divided."

A Citizen Cabinet was also recruited for Maryland's 7th Congressional district, which includes Baltimore and surrounding areas. Its views were found to be nearly identical to those of the statewide Cabinet.