

(WASHINGTON)--- Congressman Allen West (FL-22) commended President Barack Obama today for proposing major changes to Social Security and Medicare.

As reported in the Washington Post this morning, President Obama plans to argue (with Congressional Leadership) 'that a rare consensus has emerged about the size and scope of the nation's budget problems and that policymakers should seize the moment to take dramatic action. (President Obama) is proposing significant reductions in Medicare spending and for the first time is offering to tackle the rising cost of Social Security.'

"I want to take this moment to commend President Obama for facing the facts that in order for us to bring our fiscal house in order, we need to take necessary steps to address mandatory spending such as Medicare and Social Security," West said. "For too long individuals and special interests groups have used these programs to demagogue and scare seniors in order to gain a political advantage. President Obama says he finally realizes that to save these programs we need to make significant reforms, and I support his goals."

When meeting with Seniors of the 22nd District of Florida, Congressman West has stated that Social Security and Medicare can be reformed without affecting Seniors currently in these programs. The House Budget for Fiscal Year 2012 (Ryan Plan) does not propose changes to the Medicare program for individuals 55 years old and older.

With regard to the discussion on taxes, Congressman West has emphasized at every town hall meeting that he is willing to close loopholes. "Our tax code needs to be used to provide economic growth and create jobs. It cannot be used to punish individuals and small businesses that create jobs. With Florida's unemployment rate more than 9 percent, we just cannot exacerbate the situation with counterproductive tax policies," West said.

"It's obvious this discussion is being held because our nation has a debt of more than \$14 trillion dollars, and we are now asking the American people to raise our credit limit once again. Our Federal Government, our Congress, and the President need to realize we cannot continue to spend away our children's and our grandchildren's future," West concluded.

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