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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM MUST PRESERVE PROGRAM'S PROMISES**

**Century Foundation Vice President Greg Anrig on the Social Security Debate**

*New York City, Feb. 3, 2005*—With Social Security a major focus of Wednesday's State of the Union address and President Bush set to visit a number of states in the next few days to discuss the issue, the debate about the program's future has officially begun. Greg Anrig, vice president for programs at The Century Foundation, believes that it is crucial to America's families that this debate be based on facts and honest analysis and not on ideological rhetoric and sloganeering.

"Despite a polarized and often misleading debate, consensus about the importance of Social Security and the value of its promise for future generations seems clear. That is why a sensible approach to reform that preserves the program's integrity for tomorrow's retirees is so important," argued Anrig. "Social Security is fundamentally about trust, and that's why it has worked so well for 70 years. Presidents of both parties have acted to strengthen the program from one generation to the next, reducing poverty among the elderly from 35 percent before 1960 to just 10 percent today. It was Ronald Reagan who signed into law the Social Security payroll tax increases recommended by Alan Greenspan's bipartisan commission—tax increases that have built up the trust funds to fulfill the promise of paying benefits to the baby boomers when they retire in the decades ahead."

Yet extensive research has shown that some proposals for reform would jeopardize that promise. Anrig said, "Privatization would break that long-standing bond between the generations. It would drain Social Security's trust funds and undercut the trust that has enabled Americans of all ages to feel good about a society in which our elderly can live decently in retirement."

Anrig has written extensively about the Social Security reform debate, most recently in the issue brief [Ten Myths about Social Security](#). He is also coauthor (with Bernard Wasow) of [Twelve Reasons Why Privatizing Social Security is a Bad Idea](#), a Century Foundation issue brief, and coeditor (with Richard C. Leone) of the book *Social Security: Beyond the Basics*. Anrig is available for interviews and commentary about important issues in the debate over Social Security reform and privatization. He can be reached directly at 212-452-7724. Contact Alex Baker at 212-452-7705 or [baker@tcf.org](mailto:baker@tcf.org) for more information.

The Century Foundation's Social Security project serves as a complete resource on Social Security and the privatization debate, providing concise and accurate information, research, and analysis to legislators, journalists, and the general public. The project's Web site can be found at <http://www.socsec.org>.

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The Century Foundation conducts public policy research and analyses of economic, social, and foreign policy issues, including inequality, retirement security, election reform, media studies, homeland security, and international affairs. The foundation produces books, reports, and other publications, convenes task forces and working groups, and operates seven informational Web sites. With offices in New York City and Washington, D.C., The Century Foundation is nonprofit and nonpartisan and was founded in 1919 by Edward A. Filene.