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Bernie Sanders: Tax This is the print preview: Back to normal view >> Cut Deal Could Doom Social Security (VIDEO)

The Huffington Post | Nick Wing Posted: 12-14-10 11:02 AM



Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), still relatively fresh off a more than 8-hour stand against the current tax cut deal, which recently passed a key vote in the Senate, said on Monday that the framework of the plan could lead to a severe degradation of Social Security as we know it.

"I just spoke this afternoon to one of the leaders of one of the largest senior citizen organizations in this country and she worries very much that when you start diverting a hundred and twelve thousand dollars of payroll taxes away from Social Security, this could be the

beginning," Sanders explained on MSNBC's "The Ed Show." "Our Republican friends like this idea and they will extend, I fear, that concept. It is not good for the future of social security."

Sanders also continued his criticism of the president and senators who were against tax cuts for the rich for not taking a more proactive approach to ensuring that the rates weren't extended.

"What the president in my view -- what all of us should have done -- is gone around the country, rallied the American people and said 'really, do you think we should be lowering the estate tax for the top three-tenths of one percent? Do you think we should be continuing low rates on dividend and capital gains taxes? Do you really think that billionaires need a tax break?" Sanders said. "I think we win that debate and then we come to the table with the Republicans on the defensive, not us."

At a briefing Monday, White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs responded to Sanders's filibuster and his repeated claims that President Obama didn't work aggressively enough to get what he wanted out of the tax cut deal.

"I think the president would be the first to agree that there are aspects of this that he doesn't like," Gibbs said. "He respects and understands the frustration of those who have a different viewpoint on the agreement."

Gibbs continued, saying that such "frustration" didn't constitute an actionable way forward on a tax plan.

"I think, at the same time, he believes it is important for our economy, it is important for middle class families to get [this] done," Gibbs said.

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