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Congresswoman Matsui Applauds Cost-of-Living Increase for Social Security Beneficiaries

Average Increase of Almost \$500 Per Year Will Help Sacramento Seniors

SACRAMENTO, CA – Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D-Sacramento), Co-Chair of the Congressional Seniors Task Force, applauded the recent announcement by the Social Security Administration that beneficiaries would receive their first Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA) in two-years. Starting in January, Social Security beneficiaries will receive a 3.6% COLA increase, which will be an extra \$467 on average per year.

“I am pleased that older Americans will see some measure of relief in the form of a COLA increase starting next year,” Matsui said. “At a time in which so many are struggling to make ends meet, this COLA is critical for many older Americans to pay for basic day-to-day needs such as food, housing, and medicine.”

Congresswoman Matsui has advocated for a COLA increase for the past two years, given that the cost of food, gas, health insurance premiums and other day-to-day costs have increased over that same period. In fact, Matsui cosponsored H.R.766, the Guaranteed 3% COLA for Seniors Act of 2011, earlier this year, which would have provided for an immediate 3% increase for 2011 upon passage.

“Earlier this year, when it was uncertain whether Social Security recipients would receive a COLA increase, I cosponsored the Guaranteed 3% COLA for Seniors Act of 2011. This bill would ensure that older Americans would receive a 3 percent increase in benefits no matter what the automatic calculation called for. I am pleased that today’s announcement precludes the need for this bill, recognizing that America’s seniors are struggling and that it is our

collective responsibility to help ensure they benefits that they not only deserve, but have paid into their entire working lives.”

The COLA is automatically calculated using data on inflation published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. According to the Social Security Administration, an increase in the CPI-W from the third quarter of the last year to the third quarter of the current year will result in an automatic Social Security benefits raise. If there is no percentage increase in the CPI-W between the two periods, no COLA is payable. In 2009, Social Security recipients saw a 5.8% increase in their benefits, the largest since 1982, as a result of rising costs. However, recipients saw no COLA in 2010 and 2011.

For more information about Congresswoman Matsui’s work in Congress on behalf of Sacramento seniors, please click [here](#) .

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