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September 22, 2009

Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner
Social Security Administration
6401 Security Blvd
Baltimore, MD 21235

Dear Commissioner Asture:

I am writing to express my concern with the Social Security Administration trustees' recent preliminary decision not to issue a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) to millions of America's senior citizens. Although Social Security increases are a federal issue, as a State Senator from Staten Island, I have received numerous calls from my constituents on protesting the trustees decision.

This decision will be the first time in Social Security's history that automatic increases have not been adopted since such increases started in 1975. Senior citizens, many of which are living on fixed incomes, have worked hard all their lives. As you are aware, senior citizens face higher prices due to the fact that they spend a disproportionate amount of their income on health care costs. They have seen their life savings dwindle with the downturn in the stock market and our nation's economy. Increased medical costs and the nation's financial and economic condition only prove more than ever that they need a COLA in their 2010 Social Security benefits.

America's senior citizens have sacrificed on numerous occasions to make the United States the greatest country on the face of the Earth. It is the Federal government's responsibility to ensure that America's commitments to our seniors are honored now and for future generations.

I strongly recommend that the Social Security trustees reconsider their decision when they meet in October and to take into account the financial hardship that will result if our seniors do not receive a COLA in 2010.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Lanza".
ANDREW J. LANZA

Senator

AJL:jt