



While all have paid into the system and are entitled to benefits, does it not reek of unequal treatment for a government program to view them as identical?

Absent from the governor's program, however, was a suggestion that gains supporters whenever reforms are mentioned – raising or eliminating entirely the cap on income above which Social Security payments cease to be deducted.

Taxing income which exceeds the current limit of \$118,000 has the potential, its supporters argue, to solve the funding dilemma in short order. They point out that the majority of working Americans never reach the limit and, consequently, pay into the system year in and year out while contributions from wealthier individuals can end after a few months.

Gov. Christie rejected this argument, saying increasing or abolishing the limit is tantamount to a tax increase, a contention his critics claim fits with his consistent anti-tax posture and protecting the rich, endearing him to the conservative wing of the national Republican Party.

There has been considerable speculation that Gov. Christie damaged himself by raising entitlement reform, that it is an issue that has always dragged down those who become involved in it.

He has opened himself to pushback from senior citizens – a potent voting bloc – and invited criticism that he is looking out for the wealthy at the expense of the middle class.

Others contend that Gov. Christie has fallen out of the top tier of possible presidential candidates in any event and focusing on radical changes in Social Security will not re-energize his as yet undeclared candidacy.

Gov. Christie, however, has made his point rather emphatically; he's entered the swamp with the goal of draining it. He'd better keep at least one eye on the gators, though.

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