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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 23, 2007

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**Statement by OMB Director Rob Portman on the
Report by the Social Security and Medicare Trustees**

Today's report reaffirms a clear message the Trustees have been sending for years – Medicare and Social Security are unsustainable in their current form. That's why the President has prioritized and elevated reform and included a down payment on reform in the 2008 Budget.

We know that sensible reforms now that slow the rate of growth even slightly will generate substantial future savings that can save these important programs. It is disappointing that the new congressional majority chose to completely ignore entitlements in their recently-passed 2008 budget proposals.

The proposed Medicare savings in the President's Budget – totaling \$66 billion over five years – puts the program on more sound financial footing. Today's Trustees report triggers a formal warning over Medicare funding sustainability. If the Medicare proposals included in the President's Budget were in place now, the Trustees funding warning would not have been triggered. I urge Congress to adopt the President's proposals now so that next year the Medicare warning will not be triggered.

By delaying action and ignoring the problem, Democrats are leaving our children and grandchildren with three bad choices: massive tax increases, huge benefit cuts or substantial debt. It is time for Congress to listen to the repeated calls from the Trustees to address the biggest budgetary challenge of our time.

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