

Barnes campaign: On Social Security, GOP's Ron Johnson walks along the third rail

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MADISON — Over the past week, Sen. Ron Johnson has doubled down on his threats to cut Social Security and Medicare, putting hundreds of thousands of retired Wisconsinites at risk of losing their benefits.

Lt. Governor Mandela Barnes, Democratic nominee for U.S. Senate, released the following statement in response:

“Ron Johnson delivered \$215 million in tax deductions for his wealthiest donors, but wants to strip seniors of the benefits they’ve worked their entire lives for. While he’s proven he’ll throw Wisconsin’s middle class overboard to serve his corporate and special interest donors, I’m focused on ensuring every person has a fair shot to work hard, succeed, and retire comfortably.”

MSNBC: [On Social Security, GOP's Ron Johnson walks along the third rail](#)

By: Steve Benen

- The idea is relatively straightforward: Social Security is so popular, and is seen as such a pillar of modern American life, that officials who target the program are putting their political lives at risk.
- But in Wisconsin, Republican Sen. Ron Johnson has been even more cavalier about throwing caution to the wind, recently [endorsing the idea](#) of moving Medicare and Social Security into Congress’ discretionary budget — in the process, ending guaranteed and automatic benefits — where they could be

subjected to annual cuts.

- **As The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel [reported](#) over the weekend, the controversial GOP senator has had opportunities to express support for the existing Social Security system, but he keeps going in the opposite direction.**
- “Weeks after saying Social Security and Medicare should be subjected to annual budget talks — a stance that caused political blow back from his foes — Johnson once again weighed into America’s signature social insurance program.”
- **During a Wednesday campaign stop in Rice Lake, Johnson said Social Security “was set up improperly” and that the system’s funds would have been better off invested in the stock market.**
- I’ve long wondered whether a Senate candidate in a battleground state could win a campaign as an overt critic of Social Security.

Read the full article [here](#).