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Business First of Columbus - 1:39 PM EST Thursday

Study: Many Ohioans rely on Social Security

A large percentage of Ohio seniors need Social Security to remain as it is because they depend heavily on it as retirement income, says [Policy Matters Ohio](#), a liberal think tank based in Cleveland.

A Policy Matters study found 68 percent of Ohioans over 65 rely on Social Security for half of their income. Some 77 percent of Ohioans over 75 get half of their income from Social Security, the study said.

Ohioans are more likely to rely on Social Security as they get older, the study warned. Some 30 percent of state residents over age 65 get 90 percent or more of their income from Social Security, according to the study.

Policy Matters used the study to blast the Bush administration's proposal to divert part of Social Security withholdings into private investments as a way to solve the program's fiscal troubles. The administration proposes allowing residents to divert part of their Social Security taxes into private accounts but the accounts would not be guaranteed by the government.

The administration has said benefits wouldn't be cut for those over 55, but Policy Matters said its study shows a guaranteed minimum retirement is needed for future retirees who might outlive their savings.

The study broke down Social Security recipients by race and gender. It said unmarried women over 65 receive about 83 percent of their income from Social Security. African-Americans over 65 get about 79 percent of their income from Social Security, and Hispanics over 65 get 83 percent of their income from the program.

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