



# Congressman Ben Cardin

Maryland's Third District



## Congressman Ben Cardin - Maryland's Third District

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Dear Friends,

On January 4th, the 109th Congress was sworn in and it faces some important challenges. The top foreign policy priorities for this Congress include the War on Terrorism, the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and the Middle East peace process. On foreign policy issues, it's important that our nation speak with a united voice, which may be a challenge in these difficult times.

Unfortunately, our current \$413 billion budget deficit is a serious complicating factor to many other policy initiatives. In December, Congress raised the debt ceiling to more than \$8 trillion, signaling that our nation's current national debt of \$7 trillion will go even higher. Debt of this magnitude will eventually have a serious effect on our nation's economy and our ability to deal with important national priorities.

The President has stated his intention to "reform" Social Security and our tax structure. He has said he wants to make permanent the three tax cuts from his first term, and use some portion of the Social Security trust fund for private retirement accounts.

I believe that Democrats and Republicans in Congress could agree on non-controversial changes to Social Security that would strengthen the solvency of the program without moving toward a dangerous precedent of diverting a portion of Social Security funds into private accounts. Such a move would only add to our already soaring deficit and weaken Social Security's ability to pay its current obligations.

I look forward to these challenges and to working with members on both sides of the aisle who are committed to finding constructive solutions to our nation's problems.

Sincerely,

**Benjamin L. Cardin**  
Member of Congress

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### CARDIN HOLDS NEWS CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS TRIP TO IRAQ AND ISRAEL

Congressman Cardin talks to reporters about his mid-December congressional delegation trip to Iraq and Israel. The Congressman said that the Iraqi insurgency has been "very effective in intimidation and violence, which has prevented the United States from achieving its objectives." The Congressman said it's important to go ahead with the Iraq election on Jan. 30, but we "need new strategies that will bring in foreign partners and aggressively train Iraq security forces to take over more responsibility for their nation."

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#### Previous Survey Question Results

**Would you support replacing federal Transportation Security Administration (TSA) screeners with private security firms?**

| Answer | Percent |
|--------|---------|
| Yes    | 32.54%  |
| No     | 67.46%  |
| Totals | 100%    |

#### New Survey Question

Congressman Cardin Wants To Hear From You

**Would you support an additional appropriation of approximately \$100 billion to fund the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan?**

- Yes  
 No

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#### Contact Information

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