

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 19, 2018

Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

We are deeply concerned about excessive wait times and declining service at the Social Security Administration (SSA). We urge you to support robust funding in FY2019 so that SSA can work to reduce the unconscionable delays faced every day by Americans who are trying to access their earned benefits.

Social Security is an essential component of economic security for American workers; almost all workers are contributing to Social Security and earnings its benefits. The income Social Security provides is vital for retirees, families who have lost a breadwinner, and workers who have suffered a career-ending injury or illness. It is impossible to overstate the importance of the program to the 62 million people who are receiving benefits. For 6 in 10 retirees, Social Security provides the majority of their income. And nearly 4 in 10 widows have almost no income other than Social Security.


Despite the importance of Social Security and its strong level of public support, funding to operate Social Security fell by 11 percent from 2010 to 2017, after accounting for inflation. Yet over the same time span, the number of individuals who are receiving benefits increased by nearly 15 percent as the baby boom generation ages. This increase has led to a predictable and justifiable need for higher funding for SSA so it can serve more people.

Because of budget cuts, SSA has been forced to close offices and reduce the hours of operation at those left open, leading to lengthy delays. The majority of callers to SSA's 800-number can't get through because of busy signals and long hold times. And each year, thousands die waiting for a decision on whether they are eligible for disability benefits, while many more endure years without income, in the process exhausting their life savings and even losing their homes.

These are problems that can only be resolved by providing increased funding for SSA. Without more robust funding, waiting times, benefit delays, and service problems will only grow worse – something that none of our constituents want.

Social Security is essential to American families. We urge you to support more resources for SSA so Americans can receive the benefits they are counting on.

Sincerely,



Joseph Crowley



John B. Larson



Julia Brownley



Nanette Diaz Barragán



Dwight Evans



Earl Blumenauer



Brendan F. Boyle



Brenda L. Lawrence



Sander M. Levin



Ron Kind



Al Lawson, Jr.



Seth Moulton

Mark Takano  
Mark Takano

Tony Cárdenas  
Tony Cárdenas

Raul M. Grijalva  
Raul M. Grijalva

Carol Shea-Porter  
Carol Shea-Porter

Donald Norcross  
Donald Norcross

Grace F. Napolitano  
Grace F. Napolitano

Adriano Espaillat  
Adriano Espaillat

Niki Tsongas  
Niki Tsongas

Mark DeSaulnier  
Mark DeSaulnier

Debbie Dingell  
Debbie Dingell

Tom O'Halleran  
Tom O'Halleran

Donald M. Payne, Jr.  
Donald M. Payne, Jr.

Loyce Beatty  
Loyce Beatty

Ann McLane Kuster  
Ann McLane Kuster

Salud O. Carbajal

Michelle Lujan Grisham  
Michelle Lujan Grisham

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott

Jimmy Panetta

Bennie G. Thompson

John Lewis

Charlie Crist

Filemon Vela

James P. McGovern

Ro Khanna

Robert A. Brady

Jim Costa

Jerrold Nadler


Diana DeGette

  
Rick Larsen

  
Peter A. DeFazio

  
André Carson

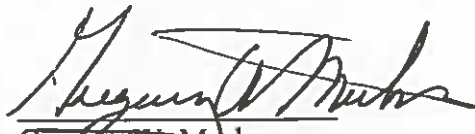
  
Eleanor Holmes Norton

  
Danny K. Davis

  
David N. Cicilline

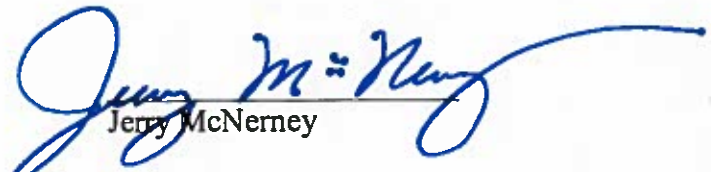
  
Terri A. Sewell

  
Ben Ray Luján

  
Gregory W. Meeks

  
Gwen S. Moore

  
Barbara Lee

  
Jerry McNerney

  
Stephen F. Lynch

  
Nydia M. Velázquez

  
Albio Sires

  
Chellie Pingree

Marcia L. Fudge

Marcia L. Fudge

Daniel W. Lipinski

Daniel W. Lipinski

Al Green

Al Green

Joe Courtney

Joe Courtney

William R. Keating

William R. Keating

Jose E. Serrano

Jose E. Serrano

Bill Pascrell, Jr.

Bill Pascrell, Jr.

Jan Schakowsky

Jan Schakowsky

Steve Cohen

Steve Cohen

Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan

Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan

Wm. Lacy Clay

Wm. Lacy Clay

John Garamendi

John Garamendi

Ted Deutch

Ted Deutch

Mike Quigley

Mike Quigley

Brian Higgins

Brian Higgins

Louise M. Slaughter

Louise M. Slaughter

Gene Green

Jimmy Gomez

Yvette D. Clarke

David Scott

Ted Lieu

Jacky Rosen

Colleen Hanabusa

Jamie Raskin

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Donald S. Beyer, Jr.

Sean Patrick Maloney

Susan A. Davis

Beto O'Rourke

Zoe Lofgren

A. Donald McEachin  
A. Donald McEachin

Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Bonnie Watson Coleman

Jackie Speier  
Jackie Speier

James R. Langevin  
James R. Langevin

G.K. Butterfield  
G.K. Butterfield

Brad Sherman  
Brad Sherman

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.

Keith Ellison  
Keith Ellison

Adam Smith  
Adam Smith

Peter Welch  
Peter Welch

Carolyn B. Maloney  
Carolyn B. Maloney

Linda T. Sánchez  
Linda T. Sánchez

Emanuel Cleaver  
Emanuel Cleaver

Eliot L. Engel  
Eliot L. Engel



Tulsi Gabbard

Tulsi Gabbard

Darren Soto

Darren Soto

J. Luis Correa

J. Luis Correa

Alan Lowenthal

Alan S. Lowenthal

Pramila Jayapal

Pramila Jayapal

Stacey E. Plaskett

Stacey E. Plaskett