

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 29, 2026

Commissioner Frank Bisignano  
Social Security Administration  
6401 Security Blvd  
Woodlawn, MD 21207

Dear Commissioner Bisignano:

We write to express our deep concern with the Social Security Administration's decision to reassign thousands of Social Security Administration (SSA) employees away from their primary, essential duties in order to address excessive wait times on SSA's toll-free number for customer service. While we understand the need to reduce wait times for calls, the blanket reassignment of personnel from other high priority tasks appears to have exacerbated backlogs and extended overdue processing times in other critical areas of the SSA. We, along with our constituents, are gravely concerned that these reassignments are creating new barriers to prompt service and delivery of benefits to the public, and request additional information on the full impact of this policy.

On February 4th, 2026, SSA reassigned employees from its Disability Adjudication, Financial and Management, Field Office Services, Risk and Quality, Digital Services, and Chief Information Officer units to assist in monitoring its public call-in phone line<sup>1</sup>. This is not the SSA's first attempt to backfill staff to address problems created by the Administration's reduction of more than 10% of SSA staff in the past year. Those staff cuts have resulted in longer wait times, reduced in-person services, office closures, and service delays for beneficiaries.

Previously, the SSA had moved 1,000 field office customer support representatives to assist with customer calls. Those employees included benefits authorizers, claims authorizers, and post-entitlement technical experts, who process claims and appeals to help seniors and Americans with disabilities receive their benefits. As with the current reassignments, employees were moved to undertake unfamiliar, complex tasks, creating inefficiencies in their new roles while impeding their ability to complete their preexisting tasks.

These employee reassignments have the potential to cause massive service delays and add to SSA's already overwhelming case backlog, which stands at 6 million pending cases at SSA processing centers and 12 million transactions in field offices<sup>2</sup>. While on paper, the reassignment may shorten wait times for calls regarding unprocessed claims and paperwork, if the people

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<sup>1</sup> Alms, Natalie and Eric Katz (February 6, 2026), [Social Security Is Directing Employees Who Normally Process Benefits to Answer Phones Instead](#), Government Executive

<sup>2</sup> Rein, Lisa, Meryl Kornfield, and Hannah Natanson (December 30, 2025). [How Social Security Has Gotten Worse under Trump](#). The Washington Post.

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responsible for processing those claims are unable to do their jobs, it will only delay the receipt of benefits and lead to worse outcomes for the individuals SSA is meant to serve.

Reassigned employees report that they are not being adequately trained before being assigned to phone duty. Several employees at processing centers said they received only three hours of training before being placed on the phone the same day – there are also reports that employees have been given bizarre and sometimes dangerous instructions for dealing with individuals in crisis or with acute, time-sensitive needs<sup>3</sup>. SSA has claimed that all reassigned employees receive 8 hours of training, but even this amount is insufficient to address the complexity and variety of requests that come into SSA on a given day. Previously, when employees were temporarily assigned to phones during emergency situations, they received months of training and shadowed a full-time phone operator. A low call wait time means virtually nothing if callers are speaking with untrained employees regarding work that has been stopped due to their reassignment.

The reassignment to the call-in line of high-level employees who process urgent claims and deliver needed benefits, with virtually no training, is a major cause for concern, particularly in light of staffing cuts in early 2025. The loss of 7,400 employees, including thousands of experienced frontline workers and seasoned phone operators, through buyouts and layoff threats, has jeopardized the processing of benefit claims. As of August 2025, the Strategic Organizing Center estimated an average ratio of 4,000 beneficiaries for every one field office employee – a truly unprecedented and unmanageable workload<sup>4</sup>. Under these circumstances, reassigning staff away from critical benefit processing is deeply harmful to the 73.9 million retirees, disabled workers, their spouses, and their children who rely on Social Security’s assistance<sup>5</sup>.

To assess the full impact of your broad reassignments on customer service and the claims backlog, we ask that you answer the following questions:

1. What does the training given to displaced staff include?
  - a. How long are displaced staff trained for before being put on the phones?
    - i. What is the least amount of training someone has received before answering a call?
  - b. How does this training differ from training for dedicated call center staff?
  - c. What are the gaps that SSA has identified in training?
  - d. What does supervision look like for displaced staff versus dedicated call center staff?
  - e. Press reporting on training for handling troubled callers has been very concerning. What training did displaced staff receive specifically for handling distressed/unsafe callers and what is the ongoing support available to that staff?
2. What impact does SSA project the staff reassignments will have on field office appointment times?

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<sup>3</sup>Katz, Eric (February 13, 2026) [‘Suicide Is Only One Option’: Social Security Staff Newly Assigned to Phone Duties Raise Concerns over Training](#) Government Executive.

<sup>4</sup>Strategic Organizing Center (December 30, 2025) [Doing Less with Less: How the Trump Administration Is Hollowing out Social Security’s Frontline Workforce.](#)

<sup>5</sup>Desilver, Drew (May 20, 2025) [What the Data Says about Social Security.](#) Pew Research Center.

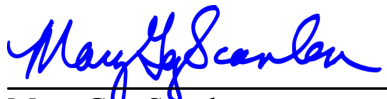
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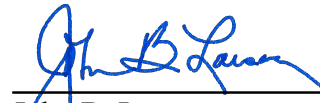
- a. What is the average time it takes per office to schedule a benefit claim appointment? What percent of appointments are scheduled within 28 days?
    - i. What percentage of disability beneficiaries receive their benefits on time/within 2 weeks?
  - b. What impact does SSA project the staff reassignments will have on claims processing?
  - c. What impact does SSA project the staff reassignments will have on other SSA functions? Please specify.
  - d. Did SSA study or otherwise assess the impact on operations from the previous round of reassignments? What did SSA learn?
3. What has the impact of this reassignment been on caller satisfaction rates?
- a. What types of issues can displaced staff handle? What types of issues are they unable to handle?
  - b. Did SSA study or otherwise assess caller satisfaction from the previous round of reassignments, versus caller satisfaction for dedicated call center staff?
  - c. Did SSA study or otherwise assess call duration from the previous round of reassignments, versus call duration for dedicated call center staff?
  - d. Did SSA study or otherwise assess call resolution or caller callbacks from the previous round of reassignments, versus call resolution or caller callbacks for dedicated call center staff?
4. What other assessments is the SSA conducting to track the efficacy and impact of reassignments?
- a. If SSA is not making assessments to determine the efficacy of staff reassignments, why has SSA made that decision?
  - b. If SSA has not made these assessments already, is it able to do so? Why or why not?

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your swift response.

Sincerely,



Mary Gay Scanlon  
Member of Congress



John B. Larson  
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



Sarah Elfreth  
Member of Congress

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Deborah K. Ross  
Member of Congress



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Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress



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Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress



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Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



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Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



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Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress



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J. Luis Correa  
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Danny K. Davis  
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Valerie P. Foushee  
Member of Congress



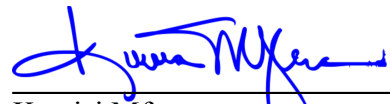
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Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



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Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress

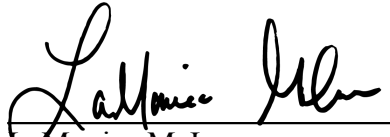


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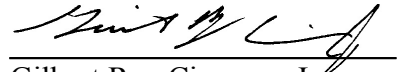
Kweisi Mfume  
Member of Congress

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LaMonica McIver  
Member of Congress



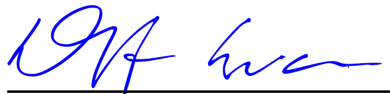
Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib  
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Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress



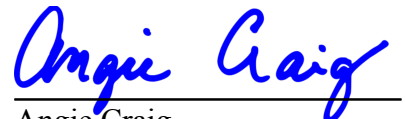
Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress



Adenta S. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



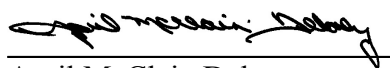
Angie Craig  
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Maxine Dexter  
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Chrissy Houlahan  
Member of Congress



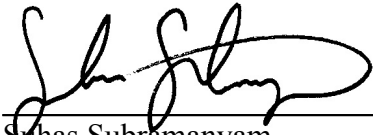
April McClain Delaney  
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Dave Min  
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Suhas Subramanyam  
Member of Congress



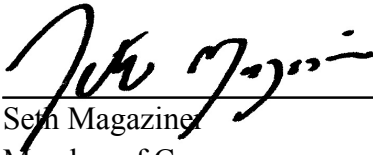
Suzanne Bonamici  
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Sydney Kamlager-Dove  
Member of Congress



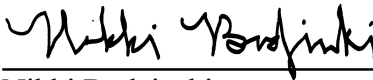
Jared Moskowitz  
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Seth Magaziner  
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Chellie Pingree  
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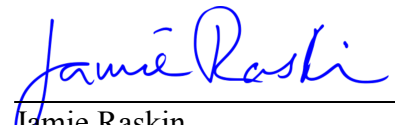
Nikki Budzinski  
Member of Congress



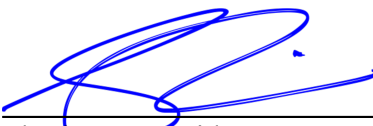
Lois Frankel  
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



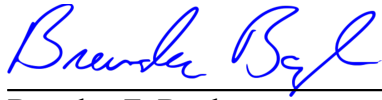
Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress



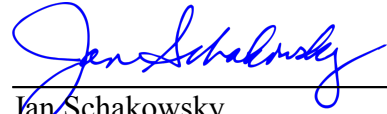
Debbie Dingell  
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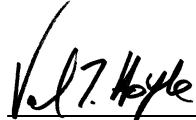
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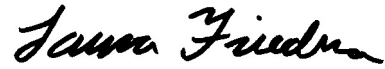
Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress



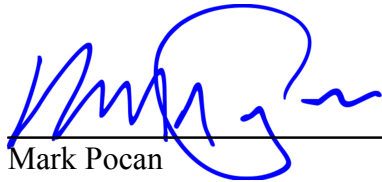
Jan Schakowsky  
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Val Hoyle  
Member of Congress



Laura Friedman  
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



Thomas R. Suozzi  
Member of Congress



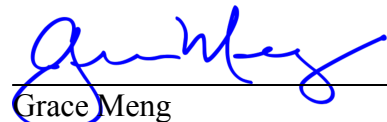
Haley M. Stevens  
Member of Congress



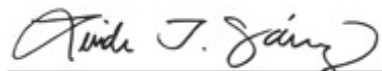
George Latimer  
Member of Congress



Ed Case  
Member of Congress



Grace Meng  
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress



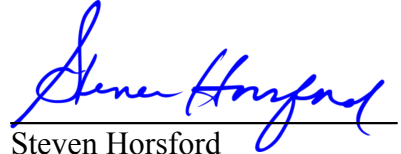
Rosa L. DeLauro  
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Raja Krishnamoorthi  
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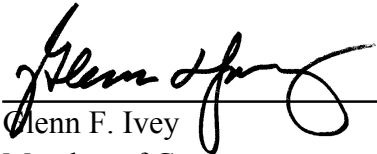
Steven Horsford  
Member of Congress



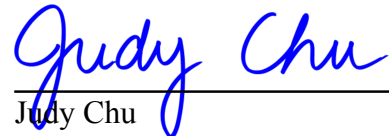
Paul Tonko  
Member of Congress



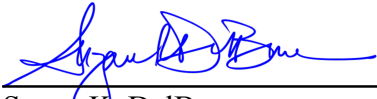
Chris Deluzio  
Member of Congress



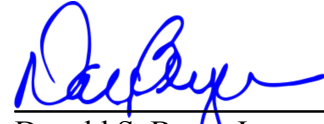
Glenn F. Ivey  
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Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



Suzan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress



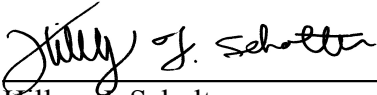
Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress



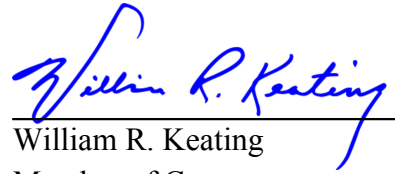
Timothy M. Kennedy  
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Hillary J. Scholten  
Member of Congress



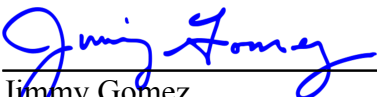
William R. Keating  
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Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



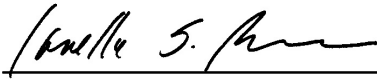
Ritchie Torres  
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Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress



Janelle S. Bynum  
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



Gabe Amo  
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress