



December 12, 2017

Representative Sam Johnson
Chairman, Social Security Subcommittee
Committee on Ways and Means
2304 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515

Representative John B. Larson
Ranking Member, Social Security Subcommittee
Committee on Ways and Means
1501 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515

Dear Chairman Johnson and Ranking Member Larson:

On behalf of the millions of members and supporters of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, I am writing to endorse H.R. 4547, the *Strengthening Protections for Social Security Beneficiaries Act of 2017*. We thank you for your leadership in developing and introducing this important legislation which, if enacted, would provide significant new protections for those vulnerable seniors whose Social Security benefits are paid through a representative payee.

The *Strengthening Protections for Social Security Beneficiaries Act of 2017*:

- Increases the number of performance reviews of representative payees and requires them to be performed by the Protection and Advocacy system within each state;
- Reduces the burden on families by no longer requiring annual accountings from parents and spouses who serve as a child's or spouse's representative payee;
- Enables beneficiaries to designate their preferred payee in advance of actually needing one, and requires the Social Security Administration (SSA) to assess the appropriateness of the preference list used by the agency to select payees;
- Increases information sharing between SSA and child welfare agencies, and directs SSA to study how better to coordinate with Adult Protective Services agencies and with state guardianship courts;
- Limits overpayment liability for children in the child welfare system; and
- Ensures that no Social Security beneficiary has a representative payee who has been convicted of certain criminal offenses or has personally been determined to require payment through a representative payee.

An important consideration in the enactment of any legislation that tasks the SSA with new workloads is that the agency receives the additional funding the new workloads require. Given the significant cuts that have been made in the agency's administrative budget in recent years, adequate funding for new workloads is especially important.

We look forward to working with you to secure passage of the *Strengthening Protections for Social Security Beneficiaries Act of 2017*, and again thank you for your leadership on these important issues.

Sincerely,

Max Richtman
President and CEO