

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON, DC 20515

April 7, 2022

Delivered via E-mail

The Honorable Richard Neal
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Neal:

We write to request that you immediately schedule a hearing before the House Ways and Means Committee to examine the challenges that the American public continues to face when trying to access services from the Social Security Administration (SSA).

The SSA touches the lives of virtually every American and prior to the pandemic regularly served more than 40 million visitors through its nationwide network of more than 1,200 field offices. However, on March 17, 2020, SSA leadership rightly made the decision for the health and well-being of both the public and its employees to close its offices in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

While the SSA was able to transition to almost exclusively providing service by phone and through its online applications, it was not without difficulty and many Americans still struggle to get in touch with the SSA for even the most basic of services. Over the past few months, the SSA has gradually increased in-office service in certain, limited, critical cases and will resume in-office service for all members of the public today. However, the SSA anticipates that reopening will result in delays and long waits for customers who haven't scheduled an appointment, which generally requires calling the SSA ahead of time.

But Americans across the country who try calling the SSA continue to have trouble getting through. Many have only been able to reach the SSA after multiple attempts and continue to experience long waits and poor quality of service. Additionally, the SSA has recently experienced multiple phone outages which have only exacerbated this problem.

In light of the ongoing difficulties that the public continues to face when trying to reach the SSA, and with offices already reopening, the American people deserve to understand how the SSA plans to manage this transition and improve on the service it provides to the public. While the

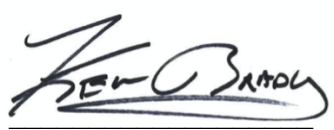
Republican Members of the Social Security Subcommittee sent a letter¹ to the SSA over a month ago requesting answers to questions on many of these issues, the SSA has yet to provide a substantive response.

In the more than two years since the SSA closed its offices to the general public, this committee has not held a single hearing to discuss these challenges, despite the difficulties that our constituents have had and continue to face when trying to do business with the SSA. As Representatives of the American public, it is incumbent that we ensure that the government by the People continues to work for the People.

It's past time for us to hold a hearing to discuss these issues and identify the challenges that the SSA needs to overcome to better serve our constituents.

We look forward to the hearing notice.

Sincerely,



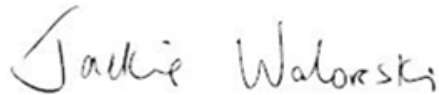
KEVIN BRADY
Committee on Ways & Means



TOM REED
Committee on Ways & Means



TOM RICE
Committee on Ways & Means



JACKIE WALORSKI
Committee on Ways & Means



CAROL MILLER
Committee on Ways & Means



RON ESTES
Committee on Ways & Means



KEVIN HERN
Committee on Ways & Means



DARIN LAHOOD
Committee on Ways & Means



JASON SMITH
Committee on Ways & Means

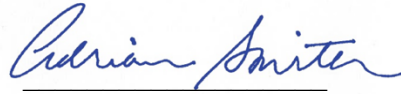


MIKE KELLY
Committee on Ways & Means

¹ Reed ET AL Letter to Acting Commissioner Kijakazi, February 18, 2022.



VERN BUCHANAN
Committee on Ways & Means



ADRIAN SMITH
Committee on Ways & Means



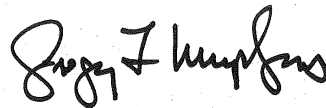
JODEY ARRINGTON
Committee on Ways & Means



BRAD WENSTRUP
Committee on Ways & Means



LLOYD SMUCKER
Committee on Ways & Means



GREG MURPHY
Committee on Ways & Means



DREW FERGUSON
Committee on Ways & Means



DAVID SCHWEIKERT
Committee on Ways & Means