



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

June 2, 2016

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

The undersigned organizations urge Congress to fully fund the President's FY 2017 budget request of \$13.067 billion for the Social Security Administration's (SSA) Limitation on Administrative Expenses (LAE). Our organizations are all members of the Social Security Task Force of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD). CCD is a working coalition of national consumer, advocacy, provider, and professional organizations working together with and on behalf of the approximately 57 million children and adults with disabilities and their families living in the United States.

Sustained, adequate resources for SSA are essential to the agency's ability to fulfill its mission of advancing the economic security of the nation's people through compassionate and vigilant leadership in shaping and managing America's Social Security programs. The President's FY 2017 request will allow SSA to improve and modernize customer service, enhance program integrity efforts, deter and detect fraud and errors, and continue to address record-high volumes of work.

SSA's FY 2016 LAE account funding of \$12.162 billion did not fully cover the agency's inflationary costs over FY 2015. Inflationary increases alone for FY 2017 will require more than \$319 million in fixed costs for items such as rent, guards, postage and employee salaries and benefits.

At the same time, as the baby boom generation ages, SSA is seeing an increase in visitors to field offices, in applications for both retirement and disability benefits, and in many other core work areas. The average length of time it takes to get a hearing

decision stands at an all-time high of 543 days. Nearly three million cases are currently pending in the agency's Program Service Centers, and more than one million people are waiting for a hearing decision – also an all-time high. Additional resources are essential to reversing these trends and assuring that Americans who have worked hard to earn their Social Security benefits receive them in a timely fashion.

Fully funding the President's FY 2017 budget request is critical to ensuring that SSA has the necessary resources to fulfill its commitment to the American public and to complete critical program integrity workloads that more than pay for the cost of this work and protect taxpayer dollars.

For all these reasons, we urge you to provide \$13.067 billion for SSA's LAE for FY 2017.

Sincerely,

ACCSES

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Association on Health and Disability

Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (ATAP)

Community Legal Services

Easterseals

Goodwill Industries International, Inc.

Justice in Aging

Lupus Foundation of America

Lutheran Services in America Disability Network

Mental Health America

National Alliance on Mental Illness

National Association of Disability Representatives

National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare

National Disability Institute

National Disability Rights Network

National Multiple Sclerosis Society

National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives (NOSSCR)

Paralyzed Veterans of America

The Arc of the United States

The Jewish Federations of North America

United Spinal Association

cc: Members, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies