



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wyden Statement in Support of Carolyn Colvin to be Social Security Commissioner
As Prepared for Delivery

The Finance Committee is here today to consider the nomination of Carolyn Watts Colvin to fill a role of extraordinary importance to millions of Americans: Commissioner of the Social Security Administration.

If confirmed, Ms. Colvin will be managing the nuts and bolts of the Social Security program – no small task, given that more than 62 million Americans use Social Security as an economic lifeline. Americans will depend on her to ensure that Social Security is operating as well as it can – that means providing the right amount to the right person at the right time. But this role is not a new one for Ms. Colvin, who has been the Acting Commissioner since February 2013. Before that, she served as the Deputy Commissioner for more than two years, coming out of a well-deserved retirement to engage in this critical public service. The Finance Committee approved Ms. Colvin’s nomination for that position by a vote of 23 to zero.

Because of her years of experience, Ms. Colvin is well-versed with the challenges involved with running SSA. One of those challenges is working within a tight budget. Social Security has felt the same fiscal squeeze that every federal agency has in recent years, and SSA has worked hard to maintain service.

That has required making some tough decisions, including reducing field office hours and consolidating some offices to address budget and staffing challenges. Ms. Colvin has been actively working on ways that SSA can effectively manage its program integrity workload.

As Acting Commissioner of SSA, Ms. Colvin has also made several service improvements. She has made a strong push to make SSA information more user-friendly and accessible to a broader swath of Americans. She has made Social Security work more efficiently with other federal agencies. And she has devoted significant attention and resources to addressing the needs of the many disabled Americans the agency serves. I have no doubt that she will continue that excellent work once confirmed.

Today’s hearing is an opportunity for the Finance Committee and Ms. Colvin to discuss how to guarantee the Social Security promise for today’s seniors and future generations. The last time Ms. Colvin appeared before the Finance Committee as a nominee, she earned our unanimous support. I hope to see her nomination to lead Social Security moved through committee and the full Senate quickly so that Social Security will have a confirmed leader in place.

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