

**United States Senate Committee on Finance  
October 29, 2025**

**Hearing to Consider the Nominations of Arjun Mody, of New Jersey, to be Deputy Commissioner Social Security for the term expiring January 19, 2031, vice David Fabian Black, term expired; Jeffrey Goettman, of Virginia, to be a Deputy United States Trade Representative (Africa, Western Hemisphere, Europe, the Middle East, Environment, Labor, and Industrial Competitiveness), with the Rank of Ambassador, vice Jayme Ray White; Julie Callahan, of the District of Columbia, to be Chief Agricultural Negotiator, Office of the United States Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador, vice Douglas J. McKalip, resigned; Thomas Bell, of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, vice Christi A. Grimm**

**Questions for the Record submitted to Arjun Mody from Senator Grassley.**

**Question 1:** Over the past year a lot has been happening at the Social Security Administration in terms of staffing, benefit administration, and customer service. Too often, Congress first learns of such actions through the press, rather than from SSA directly. This makes it more difficult for Congress to perform its constitutional oversight responsibilities and adequately serve constituents. If confirmed, will you commit to keeping me and all members of this Committee updated on any planned staffing, benefit, or customer service changes?

Yes. If confirmed, I will proactively keep you and all Members of this Committee informed of significant planned changes related to staffing, benefit administration, or customer service. As I stated during my meeting with your office, I believe that regular communication with Congress is essential to maintaining trust and ensuring effective oversight.

**Question 2:** The Social Security Administration has disclosed as part of its regulatory agenda that it is considering “Improvements to the Disability Adjudication Process.” I understand part of this project is updating “occupational data sources”. This update is badly needed as the occupational listings long used by SSA are outdated. As part of this process, there have been reports that SSA is also considering updates to the “grid rules” that are used to evaluate disability claims for those age 50 or older.

- What is your understanding of the updates SSA is considering as part of its efforts to improve the disability adjudication process? In your view, is there a need for updates to both occupational data sources and the existing grid rules?

I am not currently at SSA, and it would be inappropriate for me as a nominee to comment on something the administration may be proposing. I understand this is part of the unified agenda, but beyond that, there is no real information for me to have an informed view. However, as I stated in my testimony to the Committee, in general I believe our rules must be updated.

- If confirmed, will you commit to keeping me, and other members of the Senate Finance Committee, up to date on the status and substance of any rules or regulations SSA intends to propose as part of its efforts to improve the disability adjudication process – in advance of any Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM)?

If confirmed, I will keep this Committee apprised of the status and substance of any rules or regulatory actions under consideration related to disability adjudication improvements. I will seek to provide appropriate briefings to the Committee in advance of any NPRM to support transparency and enable meaningful engagement with Congress.

#### **Questions for the Record submitted to Arjun Mody from Senator Tim Scott.**

Question 1: With Social Security insolvency coming up in 2035, how would you balance the need to preserve Social Security for future generations with the need to maintain fiscal discipline?

Preserving and protecting Social Security for current and future generations is of the highest priority.

Maintaining fiscal discipline and protecting beneficiaries are not mutually exclusive goals. In my time working for Senator Elizabeth Dole, I got to know Leader Bob Dole. In 1983, Reagan, Dole, and O'Neill saved Social Security for what will be 50 years.

If confirmed, I will work on providing premier customer service and a pristine control environment at Social Security. I believe making Social Security a premier service organization will give policymakers in Congress the confidence in the agency to support its mission for the long-term

Question 2: What role do you believe Social Security should play in the broader retirement landscape of the 21st century?

Social Security is the largest input for most Americans' retirement. If confirmed, SSA will work to ensure Americans have better access to, and literacy of, their benefit information. Americans can then more effectively plan their retirement with this input.

#### **Questions for the Record submitted to Arjun Mody from Senator Thom Tillis.**

Question 1: I've heard from a constituent who has routinely experienced challenges with the Social Security Administration's processing of Form SSA-7050 at the Division of Earnings Records Operation in Baltimore, Maryland. On several occasions, after completing SSA-3288 and submitting SSA-7050 for their clients, the constituent has not received the requested information for months, despite the check accompanying the form being cashed. Do you commit to looking into this longstanding issue, along with any potential measures to improve the timeliness of processing?

Yes. If confirmed, I will look into this issue and review the timeliness and processes associated with the handling of Form SSA-7050 requests. I understand how delays in receiving earnings

records can negatively impact individuals, businesses, and financial planning, and I take those concerns seriously.

As part of that review, I would work with the relevant SSA components to identify the root causes of delays, evaluate potential operational improvements, and explore ways to strengthen communication with requestors. My goal would be to ensure that SSA's processes are efficient, transparent, and responsive to the public's needs.

### **Questions for the Record submitted to Arjun Mody from Senator Wyden**

#### **SSA Performance Metrics Follow-Up**

1. In response to a question from Senator Hassan about increasing transparency on customer service performance metrics, you said that "the Social Security dashboard is probably the most transparent dashboard in our federal government" and are "more than was previously ever published and through different administrations." This statement is wholly inaccurate. Under this administration, SSA is publishing fewer customer service metrics that were previously publicly available under Commissioner Martin O'Malley, making it harder for the public to hold the agency accountable and for Congress to understand how SSA uses its allocated funding.

For example, SSA stopped providing the average time callers wait to receive a callback from a SSA representative or the percentage of callers calling the National 1-800 Number receiving a "polite disconnect" (known as the 'agency busy rate'). These metrics are important to understand the complete user experience and how long it takes for Americans to receive assistance from SSA. Other performance metrics that are no longer published track field office performance, including processing benefit claims (commonly known as FO1 and FO2), average wait times to get an appointment at a local field office, and the percentage of field office appointments scheduled within 28 days. Moreover, many of the metrics were broken out by state, region, and local service area, and could compare with the previous seven years of historic performance data to track the agency's progress. That level of granularity and accountability is not available today.

My staff have repeatedly requested SSA to resume publishing its performance data to no avail, and I understand that our desire for more performance data is shared by my Republican colleagues. If confirmed, will you commit to restoring SSA's performance dashboard established under Commissioner O'Malley's tenure and, at minimum, publish all performance metrics previously available prior to January 20, 2025.

It is my understanding, based on public reporting, that SSA currently reports three times the number of data elements on the performance webpage under the Trump Administration (30) than it did under the Biden Administration (11). If confirmed, I will continually review all performance metrics and, as part of my routine communication to Congress, will discuss SSA's performance data.

## **IRS CEO**

2. Since the position was created in 1994, the role of Deputy Commissioner has historically been filled by someone with either a background in running large organizations or companies, or someone with SSA policy expertise (or both), since they would be responsible for running the agency should the Commissioner be unable to perform their duties. Given Commissioner Bisignano is now charged with managing the day-to-day operations at IRS, it appears you will be taking a larger role, if not running the agency altogether. Have you spoken with Commissioner Bisignano about your role and what you will be specifically responsible for should you be confirmed?

We have not discussed what I would specifically be responsible for if confirmed. We have generally (and very briefly) talked about areas where I have experience.

## **SSDI Proposed Rule**

3. There's been reporting about the Trump administration proposing a dramatic redesign to the disability program that would make it harder for older Americans to qualify for disability benefits. They attempted to make this same change during the first Trump administration. One study from the Urban Institute recently estimated that a cut of this magnitude would amount to the largest cut to Social Security in history. A far cry from Donald Trump's promise to not cut Social Security. When we met in my office, you said that you weren't familiar with the proposed actions, but you don't agree with cutting benefits for seniors or people with disabilities. I am glad we agree. If you're confirmed, and you learn that what was reported is accurate, are you going to block this?

It would be inappropriate for me to make that judgement on a rulemaking the agency may be working on. The President has been clear – we will protect and preserve Social Security.

## **DOGE**

4. Over this year, we have seen this administration unleash DOGE and their acolytes at Social Security. DOGE gained unfettered access to Americans' data, slashed over 6,000 employees, and injected chaos into Social Security's phone system. In August, Chair Crapo and I received a letter from Social Security's former Chief Data Officer in which he alleges the agency signed off on placing a live copy of a Social Security database containing information on every American onto an unsecure cloud server. Our staff are continuing to review the claims, but this touches on a broader issue: DOGE continues to have free rein at Social Security. Commissioner Bisignano has embraced DOGE, hiring them as full-time agency employees. Given you will likely be playing a larger role with Commissioner Bisignano's appointment at IRS if confirmed, I will ask you the same question I asked Commissioner Bisignano: Will you commit to prevent DOGE, or individuals, or any individuals or entities operating under the direction of DOGE, from any further access to Americans' most sensitive personally identifiable information, protected health information, and federal tax information?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure SSA protects personally identifiable information (PII).

5. How will you assure the public that their data will only be accessed by federal employees with appropriate security clearances, a need to know and the expertise to view and understand the data?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure SSA protects PII. I will seek to better understand use cases for SSA systems and make access decisions after being fully briefed.

### **SSA Independence**

6. Following the House's passage of the Republican reconciliation bill, SSA issued a press release and sent a mass email to all "my Social Security" account users praising the benefits of the bill and falsely announcing that Social Security benefits are no longer subject to taxes. When several of my Senate colleagues and I called Commissioner Bisignano out on this blatant falsehood, SSA doubled down on those lies by burying its misleading language on its website and keeping millions of Americans who received the initial email in the dark. It was appalling to see the agency distribute misleading and blatantly inaccurate information regarding tax changes affecting older Americans, transforming the agency into a partisan megaphone for Donald Trump while sowing confusion and distrust in SSA among Americans. As you may know, the decision on when to claim Social Security benefits is an incredibly personal decision that has profound lasting effects on the individual's financial, medical, and family circumstances. For that reason, it is critical for SSA to provide clear, accurate, and non-partisan information about Social Security. If confirmed, do you pledge to this committee and to the American public that you will run the Social Security Administration in an independent and nonpartisan manner?

If confirmed, any communication from SSA will make every reasonable effort to be accurate, timely, and credible. SSA must always meet that standard.

### **General**

7. Why do you want to become the Deputy Commissioner of Social Security?

SSA fundamentally serves every American. From the moment a newborn receives a Social Security card to the moment a family receives a death benefit. The goal is to make it a premier organization that is tangible to every American, and which every American can rely on. If done right, it'll be the most important thing I do professionally.

8. If confirmed, do you plan to complete your full 6-year term as Deputy Commissioner?

Yes.

### **Role as Trustee**

9. If confirmed, you will serve as Secretary of Board of the Social Security and Medicare Trustees. Each year, the Trustees—the Secretaries of Treasury, Labor, and HHS, and Commissioner of Social Security—and their designees work collaboratively with the Chief

Actuaries of CMS and SSA and the public trustees to develop the economic and demographic assumptions used in estimating the future of these two programs.

- a. How do you view your role as the Secretary?

If confirmed, my role as Secretary of the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds is to report on the current and projected financial status of the two programs each year.

10. Congress and the public rely on these reports to develop and consider proposals aimed at reducing or eliminating its financing shortfalls. It is essential that the techniques, methodology, and data used to develop these reports are based upon sound principles of actuarial practice and are devoid of politics. Throughout Democratic and Republican administrations, the trustees, actuaries, and public trustees work to come to a consensus on the assumptions and “follow the data” where it leads rather than letting politics drive development of the report.

- a. As Secretary, you will be charged with preparing and submitting the report to the Board for vote. Will you commit to uphold your fiduciary responsibility as Secretary and ensure the Trustees Reports continue to be based on facts and not manipulated to serve a particular agenda?

If confirmed, I will carry out my fiduciary responsibility as Secretary.

### **Data Transparency**

11. Will you commit to data-driven policy-making as Deputy Commissioner? If so, how will you demonstrate that commitment to the public?

If confirmed, I will help lead the agency as I have led offices in the U.S. Senate for most of my career—based on the law, best information, and in service to the American people.

12. The Office of the Chief Actuary’s office within Social Security conducts independent research. Will you commit that their work will be conducted unimpeded and that data integrity will not be compromised?

If confirmed, I will help lead the agency as I have led offices in the U.S. Senate for most of my career—based on the law, best information, and in service to the American people.

13. How will you ensure the agency is collecting the relevant data necessary to objectively examine equitable access to SSA programs? For instance, how will you know if women have equitable access to SSA programs compared to men, if you do not collect sex data or collect critical information about program beneficiaries through resources such as the National Beneficiary Survey?

If confirmed, I will review SSA’s data collection in granular detail and ensure we are capturing the necessary data consistent with applicable privacy laws.

14. Earlier this year, SSA recently terminated the Retirement and Disability Research Consortium cooperative agreements, which play a critical role in providing high-quality research to policymakers, scholars, and the public on matters related to SSA's retirement and disability programs and the populations they serve. This includes evaluating efficacy of SSA policies and procedures, benefit claiming decisions, education and training, return to work programs, modeling methodologies, and legislative proposals. Will you restore funding to these critical programs?

If confirmed, I will review this agreement and understand what value it provided to SSA.

### **Impoundment**

15. Do you believe the administration has the legal authority to withhold, freeze, or otherwise impound Medicare payments?

This is a legal issue that would not be decided by me.

16. Do you believe the administration has the legal authority to withhold, freeze, or otherwise impound Social Security payments?

This is a legal issue that would not be decided by me.

17. Do you believe the administration has the legal authority to withhold, freeze, or otherwise impound funding for the people and systems that ensure Social Security benefits are paid, impoundments that would make it harder for seniors or people with disabilities to access their benefits?

This is a legal issue that would not be decided by me.

18. Do you believe the administration has the legal authority to withhold, freeze, or otherwise impound Medicaid payments?

This is a legal issue that would not be decided by me.

### **Staffing Morale**

19. Large reductions in staff and employee reassignments often lead to lower morale among the remaining staff. Low morale results in burnout, increased errors, and reduced productivity. What measures will you take to boost the morale of remaining staff so they provide the best service by maintaining high productivity and great quality?

SSA will be a premier organization. If confirmed, we will give our workforce the tools to be successful; acknowledge successes, maintain robust internal and external communications, have buy-in on the processes, and importantly, steady leadership.

20. In the 2024 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey, SSA ranked last among large agencies in employee satisfaction and engagement. Since the start of this Administration, SSA

staff have experienced significant turmoil and disruption in their work lives. If confirmed, how will you improve the morale among Social Security staff?

This will be a turnaround story. I've reinvigorated every office I've led. We will have a clear mission, hands-on leadership, the tools to be successful, be a leader in our space, and work as a team.

21. Do you intend to welcome input from frontline employees on how to improve service? If so, please outline how you intend to do so.

Yes. I'm a hands-on leader. I will travel to SSA's different offices and functions, develop open lines of communication, and gather input from all levels of the agency.

### **SSA Workforce & Service Delivery**

22. What actions will you take to reduce the average waiting time for customers who call the National 1-800 Number?

If confirmed, SSA will routinely review wait times in all service verticals. Progress has been made on the 1-800 Number and I plan to support continued strengthening of SSA's phone capabilities.

23. Based on the call metrics that measure SSA's service on the National 1-800 Number, do you believe that SSA's teleservice centers are adequately staffed, understaffed or overstaffed? What are your plans for the teleservice centers' staffing levels?

If confirmed, I am committed to having the right staffing necessary to provide premier customer service.

24. Given SSA's ongoing staffing shortages and service delays, what is your plan to improve call center performance, and will you commit to sharing that plan with Congress ahead of making any additional changes?

If confirmed, I am committed to having the right staffing necessary to provide premier service.

25. What is your assessment of the role of the current SSA field office structure? Do you have plans to make changes to that structure?

If confirmed, I will review the SSA field office structure to ensure SSA is providing premier customer service.

26. Do you have plans to close any field offices in the immediate future? If so, what will be your evaluation criteria in determining which offices to close?

I have no plans to close existing field offices. Any decisions would be based on a multi-part process that evaluates data and analytics, understands the community and area needs, and takes input from field operations.

27. In the past when a field office was experiencing policy issues and/or questions related to a case, they contacted the regional office for assistance. Given the reduction in the number of regional offices, how will these requests for assistance be handled?

If confirmed, I will get a full review of field operations to ensure SSA is providing premier service.

28. If the field offices do not have sufficient staffing levels and resources to address all their workloads – processing cases, answering telephone calls and interviewing the public just to name a few – what workloads will you direct agency employees to defer?

If confirmed, I will get a full review of case processing, phone operations, and field staffing to ensure SSA is providing premier service.

29. SSA's workloads are very complex and can take years to become an expert or to reach journeyman status at the agency. In the past several months, SSA lost several centuries' worth of institutional knowledge and experience with the departures of thousands of employees.

- a. How do you plan to replace that expertise?

If confirmed, I will work towards putting in place systems and processes to equip the workforce to be successful.

- b. What is your vision for the training necessary for staff who remain to fill the knowledge gaps?

If confirmed, I will work towards providing the workforce with training, tools, and technology to be successful.

- c. Do you have any expectations that you will be able to hire new employees moving forward? If so, how do you intend to attract those new employees to SSA?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure SSA has the staff needed to meet its mission.

30. Will you honor contractual agreements and signed memorandums of understanding negotiated with SSA labor unions when the contents of such agreements deviate from subsequent Executive Orders?

If confirmed, I will seek to understand all recent agreements and work with SSA's labor unions.

31. During your confirmation process, you committed to "meet customers where they are" and provide in-person and telephone service to those who want it. I have heard from hundreds of my constituents of understaffed and overcrowded field offices and long wait times on the phones. Is it your intention to increase staff hiring so customers can be seen

in person or by phone in a timely and efficient manner? Will you commit to sharing that plan with Congress ahead of making any additional changes?

If confirmed, I will review all service verticals to ensure SSA is providing premier customer service. It is my intention to communicate on a routine basis with Congress.

32. If confirmed, how will you ensure that any administrative or staffing changes at SSA are made with the customer in mind and done with the goal of improving customer service?

If confirmed, I will work towards providing the workforce with training, tools, and technology to be successful.

33. What methodology will you use to determine Agency's service delivery goals for SSA customers and the appropriate staffing required to meet such goals?

If confirmed, I will work to continue SSA's progress on every metric currently on SSA's customer service dashboard.

34. If confirmed, what actions will you take if it becomes obvious that current staffing reductions underway were ill-advised and customers are being negatively affected? How soon can we expect a review of staffing levels from you and any necessary actions to address customer service concerns?

If confirmed, I will review all service verticals to ensure SSA is providing premier customer service.

35. Are you opposed to using telework as an incentive to encourage high performance? Why or why not?

If confirmed, I will start with the expectation of in-person work, consistent with the President's directive.

### **IT Modernization**

36. SSA has one of the largest computer systems in the world. It has a significant number of programs that need to be supported by an up-to-date system. Many employees who are currently responsible for this specialized work are leaving. If confirmed, how do you expect to address this work? Do you have a plan to upgrade SSA's systems including using COBOL? If you do not currently have a plan, how soon can we expect one from you?

If confirmed, I expect to get briefed on SSA's systems, the need for any upgrades (and the prioritization of such upgrades), and what plans are currently underway for modernization.

We underwent multiple systems upgrades when I was Staff Director of the Republican Conference. I relied on multiple inputs and made decisions that supported the entire Senate Republican Caucus.

37. Some of SSA's information technology systems are decades old. How will you demonstrate that technology improvements will not compromise access to SSA services?

If confirmed, any beneficiary facing technology changes will be tested and done to improve services. Any changes will be closely monitored.

38. What are your thoughts on the use of biometric data for verification purposes?

If confirmed, I will review the use of biometric data for verification purposes taking into consideration privacy concerns.

39. How will you address increased office traffic when individuals are unable to complete these processes?

If confirmed, any technology rollouts will be tested to ensure positive customer experience. Field office staffing will always be set to a standard of providing premier customer service.

### **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

40. How do you plan to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) at SSA if confirmed?

If confirmed, I will review best uses for AI, both on the workforce side and beneficiary side.

41. Do you agree that a human should be the ultimate decision-maker in any process that affects an individual's eligibility for benefits or the amount of such benefits? Do you agree that human review is particularly essential for adverse benefit decisions? Will you commit to making sure this remains the case at SSA if you are confirmed as Deputy Commissioner? How do you plan to ensure that this critical guardrail is enforced across the agency's use of AI in its operations and decision-making?

If confirmed, I will work towards putting in place systems and processes to equip the workforce to be successful.

- a. How will you ensure that SSA personnel meaningfully take into account the particular situation of each applicant in making eligibility decisions, rather than deferring to automated systems?

If confirmed, SSA will invest in its workforce with systems and processes that will allow them to make decisions based on each individual case.

42. How will you ensure that SSA personnel provide applicants with sufficiently clear and specific explanations of eligibility decisions so that applicants can appeal if they believe they have been wrongly denied benefits?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure SSA is clear in its communications with benefit applicants.

43. Will claimants have the ability to opt out of having AI used in their application for benefits?

If confirmed, I will review current AI uses at SSA to better understand what, if any, use occurs in benefit applications, and any opt out options.

44. Are you aware of any potential risks or pitfalls in the use of AI for administering and determining eligibility for public benefits?

- a. Can you describe some of those risks and how you plan to mitigate them in the use of AI at SSA if you become Deputy Commissioner?

If confirmed, I will seek to understand the data on how the systems are working and plans for incorporating AI and other technology. As with all things, I will identify risks and create a plan to reduce or resolve risks.

- b. Do you agree SSA should implement a higher level of review and evaluation when AI tools are being used in ways that can influence an individual's eligibility for Social Security and/or SSI benefits?

If confirmed, there will always be high standard of service, including for the deployment of any AI or other technology tools.

- c. What steps and processes will you put in place to monitor and mitigate the risk of bias in the use of AI and emerging technology in SSA programs?

If confirmed, I will understand the data on how the systems are working. As with all things, I will identify risks and create a plan to reduce or resolve risk.

- d. How do you intend to evaluate new and improved AI tools compared to previous SSA processes? Please describe how you plan to measure for both baseline operations and a new AI enhanced process with regard to fairness, efficiency, and accuracy throughout all the stages of the disability determination process.

If confirmed, I will seek to evaluate the effectiveness of AI processes, and monitor for fairness, efficiency, and accuracy through every stage of any process.

- e. In the case of Medicaid for example, we have seen AI utilized in ways that have eroded access to benefits for vulnerable people instead of improving it. What

lessons should SSA learn from other public benefits programs where AI has been utilized to ensure it does not reduce access to critical benefits?

If confirmed, I will communicate across government on lessons learned and best practices. Any systems at SSA will be tested with the goal of providing premier customer service.

- f. Will you commit to making regular reports to this Committee on the impact of AI on SSA's decision-making?

If confirmed, it is my intention to communicate on a routine basis with Congress and respond to information requested.

45. What internal and external review procedures do you plan to use to provide transparency and input as you consider and select potential AI use cases, deploy new technology and develop and improve SSA's existing AI tools?

If confirmed, I will seek to evaluate the effectiveness of AI processes, and monitor for fairness, efficiency, and accuracy through every stage of any process.

46. What steps will SSA take to incorporate responsible and ethical AI practices in the design and procurement of AI systems?

If confirmed, I will seek to evaluate the effectiveness of AI processes, and monitor for fairness, efficiency, and accuracy through every stage of any process.

47. Will you guarantee that AI systems will not be trained using claimant's medical records?

If confirmed, I will seek to better understand how AI is being used at SSA and ensure the privacy of beneficiaries is protected.

48. How will you ensure patient privacy if AI is used in the claims process?

If confirmed, I will work across the agency to review the use of AI, including ensuring patient privacy is protected.

49. Given that AI is not 100% accurate, as it relies on models trained on data which can be incomplete, biased, or overly simplistic, leading to potential errors and inaccuracies, how will you ensure that claimants and beneficiaries will receive correct information and decisions?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure humans are involved in any AI processes, the SSA workforce is properly trained, and ensure premier service to beneficiaries.

## **Access to Social Security Programs**

50. I think we can all agree that claims go faster when SSA is able to get the most accurate information from claimants as early in the process as possible. When dealing with limited-English proficient claimants, this requires providing them qualified interpretation services so they can give SSA the needed information. Will you commit to providing effective language access, including for the blind and for those who are deaf or hard of hearing?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure SSA provides premier service to all beneficiaries.

51. How do you plan to have SSA provide access to old age, disability, and survivors benefits to individuals who may lack internet/digital literacy skills, which some studies estimate to be over 20 million Americans?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure SSA serves beneficiaries where they want to be served – whether online, in person, or over the phone.

## **Disability Programs**

52. What are your views on the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure all SSA's programs provide premier service and have pristine controls. This includes SSDI which provides financial support for those with a disability who have a work history.

53. What are your views on the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure all SSA's programs provide premier service and have pristine controls. This includes SSI which provides payments to adults and children with a disability, and to older individuals who have limited income and resources.

54. Do you consider SSDI and SSI to be part of 'Social Security'?

Both programs are administered by SSA. SSDI is funded through the Social Security trust funds. SSI is funded by general tax revenue.

55. Do you have any concerns about the SSI program? What are your plans for changing SSI to address your concerns?

If confirmed, I will seek to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of the SSI program. My understanding is that it is a time and labor-intensive program to administer given its complexity.

56. The SSI program provides critical support for some of our most vulnerable communities. However, individuals seeking to apply for SSI benefits face significant administrative barriers to accessing this lifeline. The current SSI application stretches over 20 pages long and most people are unable to submit an application online. If confirmed, will you

prioritize simplifying the SSI application and making it available online for all applicants?

If confirmed, I will seek to make all of our customer facing processes simpler.

57. The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program for children with mental and physical disabilities is the nation's only income and well-being support for these children and their families, where parents often either cannot work or have reduced work so as to be able to care for their disabled child. In 2020, about 354,999 disabled children were lifted out of poverty through SSI, with their special needs and necessities of life better addressed. Yet the number of SSI awards for children have steadily declined over the past 10 years, and applications fell 45% between 2010 and 2020. The Social Security Act requires SSA to "conduct an ongoing program of outreach to children who are potentially eligible" for SSI disability.
- a. Will you conduct this statutorily required ongoing outreach program and take other measures to secure and strengthen this SSI for families with disabled children as Deputy Commissioner?

If confirmed, I will seek to ensure SSA fulfills its statutory obligations.

58. Many child survivors are not aware they can collect benefits on their deceased parent's record – will SSA take steps to reach out to survivors?

If confirmed, I will seek to ensure SSA fully meets its obligations to survivors.

59. Many states screen kids in foster care to see if they would be eligible for Social Security benefits and seize Social Security benefits from children in their care. In many cases, these children didn't even know that they were entitled to benefits. What are your plans to ensure that foster children's Social Security benefits are used for their own individual needs, rather than seized by states?

If confirmed, I will seek to ensure SSA fully meets its obligations to eligible foster children.

### **Disability Backlog**

60. Are you aware of the SSA-State relationship in the disability determination process? What is your plan to address the high attrition rate in State DDS offices?

I am aware of the SSA-State relationship in the disability determination process. If confirmed, I will work with the DDSs to help resolve attrition rates.

61. Do you believe that the state disability determination services should be federalized?

If confirmed, I will review DDS performance and work with State officials, consistent with all applicable laws and regulations, to improve performance where necessary.

62. What will you do to make sure claimants are better informed about the SSDI claims process?

If confirmed, I will seek to improve communications at SSA, internally, externally, and with Social Security claimants, recipients, and beneficiaries.

63. Given SSA's ongoing staffing shortages and service delays, what is your plan to reduce the backlogs at the state disability determination services, and will you commit to sharing that plan with Congress ahead of making any additional changes?

If confirmed, I will analyze backlogs at SSA and seek to put in place the people, technology, and processes for SSA to deliver premier customer service. If confirmed, it is my intention to communicate on a routine basis with Congress.

#### **Administrative Law Judges (ALJ) Independence**

64. Will you commit to protecting ALJ independence?

Administrative Law Judges should act independently.

65. How will you ensure proper oversight of ALJs to ensure all claimants are provided a full and fair hearing?

Administrative Law Judges should act independently.

66. How will you ensure that ALJs will not be fired or receive political intimidation due to their approval or denial rates?

Administrative Law Judges should act independently.

67. Will you implement quotas on disability awards or denials?

Administrative Law Judges should act independently.

68. Currently, 86 percent of ALJs work for SSA. Do you agree it is important for ALJs to make decisions on disability claims based on the facts of the case and not on the philosophical, political, or policy views of the administration in office at that time?

Administrative Law Judges should act independently.

### **Payment Center Backlog**

69. How do you plan to address record high backlogs in SSA's payment centers?

If confirmed, I will analyze backlogs at SSA and seek to put in place the people, technology, and processes for SSA to deliver premier service.

70. Given SSA's ongoing staffing shortages and service delays, what is your plan to reduce the backlogs at the payment centers, and will you commit to sharing that plan with Congress ahead of making any additional changes?

If confirmed, I will analyze backlogs at SSA and seek to put in place the people and processes for SSA to deliver premier service. If confirmed, it is my intention to communicate on a routine basis with Congress.

### **SSA Privatization**

71. Do you support efforts to privatize Social Security?

If confirmed, I will focus on premier service and a pristine control environment. The above question is not something I have considered.

72. What functions currently being done by SSA staff do you intend to outsource to private contractors to do instead? Which ones? How will that be more efficient, more secure (especially if outsourced overseas), or cost less? Do you agree to abide by all the same ethical constraints and conflict of interest rules that all civil servants are required to observe?

If confirmed, I will focus on premier service and a pristine control environment. The above question is not something I have considered.

73. What are your views on privatizing SSA functions? Are you in favor of privatizing all or part of SSA? Would you support outsourcing taking claims and answering telephone calls to private companies?

The above is not something I have considered.

74. Do you have knowledge of any proposed changes or plans from the White House and/or the DOGE regarding the privatization of the Social Security Administration and/or any of the programs the agency administers?

No.

## **Return to Work**

75. Helping beneficiaries return to work saves the agency money and increases tax revenues. What will you do to make sure that the agency fully supports return to work programs with adequate funding and staffing?

If confirmed, I will analyze return to work programs, and advance efforts to ensure beneficiaries are receiving premier service in this area.

76. What actions will you take to increase awareness of the SSDI and SSI work incentives?

If confirmed, I will analyze the communications efforts around these programs, and work to ensure beneficiaries have all the information necessary in this effort.

## **Transparency / Senate Oversight**

77. Will you take the necessary actions to fight for and secure proper funding for SSA through Congress?

If confirmed, I will seek to take an active role in SSA's budget submission and defense to Congress.

78. How will you ensure that any changes, especially those that impact beneficiaries or customers, are fully vetted with Congress and the American public and implemented in a full and transparent way?

If confirmed, it is my intention to communicate on a routine basis with Congress. Additionally, if confirmed, I will seek to improve communications at SSA both internally and externally.

79. If OMB puts a hold on an apportionment, will you immediately flag that for this committee?

If confirmed, I will seek to work across government and through all appropriate channels to ensure funds are expended consistent with the law.

## **Stakeholder Input**

80. My office and other offices throughout Congress often hear from advocates who represent stakeholders for many of the programs administered by SSA. In the past, advocates had a standing quarterly meeting with the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and both SSA and the advocates found these meetings to be very productive in communicating changes and getting "on the ground" information, including policy and practice reform recommendations. I understand that Commissioner Bisignano held his first meeting with advocates in August 2025. What steps do you plan to take to improve communication and relationships with the various organizations that represent the employees at SSA? If confirmed, will you commit to meeting personally with the advocacy community on a quarterly basis, as was done for many years?

If confirmed, I will support Commissioner Bisignano's efforts in stakeholder engagement.

81. Do you intend to seek input from SSA customers and SSA employees regarding SSA service delivery goals and solutions to SSA work processing roadblocks? If so, what methodology will you utilize to obtain such input?

If confirmed, I will seek multi-part input on implementing solutions, including national data, state-level data, front-line input, and beneficiary input.

82. Do you plan to meet with union leadership once confirmed and will you attend regional union or council meetings?

If confirmed, I expect to have communications and meetings with unions representing the SSA workforce.

83. What other groups, if any, do you intend to seek input from on decisions affecting service delivery improvements at SSA?

If confirmed, I will seek a variety of input on implementing solutions including quantitative information (e.g., national data, state-level data) and qualitative information (e.g., advocacy groups, front-line input, beneficiary input).

#### **Questions for the Record submitted to Arjun Modv from Senator Whitehouse.**

Question 1: During Commissioner Bisignano's confirmation hearing before the Senate Finance Committee on March 25, 2025, he promised a "total review" of data systems at the Social Security Administration to determine whether the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) damaged those systems or created "backdoors" for access by bad actors.

- A) If confirmed, will you ensure that this "total review" is accurately conducted?

If confirmed, I will ensure SSA's data systems are constantly reviewed. A one-time review is just a snapshot in time. SSA's data systems must have secure perimeters and surveillance of its interior. Reviews will be conducted by individuals with the necessary experience and expertise.

- B) Will you share this review with my office and the other members of the Finance Committee?

If confirmed, I will seek to work with your office and the Finance Committee as part of my planned routine communication with Congress. As part of this effort, I will provide updates, as appropriate, on the security of SSA's data systems.

- C) Will you ensure that the data security concerns raised by the recent whistleblower report from recently departed SSA Chief Data Officer Charles

Borges regarding the Numident database are addressed in the aforementioned total review of Social Security's systems?

If confirmed, I will ensure that reviews of SSA's data systems are comprehensive, consistent with Federal and industry standards.

- D) Will you ensure that the total review also includes the Federal Parent Locator Service and its two component exchanges, the Direct Request Locator Information File (DRLIF) and the Earnings System Keyed Applications for SSN Registration Identification (ESKARI)?

The Federal Parent Locator Service and its two component exchanges are operated by the Department of Health and Human Services. SSA contributes data to these systems but is not the owner. If confirmed, I will review the privacy and security requirements of SSA's involvement.

Question 2: Earlier this year, SSA entered into an agreement with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) enabling DHS to incorporate confidential Social Security data into its Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) system. The agreement appears to lack guardrails to protect data security, ensure accuracy, and prevent DHS from utilizing the data for other purposes.

- A) If confirmed, how will you revise the DHS agreement to include terms that explicitly protect sensitive Social Security data from misuse by other agencies?

The SAVE system is operated by the Department of Homeland Security. SSA provides limited data. If confirmed, I will work to ensure SSA agreements comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Additionally, the data provided is protected and is for strictly permissible use.

- B) What else will you do to protect this sensitive data?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure data agreements with SSA have monitoring, privacy protections, are periodically reviewed, and abide by strict access controls.

### **Questions for the Record submitted to Arjun Modv from Senator Hassan.**

Question 1:

Under the leadership of former Commissioner O'Malley, the Social Security Administration (SSA) enhanced public reporting of data about how the agency is serving seniors and other beneficiaries. However, an analysis by the Joint Economic Committee Minority Staff earlier this year found that several performance metrics were no longer available on SSA's performance dashboard. I sent a letter to Commissioner Bisignano in June 2025 raising my concerns regarding

the removal of this data and urging him to restore all previous performance metrics to the dashboard. As of October 29, 2025, all previous performance metrics have still not been restored including current call wait time, current number of callers waiting on hold, and current number of callers waiting for callback.

If confirmed, will you commit to immediately restoring all previous performance metrics to the dashboard and retaining all historical performance data?

It is my understanding based on public reporting that SSA currently reports three times the number of data elements on the performance webpage under the Trump Administration (30) than it did under the Biden Administration (11). If confirmed, I will continually review all performance metrics and as part of my routine communication to Congress, will discuss SSA's performance data.

Question 2:

The Ticket to Work Program was established by Congress to support the return to work of Social Security disability beneficiaries and to help reduce the risk of improper payments by SSA. SSA enters into agreements with organizations called Employment Networks to provide the delivery of services under the program.

Has SSA failed to deliver payments to Employment Networks in 2025? If so, has the agency provided Employment Networks an explanation for this failure? If confirmed, how would you ensure that SSA addresses this issue?

If confirmed, I will review any agreement with Employment Networks and provide any appropriate update.

### **Questions for the Record submitted to Arjun Mody from Senator Cortez Masto.**

Question 1: If confirmed, how do you plan to resolve the staffing shortages that are exacerbating the customer service crisis at the Social Security Administration and making it harder for Americans to access their Social Security benefits?

If confirmed, I am committed to having the right staffing necessary to provide premier service in every vertical – online, in person, or over the phone.

Question 2: In June, the Social Security Administration removed certain phone service metrics from public reporting, jeopardizing the transparency and accuracy of data informing customer service performance. How does the agency plan to inform beneficiaries of current call wait times and the number of callers waiting on hold moving forward?

It is my understanding based on public reporting that SSA currently reports three times the number of data elements on the performance webpage under the Trump Administration (30) than it did under the Biden Administration (11). The Interactive Voice Response (IVR) informs callers in real time on waiting times. If confirmed, I will continually review all performance metrics.

## **Questions for the Record submitted to Arjun Modv from Senator Warren.**

Question 1: Social Security Administration (SSA) Commissioner Frank Bisignano was [recently named](#) “Chief Executive Officer” (CEO) of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). In this position, he will be [responsible](#) for “overseeing all day-to-day IRS operations,” while also “continuing to serve in his role as commissioner” of the Social Security Administration (SSA). As Deputy Director, you will have to step in to lead SSA while he is away. [SSA](#) employs over 50,000 federal workers, operates around 1,500 field offices, and funds 14,000 state disability determination services. The agency also has a [budget](#) of around \$1.6 trillion. However, in your previous work, you have not managed an operation or budget this large, nor have you specifically worked on issues related to Social Security.

- a. What experiences qualify you to manage an agency with this large of a scope and that manages programs that are the economic lifeline for millions of Americans?

Commissioner Bisignano is a two-time public company CEO and has managed multiple lines of business for the world’s largest companies. He is the Commissioner and if confirmed, I will be the Deputy Commissioner. My intention is to work side by side with the Commissioner on leading the Social Security Administration.

- i. What is the largest organization that you have previously led?

I have managed multiple U.S. Senate leadership offices. I have earned the trust of Secretaries, Senators, and CEOs. Combined, I bring know-how, experience, management, and credibility.

- ii. Do you have any Social Security expertise?

I have had real jobs with real responsibilities with real results. For the nation’s drug czar, we worked across government to get a 17% reduction in youth drug use; for Senator Dole – a two-time Cabinet Secretary – we implemented BRAC, took care of our servicemembers at Fort Bragg and Camp LeJeune during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). More recently for Senator Barrasso, we ran the most effective Senate Conference in modern memory. If confirmed, I will lead to make Social Security a premier organization.

- b. Have you discussed the role you will play at SSA with Commissioner Bisignano when he is conducting official business for the IRS?

No.

- i. Have you discussed how you and Commissioner Bisignano will divide responsibilities?

We have not specifically discussed division of responsibilities but have acknowledged areas where I have experience.

Question 2: Top officials in the Trump Administration have called Social Security a “ponzi scheme,” and have touted privatizing benefits, with Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent publicly [saying](#) the administration was rolling out programs, like “Trump accounts,” that were a “backdoor for privatizing Social Security.”

- a. Do you agree with these statements?

I believe Social Security is a promise to pay.

- b. Will you commit to not privatizing any components of the Social Security program?

This is not something I have considered. If confirmed, I will focus on premier customer service and ensuring there is a pristine control environment.

- c. Will you commit to not outsourcing individual components of the Social Security program?

This is not something I have considered. If confirmed, I will focus on premier customer service and a pristine control environment.

- d. Since the announcement of your nomination, have you had any discussions about privatizing any part of the SSA with any member of the financial services industry?

No.

- i. If yes, please list the date of each discussion, the nature of each discussion and who participated in each discussion.

Not applicable.

### Customer Service

Question 3: If confirmed, how will you address the disruptions to SSA customer service that layoffs have already caused?

If confirmed, I am committed to having the right staffing necessary to provide premier customer service.

Question 4: If confirmed, do you plan to continue layoffs or reductions in force at SSA? Do you plan to continue reassigning customer service representatives at SSA to answering the agency’s 1-800 hotline?

If confirmed, I am committed to having the right staffing necessary to provide premier service in every vertical – online, in person, or over the phone.

- a. If so, please describe your plans.

If confirmed, I will review service plans in all verticals.

- b. If so, please describe how you will ensure that reductions in workforce do not result in missed payments and increased wait times.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure SSA makes the right payment to the right person at the right time. Further, based on public reporting, wait times have been driven down. The work ahead is to continue that progress.

Question 5: Will you commit to reversing any layoffs that cause increased wait times or otherwise threaten SSA beneficiaries' ability to collect their benefits?

If confirmed, I am committed to having the right staffing necessary to provide beneficiaries premier service in whatever vertical they want to be served.

Question 6: If confirmed, will you close SSA field offices?

I have no intention to close any field offices.

- a. How will you determine which offices to close?

If confirmed, any decision would be driven by data, thorough analysis, front line workforce input, and other factors.

- b. Before closing any Social Security field offices, will you commit to conducting the below analysis on how a closure would impact the service area?

To be clear, I have no intention to close any field offices. If confirmed, the below, with the exception of adjudication of appeals as those are not handled by field offices, would be among the inputs of any decision.

- i. Determine how long it currently takes to reach a customer service representative in the office, both by phone and in person.
  - ii. Determine the office's average wait time for new applicants and for adjudication of appeals. Identify the next closest office.
  - iii. Confer with the representative of the district in which the office is located.
- c. Will you ensure adequate staffing at all field offices to ensure that none are effectively closed or forced to shut down?

If confirmed, I am committed to having the right staffing necessary to provide beneficiaries premier customer service in whatever vertical they want to be served, including field offices.

Question 7: Will you commit not to closing any Social Security offices if these closures cause severe disruptions, dramatically increased travel times, or disproportionately impact individuals with severe disabilities or illnesses?

I have no intention to close any field offices. If confirmed, these would be among the factors considered.

Question 8: Will you commit to not implementing any new rules—or to immediately reverse any rules created by the Trump Administration prior to your confirmation—that create additional hurdles for Social Security beneficiaries?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure beneficiaries receive premier service and we operate a pristine control environment at SSA.

Question 9: Will you commit to evaluating wait times and appointment times at SSA field offices?

If confirmed, I will continually review all customer service performance metrics.

- a. Will you commit to monitoring staffing levels at SSA field offices to ensure that service is not delayed or disrupted?

If confirmed, I will continually monitor both national and state level data to ensure SSA is providing premier customer service.

### Regulatory Changes

Question 10: During his first administration, President Trump proposed numerous regulatory changes to the analysis SSA uses to determine if an individual is eligible for disability benefits, including its Medical Vocational Guideline “Grids.” All of the proposed changes would have made it harder for individuals to qualify for disability. The Trump Administration appears to have taken steps to resume these efforts, with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) [announcing](#) its plans to publish a rule titled “Improvements to the Disability Adjudication Process: Sequential Evaluation Process” in September. This announcement [claims](#) to propose “improvements to the disability adjudication process to ensure [the] disability program remains current and can be more efficiently administered” and also states that the rule will “include[] proposing policy updates to occupational data sources and optimizing their use to serve our customers and preserve the trust funds.” Many advocates agree that the Grids are due for an update, but disagree with the Trump administration’s historic approach to these updates—which amount to a benefit cut.

- a. Do you agree that the Trump Administration’s approach to updating the Grid system would have made it harder for Americans to qualify for disability?

I am not willing to agree to this analysis on a rule that was never final.

- b. If confirmed, what changes would you make to the Grid system?

As a nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on this issue.

- c. Will you commit to listening to disability advocacy groups when updating this system?

As you know, there are three major components of rulemaking. Propose the rule, Notice and Comment, and Final Rule. Each step has sub steps. There is not even a NPRM at this point, just the language in the Uniform Agenda. If confirmed, the agency will take in and consider all relevant comments.

- d. Will you commit to ensuring the accessibility of disability benefits for Americans with disabilities?

As you know, I worked for Senator Elizabeth Dole, the wife of Leader Bob Dole who authored the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This is an important issue, and if confirmed, I will ensure SSA is in compliance with the ADA.

Question 11: The Trump Administration is also poised to reduce or eliminate thousands of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries by limiting the definition of a “public assistance household.” Currently, an SSI recipient’s benefits can be reduced by up to one-third if they receive in-kind assistance—such as food or housing—from another member of their household—including family members or roommates. However, if one other member of the household also receive public assistance—including SSI, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and General Assistance—the household is deemed a “public assistance household,” and the SSI recipient is exempt from these benefit reductions. The Trump Administration has announced that it intends to cut SNAP from the list of programs that qualify recipients as a “public assistance household” and require that *all* other members of the household receive public assistance, rather than just one, as is currently the rule. According to Center on Budget and Policy Priority estimates, this change would cause 100,000 recipients to lose SSI eligibility altogether and 275,000 more to face benefit reductions. According to disability advocates, this change would “hit low-income, multigenerational households the hardest.”

- a. Do you agree with the Trump Administration’s attempt to change this rule and strip hundreds of thousands of Americans of their SSI benefits?

My understanding is this is a Biden rule from last year, not longstanding SSA policy. If confirmed, I will work to learn more about the rational of the Biden rule and its intent. Beyond that, as a nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on a rulemaking the agency may be working on.

- b. Will you commit to protecting the inclusion of SNAP as a qualifying program under the definition of public assistance household?

It would be inappropriate for me to comment on a rulemaking the agency may be working on.

- c. Will you commit to protecting the requirement of only one household member receiving public assistance to meet the definition of public assistance household?

**It would be inappropriate for me to comment on a rulemaking the agency may be working on.**

Question 12: Another concern is whether the Trump Administration will abide by the typical formal rule proposal process—including the 90-day window for public comment—or invoke the “good cause” exception under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) to shorten this window, effectively bypassing public comment.

- a. Do you agree that the full 90-day public comment window plays a critical role in ensuring Americans and advocacy groups can express their reactions towards federal rules and large-scale regulatory changes?

**If confirmed, I will seek to ensure the agency follows the APA.**

- b. Will you commit to ensuring any regulatory changes like the ones outlined in questions 10 and 11 receive the complete 90-day window for public comment?

**If confirmed, I will seek to ensure the agency follows the APA.**

Question 13: These changes to Social Security regulations could also increase the greater administrative burden placed on Social Security recipients by requiring additional paperwork and authorizations. These leave recipients vulnerable to disrupted benefits and improper payments. Increased paperwork and administrative costs are also burdensome for SSA staff, who are already facing a myriad of issues at the agency—including unprecedented staff layoffs.

- a. How do you plan to mitigate the increased administrative burdens these regulatory changes may cause?

**It would be inappropriate for me to comment on a rulemaking the agency may be working on.**

- b. Will you commit to ensuring that regulatory changes attempted by SSA work to lower administrative burdens—rather than serve as a backdoor cut to benefits?

**It would be inappropriate for me to comment on a rulemaking the agency may be working on.**

#### Automation and Data Privacy:

Question 14: Do you think Social Security beneficiaries would prefer to have their benefit claims handled by an American worker or an AI chatbot?

**If confirmed, I will work to ensure humans are involved in any AI processes, the SSA workforce is properly trained, and ensure premier service to beneficiaries.**

Question 15: Will you commit to ensuring that automated systems at SSA are introduced transparently with robust oversight?

If confirmed, I will seek to increase communication both internally and externally on SSA's systems and processes. We will also continuously monitor our systems and processes.

- a. Will you commit to ensuring automated systems are rolled out only after extensive analysis is conducted on how automation will impact beneficiaries and service?

If confirmed, I will seek to evaluate the effectiveness of AI processes, and monitor for fairness, efficiency, and accuracy through every stage of any process.

- b. Will you commit to reconsidering an automated system after it is implemented if it disrupts service for beneficiaries or imposes additional administrative burdens?

If confirmed, I will seek to ensure continuous monitoring of our systems and processes, with the goal of providing premier customer service.

Question 16: What role do you believe automation should play in the benefits adjudication process for Social Security, specifically disability benefits?

If confirmed, I will evaluate all SSA's systems and processes to identify areas where customer service and quality control can be improved. Benefits adjudication must be independent.

- a. Do you believe that automation should replace human decision-making for disability determinations?

If confirmed, I will evaluate all SSA's systems and processes to identify areas where customer service and quality control can be improved. Disability determination must be independent.

Question 17: Recent [reporting](#) revealed that Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) employees at SSA copied over 300 million Americans' sensitive data—including their Social Security numbers, names, and birthdays—to a private section of the agency's cloud that lacked adequate security, putting the private information of hundreds of millions at risk of being revealed and used by identity thieves.

- a. Will you commit to ensuring that officials at external agencies will not receive improper access to beneficiaries' sensitive information?

If confirmed, protecting PII will be of the highest priority.

- b. How do you plan to protect beneficiaries' data privacy and ensure such a risky transfer of data does not happen again?

If confirmed, protecting PII will be of the highest priority.

## Ethics

Question 18: Have you had communications with Commissioner Frank Bisignano?

Yes.

- a. Have you had communications with SSA regarding agency operations, personnel, and management decisions?

I have had limited conversations on issues that were publicly reported and in the public domain. I helped identify candidates for one specific position.

- b. Have you made any hiring decisions at SSA?

No.

- c. Have you been consulted on policy decisions being made at SSA?

No.

Question 19: If confirmed, will you remove individuals with ties to private equity firms or other firms that could benefit from the erosion of SSA's ability to provide basic services?

If confirmed, I will defer to the ethics officer on any potential conflicts.

- a. Will you require that any individuals employed by or advising the SSA divest any individual stocks or other holdings in entities that could profit from the privatizing of SSA functions?

If confirmed, I will defer to the ethics officer on any potential conflicts.

Question 20: If you are confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that your decisions as Deputy Commissioner are and appear to be independent and are not and do not appear to be conflicted with your personal interests or those of the Commissioner?

I have undergone an extensive OGE process. I have worked in the public sphere for over 20 years. If confirmed, I will work for the benefit of the American people.

Question 21: What steps will you take to divest from any financial interests or recuse from any issues that you have a personal interest in?

I have an agreement with OGE which will be executed if confirmed.

Question 22: Has a member of your family currently or ever been a member, founder, or investor of the "Executive Branch" social club? If so, please provide their name and role related to the club.

No.

Question 23: Has a member of your family ever visited the “Executive Branch” social club or attended an event at the club? If so, please provide the date, circumstances of the visit, and the event.

No.

Question 24: Have you had any meetings at the “Executive Branch” social club? If so, what were these meetings about and with whom?

No.

Question 25: Has a member of your family had any meetings at the “Executive Branch” social club? If so, which family member(s), what were these meetings about, and with whom were these meetings?

No.

Question 26: Have you encouraged anyone to join the club or promote the club in any other way? If so, in what ways did you promote the club?

No.

Question 27: Has a member of your family encouraged anyone to join the club or promote the club in any other way? If so, which family member(s) and in what ways did they promote the club?

No.

Question 28: Will you receive any advisor fees, consulting fees, bonuses, or other payments after the date of your confirmation?

No.

Question 29: If confirmed, will you commit to not seeking employment or board membership with, or another form of compensation from, a company that you regulated or otherwise interacted with while in government, for at least four years after leaving office?

If confirmed, I will abide by all ethics and other rules that apply to this question.

Question 30: Will you commit to recuse yourself from all particular matters involving your former clients and employers for at least four years?

If confirmed, I will abide by all ethics and other rules that apply to this question.

Question 31: Will you commit to not lobby SSA—including through work as an informal “shadow lobbyist”—for at least four years after leaving office?

If confirmed, I will abide by all ethics and other rules that apply to this question.

#### Congressional Oversight and Transparency

Question 32: Do you commit to always providing the Commissioner with accurate, fact-based advice even if it goes against his or President Trump’s agenda?

If confirmed, I will provide the Commissioner with my best advice based on the facts.

Question 33: What is your understanding of the role of the Social Security Administration Inspector General?

My understanding is the role of the IG is to provide independent oversight of SSA programs and operations.

Question 34: Will you ensure your staff complies with any Inspector General deadlines established for requested communications, documents, and witnesses, and that staff will be protected from reprisal for their testimony?

If confirmed, the IG will operate independently within the statutory guidelines.

Question 35: If you are not able to comply with any Inspector General requests and deadlines, will you notify the Republican and Democratic members of this committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial?

If confirmed, I will act in accordance with the law and the rules and precedents of working with the IG.

Question 36: If you are confirmed, will you commit to refusing to follow illegal orders from any individual, including the President?

If confirmed, I do not believe I would be given an illegal order.

Question 37: What actions would you take if you were given an illegal order from any individual, including the President?

If confirmed, I do not believe I would be given an illegal order.

Question 38: Will you commit to providing information or documents to Congress voluntarily when requested to do so through oversight letters or Congressional investigations?

If confirmed, I plan on voluntarily having routine communication with Congress and will provide responses to requests.

Question 39: Will you commit to providing information or documents to Congress if you are issued a subpoena to do so?

If confirmed, I will follow the law.

Question 40: Will you commit to voluntarily provide a deposition if you are requested by Congress to provide one?

If confirmed, I will follow the law.

Question 41: Will you commit to voluntarily testify in front of Congress if you are requested by Congress to do so?

Yes.

Question 42: Will you commit to testify or provide a deposition in front of Congress if you are issued a subpoena to do so?

If confirmed, I will follow the law.

Question 43: Will you commit to following current precedent for responding to information requests, briefings, and other inquiries from Congress, including the Senate Finance Committee and its minority members?

Yes.

Question 44: Will you commit to providing comprehensive, accurate, and timely responses to inquiries from the Government Accountability Office?

Yes.

Question 45: Will you commit to facilitating the testimony of Social Security Administration officials before Congress when requested to do so?

If confirmed, I will seek to work with Congress and SSA witnesses on facilitating testimony for any hearings.

#### Retaliation and Protecting Whistleblowers

Question 46: Do you believe that Social Security Administration personnel should be protected from any form of retaliation for coming forward about an illegal order, sexual assault or harassment, negligence, misconduct, or any other concern that they wish to raise?

If confirmed, I would refer these issues to the Chief of Human Resources for action. Workplace rules should address this question. Personnel reporting wrongdoings will be protected.

Question 47: Have you ever retaliated against any individual for coming forward about an illegal order, sexual assault or harassment, negligence, misconduct, or any other concern that they wish to raise?

No.

Question 48: If you are confirmed, will you commit to protecting whistleblowers? If so, please specify how you will do so.

If confirmed, I will follow the federal whistleblower statute.

Question 49: If you are confirmed, will you commit to preventing retaliation against any individual for coming forward about an illegal order, sexual assault or harassment, negligence, misconduct, or any other concern that they wish to raise?

If confirmed, SSA employees will not be retaliated against for raising issues.

Question 50: Will you ensure your staff complies with any Inspector General or Government Accountability Office deadlines established for requested communications, documents, and witnesses, and that staff will be protected from reprisal for their testimony?

If confirmed, I will value of the role of independent oversight.

#### Impoundment Control

Question 51: Do you believe the administration has the legal authority to withhold, freeze, or otherwise impound Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid payments?

This is a legal issue that would not be decided by me.

Question 52: Do you believe the administration has the legal authority to withhold, freeze, or otherwise impound funding for the people and systems that ensure Social Security benefits are paid, impoundments that would make it harder for seniors or people with disabilities to access their benefits?

This is a legal issue that would not be decided by me.

Question 53: If the OMB puts a hold on an apportionment, will you immediately flag that for this committee?

If confirmed, I will seek to work across government and through all appropriate channels to ensure funds are expended consistent with the law.

### **Questions for the Record submitted to Arjun Modv from Senator Warnock.**

Question 1: It was [recently announced](#) that Commissioner Bisignano will serve in a newly created role as CEO of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). At the same time, customer service at the Social Security Administration (SSA) [has been suffering](#). Do you think Commissioner Bisignano's recent appointment will improve Georgian's ability to access their earned benefits?

Commissioner Bisignano is a two-time public company CEO and has managed multiple lines of business for the world's largest companies. I believe the Commissioner is exceling in both roles and turning around service at SSA, with the goal of providing beneficiaries with premier customer service.

Question 2: If Commissioner Bisignano is called away for his new role at IRS and if confirmed, what would you do on day one of leading SSA?

Frank Bisignano is the Commissioner of Social Security, and if confirmed I will be the Deputy Commissioner. My intention is to work side by side with the Commissioner on leading the Social Security Administration. As I stated in my testimony, my focus will be on premier service and pristine controls.

Question 3: Do you believe the SSA is currently meeting the standards of people who rely on benefits? Why or why not?

From the public data, SSA has turned around a negative trend on customer service. The goal is to provide first-class customer service, and I believe SSA will achieve that goal.

Question 4: In your opinion, what is the most pressing issue facing SSA today?

Providing beneficiaries with premier service and having a pristine control environment. If SSA accomplishes these two goals, the downstream effect with incredibly positive.

Question 5: Earlier this year, the Trump Administration [announced](#) it would start withholding 50 percent of a Social Security beneficiary's monthly check to recover overpayments. As a Deputy Commissioner of SSA, do you support this decision to recoup overpayments that are often no fault of the individual?

I understand this issue. If confirmed, my focus will be getting the payment right in the first place.

Question 6: How will you guarantee that SSA employees feel safe reporting issues without fear of retaliation, and what specific policies would you encourage or observe to protect whistleblowers?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure all aspects of the whistleblower statute are followed. We will have an organization where there will not be fear of retaliation. SSA will be a premier organization.

Question 7: Since February, the Administration has [eliminated](#) 7,000 employees at SSA, about 12 percent of its workforce.

- Do you believe SSA is adequately staffed?

If confirmed, I am committed to having the right staffing necessary to provide premier service.

- Would you support additional cuts to the workforce?

If confirmed, I am committed to having the right staffing necessary to provide premier service.

Question 8: Do you believe that online and digital customer service is the future of SSA? If so, how will you ensure that older adults and people with limited broadband can continue to access services?

If confirmed, I am committed to having the right staffing necessary to provide premier service in every vertical – online, in person, or over the phone.

Question 9: Do you support maintained access to SSA field offices across the country? Will you commit to informing this Committee with 120 days' notice should SSA decide to close any field offices?

I have no intention to close any field offices.

Question 10: The [average wait time](#) to be approved for disability insurance in Georgia is 370 days - 50 percent longer than the national average.

- Do you think a year is a reasonable amount of time for Georgians on disability to get their benefits approved?

If confirmed, I will look at the state level data for Georgia and better understand the inputs into that wait time. Unreasonably long wait times must be reduced.

- Please list three ideas to help reduce the length of disability insurance determination backlogs.

If confirmed, I will work with Congress on this issue. In general, I would begin to look at efficiencies in processing, retention and training of staff, and technology tools.

Question 11: Will you commit to maintaining Social Security as a public trust rather than allowing it to be transformed into a profit-driven system, and how will you resist political pressure to fundamentally alter the program's structure?

If confirmed, I will focus on premier customer service and a pristine control environment. The above is not something I have considered.

Question 12: What strategies do you have to retain experienced staff, maintain institutional knowledge, and improve employee morale at SSA while ensuring quality service to beneficiaries?

SSA will be a premier organization. If confirmed, we will give our workforce the tools to be successful; acknowledge successes, maintain robust internal and external communications, have buy in on the processes, and importantly, steady leadership.