

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 4, 2020

The Honorable Andrew Saul
Commissioner
Social Security Administration
6401 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21235

Dear Commissioner Saul:

With the spread and concern about the COVID-19 virus, we urge you to reverse the decision to eliminate or curtail telework options for SSA employees, including frontline field office employees.

We are learning new information about COVID-19 daily, and do not yet know how widespread this outbreak of the virus may be. As you likely know, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that if people are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, they should stay home from work to mitigate the potential spread of the virus should they test positive. In addition, employees with ill family members, or who have children whose schools or childcare centers are closed, will be unable to work at all if their only option is to report to the office.

Given this information and the fact that the virus continues to spread, all federal agencies should have contingency plans in place in order to continue serving their customers and fulfilling their mission while keeping their employees and the American public as safe as possible. If SSA had a robust telework program, SSA would be well positioned to continue many public-serving operations while employees worked from home. Abandoning SSA's telework infrastructure is not only counterproductive to improving employee morale and making SSA an attractive place to work, but it also removes an important tool that SSA could deploy in a public health crisis like the COVID-19 virus outbreak.

We urge you to reverse the decision to eliminate or curtail telework. Please provide us with a response by March 12 about how you are preparing SSA to meet the needs of all workers and families impacted by COVID-19 and any other public health situation.

Sincerely,



Richard E. Neal
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives



Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Committee on Finance
U.S. Senate