



Office of the Inspector General

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

May 31, 2024

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write to inform you of my retirement from the position of Inspector General for the Social Security Administration effective June 29, 2024. It has been my great honor to serve as Inspector General, and I am proud of what the Social Security Administration (SSA) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has accomplished under my leadership.

As a partner at the law firm WilmerHale, I was surrounded by lawyers who had served in the federal government, some more than once. I was inspired by their service and wanted to give back in the same way when my life and career permitted. I was deeply honored to be nominated and confirmed to be the Inspector General for SSA. This agency held particular importance to me as I believed I could make an impact that would help some of the most vulnerable individuals in our country. My goal was to use my private sector experience to help modernize SSA OIG to be more agile, to think bigger, and to become leaders. I believe during my tenure we achieved these goals.

Over the past five years, thanks to the creativity and hard work of our employees, SSA OIG has innovated and led in areas of emerging threats, such as imposter scams and artificial intelligence. We have also partnered with SSA to accomplish shared anti-fraud goals in a number of key areas. And we invested in our workforce by strengthening programs for employee engagement and development.

Early in my tenure, we saw the rise of federal government imposter scams and recognized the need to act swiftly and comprehensively to respond. SSA OIG developed a multidisciplinary approach to combatting and preventing imposter scams that included education and outreach, civil enforcement, and criminal investigations. National Slam the Scam Day, the brainchild of SSA OIG, has now been held each of the past five years and represents government at its best – collaboration across government and with the private sector to protect the public from scammers seeking to steal their money and personal information. SSA OIG also established a new division, the Major Case Unit, to investigate these and other complex fraud schemes.

SSA OIG has also become a leader in understanding artificial intelligence (AI) and responding to the potential threat it represents to the public. We created an AI task force and are collaborating with SSA on AI initiatives. Because we are at the forefront in the field, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has asked that SSA OIG present on AI at events open to the entire federal government.



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In 2021, OMB issued guidance on OIG-agency collaboration that called for more cooperation and engagement. Several collaborative initiatives we developed are directly in line with OMB's guidance, including the National Anti-Fraud Committee, a partnership with SSA that supports cooperating and proactively working to identify and advance strategies for combatting fraud.

We continued to successfully collaborate with SSA and state disability services organizations in the Cooperative Disability Investigations (CDI) program. The CDI program focuses on reviewing and identifying disability fraud before benefits are paid. It is one of SSA and OIG's most successful anti-fraud initiatives and a bipartisan Congressional priority. In 2021, we established a "Hub Model" to provide CDI coverage to more than one state from a single CDI unit, which permitted us to meet the Congressional mandate from the *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015* to provide coverage in all fifty states and U.S. territories, while also achieving cost-savings.

While we sometimes may not think of an audit function as agile, under my leadership, our auditors have gone from once-a-year audit planning to continuous audit planning, which permits us to adapt our priorities and focus on the most emergent issues facing the agency.

I also built a stronger information technology (IT) component within SSA OIG to better adapt and respond to changing needs of the organization. With the new IT component, we were able to successfully develop and implement a new case management system on time and on budget, a longstanding priority for the organization. We also invested in our cybersecurity capabilities.

SSA OIG's employees are the organization's most valuable asset and, in response to feedback from the workforce, we focused on improving engagement and professional development programs. We established SSA OIG's first-ever full-time organizational health director position to serve as a liaison between the workforce and leadership. We also established new programs to improve opportunities for professional development for all employees. In one such example, the Professional Development Program, which includes a panel comprised of senior leaders, evaluates and approves requests for leadership training organization-wide, thereby permitting more consistency and fairness in how those opportunities are awarded.

As I retire, I look forward to the next stage of my life. But I also reflect back on my tenure as Inspector General. I am proud of the SSA OIG team and the progress we accomplished together. I believe I am leaving the organization in a much stronger position to continue the important work it performs to serve the American people.

Sincerely,

Gail S. Ennis
Inspector General