



Office of the Inspector General

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Written Testimony
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to the United States House of Representatives
Committee on Ways and Means
Joint Subcommittees on Social Security and Work & Welfare
Hearing with Commissioner of the Social Security Administration
Frank J. Bisignano
on the Oversight of the Social Security Administration
& Budget for Fiscal Year 2027
June 10, 2026

Chairmen Estes and LaHood, Ranking Members Larson and Davis, and Members of the Subcommittees, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the Social Security Administration (SSA) Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) oversight and budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2027. Over 90 years ago, President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act, and today Social Security is a cornerstone of economic security for more than 72 million Americans—retirees, people with disabilities, survivors, and their families. Protecting the integrity and sustainability of this program is essential for every taxpayer and beneficiary.

The Importance of OIG Oversight

The OIG's mission is to ensure that SSA programs are administered efficiently, effectively, and with integrity. Our independent audits and investigations identify weaknesses, recommend improvements, and protect taxpayer dollars from fraud, waste, and abuse. This oversight is critical to maintaining public trust and ensuring benefits reach those who need them most.

The Inspector General Act, as amended, (and the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance, M-22-04, *Promoting Accountability through Cooperation among Agencies and Inspectors General*, which reinforces the existing statutory framework,) requires OIGs to maintain independence while fostering productive relationships with agency leadership. As the Assistant Inspector General for Audit as First Assistant, I periodically meet with SSA Commissioner Frank J. Bisignano to perpetuate a constructive relationship between SSA leadership and SSA OIG leadership to fulfill my role as outlined in the Inspector General Act.

Commissioner Bisignano has demonstrated a commitment to accountability. Since Commissioner Bisignano's confirmation in May 2025, because of his priority, the number of unimplemented OIG audit recommendations has dropped from 265 to 137, the lowest in over eight years. This progress should translate into billions of dollars in potential savings for American taxpayers.

President's Budget for FY 2027

It is important for the Subcommittees to understand how President Trump's Budget for FY 2027 will provide the necessary resources for SSA OIG to execute its statutory role and meet its mission.

The President's FY 2027 Budget for SSA OIG requests \$114.7 million in direct appropriations, including \$2 million to remain available until expended for information technology (IT) modernization. In addition, the budget requests SSA transfer \$25.1 million to SSA OIG for jointly operating the anti-fraud Cooperative Disability Investigations (CDI) Program. This funding level represents an increase of \$0.5 million over FY 2026.

The President's budget request will support SSA OIG's independent audits, evaluations, and investigations; address systemic weaknesses in SSA's programs and operations; and implement Executive Orders, including those focused on preventing ineligible individuals from receiving Social Security benefits.

Return on Investment & Staffing

SSA OIG's work delivers significant value to the American public. In FY 2025, SSA OIG's return on investment (ROI) was \$16 to \$1. That is, \$16 returned for every \$1 appropriated. In FY 2025, SSA OIG audits identified about \$708 million in questioned costs and about \$975 million in funds that could be put to better use. During FY 2025, investigations resulted in 566 criminal convictions and contributed to almost \$332 million in monetary accomplishments.

At the start of FY 2026, SSA OIG employed 414 Full-Time Equivalents (FTE). Working with OMB and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) on rightsizing the workforce for optimal efficiency and effectiveness, SSA OIG will be pursuing hiring for critical positions this year. Each additional investigative FTE is estimated to close 31 more cases and generate \$1.1 million in additional monetary accomplishments. Each audit FTE enables SSA OIG to review more aspects of SSA programs and operations, leading to increased cost savings and improved program controls and efficiency. SSA OIG audits, on average, have identified about \$29 million in questioned costs and about \$28 million in funds put to better use.

SSA OIG is committed to recruiting and retaining high-performing staff based on merit to enable the organization to meet the statutory obligations related to independent, high-quality audits and investigations work, including ensuring OIG's investigative staff is appropriately resourced to present cases for potential prosecution.

Audit

The Office of Audit conducts comprehensive financial, IT, and performance audits to evaluate SSA's compliance with laws, regulations, and other requirements. These audits identify issues and recommend corrective actions to improve SSA's programs and operations, leading to increased efficiency and greater effectiveness, in addition to identifying fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement.

In FY 2025, SSA OIG issued 44 audit reports, focusing on SSA's most significant management and performance challenges. SSA OIG annually identifies these challenges based on SSA risk assessments and audit and investigative work. SSA OIG implements a risk-based approach to determine which discretionary audits to perform based on several factors, including: the maturity of SSA's controls over workloads, issues of significant Congressional, and public interest, and the number of individuals who could be affected. The FY 2027 Budget will allow SSA OIG to continue to perform audits that help to improve the prevention, detection, and recovery of improper payments, ensuring SSA pays the correct person the correct amount.

In addition, in Fiscal Year 2025, SSA OIG produced several audits specifically required or requested by Congressional Committees or Members of Congress:

- Social Security Administration's Telephone Metrics
- The Social Security Administration's Information Security Program and Practices for Fiscal Year 2025
- Administrative Law Judges with the Highest and Lowest Allowance Rates
- The Social Security Administration's Administration of the Next Generation Telephony Project Contract
- The Social Security Administration's Compliance with the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019 in Fiscal Year 2024

Year after year, SSA OIG consistently reports one of SSA's major challenges relates to improving the prevention, detection, and recovery of improper payments. SSA OIG has also made suggestions to SSA for improving its improper payment estimation methodology (The Social Security Administration's Methodology for Estimating Improper Payments).

From FYs 2015 through 2023, SSA paid over \$10 trillion in benefits and reported \$82.3 billion in improper payments. In FY 2025 alone, SSA estimates \$11.3 billion in improper payments, \$9.3 billion in overpayments and \$2 billion in underpayments.

SSA must be a responsible steward of the funds entrusted to its care by minimizing the risk of making improper payments and recovering overpayments when they occur. Even small errors can result in millions of dollars in losses. Preventing improper payments is more efficient than recovering them. Prior audit work identified some of the sources of improper payments and internal control issues. SSA OIG made recommendations, including those related to automation, data analytics, and third party data collection, to help SSA improve its ability to prevent and better detect improper payments (Preventing, Detecting, and Recovering Improper Payments).

In FY 2027, SSA OIG will continue prioritizing audit work to review improper payments and high-dollar overpayments. As of June 1, 2026, SSA OIG had 27 audits and reports underway related to improving the prevention, detection, and recovery of improper payments. (A list of all SSA OIG ongoing audit work is available at oig.ssa.gov.)

SSA serves hundreds of thousands of American citizens each day in person at field offices located in their community; over the phone; or online through their personal my Social Security accounts. It is essential that Social Security provide secure, accurate, and timely service.

In FYs 2025 and 2026, SSA OIG issued several audit reports related to SSA's service delivery, including:

- Social Security Administration's Telephone Metrics
- Workload Management for Field Offices
- Staffing Public-facing Offices
- Physical Security at Offices
- Staffing, Productivity, and Processing Times at State Disability Determination Services
- Contract with Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory for Analysis of the Social Security Administration's Disability Process
- Manager-to-Manager Application for Critical Case Processing
- The Social Security Administration's International Workloads in Processing Center 8

As stated previously, SSA has made it a priority, under the direction of Commissioner Bisignano, to address the recommendations in these reports and SSA OIG will continue to monitor progress. SSA OIG's audit work in several other areas has already led, or will shortly lead, to real improvements to SSA's programs and operations.

Investigations

The Office of Investigations (OI) conducts criminal investigations into allegations of fraud and misconduct related to SSA programs, operations, and employees. OI works closely with federal, state, and local law enforcement partners. Our efforts disrupt criminal schemes, protect trust funds, and ensure benefits go to those who truly qualify. Investigative efforts may result in criminal or civil prosecutions, civil monetary penalties, Agency administrative sanctions, or Agency administrative actions.

During FY 2025, SSA OIG investigations resulted in 566 criminal convictions and contributed to over \$332 million in monetary accomplishments, including restitution, recoveries, settlements, judgments, fines, civil and administrative actions, and estimated savings.

Since FY 2025, SSA OIG OI has participated in several Task Forces and working groups in support of the priorities of the Trump Administration. This includes participating in the D.C. Safe and Beautiful Task Force and the Memphis Safe Task Force.

Over the last several years, transnational organized crime and cyber-enabled fraud are growing threats. SSA OIG has become more agile and responsive, using advanced techniques and tools for case management, data collection, digital evidence analysis, and large dataset analysis.

Cooperative Disability Investigations (CDI) Program

The CDI Program is OIG's most successful anti-fraud initiative. Fraud against SSA's program weakens the trust funds. Individuals who cheat the system take money away from those who truly need it most to provide a measure of financial security. SSA OIG has a zero-tolerance level for fraud. To combat fraud in disability programs, the CDI Program was created to ensure only people who qualify for Social Security benefits receive them. Disability fraud comprises a significant part of the SSA OIG investigative workload.

CDI combines federal and state resources to combat fraud in SSA's Title II and Title XVI disability and other federal and state programs such as food and nutrition assistance, housing assistance, Medicare, and Medicaid. Each CDI unit consists of an SSA OIG special agent, who serves as a team leader, and personnel from SSA, state disability determination services (DDS), and state or local law enforcement partners.

Generally, CDI units investigate questionable disability claims to stop payment before it occurs, or as soon as fraud is suspected. The program supports the Agency's continuing disability review and redetermination processes when fraud may be involved. CDI unit members use their respective skills and expertise to investigate suspicious statements and activities of disability claimants, medical providers, and other third parties; obtain evidence and provide investigative findings that help SSA DDS make accurate and timely disability determinations.

Schemes include, among other activities, feigning medical impairments, concealing work activity or medical improvement while receiving disability benefits, or sophisticated conspiracies facilitated by doctors, lawyers, or other third parties, aimed at defrauding the disability programs.

The *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015* mandated that SSA achieve nationwide CDI coverage by the end of FY 2022 (Pub. L. No. 114-74, § 811, 129 Stat. 584, 601 (2015)). Working with state and local partners, SSA and SSA OIG successfully fulfilled this mandate, and today there are 50 CDI units covering 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and American Samoa.

As of June 2026, 19 states had at least one CDI unit operating without a law enforcement partner. Operating CDI units without full law enforcement partner participation threatens the success and impact of this critical program integrity initiative by decreasing investigative capacity and delaying timely disability determinations.

Since the CDI Program's inception in 1997, CDI investigations have contributed to projected savings to taxpayers of approximately \$8.54 billion: \$4.72 billion in projected savings to SSA's disability programs, and \$3.82 billion in projected savings to related Federal and State benefit programs.

Recent accomplishments of the CDI Program include the following:

Category	October 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024	April 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024	October 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025	April 1, 2025 – September 30, 2025
Disability claims denied or ceased	560	627	620	824
Projected savings for SSA programs	\$39.7 million	\$40.9 million	\$41.5 million	\$57.5 million
Projected recoveries for SSA programs	\$5.8 million	\$9.9 million	\$11.9 million	\$12.6 million
Projected savings for non-SSA programs	\$47.5 million	\$54.2 million	\$45.7 million	\$66.0 million

In summary, from FY 2024 to FY 2025, the CDI Program denied or ceased over 2,600 disability claims, resulting in \$179.6 million in projected savings for SSA programs and \$213.4 million in projected savings for non-SSA programs.

In FY 2027, SSA OIG is committed to the ongoing success of the CDI Program by increasing oversight and improving operations through dedicated leadership and management. To provide appropriate levels of national investigative oversight for the CDI Program and meet the operational demands of the nationwide coverage, SSA OIG dedicates up to 73 employee positions to operate the program.

Cooperative Disability Investigations Program Costs

In FY 2026, the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate Committee of Appropriations provided a transfer of \$24.6 million from SSA's Limitation on Administrative Expenses program integrity cap adjustment, which funds the CDI Program, to SSA OIG for SSA OIG's direct costs of leading the jointly operated anti-fraud CDI Program (Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2026. Pub. L. 119-75, Title IV, 140 Stat. 173, 314 (2016)). This amount represented 1.03% of SSA's program integrity appropriation. The President's Budget for FY 2027 is requesting a nominal increase of \$0.5M which represents 1.05% of SSA's program integrity appropriation.

The CDI Program has a proven history of success and is essential to protecting the solvency of the Social Security trust funds and maintaining public confidence in SSA's stewardship.

Preventing Illegal Aliens from Obtaining Social Security Benefits

SSA OIG has had a longstanding partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), and Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force. These collaborative efforts focus on investigating use and trafficking of illegal documents and Social Security numbers (SSNs), and fraudulent application and receipt of government benefits by non-eligible individuals. SSA OIG also assigned a senior investigative analyst full-time to the HSI Cross Border Financial Crime Center to work jointly on Social Security fraud schemes, illegal immigration, transnational organized crime, and worksite enforcement.

In January 2025, in addition to SSA OIG's core investigative mission, SSA OIG engaged with law enforcement partners on the following initiatives that align with the priorities of the Trump Administration and prevent fraud in SSA programs:

- *The Removable Alien Project*: Identifying individuals ordered deported but still collecting Social Security benefits.
- *Unaccompanied Alien Children*: Locating minors who may be victims of trafficking or representative payee misuse.
- *Travel & Residency Enforcement Coop*: Identifying SSI recipients concealing foreign travel or residency.

These initiatives involve analysis of large data sets to identify investigative leads. As these leads come to fruition, SSA OIG will dedicate required resources to conduct investigations of individuals suspected of defrauding SSA programs and support the workload stream for the newly assigned Special Assistant United States Attorneys tasked with prosecuting such Social Security fraud.

Collaboration and Partnerships

SSA OIG collaborates with other federal agencies in the fight against fraud in SSA and other federal programs. For example, SSA OIG works with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on joint investigations, bringing a wealth of data and expertise in Social Security fraud and identity-related schemes. The Elder Justice Initiative, led by the U.S. Department of Justice, brings together and facilitates coordination among numerous state, local, and federal entities with capabilities and authority to fight elder fraud and elder abuse. SSA OIG is also involved with several regulatory agencies in the fight against SSA-related fraud, chiefly the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), and an anti-fraud working group formed under auspices of the Federal Communications Commission to combat phone scams.

The National Anti-Fraud Committee

The National Anti-Fraud Committee (NAFC) is a partnership between SSA and SSA OIG that supports strategies for combatting fraud, waste, and abuse in SSA programs and operations. Through NAFC quarterly meetings and an annual summit, SSA and SSA OIG share information to create concrete actions for addressing fraud and mitigating risk vulnerabilities in SSA programs and operations. The NAFC discussions help inform SSA OIG oversight, highlight government and industry best practices, and lead to increased agency-wide understanding of the fraud challenges facing SSA. NAFC serves as a focal point for SSA's anti-fraud efforts and serves as a demonstration of SSA and SSA OIG's mutual commitment in working together to combat fraud in SSA's programs and operations.

Examining and Leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Public and private sector entities will continue to explore using AI technology as a tool to enhance operations, create efficiencies, and improve customer service. In accordance with the Administration's directive to focus on utilizing AI to modernize the Federal government, see [Fact Sheet: Eliminating Barriers for Federal Artificial Intelligence Use and Procurement](#), SSA OIG will leverage this emerging technology to identify and eliminate fraud, waste and abuse in SSA's programs and operations.

AI also can be used to commit fraud by directing millions of dollars away from deserving SSA beneficiaries. Some examples are AI-powered chatbots used to divert direct deposits to spurious accounts; AI-generated imposter scams; AI tools used to generate fraudulent identification documents enabling identify theft and impersonation schemes; AI to create audio deep-fakes or deep-fake videos; and AI to create synthetic identities, which can be used to fraudulently apply for benefits or otherwise direct funds away from legitimate SSA beneficiaries. SSA OIG OI is utilizing various AI tools daily to support investigations, intelligence, and forensics.

SSA OIG established an internal AI task force comprised of investigators, auditors, IT specialists, and lawyers to confront these issues. SSA OIG is working across government to share best practices on ways to fight AI-related fraud and use AI to detect fraud. SSA OIG also participates in a quarterly AI working group with SSA to unwrap the potential transformational impact that AI has on Social Security benefits paid to the American public, but in a way that balances enhanced customer service with the potential of a greater risk of fraud.

In FY 2027, SSA OIG's oversight responsibilities will increase significantly in this area to identify, and minimize vulnerabilities in agency systems, security posture, and programs. SSA OIG will make recommendations to assist in SSA's AI efforts to eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse in programs and operations. Significant investments will be required to investigate AI-enabled criminal activity, protect vulnerable Americans, and provide federal and state prosecutors with the forensic data needed to successfully prosecute fraud against SSA.

Social Security-Related Scams

In 2025, the FTC reported that consumers lost \$15.9 billion to scams¹, including government imposter scams. SSA OIG continues to receive reports of scammers impersonating government employees or alleging a Social Security-related problem to steal money or personal information from victims. While SSA OIG has achieved remarkable results in the reduction of Social Security-related scam reports of Social Security-related scams are still one of the top reported government imposter scams according to the FTC.

Social Security related scams present a persistent challenge that threatens the integrity of SSA programs and operations. SSA OIG has devoted significant resources and established a multipronged approach to combat Social Security-related scams through criminal investigations, civil enforcement, and public outreach and education efforts.

SSA OIG criminal investigations work diligently to develop leads, prosecute criminals, and disrupt scams. SSA OIG proactively shares data, information, and best practices with partner organizations to support a government-wide approach to combatting scams and fraud to better protect American citizens. SSA OIG will continue to commit staff to analyze imposter scam

¹ [Consumer Sentinel | Tableau Public](#)

allegations, develop investigative leads, and deploy effective investigative strategies to combat these fraud schemes.

Section 1140 of the *Social Security Act* is a consumer protection law that prohibits misleading consumers by giving a false impression of association with, or authorization or endorsement by, the SSA through any type of communication. Working together with federal and state law enforcement partners, SSA OIG shares knowledge, strategies based on its analyses of industry trends, and coordinates parallel enforcement actions for maximum consumer protection impact. In FY 2027, SSA OIG will continue to issue take-down requests for fraud and imposter websites and social media pages that violate Section 1140. SSA OIG will pursue entities that send misleading mailers, call centers and corporations that engage in fraudulent or misleading phone campaigns, and telecommunications companies that transit Social Security-related scam calls into the country from overseas.

Throughout the year, SSA OIG collaborates across all levels of government, leverages anti-fraud interests of private companies, and engages with special interest groups who focus on combatting fraud, protecting vulnerable populations, and serving local communities to raise awareness of government imposter scams.

On March 5, 2026, SSA OIG, in collaboration with SSA, held National Slam the Scam Day for the seventh year, providing citizens with a clear, consistent message and resources to promote a better understanding of scams, the tactics scammers use, and emerging trends. National Slam the Scam Day unites all levels of government, nonprofit organizations, and private companies with a national outreach strategy providing clear and consistent messaging and ready-made resources to protect Americans.

This year, National Slam the Scam Day reached potentially 317 million individuals on radio, television, and print media, and almost 30 million individuals on social media platforms. SSA OIG will continue to track scam allegations submitted to SSA OIG, issue scam alerts to warn of recurring or emerging scam tactics and amplify anti-fraud messages across social media platforms.

Scams cost Americans billions each year. OIG's multipronged approach, including conducting criminal investigations, civil enforcement, and public outreach, protects the public. SSA OIG will continue to track scam allegations, issue alerts, and amplify anti-fraud messages across media platforms.

SSA OIG remains committed to combating these vicious scams, protecting Americans, and safeguarding trust in SSA. The FY 2027 Budget will allow SSA OIG to better anticipate, recognize, and efficiently mitigate new and emerging fraud schemes.

Information Technology Modernization

SSA OIG continues to make significant progress in modernizing and transforming applications that support investigative processes and workloads as well as administrative lines of business applications. The \$2 million set-aside for information technology modernization is critical in SSA OIG's efforts to modernize applications that support investigative and audit processes with business process management solutions. The funding will modernize SSA OIG's core application and platform architecture to include migrating to secure, scalable cloud infrastructure.

The proposed budget also provides for the continued enhancement of SSA OIG's critical systems, and the integration of internal applications with SSA systems to enhance data sharing capabilities with external partners. These enhancements are aligned with Presidential priorities and Executive Orders, ensuring SSA OIG remains compliant with federal mandates and responsive to evolving requirements.

In FY 2025, SSA OIG used dedicated IT modernization funding for critical enhancements to our existing suite of enterprise applications. To fulfill SSA OIG's investigative mission, IT specialists and contractors continued to perform necessary maintenance and enhance of the Investigative Case Management System to ensure a secure, stable, and scalable platform. SSA OIG enhanced the Investigative Case Management System to support the collection of National Incident-Based Reporting (NIBRS) data, according to FBI standards and regulations. SSA OIG is now NIBRS certified, and in FY 2026, SSA OIG began submitting data to the FBI via a fully automated process that regularly pulls data from the Investigative Case Management System and submits using FBI's established protocols.

SSA OIG continued to explore a process improvements and design, develop and implement at IT Change Management Systems to increase operational process efficiencies, SSA OIG also redesigned the web forms used by the American public to report alleged fraud and imposter scams to improve the quality of information collected.

Our efforts in FY 2026 are focused on modernizing our underlying data structure that supports mission-critical law enforcement operations. Through data analytics, a team of IT specialists created an authoritative data source for improved business intelligence reporting capabilities. Additionally, this fiscal year, the team started work to build an analytics platform that can be leveraged internally to streamline and expedite data extractions necessary for ongoing audits and investigations. The team began construction of index files, documentation, and requirements gathering to ensure the new platform is efficient and comprehensive.

SSA OIG efforts also included system enhancements to capture data that aligns with the Administration's priorities, specifically enhancements to our Investigative Case Management System to support immigration related efforts. For example, SSA OIG implemented system enhancements in accordance with Executive Order 14218 that allows SSA OIG to review and confirm the relevant data sets associated with the referrals for individuals over age 100 with earnings where the SSN does not match the Personally Identifiable Information of the true Number Holder.

In FY 2026, SSA OIG continued to implement architectural improvements and enhancements to the Investigative Case Management System and lines of business support applications to transition to a cloud-hosted environment. Using cloud-managed solutions will aid SSA OIG in minimizing future application maintenance and allowing easier enhancements.

In FY 2027, SSA OIG will continue to leverage emerging technologies and introduce modernizations that improve usability and functionality and enhance business processes. Adoption of emerging technologies such as AI tools, application programming interfaces, and cloud platforms, require that SSA OIG continue to modernize application and platform architecture to optimize security, performance, agility, and scalability. SSA OIG will also continue to enhance the web forms used by the public to report alleged fraud and imposter scams. These enhancements will improve the intake process and empower the public to engage more effectively with our investigative operations, thereby strengthening our ability to detect and address fraudulent activities. Finally, SSA OIG will continue to implement functionality that will allow our criminal investigators to keep pace with President Trump's Agenda.

Conclusion

Chairman Estes and LaHood, Ranking Member Larson and Davis, thank you for the opportunity to submit a written statement for this important hearing with SSA Commissioner Frank Bisignano. It is essential for the Subcommittees on Social Security and Work and Welfare to understand the breadth and depth of issues SSA OIG will focus on in FY 2027.

SSA OIG's oversight is essential to protect Social Security for current and future generations. Every dollar invested in SSA OIG oversight yields substantial savings, strengthens program integrity, and ensures benefits reach those who are truly eligible and depend on Social Security programs.

The dedicated SSA OIG employees work diligently to provide important independent oversight of SSA programs and operations and are committed to preventing fraud, waste, and abuse while enhancing program efficiency. The funding requested in the FY 2027 Budget supports SSA OIG to ensure it remains steadfast in its mission to guarantee accountability and integrity within SSA. The American people can expect continued attentiveness and innovation in oversight efforts of this program.