

## **Social Security Administration Fairness Act**

Social Security is the most successful government program in our nation's history— keeping millions of seniors, widows, dependent children, and people with disabilities out of poverty for over 80 years.

Historically, the agency that has provided these fundamental benefits to millions and millions of Americans has been grossly undervalued and understaffed by budget and political cycles that fail to respond to the needs of the public. Since 1970, the Social Security Administration's (SSA) funding has gone down 34 percent per beneficiary, adjusting for inflation. In 2017, SSA was asked to support over 70 million Americans with 1.3 percent in administrative funding. To put this in perspective, private life insurance companies spend 19 percent and private-sector-defined benefit plans spend three percent on administrative costs, respectively.

In recent years, SSA's budget has declined nine percent since 2010, while the number of beneficiaries has gone up more than 15 percent. This has resulted in the loss of more than 10,000 employees, the closure of all rural contact centers, and over 10 percent of all field offices nationwide. And these funding cuts have had an unconscionable human cost—last year alone, 10,000 people died and thousands more lost their homes or declared bankruptcy while waiting on a disability decision.

The Social Security Administration Fairness Act will give SSA the funding it needs to provide services that Americans have paid for and certainly deserve. This legislation will restore timely service to beneficiaries, address the one million person disability backlog, speed up the time it takes for seniors and persons with disabilities to receive Social Security and Medicare benefits, and prevent the SSA from closing field offices that provide essential services to the American people.

Social Security is a lifeline for many seniors and individuals with disabilities. It is our duty to expand and strengthen the program and agency that has served the American public with diligence and dignity since the Great Depression.

### **The Social Security Administration Fairness Act would:**

- Set SSA's administrative funding at 1.5 percent of overall benefit payments.
- Eliminate the five-month waiting period for approved SSDI recipients and the 2-year waiting period for SSDI beneficiaries to qualify to receive Medicare.
- Implement a moratorium on all closures of field offices and contact stations.

**Organizational Endorsements:** AFGE, AFL-CIO, Alliance for Retired Americans, Center for Medicare Advocacy, Justice in Aging, Medicare Rights Center, National Committee to Preserve Social Security & Medicare, National Council of Social Security Management Associations, National Organization of Social Security Claimants Representatives, Social Security Works, Special Needs Alliance, Strengthen Social Security Coalition, and The Arc.