Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 11, 2025

The Honorable Michelle King
Acting Commissioner
Social Security Administration
6401 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21235

Dear Acting Commissioner King,

Social Security has been the bedrock promise of economic security in our nation for the last century. After a lifetime of work or in life's most precarious moments, it provides benefits to approximately 70 million people across the United States including seniors, survivors, and people with disabilities. Monthly Social Security payments help beneficiaries to put food on the table, keep a roof over their heads, pay medical bills, and secure other basics.

It is impossible to overstate the importance of Social Security benefits to our nation's people – or the potentially dire consequences if a beneficiary's personal information is compromised. That is why we have been alarmed by reports that Elon Musk and the so-called U.S. Department of Government Efficiency ("DOGE") gained access to the Department of the Treasury systems that deliver Social Security benefits, and that the DOGE will soon turn its attention to the Social Security Administration (SSA).

SSA establishes Social Security Numbers (SSNs) for nearly all Americans, and the agency's beneficiary payment systems manage some of the most personal information such as banking information, home addresses, and SSNs. SSA's confidential files can also include the reasons for benefit receipt, such as whether a person is receiving benefits because a parent or spouse has died; whether a person is receiving benefits due to a disability, and their specific medical conditions; or whether a child is receiving foster care services. Seniors, survivors, people with disabilities, and children who rely on Social Security benefits must be able to trust that their personal information is safeguarded, especially from those whose only interest is their own wealth.

Our offices are flooded with calls from constituents who are alarmed that their personal information may be compromised by Mr. Musk and his DOGE team – or even worse, who are frightened that their Social Security benefits will be cut off. We will not stand by and allow the sensitive personal information of our nation's Social Security beneficiaries to be politicized or bought and sold to the highest bidder, or to allow any harm to their Social Security benefits. The stakes are too high and the consequences too grave. Given the urgency of this matter, we request you respond to the following questions in writing within 72 hours:

1. What potential risks do the public and Social Security beneficiaries face if their sensitive SSA records are exposed to unqualified external parties?

2. Has anyone, including Mr. Musk or those associated with the DOGE team, sought access to any of SSA's systems, such as its systems that issue and record SSNs, its eligibility determination systems, or its beneficiary payment systems?

3. Has anyone associated with the DOGE team been granted access to any of SSA's systems? If so:

    a. Why has the DOGE team been granted access to SSA's systems?
    b. What information about the public and Social Security beneficiaries has the DOGE team already accessed? Please provide a complete list of all systems that the team has accessed.
    c. Have any files been modified by the DOGE team? If so, please provide a complete list of all modifications that the team has made.
    d. What is the specific authority under which the DOGE team has been granted access to SSA's systems?
    e. Who at SSA is responsible for monitoring the DOGE team's access and their actions with regard to the data?

4. What type of background or security checks are given to SSA employees who have access to beneficiary data and payment systems? Have Mr. Musk or those associated with the DOGE team been subjected to similar background or security checks?

5. Has anyone at SSA advised Mr. Musk, his DOGE team, or other Trump Administration officials about the potential dangers of exposing sensitive and personal information to unqualified external parties?

6. Has SSA received calls to its national 1-800 number and field offices from seniors and other members of the public concerned that their personal information has been shared with Mr. Musk or those associated with his DOGE team, and potentially further exposed?

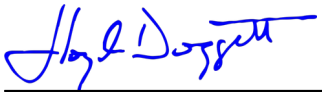
    a. What has been the volume of calls?
    b. What is SSA telling the public?
    c. SSA faces a customer service crisis due to years of underfunding, with the lowest staffing levels in over fifty years. Has the alarm caused by the actions of Mr. Musk and his DOGE team worsened SSA's customer services, and if so, how?

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

Richard E. Neal
Ranking Member, Committee on Ways and Means

John B. Larson
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on Social
Security



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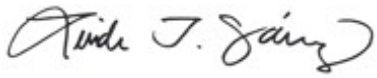
Member of Congress



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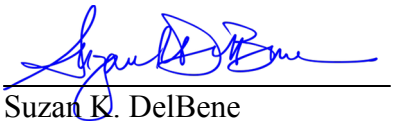

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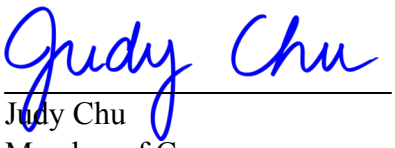

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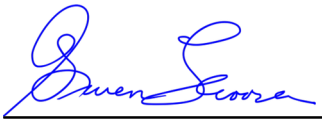

Gwen S. Moore
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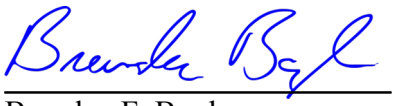
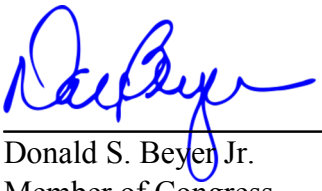


Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



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