



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 22, 2015

**Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Social Security Task Force  
Statement on Proposed Social Security, SSI Offset  
for Surface Transportation Bill**

Washington, DC – Today, the Co-Chairs of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Social Security Task Force released the following statement in response to the inclusion of a Senate proposal to partially pay for legislation to reauthorize surface transportation programs by cutting Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits:

“While both income and transportation are vital for people with disabilities, Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) should not be on the table to pay for highways. As the Senate works to finalize surface transportation reauthorization legislation, we urge Congress to reject any proposals to use Social Security and SSI benefits to pay for unrelated programs.

One proposed offset announced yesterday by Leader McConnell and Senator Boxer would cut off all Social Security benefits – including Social Security Disability Insurance and SSI – for people with disabilities, seniors, veterans, and their families from what is all too often their only financial support. The results would be absolutely devastating.

While the Committee on Environment and Public Works summary suggests that this proposed highways pay-for includes a “safeguard” to provide good cause exemptions, the estimated savings of \$2.3 billion over 10 years makes it clear that the proposal means cutting off all Social Security and SSI benefits for hundreds of thousands of Americans:

- Law enforcement is already notified of the whereabouts of every person with a warrant for a felony or an alleged violation of probation or parole who turns up in the Social Security Administration (SSA) databases. And the Social Security Act already prohibits benefits being paid to individuals fleeing from law enforcement to avoid prosecution or imprisonment – a process that is working.
- Almost none of the individuals who would be affected by this provision are actual fugitives from justice and most of the warrants in question are many years old and involve minor infractions.

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- SSA attempted to administer a similar provision for a number of years, with catastrophic effect for many people with disabilities and seniors, employing procedures that did not withstand judicial scrutiny. For example, because warrant databases are notoriously inaccurate, cases of mistaken identity were common.
- If Congress adopts this provision, it would return SSA to a policy that was overly broad and led to much unintended harm to people with disabilities, seniors and veterans who have not been convicted of any crime but who rely on Social Security and SSI.”

To view the proposal, see p. 949, Sec. 52303:

<http://www.epw.senate.gov/public/cache/files/7311e4f6-04eb-43b1-a5c2-7586dee4e805/edw15730.pdf>

For background:

On impact - <http://www.justiceinaging.org/the-cuff-act/>

On SSA’s current policy - <http://oig.ssa.gov/about-oig/fugitive-enforcement-program>

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) is a coalition of over 100 national disability organizations working together to advocate for national public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion in all aspects of society of the 57 million children and adults with disabilities living across the United States. The CCD Social Security Task Force focuses on disability policy issues in the Social Security Act Title II disability programs and the Title XVI Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program.

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