

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 15, 2021

The Honorable Grace M. Kim
Deputy Commissioner for Operations
U.S. Social Security Administration
1905 9th Street NE
Washington, D.C. 20018

Dear Deputy Commissioner Kim,

We are concerned that the Social Security Administration (SSA) is falling behind in its duty to provide services to Americans due to a lack of access to in-person services. It has come to our attention that in Ohio most, if not all, employees of the SSA are still working remotely and SSA remains closed for in-person appointments. This inaccessibility has hindered basic services, delayed time-sensitive assistance, and hurt senior citizens.

We understand the severity and hardships the COVID-19 pandemic placed on our country and safeguards, including teleworking capabilities, were implemented to keep employees safe. However, based on the delays our constituents are facing, it is clear SSA cannot fulfill their public obligation to provide essential services in a timely manner while working remotely. Fortunately, thanks to Operation Warp Speed, the Food and Drug Administration approved three vaccines for Emergency Use Authorization to help stop the spread of COVID-19. These vaccines are helping to keep people safe and allow Ohio and much of the country to re-open and return to pre-pandemic activities. In our state alone, there have been over 5.6 million Ohioans, or close to 50%, who have been vaccinated. The community COVID-19 positivity rate in Ohio is at its lowest since the beginning of the pandemic.

The delays in service at SSA due to remote working are unacceptable. It is time to return to normalcy. We request SSA employees return to the office so that struggling Americans can get the timely assistance they deserve.

Thank you for your attention on this matter and we welcome the opportunity to further discuss our concerns.

Sincerely,



Robert E. Latta
United States Representative



Troy Balderson
United States Representative



Anthony Gonzalez
United States Representative



Bob Gibbs
United States Representative



Brad R. Wenstrup, D.P.M.
United States Representative



Bill Johnson
United States Representative