



New York State
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April 30, 2026

Dear Congressperson:

On behalf of the 60,000 professional, technical and scientific staff that compose the New York State Public Employees Federation (PEF), I am writing to request that you and your colleagues work to protect service delivery at the Social Security Administration (SSA) and to maintain SSA Disability Determination Services (DDS) in the states as opposed to moving those services to the federal government. PEF represents the DDS examiners employed by the Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA) and thousands of SSA beneficiaries across the state.

Since last year, SSA has lost roughly 7,500 employees — about 13 percent of its workforce, contributing to service delays and growing backlogs. New York State has also been negatively impacted by a hiring freeze that has resulted in more than 50 fewer direct service staff to adjudicate claims and support beneficiaries. Without proper funding and staffing, SSA cannot meet the growing needs of your constituents or other New Yorkers. Correspondingly, the recent move to transfer the state-operated disability determination process to SSA will result in even longer wait times, higher denial rates and reduced resources for New Yorkers with disabilities in your district and beyond. We urge you to work with your colleagues to bolster SSA and to maintain the DDS process with the state's OTDA staff who have been running this program successfully for decades.

More specifically, we urge you to support your constituents by:

1. Providing administrative funding equivalent to 1.2% of benefit outlays, which will help increase staffing, enhance services and eliminate the need for additional field office closures and consolidations.
2. Supporting H.R. 8190, the Social Security Customer Service Act, which will ensure additional funding explicitly earmarked for frontline and support staff based on unique community needs.
3. Protecting frontline service capacity, including field offices and community-based service delivery, and maintaining OTDA as the primary

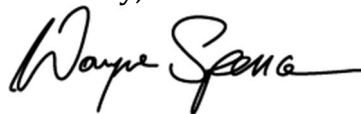
delivery vehicle for the SSA DDS applications, hearings and determinations in New York.

4. Delivering emergency funding for 3–5,000 permanent customer service representatives for the national toll-free number, additional field office staff to restore community-based service capacity, and payment center and support unit staff to address growing backlogs.
5. Requiring full transparency of customer service metrics, including call wait times, field office availability, overpayments, SSI, and disability backlogs.
6. Enhancing direct Congressional oversight of SSA service delivery — including field offices, the National 800 Number, and online claims processing — to address staffing-driven delays and backlogs.
7. Holding hearings on and providing strict Congressional oversight over the acquisition and implementation of artificial intelligence to ensure algorithmic transparency and validity, protect confidential SSA beneficiary data, protect against implicit biases, ensure that a human is ultimately responsible for any decisions made by AI, and ensure that all benefit eligibility determinations are made by humans, not machines.

Your constituents and all Social Security beneficiaries depend on timely, accessible service. Congress must act to ensure SSA has the workforce and accountability needed to serve the public effectively. Let's be clear: If eligible beneficiaries are unable to access needed disability services and benefits because of bureaucracy, ineffective communication and/or lack of staffing, it constitutes a CUT in Social Security benefits.

I look forward to your response on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wayne Spence". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wayne Spence
President, New York State Public Employees Federation