

Social Security Advisory Board
Minutes
Board Meeting
December 16, 2014

Location: 400 Virginia Avenue, S.W., Suite 625
Washington, D.C. 20024

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

SSAB Members: Henry Aaron, Chair
Lanhee Chen
Alan Cohen
Bernadette Franks-Ongoy
Jagadeesh Gokhale
Dorcas Hardy
Barbara Kennelly

Presenters: **Terrie Gruber**, Chief Program Officer, Disability Case Processing System, Social Security Administration
Ken Nibali, Former Associate Commissioner for Disability, Social Security Administration
Andrew Biggs, Resident Scholar, American Enterprise Institute
Jack VanDerhei, Research Director, Employee Benefit Research Institute
Virginia Reno, Vice President for Income Security, National Academy of Social Insurance

SSAB Staff: Jackie Chapin, Policy Chief
Jeremy Elder, Policy Analyst
Joel Feinleib, Staff Economist
Sterling Laudon, Policy Attorney
Alec Moore, Policy Analyst
Sarah Weaver, Management Analyst
David Warner, Management Chief
Bethel Dejene, Associate
Hong Han, Associate
Anita Kelly, Detailee
Kathleen Romig, Detailee
Ellen Skirvin, Associate

During its December meeting, the Board met with a representative of SSA about the Disability Case Processing System (DCPS), a member of the Board's Disability Policy Panel (DPP) about its upcoming report, and a panel of economists about retirement security. It also met in Executive Session throughout the day.

In the morning, the Board met with Terrie Gruber, chief program officer for the Disability Case Processing System at SSA. Ms. Gruber briefed the Board on the history of DCPS and SSA's oversight efforts to improve oversight and development. Ms. Gruber detailed inadequacies of the DCPS and the missteps that led SSA to initiate a reboot. Ms. Gruber explained that SSA had hired an outside group to evaluate the entire program and was using recommendations from that report to improve oversight. Ms. Gruber explained that SSA has taken steps to improve oversight and implement the DCPS while minimizing expected cost overruns.

Later, the Board met with Ken Nibali, former SSA associate commissioner for disability, and current member of the Board's DPP. Mr. Nibali shared the DPP's findings from its upcoming report. Mr. Nibali described five recommendations included in the report: 1) sustained funding for continuing disability reviews; 2) retention of the medical improvement review standard and improving implementation; 3) strengthening payment integrity tools; 4) expanding return-to-work programs for those removed from Social Security disability; and 5) adapting the report's recommendations for SSI children and youth.

Finally, the Board met with Andrew Biggs from the American Enterprise Institute, Jack VanDerhei from the Employee Benefit Research Institute, and Virginia Reno from the National Academy of Social Insurance to discuss retirement security. Panelists discussed Social Security retirement benefits and the impact of potential changes on retirement security. Mr. Biggs discussed replacement rates, their relationship to income security, and gaps in retirement security. Mr. VanDerhei discussed the threat of income insecurity, the impact of defined pension plans, and leakage. Ms. Reno discussed the benefits of Social Security and the importance of the benefits to retired Americans.

I certify that the minutes written for the December 16, 2014 meeting of the Social Security Advisory Board are correct.



Henry J. Aaron

Chairman
Social Security Advisory Board