

Social Security Advisory Board
Minutes
Board Meeting
November 17, 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: **Marianna LaCanfora**, Deputy Commissioner for Retirement and Disability Policy, Social Security Administration
Glenn Sklar, Deputy Commissioner for Disability Adjudication and Review, Social Security Administration
Jack Allen, Deputy Chief Administrative Law Judge, Office of Disability Adjudication and Review, Social Security Administration
Bill Zielinski, Deputy Commissioner for Systems, and Chief Information Officer, Social Security Administration

SSAB Staff: Claire Green, Staff Director
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
Kathleen Romig, Detailee
Ellen Skirvin, Associate

During its September meeting, the Board held three fact-finding sessions – one in the morning, and two in the afternoon. It also met in executive session at various points throughout the day.

In the morning, the Board met with Marianna LaCanfora, Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Retirement and Disability Policy (ORDP) at the Social Security Administration (SSA). Ms. LaCanfora described her role as Deputy Commissioner as well as the current organizational structure of ORDP, an office that encompasses a broad spectrum of responsibilities relating to policy, research, and data exchange agreements. She also discussed current ORDP projects as well as their respective challenges. Projects focused on areas such as improving payment accuracy, representative payees, disability and work, online applications and automation, and disability and retirement research.

In the afternoon, the Board met with Glenn Sklar, Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Disability Adjudication and Review (ODAR) and Deputy Chief Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Jack Allen. Mr. Sklar and Judge Allen were invited primarily to discuss the growing backlog at the hearing level of disability adjudication, and to address potential solutions to that backlog. For example, it currently takes over 300 days, on average, for a disability claimant to receive an ALJ decision. Also discussed was the strained relationship between SSA and OPM over the hiring of ALJs, and ways that this process could be improved or at least streamlined for SSA.

Lastly, the Board met with Bill Zielinski, Deputy Commissioner for Systems and Chief Information Officer at SSA. Mr. Zielinski discussed the agency's Disability Case Processing System (DCPS) initiative, which aims at making disability case processing more seamless by integrating over 50 state disability systems into one, centralized federal system. Currently, the project is being reviewed based on several challenges that were recently encountered during beta testing. Mr. Zielinski also shared insights on the broader efforts to modernize SSA's technology infrastructure, and how SSA is prioritizing certain projects based on limited resources and budget.

I certify that the minutes written for the November 17, 2014 meeting of the Social Security Advisory Board are correct.



Henry J. Aaron

Chairman
Social Security Advisory Board