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Roundtable on Social Security's Public Service

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Speaker Bios

Amira C. Boland is a mom of two and a passionate civil servant working to increase the use of behavioral science insights, evidence, private sector customer experience, and human-centered design practices to improve public service delivery and rebuild trust in government. Boland is currently the Federal Customer Experience Lead at the Office of Management and Budget and was the Executive Secretary of the White House Social and Behavioral Sciences Team and Deputy Director of the Office of Evaluation Sciences. Prior to Federal service, Boland worked on projects involving financial and insurance services product development, social finance, the creation of innovative central units within multiple governments, and counter-terrorism research.

Elizabeth H. Curda is a Director in the Government Accountability Office's (GAO) Education, Workforce, and Income Security team. Curda oversees a portfolio of audits of federal disability programs at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Social Security Administration (SSA), and the Railroad Retirement Board, among other agencies. Her portfolio also addresses the role federal programs play in providing equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life. Curda joined GAO in January 1992 and has conducted and led audits and advised agency officials on a wide range of federal performance and budget issues, including the use of strategic planning and other leading performance management techniques to achieve results. Curda earned a MPA from Columbia University and a bachelor's degree in Economics from Smith College.

Kristen Dama is the Managing Attorney of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medical-Legal Partnership at Community Legal Services of Philadelphia (CLS). Dama oversees the SSI Unit's work fighting for local, state, and federal policies that stabilize and improve the lives of individuals with disabilities and manages CLS's medical-legal partnerships, which provide direct legal services to patients at primary care health centers in two Philadelphia neighborhoods. Dama joined CLS in 2007 as an Independence Foundation Public Interest Law Fellow. In Dama's first decade of practice, Dama was a member of CLS's Welfare Unit, representing clients seeking public benefits from the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services and working on health policy issues and class action litigation affecting low-income Pennsylvanians. Dama received her JD cum laude from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, earned an MBE from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, and is a magna cum laude graduate of the University of Michigan, where Dama studied Political Science and History.

Stephen C. Goss has been Chief Actuary at SSA since 2001. Goss has worked in areas related to health insurance and long-term-care insurance as well as pension, disability, and survivor protection. Goss is a member of the Society of Actuaries, the American Academy of Actuaries, the National Academy of Social Insurance, the Social Insurance Committee of the American Academy of Actuaries, and the Social Security Retirement and Disability Income Committee of the Society of Actuaries. Goss joined the Office of the Chief Actuary in 1973 after graduating from the University of Virginia with a master's in mathematics. Goss earned a bachelor's in mathematics and economics from the University of Pennsylvania.

Kate Lang is a Senior Staff Attorney in Justice in Aging's Economic Security Team in Washington, DC. Lang works on Social Security and SSI-related issues and was formerly a staff attorney at the Legal Aid Bureau in Riverdale, Maryland where Lang was an advocate for low-income older adults and persons with disabilities. In previous positions, Lang worked at the National Legal Aid and Defender Association, Bread for the City Legal, and Doherty, Cella, Keane and Associates, LLP, and Legal Services of Northern California. Lang received a BA from Oberlin College, JD from Fordham University School of Law, and a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania in teaching English to speakers of other languages.

David Lescarini is the District Manager of the McMinnville, Tennessee, Social Security Field Office, a position Lescarini has held since 2005. Lescarini is currently President of the National Council of Social Security Management Associations (NCSSMA) and served as Vice President of NCSSMA from 2018-2020. Lescarini has participated in and chaired numerous workgroups within SSA and NCSSMA, primarily focused on information technology and innovation. Lescarini began his career with SSA in 1999. Prior to McMinnville, Tennessee, Lescarini held positions in Madisonville, Kentucky and Albertville, Alabama. Lescarini has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History from the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

Bethany Lilly is the Senior Director of Income Policy at The Arc, specializing in public policy related to Social Security, income supports, paid family and medical leave, and poverty. Lilly joined The Arc after six years at the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, where Lilly worked on public policy impacting people with mental health disabilities. Before joining the Bazelon Center, Ms. Lilly was a law clerk with the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions; a legal fellow at the Center for Medicare Advocacy; and, while completing her J.D. at Duke University School of Law, worked at the Duke AIDS Legal Project.

L. Scott Muller is a retired Senior Economist at the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics at SSA, where Muller worked from 1978 through 2014. Muller is a member of the American Economic Association and the National Academy of Social Insurance. Muller holds a bachelor's degree in economics and political science from Syracuse University and a master's degree in economics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Peggy Murphy is the Immediate Past President of NCSSMA, elected in August 2018. Prior to that, Murphy served as Vice President of NCSSMA, as President and Vice President of the Denver Region Social Security Management Association (DRSSMA), and Chair of NCSSMA's Title 2 Committee. During her term, Murphy focused on improving support for management and cultivating and strengthening relationships with executives, including pursuing biannual meetings. Murphy has been the District Manager of the Great Falls, Montana field office since 2010. Murphy previously held management positions in Aurora, Colorado, and was Team Leader in the Center for Program Support and Deputy Regional Communications Director in the Denver Region. Murphy also was the lead for tribal outreach in the Denver Region for several years. Murphy holds a BS in sociology and counseling and an MBA from Troy State University.

Jody Schimmel Hyde, PhD is a principal researcher at Mathematica and the deputy director of its Center for Studying Disability Policy. Schimmel Hyde's research focuses on policies related to the employment and health care of people with disabilities, with a particular focus on services and supports to assist federal disability beneficiaries and older workers. Schimmel Hyde has extensive experience conducting quantitative analyses using administrative data and nationally representative data sources. For the past decade, Schimmel Hyde has been involved in Mathematica's efforts to build the annual Disability Analysis File for SSA, which aggregates administrative data across about one dozen sources into a research-ready file to study the characteristics and outcomes of disability beneficiaries. Schimmel Hyde has led studies as part of SSA's Retirement and Disability Research Consortium (RDRC) and its evaluation of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Planning and Assistance programs. Schimmel Hyde holds a PhD in economics from the University of Michigan.

Purvi Sevak, PhD is a Principal Researcher at Mathematica, whose primary research interest is in policies to support the employment and well-being of people with disabilities and chronic conditions. Her work spans the fields of health, employment, and program evaluation. Sevak is currently leading the impact evaluation of a work-based learning demonstration for transition aged youth in Vermont. Sevak has designed or led the quantitative evaluation of several notable federally funded interventions for the CMS and the Rehabilitation Services Administration. Published research includes studies examining SSI program participation, geographic variation in employment and program use, barriers and facilitators to employment, retirement and savings behavior, the ability of intensive care management to improve outcomes for Medicare beneficiaries with complex health needs. Sevak has been at Mathematica since 2013 and was previously a Professor in the Economics Department at Hunter College, in the City University of New York. Sevak holds a PhD in economics from the University of Michigan.

Sarah S. Stith, PhD is an applied microeconomist, whose research examines the efficiency and equity effects of health care regulation and spillovers from and to related markets. Stith's current work covers topics including provider gaming behaviors and access-to-care in organ transplantation, trade-offs and spillovers between cannabis and conventional pharmaceutical markets, and the intersection of public assistance and health. Stith is a Senior Fellow with the University of New Mexico's Center for Health Policy, a Research Fellow with the Center for Financial Security at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and an Affiliated Researcher with the University of New Mexico's Medical Cannabis Research Fund. Stith received a PhD in business economics from the University of Michigan, an MBA from the University of Texas at Austin, and a BA from Tulane University.

Nancy Yee Ching Wong, PhD is a consumer psychologist who explores how cultural values influence consumption decisions, how people respond emotionally in different situations, and how materialistic values influence the way we consume. Wong is particularly interested in understanding how consumers make choices that could impact their health and financial well-being and promote environmental sustainability. Wong received a PhD in business administration from the University of Michigan, an MBA from University of California – Los Angeles, and a BBA from York University.

Erica H. Zielewski is a Senior Evidence Analyst on the Evidence Team in OMB's Economic Policy Division. As a member of the Evidence Team, Zielewski undertakes activities to promote evidence building and use across the Federal government, including serving as an internal expert on program evaluation within OMB and working with agencies to build capacity in this area. Zielewski started a federal career as a Presidential Management Fellow in 2009 in the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the Department of Health and Human Services. At ACF, Zielewski most recently led the Division of Data and Improvement, focused on interoperability and administrative data use, with prior roles overseeing large-scale evaluations of employment and training programs, asset-building efforts, and programs serving disconnected youth. Prior to joining ACF, Zielewski was a Research Associate at the Urban Institute researching the child welfare system, adoption, and youth aging out of foster care. Erica has an MPP from Georgetown University and a BA in political science from Vassar College.

Board Member Bios

Kim Hildred currently serves as President of Hildred Consulting, LLC, and Chair of the Social Security Advisory Board. In 2015, Hildred retired from the House of Representatives after serving 17 years as Staff Director of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security. There, Hildred assisted Committee Members in the development and passage of legislation to strengthen Social Security retirement, survivors, and disability programs, as well as oversight of these programs. Prior service includes three years deciding Social Security disability claims, followed by ten years managing Social Security disability programs, including service as a Federal Disability Hearing Officer and Disability Program Administrator. Hildred has a BA from Waynesburg University and a MS in education from Duquesne University. Hildred's current term of office as a House appointee is September 2016 to September 2022.

Nancy J. Altman has a forty-five-year background in Social Security and private pensions. Currently, Altman is President of Social Security Works and Chair of the Strengthen Social Security Coalition. Altman was on the faculty of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, and taught courses on private pensions and Social Security at the Harvard Law School. In 1982, Altman was Alan Greenspan's Assistant in his position as Chairman of the bipartisan commission that developed the 1983 Social Security amendments. Altman is the author of *The Battle for Social Security*, and *The Truth About Social Security*, as well as coauthor of *Social Security Works! Why Social Security Isn't Going Broke and How Expanding It Will Help Us All*. Altman has an AB from Harvard University and a JD from the University of Pennsylvania Law School. Altman's current term of office as a House appointee is October 2017 to September 2023.

Jagadeesh Gokhale, PhD is the Director of Special Projects at the Penn Wharton (“Wharton”) Budget Model. Prior to joining Wharton, Gokhale was a Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute. An economist by training, Gokhale’s main research fields are macro and public economics with a special focus on the effects of fiscal policy on future generations. Gokhale has written extensively on policy issues, including Social Security and Medicare reform, national saving, private insurance, financial planning, wealth inequality, generational accounting, and public intergenerational transfers. Gokhale has testified before Congress several times on these topics. In 2010 Gokhale published *Social Security: A Fresh Look at Policy Alternatives*, which constructs a different method for determining the solvency of the Social Security trust funds. Gokhale published work in numerous professional journals, as well as newspapers such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Financial Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *Forbes*. Gokhale’s current term of office as a Senate appointee is October 2015 to September 2021.

Bob Joondeph served as the Executive Director of Disability Rights Oregon for over 30 years, promoting and defending the legal and civil rights of Oregonians with disabilities through legal-based advocacy. Joondeph has represented individuals with disabilities in state and federal courts, agencies, 11 and legislatures. Joondeph has served on the Oregon Health Evidence Review Commission, Health Services Commission, Health Fund Board, Mental Health Planning and Management Advisory Council, State Rehabilitation Commission, Governor’s Task Force on Brain Injury, and the Council on Developmental Disabilities. Joondeph is the recipient of the Oregon State Bar Public Service Award, Oregon Disabilities Commission Advocate of the Year Award, Brain Injury Alliance of Oregon Advocacy Award, and the Oregon Civil Rights Leadership Award. Joondeph graduated from the Case Western Reserve Law School and Brown University. Joondeph’s current term of office as a Senate appointee is October 2018 to September 2024.