



TICKET TO **W**ORK & **W**ORK INCENTIVES ADVISORY **P**ANEL



December 20, 2005

The Honorable Jim McCrery, Chairman
Social Security Subcommittee
House Ways and Means Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Room B-316 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley, Chairman
Senate Finance Committee
U.S. Senate
Room 219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen McCrery and Grassley:

I am writing on behalf of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Advisory Panel (the Panel) to recommend the renewal of the Social Security Administration's authority to begin new demonstration projects. SSA has authority to continue projects initiated by December 17, 2005, but its authority to initiate new demonstration projects ended on December 18, 2005.

SSA currently has several important demonstration projects underway, including the Mental Health Treatment Study, the Benefit Offset Demonstrations, and the Youth Transition Demonstration. Findings from these and other ongoing projects will help inform SSA about which employment supports, work incentives, health benefit packages, etc. are necessary for moving Social Security beneficiaries toward self sufficiency through employment.

It is important to SSA's beneficiaries and the American people that Congress renews SSA's authority expeditiously, so the Agency can begin new demonstration projects. Findings from these projects are vital in forwarding the President's New Freedom Initiative.

We are pleased to have the opportunity to make this recommendation. If you have any questions, please contact the Panel's Executive Director, Jill Houghton. She can be reached at 202-358-6419.

Sincerely,



Berthy De La Rosa-Aponte, Chair
Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Advisory Panel

cc: The Honorable Max Baucus
Ranking Member, Senate Finance Committee

The Honorable Rick Santorum
Chairman, Senate Subcommittee on Social Security & Family Policy

The Honorable Kent Conrad
Ranking Member, Senate Subcommittee on Social Security & Family Policy

The Honorable Bill Thomas
Chairman, House Committee on Ways and Means

The Honorable Charles Rangel
Ranking Democrat, House Committee on Ways and Means

The Honorable Sander Levin
Ranking Democrat, House Social Security Subcommittee

Jo Anne B. Barnhart
Commissioner, Social Security Administration