



SOCIAL SECURITY

The Commissioner

September 24, 2007

Congressman Jim McCrery
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman McCrery,

Thank you for your letter of September 21, 2007, concerning Section 301 of H.R. 976 passed by the Senate.

I have enclosed answers to your seven questions. Please feel free to contact me if you need any additional information. The Office of Management and Budget advises that there is no objection to the transmittal of this letter from the standpoint of the President's program.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Astrue

Enclosures

1. *If implemented as written, would the name and Social Security number verification process in Section 301 of the Senate SCHIP bill allow SSA to verify whether someone is a naturalized citizen?*

No, the name/SSN verification process only indicates whether this information matches SSA's records. Our understanding of Section 301 is that it would provide States with the option of using a match as a conclusive presumption that someone is a citizen, whether naturalized or not. Since we have no data specific to this particular population, we have no basis for estimating how many non-citizens would match if this language were passed by Congress.

2. *Would Section 301 require SSA to perform any verification of a person's status as a naturalized citizen?*

Section 301 would not provide for verification of citizenship but would create a conclusive presumption based on less reliable data that a person is a citizen. As we read Section 301, it would not require use of DHS data to make a verification of citizenship.

3. *Would the implementation of this provision detect and/or prevent a legal alien who is not a naturalized citizen (and therefore generally ineligible for Medicaid), from receiving Medicaid?*

No. Our current name/SSN verification procedures will not detect legal aliens who are not naturalized citizens.

4. *Would the name and Social Security number verification system in Section 301 verify that the person submitting the name and Social Security number is who they say they are?*

No.

5. *Would the name and Social Security Number verification system in Section 301 prevent an illegal alien from fraudulently using another person's valid name and matching SSN to obtain Medicaid or SCHIP benefits?*

No.

6. *Would the name and Social Security number verification system in Section 301 prevent an individual who has illegally overstayed a work visa permit from qualifying for Medicaid or SCHIP?*

The name/SSN verification system in Section 301 would not identify individuals who have illegally overstayed a work visa permit.

7. *Based on the accuracy of your database, please comment as to the volume of false positives or false negatives that could occur under the Social Security number verification process in section 301 of the Senate SCHIP bill.*

Due to a lack of data specific to this particular population defined in section 301, we have no basis for projecting how many “false negatives” or “false positives” would be produced by enactment of Section 301, but they will occur.

CHARLES B. RANGEL, NEW YORK,
CHAIRMAN

FORTNEY PETE STARK, CALIFORNIA
SANDER M. LEVIN, MICHIGAN
JIM McDERMOTT, WASHINGTON
JOHN LEWIS, GEORGIA
RICHARD E. NEAL, MASSACHUSETTS
MICHAEL R. McNULTY, NEW YORK
JOHN S. TANNER, TENNESSEE
XAVIER BECERRA, CALIFORNIA
LLOYD DOGGETT, TEXAS
EARL POMEROY, NORTH DAKOTA
STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES, OHIO
MIKE THOMPSON, CALIFORNIA
JOHN B. LARSON, CONNECTICUT
RAHM EMANUEL, ILLINOIS
EARL BLUMENAUER, OREGON
RON KIND, WISCONSIN
BILL PASCRELL, Jr., NEW JERSEY
SHELLEY BERKLEY, NEVADA
JOSEPH CROWLEY, NEW YORK
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, MARYLAND
KENDRICK MEEK, FLORIDA
ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ, PENNSYLVANIA
ARTUR DAVIS, ALABAMA

JANICE MAYS,
CHIEF COUNSEL AND STAFF DIRECTOR

Congress of the United States

U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

1102 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
(202) 225-3625

Washington, DC 20515-6348

<http://waysandmeans.house.gov>

JIM McCRERY, LOUISIANA
WALLY MERGER, CALIFORNIA
DAVE CAMP, MICHIGAN
JIM RAMSTAD, MINNESOTA
SAM JOHNSON, TEXAS
PHIL ENGLISH, PENNSYLVANIA
JERRY WELLER, ILLINOIS
KENNY C. HULSHOF, MISSOURI
RON LEWIS, KENTUCKY
KEVIN BRADY, TEXAS
THOMAS M. REYNOLDS, NEW YORK
PAUL RYAN, WISCONSIN
ERIC CANTOR, VIRGINIA
JOHN LINDER, GEORGIA
DEVIN NUNES, CALIFORNIA
PAT TIBERI, OHIO
JON PORTER, NEVADA

BRETT LOPER,
MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

September 21, 2007

Commissioner Michael J. Astrue
Social Security Administration
Office of the Commissioner
6401 Security Blvd.
Baltimore, MD 21235

Dear Commissioner Astrue:

As Congress prepares to debate the reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), I am writing to request your assistance in clarifying an issue raised by a provision in the Senate passed bill. Specifically, I would request that the Social Security Administration provide technical assistance to explain the impact of Section 301 of H.R. 976, which was passed by the Senate on August 2, 2007.

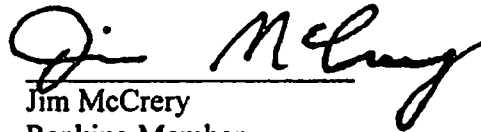
Concerns have been raised that the implementation of this provision could make it easier for illegal aliens to qualify for government funded healthcare programs including SCHIP and Medicaid. In order to better assess the accuracy of these claims, I would request that you provide answers to the following questions by no later than the evening of Monday, September 24, 2007.

1. If implemented as written, would the name and Social Security number verification process in section 301 of the Senate SCHIP bill allow the Social Security Administration (SSA) to verify whether someone is a naturalized citizen?
2. Would Section 301 require SSA to perform any verification of a person's status as a naturalized citizen?
3. Would the implementation of this provision detect and/or prevent a legal alien who is not a naturalized citizen (and therefore generally ineligible for Medicaid), from receiving Medicaid?
4. Would the name and Social Security number verification system in Section 301 verify that the person submitting the name and Social Security number is who they say they are?

5. Would the name and Social Security number verification system in Section 301 prevent an illegal alien from fraudulently using another person's valid name and matching Social Security number to obtain Medicaid or SCHIP benefits?
6. Would the name and Social Security number verification system in Section 301 prevent an individual who has illegally overstayed a work visa permit from qualifying for Medicaid or SCHIP?
7. Based on the accuracy of your database, please comment as to the volume of false positives or false negatives that could occur under the Social Security number verification process in section 301 of the Senate SCHIP bill.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. If you should have questions about any of the requests in this letter, please contact Chuck Clapton of the Ways and Means Committee Republican staff at (202) 225-4021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim McCrery". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Jim McCrery
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means