

Social Security Advisory Board
Minutes
Board Meeting
March 3, 2010

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

Time: 8:45 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

SSAB Members: Barbara Kennelly, Acting Chair
Dana Bilyeu
Jagadeesh Gokhale
Dorcas Hardy
Marsha Katz (by telephone)
Mark Warshawsky

Presenters: Michael Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security
Michael Gallagher, Deputy Commissioner for Budget and
Financial Management
Bonnie Kind, Associate Commissioner for Budget
Kay Ely, OPM, Associate Director Human Resources
and Services Division
Elaine Kaplan, OPM, General Counsel
Julie Ferguson Queen, OPM, Office of General Counsel
Alan Cohen, Senior Budget Analyst, Democratic Staff, Senate Committee
Finance
Chris Goble, SSA Detailee, Senate Committee on Finance
Walt Fennell, Pricewaterhouse Coopers
Sam Gutterman, Pricewaterhouse Coopers (by telephone)
John Stell, Pricewaterhouse Coopers
Pat O'Carroll, Inspector General, SSA
Vicki Vettters, Office of Audit, OIG, SSA

SSAB Staff: Debi Sullivan, Deputy Staff Director
Joel Feinleib
Beverly Rollins
George Schuette
David Warner

Other Guests: David Whalin, Office of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs, SSA
Scott Frey, SSA
Pat Vinkeres, Office of Management and Budget
Stephen McFadden, Private Citizen

During the morning the Board met with OPM executives to discuss OPM's role in developing an administrative law judge (ALJ) register from which SSA can hire new ALJs.

The OPM officials explained their process to the Board members, noting that they are bound by statute and risk a lawsuit if they do not follow the laws strictly. The Board members discussed a number of the concerns that SSA has with OPM's process and asked the executives to consider ways in which they can address those concerns.

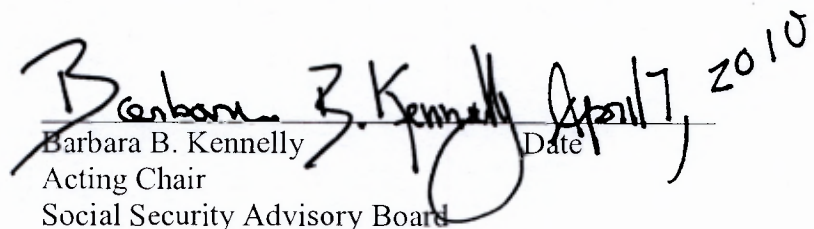
During lunch the Board members met with SSA Commissioner Michael Astrue, Michael Gallagher, and Bonnie Kind. The group discussed: the Department of Treasury's plans to promote direct deposit with Social Security beneficiaries; the status of SSA's disability hearings backlog; SSA's efforts to build new hearing offices, a national hearing center, and a number of satellite offices; the status of the agency's health IT initiative; the 800 number's busy rate; the opening of the new teleservice center in Jackson, Tennessee; the increase in the number of initial disability claims and hearing requests in fiscal year 2009 over fiscal year 2008; and SSA's projection of a significant increase in the number of disability applications in fiscal year 2010.

Early in the afternoon the Board members met with Senate Finance Committee staff members, Alan Cohen and Chris Gobel to discuss Social Security issues that the Senate's Committee on Finance is studying currently, including SSA's budget and the new Deficit Reduction Commission formed by Congress.

Later in the afternoon, the Board members met with Walt Fennell, Sam Gutterman, (by telephone), John Stell, Pat O'Carroll, and Vicki Veters to discuss the auditing of SSA's financial statement. This session included a discussion of the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board's requirements in the annual review of the Statement of Social Insurance. For several years PricewaterhouseCoopers held the contract to perform the audit but recently SSA signed a new contract with Grant Thornton, an auditing and consulting firm. The Board was told that PriceWaterhouseCoopers found that SSA's actuaries are "doing good work."

The Board met in closed session to conduct administrative business including the empanelling of the 2011 Technical Panel on Assumptions and Methods and the Board's visit to Durham, N.C. to see SSA's new national computer center.

I certify that the minutes written for the March 3, 2010 meeting of the Social Security Advisory Board are correct.

 Barbara B. Kennelly April 7, 2010
Acting Chair
Social Security Advisory Board