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Kim Hildred  
Staff Director  
Subcommittee on Social Security  
Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
B-317 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Ms. Hildred:

I received a letter from Chariman Johnson asking me to send you my response to a follow-up question in order to complete the hearing record for the May 9<sup>th</sup> hearing on the state of Social Security's information technology.

Chariman Johnson's question was as follows: "You stated in your testimony that the percentage of online sessions that were initiated from a mobile device nearly tripled in 2011 to roughly 15%. What does this mean for e-government services in the future? What types of government services could be best suited for mobile technology?"

The main impact on e-government services of increased usage of mobile devices is that more and more standard government websites will be accessed from phones, smart phones, and tablets, which will necessitate the translation of most, if not all, government websites to a mobile environment over then next ten years. While many federal agencies and departments have made online citizen satisfaction a priority over the last decade or so, the mobile environment requires a new set of best practices and standards to deliver information and services to citizens on smaller screens. Sites that provide a very satisfying full-size experience may not meet citizen needs when the screen size and content is reduced.

However, agencies can use the same technology they use to measure and improve the online experience for other channels, including mobile channels. The best way to know if mobile sites and applications are meeting the needs and expectations of citizens is to ask the citizens themselves. There are federal agencies who already have mobile surveys in development, and the hope is that as mobile adoption increases, it will become standard practice. It will be critical to provide not only adequate mobile experiences for citizens, but good ones in order to fulfill the promise of cost-savings that mobile can offer. The more ways citizens have to interact with their government electronically, whether it be from a desktop, laptop, smart phone, or tablet device, the less they need to use costlier channels like call centers, branch offices, and the mail. Online and mobile services also increase efficiency in terms of updating information and communicating with the citizenry.

As for what kinds of government services are best-suited for the mobile environment, in truth, they all are. Mobile is just another delivery mechanism for a traditional website, so any government information or service that is available on a website (which is just about all of them), is going to see more and more access via mobile device whether or not it is particularly well-



suited for the mobile environment. Because the mobile environment is smaller, many consider it to have substantial limitations. This is another reason to use voice-of-citizen feedback to find out which capabilities should be prioritized as the federal government continues its translation to mobile.

I would be happy to talk further with you, Chairman Johnson, or any of the other members of the House Subcommittee about the growing importance of mobile services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry Freed". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Larry Freed  
President and CEO  
ForeSee