

ADVISORY

FROM THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

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Chairman Boustany Announces Hearing on Protecting the Safety Net from Waste, Fraud, and Abuse

Today, Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee Chairman Charles Boustany (R-LA) announced that the subcommittee will hold a hearing titled, “*Protecting the Safety Net from Waste, Fraud, and Abuse.*” **The hearing will take place at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, June 3, in room 1100 of the Longworth House Office Building.**

In view of the limited time available, oral testimony at this hearing will be from invited witnesses only. Witnesses will include Members of Congress with reform proposals as well as experts on the operation of the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs. However, any individual or organization not scheduled for an oral appearance may submit a written statement for consideration by the committee for inclusion in the printed record of the hearing.

In announcing the hearing, Chairman Boustany stated, “**The SSI and UI programs annually waste billions of dollars due to improper payment rates that average around 10 percent year after year. It’s long past time that we identify the causes and start implementing real reforms to improve the integrity of these programs. That will benefit taxpayers, but especially those who most need this assistance.**”

BACKGROUND:

The SSI program is the nation’s largest Federal means-tested cash assistance program and is administered by the Social Security Administration. In FY 2014 it provided \$53.9 billion in benefits to an estimated 8.2 million disabled and elderly individuals who currently have limited income and assets.

The Federal-State UI program assists unemployed individuals by offering weekly unemployment benefit checks while they search for work. In FY 2014 it provided \$37.2 billion in benefits to an estimated 2.5 million eligible unemployed individuals a week in December 2014.

While these two programs serve separate and distinct populations, they have one chief similarity—among the highest improper payment rates of all programs supported with federal funds. In fiscal year 2014, SSI made \$5.1 billion in improper payments, for an improper payment rate of 9.2 percent. The UI

program made \$5.6 billion in improper payments in fiscal year 2014, for an improper payment rate of 11.6 percent. Since fiscal year 2007, each program has had an annual improper payment rate near 10 percent, resulting in a total of \$32 billion in SSI and \$67 billion in UI improper payments since then. Such improper payments occur when taxpayer funds go to the wrong recipient, in the wrong amount, without proper documentation, or when the recipient uses taxpayer funds inappropriately.

FOCUS OF THE HEARING:

This hearing will focus on identifying waste, fraud and abuse within the SSI and UI programs as well as discussing legislative proposals to reduce improper payments and improve program integrity.

DETAILS FOR SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS:

Please Note: Any person(s) and/or organization(s) wishing to submit for the hearing record must follow the appropriate link on the hearing page of the Committee website and complete the informational forms. From the Committee homepage, <http://waysandmeans.house.gov>, select "Hearings." Select the hearing for which you would like to submit, and click on the link entitled, "Please click here to submit a statement or letter for the record." Once you have followed the online instructions, submit all requested information. Attach your submission as a Word document, in compliance with the formatting requirements listed below, **by June 17, 2015**. Finally, please note that due to the change in House mail policy, the U.S. Capitol Police will refuse sealed-package deliveries to all House Office Buildings. For questions, or if you encounter technical problems, please call (202) 225-1721 or (202) 225-3625.

FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS:

The Committee relies on electronic submissions for printing the official hearing record. As always, submissions will be included in the record according to the discretion of the Committee. The Committee will not alter the content of your submission, but we reserve the right to format it according to our guidelines. Any submission provided to the Committee by a witness, any supplementary materials submitted for the printed record, and any written comments in response to a request for written comments must conform to the guidelines listed below. Any submission or supplementary item not in compliance with these guidelines will not be printed, but will be maintained in the Committee files for review and use by the Committee.

1. All submissions and supplementary materials must be provided in Word format and **MUST NOT** exceed a total of 10 pages, including attachments. Witnesses and submitters are advised that the Committee relies on electronic submissions for printing the official hearing record.
2. Copies of whole documents submitted as exhibit material will not be accepted for printing. Instead, exhibit material should be referenced and quoted or paraphrased. All exhibit material not meeting these specifications will be maintained in the Committee files for review and use by the Committee.
3. All submissions must include a list of all clients, persons, and/or organizations on whose behalf the witness appears. A supplemental sheet must accompany each submission listing the name, company, address, telephone, and fax numbers of each witness.

The Committee seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202-225-1721 or 202-226-3411 TTD/TTY in advance of the event

(four business days notice is requested). Questions with regard to special accommodation needs in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats) may be directed to the Committee as noted above.

Note: All Committee advisories and news releases are available online at <http://www.waysandmeans.house.gov/>.