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December 14, 2017

The Honorable Sam Johnson
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Social Security
2304 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Larson
Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Social Security
1501 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Johnson and Larson:

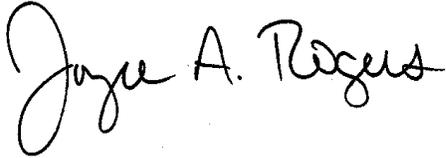
AARP, with its nearly 38 million members, writes today on behalf of our members and all Americans age 50 and older in support of HR 4547, the Strengthening Protections for Social Security Beneficiaries Act of 2017.

We commend your leadership on this important issue of improving protections for the 5.5 million Social Security beneficiaries who rely on a representative payee to properly and timely administer their monthly benefits. Representative payees play a critical role in serving the interests of vulnerable Social Security beneficiaries. The number of representative payees is expected to grow substantially as the Baby Boom receives earned retirement benefits.

The Johnson-Larson Act greatly improves the coordination between the Social Security Administration (SSA) and State agencies, including the courts. The bill encourages reviews of all State programs, periodic onsite reviews of payees and increased data sharing. The bill also encourages beneficiaries to consider advance designation of payees to better control their futures. The bill adds stronger protections to deter fraud and abuse by payees, including through expanded use of background checks. Also the bill takes the first steps toward assessing creditor payees, such as nursing homes, to better assure that beneficiaries are adequately protected by payees who act both as intermediaries and creditors.

Thank you for your leadership and bi-partisan support for an improved representative payee system. We look forward to continuing to work with you to assure the long-term strength and soundness of the Social Security system, which provides essential retirement security for almost all Americans and their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joyce A. Rogers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Joyce A. Rogers
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs