

# Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Report

Social Security Advisory Board  
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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

| <b>Acronyms<br/>Abbreviations</b> | <b>Term</b>  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Board                             | Social Security Advisory Board                                 |
| CNMI                              | Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands                   |
| DDS                               | Disability Determination Services                              |
| DI                                | (Social Security) Disability Insurance                         |
| FRA                               | Full Retirement Age  |
| FY                                | Fiscal Year  |
| NCSSMA                            | National Council of Social Security Management Association     |
| NOSSCR                            | National Association of Social Security Claims Representatives |
| OAI                               | Old Age Insurance  |
| OASDI                             | Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance                   |
| SI                                | (Social Security) Survivor's Insurance                         |
| SSA                               | Social Security Administration                                 |
| SSAB                              | Social Security Advisory Board                                 |
| SSI                               | Supplemental Security Income                                   |
| UAS                               | Understanding America Study                                    |

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## Message from the Chair

Each day American seniors, children, individuals with disabilities, workers, and businesses rely on the critical services that the Social Security Administration (SSA) provides. In his proclamation celebrating the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Social Security Act, President Trump highlighted his commitment to make SSA “more efficient, more responsive, and more effective than ever before.” As shown on [SSA’s performance website](#), meaningful improvements have been achieved over this past year.

For over 30 years, the Social Security Advisory Board (Board) has worked on a bipartisan basis to make recommendations that will improve the outcomes and efficiency of SSA’s programs. This past year, for example, the Board made recommendations that, if adopted, would:

- Help grieving widows(ers) by ensuring a child’s benefits continue uninterrupted after a parent passes away;
- Make it easier to get a Social Security card for a person released from incarceration, which is needed to get a job;
- Ensure individuals who are waiting for a disability decision are aware of all benefits that are available to them through proactive outreach;
- Improve the processing of disability applications by reexamining the process of hiring new staff; and
- Protect the integrity of the Social Security trust funds.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2025, the Board published 5 reports and 1 letter, which included 36 recommendations to SSA and Congress. It is our hope that these recommendations will be implemented to improve SSA’s programs and operations. Many of these recommendations do not require legislation and can be implemented through changes to SSA operations or processes.

In FY 2026, the Board will continue to gather information from a wide range of stakeholders and experts to understand what is working well at SSA and identify ways to improve. We may not always agree on the best path forward, but when we do, we will continue to meet our statutory purpose of providing those bipartisan recommendations to advance our collective mission of better serving the American people.

*Amy Shuart*  
Amy Shuart, Chair

## Introduction

The Board was established in 1994 to advise the President, Congress, and the Commissioner of Social Security on matters of policy and administration of the Old-Age Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI) and SSI programs. The Board's authorizing statute outlines the following nine functions:

1. Analyzing the Nation's retirement and disability systems and making recommendations with respect to how the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program and the supplemental security income program, supported by other public and private systems, can most effectively assure economic security;
2. Studying and making recommendations relating to the coordination of programs that provide health security with programs described in paragraph (1);
3. Making recommendations to the President and to the Congress with respect to policies that will ensure the solvency of the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program, both in the short-term and the long-term;
4. Making recommendations with respect to the quality of service that the Administration provides to the public;
5. Making recommendations with respect to policies and regulations regarding the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program and the supplemental security income program;
6. Increasing public understanding of the social security system;
7. Making recommendations with respect to a long-range research and program evaluation plan for the Administration;
8. Reviewing and assessing any major studies of social security as may come to the attention of the Board; and
9. Making recommendations with respect to such other matters as the Board determines to be appropriate.

Each year, the Board identifies topics for examination and associated deliverables, including Board publications, commissioned work, public events, and letters. This report provides an overview of the Board's FY 25 work, including the associated recommendations. The complete reports are available on the Board's [website](#).

The Board's authorizing statute requires it to meet at least four times per year. These meetings are critical in supporting the Board's current and future research projects and provide insight to inform the Board's perspective on SSA's operations. A detailed list of meeting participants can be found in Appendix A.

## Summary of FY 25 Work

### 2024 SSI Statement: Supplemental Security Income and Incarceration

On December 28 2024<sup>1</sup>, the Board released [Supplemental Security Income and Incarceration](#), which is the Board's 2024 edition<sup>2</sup> of its annual SSI statement.<sup>3</sup> The Board chose to focus on SSI and incarceration for several reasons. Changes to how incarceration-related workloads are managed would help SSA to better meet its goal of making benefit determinations and payments in a timely manner and with greater accuracy. Improvements would also help SSI claimants and recipients exiting incarceration, who use SSI's cash benefits to meet housing and other needs as they transition back to community life. It is widely thought that access to public benefits may also reduce recidivism.<sup>4</sup>

The Board made the following recommendations:

- Congress should authorize incentive payments to correctional facilities reporting the release of people whose SSI benefits were suspended.
- SSA should study underpayments related to premature suspension for incarceration.
- SSA should adjust its regulations so people residing in halfway houses and similar facilities that charge rent are eligible for SSI.
- SSA should enforce existing rules for people on electronic home monitoring.
- Congress should allow SSI to remain suspended rather than terminating benefits after 12 months of suspension.
- SSA should publish current prerelease agreements (PRAs).
- SSA should identify and train staff to negotiate, amend, and enforce PRAs.
- SSA should allow prerelease applications to be submitted earlier and stop denying them for being awarded too early.

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<sup>1</sup> The Board held a public event, the [September 2024 roundtable on SSI and Incarceration](#), that informed this report.

<sup>2</sup> In FY 24, due to a lack of quorum, the Board was unable to meet the publication deadline for SSA's annual report on the SSI Program. Instead, the Board published its annual SSI statement as a stand alone report in FY 25, after quorum was obtained.

<sup>3</sup> Public Law 104-193, The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996, permits members of the Board, individually or collectively, to include their views in SSA's Annual Report of the SSI Program to the President and Congress. Each year since 1998, the Board or one of its members has submitted such statement, with the exception of 2024 due to a lack of quorum. Previous statements can be accessed on the [Collected SSI Statements](#) page on the Board's website.

<sup>4</sup> Chris Koyanagi, "[A Better Life—A Safer Community](#)," Bazelon Center, January 2003

- SSA should end its ban on presumptive disability and blindness payments for people leaving incarceration.
- SSA should encourage research on how mental health conditions are evaluated for people who have been incarcerated.
- SSA should do proactive outreach on Health IT partnerships to correctional facilities and other entities that serve people leaving incarceration.
- SSA should engage with agencies that assist incarcerated and recently released SSI claimants.
- SSA should work with BOP and other correctional agencies to improve mail procedures.
- SSA should include replacement Social Security cards in all PRAs.
- SSA should improve its communications with correctional facilities and the public about the documentation needed to obtain replacement Social Security cards.
- SSA should allow correctional facilities to transmit replacement cards to people who have been transferred or released.

## **Social Security Benefits for People Aged 62 to Full Retirement Age**

Although most people know that workers can receive Social Security retirement benefits as early as age 62, people between the ages of 62 and full retirement age (FRA) may be eligible for several different Social Security benefit programs, depending on their circumstances. In addition to Old-Age Insurance (retirement) benefits (OAI), they may also qualify for Disability Insurance (DI) benefits and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. They may also be eligible for Survivors Insurance (SI) benefits. It is important that potential claimants have all necessary information to decide which benefit or combination of benefits would be the best for their situation.

On February 21, 2025, the Board published [\*Social Security Benefits for People Aged 62 to Full Retirement Age\*](#), a report which explores Social Security and SSI retirement and disability benefits available to people in multiple scenarios that older adults may face. The Board made the following recommendations:

- SSA should explore ways to improve the clarity of question 9 on the application for OAI benefits, which asks about the inability to work due to illnesses, injuries, or other health conditions.
- SSA should improve communication to people aged 62 to FRA who may become eligible for DI after receiving reduced OAI benefits.

- SSA should contact DI claimants who turn 62 while their application is pending to ask if they would like to receive reduced OAI benefits while waiting for a disability determination.
- SSA's OIG should assess whether the improvements to automation for people switching between DI and OAI benefits have succeeded in reducing improper payments and missed benefit eligibility.
- SSA should investigate the feasibility of automating OAI benefit applications for SSI recipients who become eligible for OAI benefits at age 62 or older.
- SSA should explore creating an alert for pending SSI claims where the claimant has turned 65 to assess eligibility for SSI based on age.
- SSA and its partners should incorporate information on the benefit options for people aged 62 to FRA in their customer experience project on approaching retirement.
- SSA should conduct research on the number of people who fall into each scenario and on knowledge gaps for people aged 62 to FRA and their representatives to inform improvements and outreach.

## **2025 SSI Statement: SSI in the United States Territories**

On July 17, 2025, the Board released its [2025 SSI Statement](#) focused on SSI in United States (US) territories. This paper describes the history and current status of SSI and alternative block grant programs in US territories, starting in 1898 when the US began to acquire its current territories. The paper then compares SSI and territorial block grant programs and discusses considerations around extending SSI to include residents of all US territories. The paper does not include any recommendations.

## **Improving Hiring Processes at State Disability Determination Services**

The Social Security Act requires state Disability Determination Services (DDSs) to determine a claimant's medical eligibility for disability benefits on behalf of the Social Security Administration. Entirely funded by SSA, the DDSs comply with SSA policies, procedures, and operational decisions, including the determination of when a DDS may hire personnel. The National Council of Disability Determination Directors (NCDDD) has consistently reported that episodic hiring freezes issued by SSA and the timing of hiring approvals significantly hinder the DDSs' ability to process workloads efficiently.

On September 18, 2025, the Board published [Improving Hiring Processes at State Disability Determination Services](#), which examined the impacts of SSA's hiring practices on disability claims processing. The Board made the following recommendations to the SSA:

- Allow DDSs more latitude to manage their allocated budget to recruit and fill open positions without being hindered by hiring freezes. Specifically, once funding is allocated to the DDS and hiring numbers are agreed upon, allow the DDSs to use available resources to address staffing as needed.
- Include the DDSs in the agency's human capital planning efforts as required by federal regulation.

## **Social Security Survivors Insurance Benefits for Children**

The Social Security Amendments of 1939 established monthly Survivors Insurance (SI) benefits. SI provides benefits to the families of fully or currently insured workers upon the worker's death. When a worker who has contributed to Social Security for the requisite number of quarters dies, surviving spouses (including divorced spouses), children, and dependent parents of the worker may be eligible for SI benefits.

On September 18, 2025, the Board published [Social Security Survivors Insurance Benefits for Children](#), a paper focused on SI benefits for children and widowed spouses caring for a surviving child. The Board made the following recommendations:

- SSA should develop an online application for SI benefits.
- SSA should allow the public to self-schedule appointments to apply for SI benefits.
- SSA should provide the option to advance designate a representative payee in situations where an OAI or DI beneficiary has children receiving auxiliary benefits.
- SSA should use the data it collects and work with states to identify children eligible for SI benefits.
- SSA should resume targeted outreach, i.e., sending letters to families of deceased workers who may be eligible for SI benefits and evaluating the effectiveness of this outreach.
- SSA should partner with state departments of funeral services to improve outreach and training for funeral directors on SI benefits.
- SSA should restart annual mailings of the Social Security Statement to all insured workers.

## **Letter to Congress: Trust Fund Buildings**

On September 18, 2025, the Social Security Advisory Board sent a [letter to Congress](#) regarding property acquired with money from the Social Security trust funds. The Board

believes that any proceeds from the sale of trust fund acquired property should go to the trust funds. Trust fund dollars are for Social Security program purposes only and have been intentionally set apart from general revenues by Congress. The Board made the following recommendations to Congress:

- Clarify that proceeds from the disposition of trust fund acquired property belong to the trust funds. This clarification should apply both prospectively and to proceeds from trust fund buildings that were already sold.
- That the trust funds receive interest on proceeds diverted to the general fund from previously sold properties.
- Direct the Government Accountability Office to determine which properties should be considered trust fund acquired, given disagreements between SSA and GSA on that topic.

## Board Appointments and Members

By statute, seven Board members are appointed by the President and Congress based on their integrity, impartiality, and good judgment, as well as their education, experience, and achievements.<sup>5</sup> Two Board members are chosen by the House of Representatives, one from each party, and similarly, two Board members are chosen by the Senate. The remaining three Board members are Presidential appointments requiring confirmation by the Senate (PAS).

The Board's authorizing statute sets forth the appointment process:

- three members shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. Not more than 2 of such members shall be from the same political party.
- two members (each member from a different political party) shall be appointed by the President pro tempore of the Senate with the advice of the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member of the Senate Committee on Finance.
- two members (each member from a different political party) shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, with the advice of the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member of the House Committee on Ways and Means.
- Each member of the Board shall serve for a term of 6 years, except when a member appointed to a term of office after the commencement of such term may serve under such appointment only for the remainder of such term.

Throughout FY 25, there were four members: two appointed by the Senate and two appointed by the House. The three Presidential appointments remained vacant.<sup>6</sup> Bob Joondeph, of Portland, Oregon, was [reappointed](#) by the Senate to the Social Security Advisory Board for a six-year term effective Monday, October 1, 2024 until September 30, 2030. Joondeph originally joined the Board in October 2018, when he replaced Bernie Franks-Ongoy. For a full history of Board member appointments, see the [Board Members page](#) on the website.

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<sup>5</sup> 42 USC 903 (c) (2)

<sup>6</sup> The three Presidential appointments have been vacant since 2016, 2018, and 2020, respectively.

## Board Members during Fiscal Year 2025

### **Bob Joondeph, Chair (Senate Democrat appointee)**



**Bob Joondeph, JD**, served as the Executive Director of Disability Rights Oregon for over 30 years, promoting and defending the legal and civil rights of Oregonians with disabilities through legal-based advocacy. Bob has represented individuals with disabilities in state and federal courts, agencies, and legislatures. He has served on the Oregon Health Evidence Review Commission, Health Services Commission, Health Fund Board, Mental Health Planning and Management Advisory Council, State Rehabilitation Commission, Governor’s Task Force on Brain Injury, and the Council on Developmental Disabilities. Bob is the recipient of the Oregon State Bar Public

Service Award, Oregon Disabilities Commission Advocate of the Year Award, Brain Injury Alliance of Oregon Advocacy Award, and the Oregon Civil Rights Leadership Award, and is a graduate of Case Western Reserve Law School and Brown University.

### **Amy Shuart (House of Representatives Republican appointee)**

**Amy Shuart** has over 15 years of experience in Social Security, identity, and technology



policy. Amy is currently the Vice President of Technology & Innovation at Business Roundtable. She previously was the Head of North America Government Affairs for Onfido, a global digital identity company, where she launched their Washington office. Amy worked for the Committee on Ways and Means for over a decade, most recently as the Social Security Subcommittee Staff Director. She started her career as a Presidential

Management Fellow at the Social Security Administration in the Office of Retirement Policy and has also worked at the Office of Management and Budget in the Medicare Branch and the White House National Economic Council. Amy holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, a Bachelor of Arts in Public and Urban Affairs from Virginia Tech, and a Master of Public Affairs from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin.

### **Nancy Altman (House of Representatives Democrat appointee)**



**Nancy J. Altman, JD**, has a forty-five-year background in Social Security and private pensions. Currently, she is President of Social Security Works and Chair of the Strengthen Social Security Coalition. Nancy was a member of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government faculty and taught courses on private pensions and Social Security at Harvard Law School. In 1982, she was Alan Greenspan's assistant in his position as Chairman of the bipartisan commission that developed the 1983 Social Security amendments. Nancy is the author of *The Battle for Social Security* and *The Truth About Social Security* and co-author of *Social Security Works! Why Social Security Isn't Going Broke and How Expanding It Will Help Us All* and *Social Security Works for Everyone! Protecting and Expanding the Insurance Americans Love and Count On*. She has an AB from Harvard University and a JD from the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

### **Jagadeesh Gokhale (Senate Republican appointee)**



**Jagadeesh Gokhale, PhD**. Prior to retiring from Wharton in March 2025, Jagadeesh was Director of Special Projects at the Penn Wharton Budget Model. Before joining Wharton, he held positions of Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute and Senior Economic Advisor at the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland. An economist by training, Jagadeesh's main research fields are macro and public economics, with a particular focus on the effects of fiscal policy on future generations. He has written extensively on policy issues, including Social Security and Medicare reform, national saving, private insurance, financial planning, wealth inequality, generational accounting, and public intergenerational transfers, and has testified before Congress several times on these topics. In 2010, Jagadeesh published *Social Security: A Fresh Look at Policy Alternatives*, which constructs a different method for determining the solvency of the Social Security trust funds. Jagadeesh has also been published in numerous professional journals and newspapers, such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Financial Times*, and *The Washington Post*.

## Appendices

### Appendix A - FY 25 Board Meetings and Participants

To inform the Board's research in FY 25, the Board met with SSA leadership and staff, SSA management associations and union representatives, and experts from both the private and public sectors. The Board is grateful to all those who shared their knowledge, time, and expertise; we could not do our work without them.

#### ***November 14 – 15, 2024***

On **November 14**, the Board met in Executive session.

- Rebecca Ringham, Attorney, Ethics Law Division (ELD), Office of the General Counsel (OGC), SSA
- Emily Markham, Attorney, ELD, OGC, SSA
- SSA Components working with the DMF
  - Representatives from Retirement and Disability Policy
    - Richarde Graham
    - Stephanie Meilinger
    - Elvin Cortes
    - Tony Mathison
    - Chris Tino
    - Monica Nolan
    - Lindsay Trezona
  - Representatives from Operations
    - Angelic Grimes
    - Cristi Banker
    - Andrew Ginocchio
    - Rachel Gonzalez LaCoste
  - Representatives from the Office of the Chief Information Officer
    - Ann Amrhein
    - Heather Potts
    - Clare Mastramico
  - Representatives from Budget and Financial Management
    - Adam Goldstein
    - Christian Hellie

- Shae Sutton, Executive Director, National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS)
- Caprice Edwards, Chief Information Officer, NAHSIS
- Krystal Colburn, Assistant State Registrar & Chief Reporting Officer, Arizona Department of Health Services
- Jeremy Peterson, Deputy State Registrar, Idaho Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare

On **November 15**, the Board met in Executive session.

- Timothy E. Gribben, Commissioner, Bureau of the Fiscal Service
- Linda Chero, Assistant Commissioner for Disbursement and Debt Management, Bureau of the Fiscal Service
- Jeff Brown, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audits, OIG, SSA

### ***January 30 – 31, 2025***

On **January 30**, the Board met in Executive session.

- Rich Couture, President AFGE Council 215, Senior Attorney Advisor, Massachusetts Office of Hearings Operations, SSA
- Jessica Lapointe, President, AFGE Council 220, Claims Specialist, Madison, Wisconsin Field Office, SSA
- Beverly Parks, President, AFGE Local 2006, Lead Disability Processing Specialist, Philadelphia Social Security Center, SSA
- Shelley Washington, Executive Vice President, AFGE Local 1923, Systems Programmer, Division of Mainframe System Software, SSA Headquarters, SSA
- Rachel A. Emmons, Government Relations and Public Affairs Specialist, Greystone Group LLC (representing NCSSMA)
- Kathy Zuleger, Acting President, NCSSMA, District Manager, Wausau, WI
- Timothy Milton, Acting Vice-President, NCSSMA, District Manager, Scotts Bluff, NE
- David Lescarini, Immediate Past President, NCSSMA, District Manager, McMinnville, TN
- Christina Montoya, Teleservice Center (TSC) Representative, NCSSMA, Unit Supervisor, Albuquerque, NM, TSC

On **January 31**, the Board met in Executive session.

- Michelle King, Acting Commissioner, SSA
- John Whitelaw, Advocacy Director, Delaware CLA
- David Camp, Chief Executive Officer, National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives (NOSSCR)

***March 27 – 28, 2025***

On **March 27**, the Board met in Executive session.

- Sean Brune, Acting Deputy Commissioner, Office of Mission Support, SSA
- Dustin Brown, Chief Operating Officer, Assistant Deputy Commissioner External Affairs, SSA

On **March 28**, the Board met in Executive session.

- David Weaver, Instructor, Department of Statistics, University of South Carolina

## Appendix B - FY 25 Staff Bios

### **Claire Green, Staff Director**

Claire joined SSAB in October 2012 as the Deputy Staff Director and became the permanent Staff Director in September 2013. She oversees all aspects of Board work and agency operations. Prior to joining SSAB, Claire worked as a Congressional Fellow for the Senate Finance Committee. Her portfolio included Social Security program and policy issues, administrative budget, and trust fund solvency concerns. Before that, she worked as an attorney in Social Security hearings components, both in hearing offices and later in headquarters. Claire holds a JD from Western State University College of Law and graduated with honors from Assumption College in English and Sociology. She is also a member of the National Academy of Social Insurance.

### **Sunny Bick, Management Analyst**

Sunny Bick joined the Board staff in January 2020 as a Management Analyst.

Sunny has varied responsibilities on both the Operations and Research Teams, including administrative functions, outreach, drafting the agency's Annual Report, and assisting with research projects. Before joining SSAB, Sunny had a research background in molecular biology. Most recently, she worked as a senior researcher in the transgenics lab at the Mayo Clinic's Institute of Neurodegenerative Diseases in Jacksonville, Florida, studying the pathology of Alzheimer's Disease. Her previous work at Stanford University's Hopkins Marine Lab involved marine species' genetic diversity and adaptation to environmental stress. Sunny's degrees are in microbiology and biochemistry.

### **Diane Brandt, Research Director**

Diane joined SSAB in September 2017 as a Senior Advisor. She assists with planning and conducting research activities in support of the Board's mission. Diane's career with the federal government began in 2008 as a protocol manager for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Clinical Center, Rehabilitation Medicine Department, Epidemiology and Biostatistics Section. Diane worked principally on an interagency agreement with SSA to support the agency's disability programs. In addition to a diverse clinical background in physical therapy, her research interests include public policy/health policy and implications for vulnerable populations; and the geospatial implications of policy outcomes. Diane holds a BS in physical therapy from the University of Missouri – Columbia, an MS specializing in gerontology and neurorehabilitation from Washington University in St. Louis, and an MA and PhD from the University of Missouri – St. Louis in political science, specializing in public and health policy.

**Cheri Cannon, General Counsel**

Cheri Cannon joined the Board in April 2021 as the General Counsel. She provides legal advice on personnel policy and processes, fiscal matters, and the interpretation of Board documents and statutes. She also represents the Board with other administrative bodies, serves as the FOIA and Privacy officials and trains the staff on government-wide requirements. Previously, Cheri was a Partner at Tully Rinckey PLLC and head of the Federal Labor and Employment practice. She was the Managing Partner of the DC office for three years. Previously, she served in the Senior Executive Service at the Air Force as Deputy General Counsel for Fiscal, Ethics, and Administrative Law. Cheri was also the Chief Counsel to the Chairman of the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB). Other government service includes 17 years at SBA, where she served in various SES roles. Before joining the government, she was in private practice. She earned a BA in political science (with Honors) from UC Santa Barbara and a JD from Georgetown University Law Center.

**Stacy Cloyd, Senior Research Attorney**

Stacy Cloyd is a Senior Research Attorney. Stacy joined the Board in July 2022. Her interests include Social Security Disability Insurance; Supplemental Security Income; and how SSA interacts with the public, other federal agencies, and state and local governments. Stacy previously spent seven years at the National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives, departing as the Director of Government Affairs. She has also served as Senior Domestic Policy Analyst at Bread for the World Institute, staff attorney and disability practice supervisor at Bread for the City's legal clinic, and volunteer attorney and mentor at the DC Bar Pro Bono Center. Stacy received an AB magna cum laude in government from Smith College. Her JD (cum laude) and Master of Urban and Regional Planning degrees are from the University of Michigan. She was elected to the National Academy of Social Insurance in 2017.

**Bethel Dejene, Management Officer**

Bethel Dejene joined the Board staff in June 2014 as a Research Analyst intern and continued as a Research Analyst on a part-time basis. Then she moved to a full-time position as a Management Analyst and is currently the Management Officer. Bethel supports in managing the agency's operations. Before joining the Board, Bethel was a participant in Capital Area REACH's job-readiness and community service program and completed an internship at the Ethiopian Community Development Council in Arlington, Virginia. Bethel earned a BS in Psychology (cum laude) from George Mason University.

**Paul Frazier**, IT Systems Engineer

Paul Frazier joined the Board in January 2022 as the Systems Engineer, and is responsible for all aspects of SSAB IT infrastructure, cybersecurity compliance, and SharePoint organization. Before coming to the Board, Paul worked on federal contracts for clients such as the Department of Justice, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Federal Judiciary, US Navy, and the Social Security Administration.

**Conway Reinders**, Lead Policy Analyst & Communications Officer

Conway Reinders joined SSAB in 2017 and is currently a Lead Policy Analyst and Communications Officer. His research focuses on issues related to the quality and accessibility of the Social Security Administration's services. Conway also serves as the agency's Communications Officer, coordinating the Board's messaging, external outreach, and public events. Previously, Conway was a research assistant at the Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative and a Special Assistant at the Hamilton Project at the Brookings Institution. He holds a BA from the George Washington University, graduating magna cum laude in economics (special honors) and international affairs. In 2021, Conway was elected to the National Academy of Social Insurance.

**Jenn Rigger**, Senior Advisor

Jenn Rigger joined the Board in March 2015 as a detailee from Social Security. She was later hired as a Senior Advisor. Her areas of focus include the disability determination process, the partnership of SSA and the state Disability Determination Services agencies, and enumeration/death data reporting. With over 30 years in and around the federal government, Jenn worked on the state/federal vocational rehabilitation program while at the Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration and on SSA's support of disability beneficiaries' return-to-work efforts. Jenn's federal career began on Capitol Hill. She also was active in presidential primary campaigns. She holds a BS in political science and history from James Madison University.

**Emily Roessel**, Senior Researcher

Emily joined the Board in July 2022. Her areas of focus include retirement and financial security. Emily previously worked at the Social Security Administration as a Presidential Management Fellow and then as a Social Science Research Analyst in the Office of Research, Demonstration, and Employment Support. At SSA, Emily conducted research on the return-to-work efforts of Social Security disability beneficiaries. She has also worked at Abt Associates and the Brookings Institution. Emily received a BA in applied mathematics from Brown University and an MPP from the University of Michigan. She was elected to the National Academy of Social Insurance in 2023.

**Omar Shalabi**, Data and Program Analyst

Omar Shalabi first came to the Board in September 2019 as a Research Intern and joined as a permanent employee in April 2020. Omar graduated with a BA in Economics from the University of Maryland, completing a research practicum with the strategic advisory and mergers & acquisitions firm Kaulkin Ginsberg. At Kaulkin Ginsberg, Omar studied the student loan market, particularly regulatory changes and loan issuance and collection trends.

## **About the Board**

The Social Security Advisory Board is a bipartisan federal agency established in 1994 to advise the President, Congress, and Commissioner of Social Security on matters of policy and administration of the Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income programs. The Board has seven members, appointed by the President, Senate, and House of Representatives.