

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 7, 2020

The Honorable Andrew Saul  
Commissioner  
Social Security Administration  
6401 Security Boulevard  
Baltimore, MD 21235

Dear Commissioner Saul:

I write today to urge the Social Security Administration (SSA) to offer leniency and accommodations during the ongoing public health crisis caused by the spread of COVID-19. Local Social Security offices have been closed to in-person visits since March 17. This has limited access for vulnerable Americans. Many Americans cannot use online services either because they do not have an internet connection at their residence or they lack access to public internet services because most non-essential businesses across the country are closed.

My office has heard from a number of Virginians who, through various circumstances, are having their Social Security payments withheld and are unable to receive timely assistance from SSA due to the lack of in-person services. Many report having filed reconsiderations and appeals before March 17 with no word from their local office that the paperwork has been received, let alone that it is being processed. Others report that their previously scheduled hearings with Administrative Law Judges have been canceled. At a time when businesses are laying off workers, these individuals will struggle to find even supplemental employment while they wait for their applications to be adjudicated.

As we all take steps to limit the spread of COVID-19, I urge you consider freezing garnishment actions until SSA's usual services can resume and assist those Americans who are relying on timely decisions for their applications. During this crisis, we need to ensure the federal government is a helping hand, rather than a hurdle for Americans struggling to deal with the impacts of the virus.

Thank you in advance for your prompt response and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator