

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3601

To direct the Commissioner of Social Security to implement certain recordkeeping recommendations, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 28, 2019

Mr. KING of Iowa introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

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## A BILL

To direct the Commissioner of Social Security to implement certain recordkeeping recommendations, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Social Security Integ-

5       rity Act of 2019”.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       Congress finds the following:

8               (1) Individuals can commit various types of

9       fraud against the Government by reporting earnings

1 under deceased individuals' Social Security Numbers  
2 (SSNs).

3 (2) Various Federal entities rely on the Social  
4 Security Administration's (SSA) death information  
5 to detect unreported deaths and verify the accuracy  
6 of reported deaths.

7 (3) The Numident is the SSA's computer data-  
8 base file on all who have applied for a Social Secu-  
9 rity number. The Office of the Inspector General  
10 (OIG) of the SSA conducted an audit and deter-  
11 mined that the SSA did not have controls in place  
12 to annotate death information on the Numident  
13 records of numberholders who exceeded maximum  
14 reasonable life expectancies and were likely deceased.

15 (4) The OIG identified 34 cases in which it ap-  
16 peared that the deceased numberholder's name and  
17 Social Security Number (SSN) had been misused. In  
18 one instance an employer reported paying wages to  
19 someone from 2008 through 2012 using a  
20 numberholder's name and SSN that had been born  
21 in 1886. SSA payment records indicated that the  
22 numberholder died in January 1965, but the SSA  
23 did not record the numberholder's death on the  
24 Numident. SSA continued paying benefits to the  
25 numberholder's widow until her death in February

1       1973. SSA's Master Earning File (MEF) contained  
2       no reported earnings information for this  
3       numberholder from 1956 through 2007.

4           (5) The OIG determined that thousands of the  
5       SSNs could have been used to commit identity  
6       fraud. For tax years 2006 through 2011, SSA re-  
7       ceived reports that individuals using 66,920 SSNs  
8       had approximately \$3.1 billion in wages, tips, and  
9       self-employment income. SSA transferred the earn-  
10      ings to the Earnings Suspense File because the em-  
11      ployees' or self-employed individuals' names on the  
12      earnings reports did not match the numberholders'  
13      names.

14          (6) During calendar years 2008 through 2011,  
15      employers made 4,024 E-Verify inquiries using  
16      3,873 SSNs belonging to numberholders born before  
17      June 16, 1901. According to the OIG, these inquir-  
18      ies indicate individuals' attempts to use the SSNs to  
19      apply for work.

20          (7) The OIG determined that resolving these  
21      discrepancies will improve the accuracy and com-  
22      pleteness of the Death Master File and help prevent  
23      future misuse of these SSNs.

24          (8) The American taxpayer deserves to have the  
25      surety of knowing that every agency and department

1 within the Federal Government takes the prudent  
2 actions necessary to prevent future fraud and waste  
3 of hard-earned dollars.

4 (9) In 2015, the OIG identified approximately  
5 6.5 million numberholders age 112 or older who did  
6 not have death information on the Numident.

7 (10) Of the 6.5 million cases OIG identified,  
8 based on initial review, SSA believed approximately  
9 1.5 million of these individuals were deceased. After  
10 further in-depth analysis, SSA posted death infor-  
11 mation to records for only those cases that passed  
12 complex identity matching protocols, and where the  
13 most current information indicated the individuals  
14 are in fact deceased.

15 (11) For the remaining 5 million cases, the  
16 SSA reports that it does not have sufficient or reli-  
17 able evidence that these individuals are deceased.  
18 However, the SSA also notes that the individuals  
19 have never received payments from the SSA; the  
20 records are decades old, and are the result of error-  
21 prone paper reporting processes; it is possible that,  
22 decades ago, SSA incorrectly recorded some dates of  
23 birth and that some individuals are much younger  
24 than current records indicate; and it would be im-  
25 prudent to presume death in order to add these

1 cases to the DMF because doing so could result in  
2 the inappropriate release of living individuals' per-  
3 sonally identifiable information—an action that has  
4 far-reaching and adverse consequences for these in-  
5 dividuals.

6 (12) In line with the OIG's recommendations,  
7 the SSA should take proactive action to fully protect  
8 the American taxpayer by ensuring that there are  
9 comprehensive controls in place to annotate death  
10 information on the Numident records of  
11 numberholders who exceeded maximum reasonable  
12 life expectancies.

13 **SEC. 3. IMPLEMENTATION OF OIG RECOMMENDATIONS.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the  
15 date of the enactment of this Act, the Commissioner of  
16 Social Security shall implement all of the recommenda-  
17 tions described in the memorandum from the Office of the  
18 Inspector General of the Social Security Administration  
19 entitled “Numberholders Age 112 or Older Who Did Not  
20 Have a Death Entry on the Numident (A–06–14–34030)”  
21 and dated March 4, 2015.

22 (b) ADDITIONAL PAYMENT TO INDIVIDUALS ATTAIN-  
23 ING 100 YEARS OF AGE.—The Commissioner of Social Se-  
24 curity shall make a one-time payment in the amount of  
25 \$100 to each individual who, according to the records of

1 the Commissioner of Social Security, attains 100 years of  
2 age after the date of enactment of this Act and applies  
3 for such payment.

4 (c) REPORT.—Not later than December 31 of each  
5 calendar year that begins after the date of the enactment  
6 of this Act and ends before the date that is 3 years after  
7 such date of enactment, the Commissioner shall submit  
8 to the Congress a report on the progress made toward im-  
9 plementation of each of the recommendations described in  
10 the memorandum specified in subsection (a), the methods  
11 used to implement such recommendations, the amount of  
12 funds expended and any other resources utilized to imple-  
13 ment such recommendations, and the projected date of full  
14 implementation.

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