

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1876

To prevent closure of social security field and hearing offices and resident stations.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 5, 2025

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut (for himself, Mr. NEAL, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. HORSFORD, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. BISHOP, Mr. DELUZIO, Mr. NADLER, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. JACOBS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. TITUS, Mr. COHEN, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY, Ms. BUDZINSKI, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Ms. CHU, Ms. SEWELL, Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. IVEY, Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, Mrs. McIVER, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. DeLAURO, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. ELFRETH, Ms. ANSARI, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. TONKO, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. STANTON, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Mr. AUCHINCLOSS, Mr. CARSON, Mr. SORENSEN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. LANDSMAN, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. POCAN, Mr. AMO, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. UNDERWOOD, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. RILEY of New York, Ms. PLASKETT, Ms. RANDALL, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. BROWN, Ms. PETTERSEN, Mr. MFUME, Mr. SWALWELL, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. MORELLE, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. MCGARVEY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

A BILL

To prevent closure of social security field and hearing offices and resident stations.

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

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Keeping Our Field
3 Offices Open Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. PREVENTING CLOSURE OF FIELD AND HEARING OF-**
5 **FICES AND RESIDENT STATIONS.**

6 (a) MORATORIUM ON CLOSURE OR CONSOLIDATION
7 OF FIELD OR HEARING OFFICES OR NEW LIMITATIONS
8 ON ACCESS TO SUCH OFFICES.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
10 graphs (2) and (3), the Commissioner of Social Se-
11 curity shall take no action on or after the date of
12 enactment of this Act to close or consolidate field or
13 hearing offices or resident stations of the Social Se-
14 curity Administration or to otherwise impose any
15 new limitation on access to such offices or stations.

16 (2) EXCEPTION FOR EMERGENCY CLOSURES.—
17 Paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to any
18 temporary action by the Commissioner to close or
19 otherwise limit access to field or hearing offices or
20 resident stations in response to an emergency.

21 (3) CESSATION OF MORATORIUM UPON REPORT
22 TO CONGRESS.—Paragraph (1) shall cease to be ef-
23 fective on the date that is 180 days after the report
24 described in paragraph (4) is submitted.

25 (4) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not earlier than Jan-
26 uary 21, 2029, the Commissioner shall submit to the

1 Committee on Ways and Means of the House of
2 Representatives and the Committee on Finance of
3 the Senate a report outlining and justifying the
4 process for selecting field or hearing offices or resi-
5 dent stations to be closed or consolidated or other-
6 wise to have limited access. Such report shall in-
7 clude—

8 (A) an analysis of the criteria used for se-
9 lecting field or hearing offices and resident sta-
10 tions for closure, consolidation, or limited ac-
11 cess;

12 (B) a description of how the Commissioner
13 has analyzed and considered relevant factors,
14 including transportation and communication
15 burdens faced by individuals serviced by the of-
16 fices and stations, including elderly and dis-
17 abled individuals; and

18 (C) a description of any method of cost-
19 benefit analysis applied by the Commissioner in
20 connection with closures and consolidations of
21 such offices and stations, and other limitations
22 on access the offices and stations, including any
23 analysis that takes into account—

1 (i) the anticipated savings resulting
2 from the closure, consolidation, or limita-
3 tion on access;

4 (ii) the anticipated costs associated
5 with replacing services lost by the closure,
6 consolidation, or limitation on access;

7 (iii) the anticipated effects on employ-
8 ees of the offices or stations affected;

9 (iv) how the loss of access resulting
10 from the closure, consolidation, or limita-
11 tion on access will be replaced by the es-
12 tablishment of a new field or hearing office
13 or resident station, increased access at a
14 different office or station, or some other
15 means, and the factors considered by the
16 Commissioner in determining how to re-
17 place such lost access; and

18 (v) such other relevant factors as may
19 be determined by the Commissioner, in-
20 cluding but not limited to transportation
21 and communication burdens faced by indi-
22 viduals serviced by the offices and stations,
23 including elderly and disabled individuals.

24 (b) REQUIREMENTS FOR FUTURE CLOSURES, CON-
25 SOLIDATIONS, AND NEW LIMITATIONS ON ACCESS.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 704 of the Social
2 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 904) is amended by adding
3 at the end the following new subsection:

4 “(f)(1) FIELD AND HEARING OFFICES AND RESI-
5 DENT STATIONS.—Subject to paragraph (6), the Commis-
6 sioner may not close a field or hearing office or a resident
7 station of the Administration, consolidate two or more
8 such offices or stations, or otherwise impose any new limi-
9 tation on public access to any such office or station, unless
10 the Commissioner complies with the requirements of para-
11 graphs (2), (3), (4), and (5) in connection with the clo-
12 sure, consolidation, or limitation on public access.

13 “(2)(A) The requirements of this paragraph are met
14 in connection with a closure, consolidation, or new limita-
15 tion on access referred to in paragraph (1) only if—

16 “(i) not later than 120 days before the date of
17 the closure, consolidation, or limitation on access,
18 the Commissioner provides effective public notice of
19 the proposed closure, consolidation, or limitation on
20 access (including, to the extent practicable, notice by
21 direct mailing and through community outlets such
22 as newspapers and posting in heavily frequented
23 public spaces) to individuals residing in the area
24 serviced by the affected offices or stations;

1 “(ii) the public notice issued pursuant to clause
2 (i) includes information on—

3 “(I) how the Commissioner will, not later
4 than 30 days after the date of the closure, con-
5 solidation, or limitation on access, replace the
6 loss in access resulting from the closure, con-
7 solidation, or limitation on access by estab-
8 lishing a new office or station, increasing public
9 access to a different office or station, or some
10 other means; and

11 “(II) how to contact the Administration if
12 an individual experiences service delays or prob-
13 lems as a result of the closure, consolidation, or
14 limitation on access; and

15 “(iii) not earlier than 30 days after the
16 issuance of public notice pursuant to clause (i) and
17 not later than 45 days before the date of the pro-
18 posed closure, consolidation, or limitation on access,
19 the Commissioner conducts at least 2 public hear-
20 ings (scheduled so that the first and last such hear-
21 ings are separated by at least 10 days), at which the
22 Commissioner presents the justifications for the clo-
23 sure, consolidation, or limitation on access described
24 in subparagraph (B) and provides for attendees an

1 opportunity to present their views regarding the pro-
2 posed closure, consolidation, or limitation on access.

3 “(B) The justifications referred to in subparagraph
4 (A)(iii) shall consist of the following:

5 “(i) an analysis of the criteria used for selecting
6 the field or hearing office or offices, or the resident
7 station or stations, for closure, consolidation, or lim-
8 ited access;

9 “(ii) a description of how the Commissioner has
10 analyzed and considered relevant factors, including
11 but not limited to transportation and communication
12 burdens faced by individuals serviced by the offices
13 or stations, including elderly and disabled individ-
14 uals; and

15 “(iii) a description of a method of cost-benefit
16 analysis which shall be applied by the Commissioner
17 in connection with the closure, consolidation, or limi-
18 tation on access, and which shall take into ac-
19 count—

20 “(I) the anticipated savings resulting from
21 the closure, consolidation, or limitation on ac-
22 cess;

23 “(II) the anticipated costs associated with
24 replacing services lost by the closure, consolida-
25 tion, or limitation on access;

1 “(III) the anticipated effects on employees
2 of the offices or stations affected; and

3 “(IV) such other relevant factors as may
4 be determined by the Commissioner, including
5 but not limited to transportation and commu-
6 nication burdens faced by individuals serviced
7 by the offices and stations, including elderly
8 and disabled individuals.

9 “(C) The notice provided pursuant to subparagraph
10 (A)(i) shall include notice of the time and place of the
11 public hearings to be conducted pursuant to clause (A)(iii)
12 and of the right of aggrieved individuals to appeal to the
13 Commissioner regarding the proposed closure, consolida-
14 tion, or limitation on access pursuant to paragraph (4).

15 “(3) The requirements of this paragraph are met in
16 connection with a closure, consolidation, or limitation on
17 access referred to in paragraph (1) only if, not later than
18 30 days before the date of the proposed closure, consolida-
19 tion, or limitation on access, the Commissioner submits
20 to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of
21 Representatives, the Committee on Finance of the Senate,
22 and each Member of the Congress representing a State
23 or congressional district in which the affected office or of-
24 fices, or station or stations, are located a detailed final

1 report in support of the closure, consolidation, or limita-
2 tion on access. Such report shall include—

3 “(A) the justifications described in paragraph
4 (2)(B), (including any amendments made to such
5 justifications after the public hearings conducted
6 pursuant to paragraph (2)(A));

7 “(B) any findings made by the Commissioner
8 pursuant to the public hearings;

9 “(C) the status of any appeals regarding the
10 closure, consolidation, or new limitation on access
11 which were commenced pursuant to paragraph (4)
12 before the date of the report;

13 “(D) the final decision of the Commissioner re-
14 garding the closure, consolidation, or new limitation
15 on access; and

16 “(E) such other information as the Commis-
17 sioner considers relevant.

18 “(4)(A) Upon timely request by any individual who
19 makes a showing in writing described in subparagraph (B)
20 in connection with a proposed closure, consolidation, or
21 limitation on access referred to in subparagraph (A), the
22 Commissioner shall give such individual an opportunity for
23 a hearing with respect to the closure, consolidation, or lim-
24 itation on access. The request for the hearing shall be con-
25 sidered timely only if it is made not later than 30 days

1 before the proposed date of the closure, consolidation, or
2 limitation on access. The Commissioner shall submit to
3 the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Rep-
4 resentatives, the Committee on Finance of the Senate, and
5 each Member of the Congress representing a State or con-
6 gressional district in which the affected office or offices,
7 or station or stations, are located the Commissioner's find-
8 ings based on the hearing and a description of any action
9 taken or to be taken by the Commissioner on the basis
10 of such findings.

11 “(B) A showing described in subparagraph (A) shall
12 consist of a showing that—

13 “(i) the determination of the Commissioner to
14 close a field or hearing office or resident station,
15 consolidate field or hearing offices or resident sta-
16 tions, or impose a new limitation on access to such
17 offices or stations is arbitrary, capricious, an abuse
18 of discretion, not in accordance with law, or not
19 based on substantial evidence; or

20 “(ii) the Commissioner has failed to observe
21 procedures required by law in connection with the
22 closure, consolidation, or new limitation on access.

23 “(5) The requirement of this paragraph is met in
24 connection with a closure, consolidation, or limitation on
25 access referred to in paragraph (1) only if such closure,

1 consolidation, or limitation on access will not result in the
2 total number of field or hearing offices and resident sta-
3 tions of the Administration falling below the total number
4 of such offices and stations that were in operation on Jan-
5 uary 20, 2025.

6 “(6) Paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to
7 any temporary action by the Commissioner to close or oth-
8 erwise limit access to field or hearing offices or resident
9 stations in response to an emergency.”.

10 (2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made
11 by paragraph (1) of this subsection shall apply with
12 respect to closures and consolidations of field or
13 hearing offices and resident stations and impositions
14 of new limitations on access to such offices and sta-
15 tions occurring after the cessation of the moratorium
16 under subsection (a) of this section.

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