

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7228

To amend title VII of the Social Security Act to improve the Social Security Administration's procedures to close or reduce access to field offices, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 22, 2026

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin (for herself, Ms. JOHNSON of Texas, and Ms. NORTON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

A BILL

To amend title VII of the Social Security Act to improve the Social Security Administration's procedures to close or reduce access to field offices, 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 “Maintain Access to
5 Vital Social Security Services Act of 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. FIELD OFFICES.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Social Security
8 Act (42 U.S.C. 701 et seq.) is amended by adding at the
9 end the following:

1 **“SEC. 714. FIELD OFFICES.**

2 “(a) IN GENERAL.—

3 “(1) NUMBER OF FIELD OFFICES AND PER-
4 SONNEL.—The Commissioner shall operate a suffi-
5 cient number of field offices and employ an suffi-
6 cient number of personnel at each field office to—

7 “(A) provide comprehensive, convenient,
8 and accessible services to the public;

9 “(B) meet current and projected work-
10 loads, including consideration of anticipated
11 workload or population changes identified
12 through a service area review; and

13 “(C) maintain posted public operating
14 hours to the maximum extent possible and min-
15 imize wait-times at each field office, including
16 for those without appointments.

17 “(2) MINIMUM REQUIREMENT.—Notwith-
18 standing paragraph (1), the Commissioner take such
19 actions as are necessary to ensure that the number
20 of personnel assigned to field offices is not less than
21 the number so assigned on January 1, 2025.

22 “(b) PROCEDURE TO CLOSE OR REDUCE ACCESS TO
23 A FIELD OFFICE.—

24 “(1) IN GENERAL.—

25 “(A) REQUIREMENT TO FOLLOW PROCE-
26 DURE.—The Commissioner may not take any

1 action described in subparagraph (B) with re-
2 spect to a field office except in accordance with
3 this subsection.

4 “(B) COVERED ACTIONS.—The actions de-
5 scribed in this subparagraph with respect to a
6 field office are the following:

7 “(i) Permanently closing a field office,
8 including by ending or electing not to
9 renew a lease for a field office.

10 “(ii) Ending, or electing not to renew,
11 a lease for any field office.

12 “(iii) Consolidating the field office
13 with one or more other field offices.

14 “(iv) Any other action that would im-
15 pose a new limitation on public access or
16 reduce in-person services at a field office.

17 “(C) PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY EXCEP-
18 TION.—This subsection shall not apply for the
19 duration of any public health emergency under
20 section 319(a) of the Public Health Service Act
21 (42 U.S.C. 247d(a)).

22 “(2) NOTIFICATION OF ANTICIPATED ACTION.—

23 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180
24 days before the date on which the Commis-
25 sioner intends any action described in para-

graph (1)(B) with respect to a field office to take effect, the Commissioner shall promulgate a public notification of such action that includes the following information:

“(i) An identification of the field office.

“(ii) The date on which such action is intended to take effect.

“(iii) The reasons for taking such action, including, if applicable, the reasons for rejecting any available alternative actions such as relocation of the field office and the role, if any, played by the General Services Administration in contributing to such decision.

“(iv) The date, time, and location of the public hearings to be held pursuant to paragraph (3).

“(v) Any alternative means of receiving assistance related to social security which may be used by individuals served by the field office.

“(vi) Contact information, including by phone and internet, by which individ-

1 uals may inquire for more information re-
2 lated to such action.

3 In promulgating a notification under this para-
4 graph, the Commissioner shall post such notifi-
5 cation at the affected field office and other
6 nearby field offices, mail such notification to
7 residents in the area served by such field of-
8 fices, publish such notification in newspapers
9 printed in such area, or take such other actions
10 as the Commissioner determines to be nec-
11 essary.

12 “(B) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—As
13 soon as practicable and not later than 180 days
14 before the date on which the Commissioner in-
15 tends any action described in paragraph (1)(B)
16 with respect to a field office to take effect, the
17 Commissioner shall provide written notification
18 to each member of Congress and Senator whose
19 constituents are served by such field office.

20 “(C) LOCAL GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION
21 AND INVOLVEMENT.—As soon as practicable
22 and not later than 180 days before the date on
23 which the Commissioner intends any action de-
24 scribed in paragraph (1)(B) with respect to a
25 field office to take effect, the Commissioner

1 shall provide written notification to any unit of
2 local government within the service area of such
3 field office and provide the opportunity for local
4 governments to propose alternatives for such
5 action.

6 “(3) OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT.—

7 “(A) PUBLIC HEARING.—Not earlier than
8 30 days and not later than 120 days after a no-
9 tification is published under paragraph (2)(A)
10 with respect to any action described in para-
11 graph (1)(B) with respect to a field office, the
12 Commissioner shall hold not fewer than two
13 public hearings in the geographic area served
14 by the field office, at which the Commissioner
15 shall—

16 “(i) present the reasons for taking
17 such action, including the criteria used to
18 select the field office for such action and,
19 if applicable, the reasons for rejecting any
20 available alternative actions such as reloca-
21 tion of the field office within the area
22 served;

23 “(ii) describe the Social Security Ad-
24 ministration’s plan to mitigate disruption
25 in service for the community served by the

1 field office, including any special needs of
2 the community and any anticipated impact
3 on vulnerable populations such as the el-
4 derly, individuals with disabilities, and
5 those with language or mobility challenges;
6 and

7 “(iii) provide an opportunity for pub-
8 lic comment, including an opportunity to
9 recommend alternatives to such action.

10 “(B) SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COM-
11 MENTS.—The Commissioner shall accept writ-
12 ten comments from the public relating to such
13 action during the period described in subpara-
14 graph (A), which shall be posted on the website
15 of the Social Security Administration.

16 “(4) PUBLIC REPORT ON HEARING.—Not later
17 than 15 days before the date on which any action
18 described in paragraph (1)(B) with respect to a field
19 office takes effect, the Commissioner shall promi-
20 nently publish on the website of the Social Security
21 Administration a written report that describes the
22 action the Commissioner intends to take with re-
23 spect to the field office after giving full consideration
24 to, any alternatives proposed by local governments
25 pursuant to paragraph (2)(c) and any public com-

1 ments received during the period described in para-
2 graph (3)(A). Such report shall include a response
3 by the Commissioner to each unique written com-
4 ment received during such period. The Commissioner
5 shall submit a copy of such report to each member
6 of Congress identified pursuant to paragraph (2)(B),
7 the Committees on Appropriations of the House of
8 Representatives and the Senate, the Committee on
9 Ways and Means of the House of Representatives,
10 and the Committee on Finance of the Senate.

11 “(5) APPROVAL BY INSPECTOR GENERAL OF
12 THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION.—No action
13 described in paragraph (1)(B) may go into effect
14 until the Inspector General of the Social Security
15 Administration has reviewed any health and safety
16 claims made by the Commissioner with respect to
17 such action and has determined that the Commis-
18 sioner substantially and procedurally complied with
19 all applicable laws, regulations, and guidelines with
20 respect to such action.”.

21 (b) MORATORIUM.—The Commissioner may not take
22 any action described in section 714(b)(1)(B) of the Social
23 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 914(b)(1)(B)) with respect to a
24 field office until the date that is 30 days after the date
25 on which the Inspector General of the Social Security Ad-

1 ministration provides a written determination that the
2 amendments made by subsection (a) have been fully imple-
3 mented by the Social Security Administration, except that
4 in the case of such an action related to health and safety
5 reviewed by the Inspector General, such action may take
6 effect for a period not to exceed 30 days unless the Com-
7 missioner provides public notice explaining the need to ex-
8 tend such period.

9 **SEC. 3. RECOMMENDATIONS OF SOCIAL SECURITY ADVI-**
10 **SORY BOARD.**

11 Section 703(b)(4) of title VII of the Social Security
12 Act (42 U.S.C. 903(b)(4)) is amended by striking “public”
13 and inserting “public, taking into account the impact of
14 closing field offices on the quality of service to individuals
15 with disabilities or language barriers or other vulnerable
16 populations”.

17 **SEC. 4. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

18 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
19 ment of this Act, the Commissioner shall submit to the
20 Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Rep-
21 resentatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate
22 a report that—

23 (1) includes a list of all field offices closed dur-
24 ing the 5-year period ending on the date of enact-
25 ment of this Act, the reason for each such closure,

1 and any impacts of each such closure on wait-times
2 and staffing at nearby affected field offices;

3 (2) describes the role played by the Government
4 Services Administration (GSA) in each of the field
5 office closings in identifying any available alternative
6 actions such as relocation of the field office, includ-
7 ing a detailed description of—

8 (A) the number of alternative locations
9 identified by the GSA during each closure pro-
10 cedure;

11 (B) whether the GSA sought input (and
12 the means by which that input was solicited) on
13 alternative locations from State or local public
14 officials or the public in the affected service
15 area (including how many days, weeks, months,
16 or years prior to the closing the GSA sought
17 such input) and the most common cited reasons
18 for not finding suitable alternative locations
19 prior to closing a field office; and

20 (C) any recommendations for how to im-
21 prove the transparency and adequacy of the
22 process for soliciting and determining the ap-
23 propriateness of alternative space for relocation
24 prior to closing a field office; and

25 (3) describes a plan—

1 (A) to ensure that field offices are receiv-
2 ing sufficient resources to maintain at least the
3 level of constituent services provided in the pre-
4 vious fiscal year; and

5 (B) to adequately address the number of
6 individuals projected to use field offices during
7 the 10-year period beginning on the date of en-
8 actment of this Act.

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