

## Off-Budget - Mission Possible

The National Council of SSA Field Operations Locals urges Congress to pass an FY 2003 administrative budget that will provide the resources necessary to carry out our mission and endorse a plan to take social security administrative expenses OFF-BUDGET.

Based on the critical need to ensure the integrity of records and payments, we support an increase of 20% (5,500) direct service, community-based positions for field offices and teleservice centers across the country. Lacking a commitment by the Administration and Congress to appropriately fund needed resources at SSA, we will be increasingly unable to meet existing and imminent workloads, and fail to recruit, hire and train new employees for the future.

**President Bush's FY 2003 budget request not only falls short of funding essential resources but calls for a reduction in workyears, from 64,826 FY 02 to 64,730 FY 03.** At the same time, OMB predicts the number of disability claims will "rise substantially in coming years." While decreasing the number of workyears, the administration is increasing the number of SSI redeterminations to be conducted by NINE (9%) over the budgeted 2002 level. SSA experience shows \$7 in savings each \$1 invested. **This budget request appears irrational.**

The Social Security Advisory Board stated "It is entirely appropriate that spending for the administration of Social Security programs be set at a level that fits the needs of Social Security contributors and beneficiaries, rather than requiring it to compete with funding for health, education, and other human services functions within the federal government....." **In October 2000, HR 5447, bipartisan legislation was introduced to take social security administrative costs OFF BUDGET. We encourage a reintroduction of this or similar legislation.**

SSA has been significantly downsized over the last two decades, experiencing a 26 percent decline in the total number of employees since 1982 and now faces serious staffing shortages particularly in direct service positions. New claims for benefits will rise 23% in ten (10) years. Disability beneficiaries will rise substantially 47% by 2010 as baby-boomers reach the age at which the incidence of disability occurs, closely followed by an increase of retirement and survivor beneficiaries from 38 million to 44.5 million starting to peak around 2008.

Without intervention from this Congress, the very cornerstone of the Social Security Administration's program and mission is in **IMMINENT DANGER.**

	Actual FY 2001	Expected FY 2002	Expected FY 2003
<b>SELECTED WORKLOAD MEASURES</b>			
800 Number Calls Handled (millions)	59	61	63
Retirement and Survivors Claims (thousands)	3,093	3,107	3,109
Initial Disability Claims Processed (thousands)	2,167	2,191	2,201
Initial Disability Claims Pending (thousands)	579	695	783
Hearings Processed (thousands)	465	490	544
Periodic CDRs Processed (thousands)	1,730	1,397	1,380
SSI Non-Disability Redeterminations Processed (thousands)	2,316	2,255	2,455
Social Security Statements (millions)	137	136	136
Annual Earnings Items Posted (millions)	274	272	273
Social Security Numbers Issued (millions)	18	17	17
<b>SELECTED OUTCOME MEASURES</b>			
800 Number 50 Minute Access Rate	93%	92%	94%
SSI Payment Accuracy	N/A	94%	95%
Initial Disability Claims Average Processing Time (days)	106	115	110
Hearings Average Processing Time (days)	308	330	330
Percent of Citizen-Initiated Services Available to the Public Either Internet or Automated Phone Service	23%	30%	40%
Percent of Public Knowledgeable about SSA Programs	78%	78%	78%