

**U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell**

**Senate Finance Committee Executive Session to Consider Frank Bisignano to be  
Commissioner of the Social Security**

**April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025**

**[[AUDIO](#) | [VIDEO](#)]**

**Sen. Cantwell:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I am speaking against this nomination. I do share my colleague from Oregon, the Ranking Member's, concerns that we need to understand Mr. Bisignano's past statements.

And I think the context here is that we have seen cuts in staffing. We have seen threats of closures of offices. We have seen the request for re-registration. And so we are seeing an undermining of the services at Social Security right now, and Mr. Bisignano represents somebody who has made a name for himself in the business sector of coming in, and if you will, slashing and burning to find the efficiencies.

Well, I would say Social Security is no place to slash and burn. It's a contract with the American people. It should be kept. And what we should do is improve the service.

The taxpayers that pay into the program do so throughout their lives, and they want the government to live up to that obligation and take care of them. Overwhelmingly, Americans support social security. A recent AARP poll found that 85% of Americans want Social Security benefits maintained or increased. And that shows that that's everybody, that's not just Democrats or people who remember how Social Security got created. This is everybody. This is Democrats, Republicans, independents.

But we have an administration represented with DOGE, who think that they're going to come in here and find billions of dollars that they can take out of Social Security and give to tax breaks to billionaires and corporations.

So I think it's fair to understand whether Mr. Bisignano really did participate in that process, and he has a background that that's why he's being hired. He's not being hired because he's an expert on Social Security. He's being hired because somebody thinks he's going to come in here and basically get billions of dollars out of Social Security to give to a tax bill.

So I just want to say, I need to tell the Committee how important it is that the administration's actions are leaving our offices overcrowded. Phone calls, as my colleague from Montana mentioned, are 1.5 hours or longer, we had a constituent share that she wasn't able to even log into her account due to new verification changes. She's nearly 80 years old, so it's not like she has a smartphone or computer or a webcam, or is going to drive herself just over to the Social Security office.

So I have 1.4 million constituents that deserve Social Security, and we're making it harder on them.

And the instance I mentioned at Mr. Bisignano's hearing is that Social Security wrongfully declared one of my constituents, Ned Johnson, dead. His monthly benefit was withheld. Thousands of dollars in previously paid benefits were clawed back out of his joint account he shares with his wife. The erroneous determination set off a bureaucratic nightmare, and ultimately he had to wait in line at the Federal Building.

But guess what? Guess what? They're still withholding his money, his most recent check. They are still withholding his payment. Why does he have to wage a war just to get his Social Security benefits? We cannot afford more of this thinking in this position. We need to make sure that we know the answers, and I do not believe that we have them today.

Thank you.

**Sen. Crapo:** Let me just say, before moving forward. No one, on our side, including the nominee, has said that they are going to cut Social Security benefits. In fact, the President has made it clear that he will not support cutting Social Security benefits. And the bottom line is, the nominee is not even at the Social Security Administration yet.

**Sen. Cantwell:** I beg to differ. My constituent, Ned Johnson, would want to know why the heck, out of all these years, he has to wage a war just to get his benefit. And it's because there's been a chilling effect.

And I think that the issue is, is he being hired, and did he participate in the DOGE discussion?

So I'm against his nomination, but I think we deserve to know the answers to the question the Ranking Member is asking.