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Wyden Opposes Committee Vote to Advance Bisignano's Nomination to Lead Social Security *As Prepared for Delivery*

Today, the Finance Committee will vote on the nomination of Frank Bisignano to be the commissioner of the Social Security Administration.

I want to be clear from the outset, colleagues. The Finance Committee should not be holding this vote today. This nominee lied multiple times to every member of this Committee, including the Chairman and his staff, about his actions and communications with DOGE and the Social Security Administration prior to his hearing.

My office received an account from a whistleblower about the ways the nominee was deeply involved in and aware of DOGE's activities at the agency.

Mr. Bisignano lied in meetings with bipartisan Finance Committee staff.

Mr. Bisignano lied in a meeting with me in my office.

And Mr. Bisignano lied before this committee a week ago.

I asked the nominee if he had a part in speeding up the hiring of Akash Bobba, a DOGE acolyte who was rushed into the agency after other members of DOGE had trouble persuading career officials to cut corners and ignore safeguards and privacy laws. Mr. Bisignano told me he was not involved. The whistleblower's statement says he lied - that Mr. Bisignano personally intervened to get Bobba immediate access to Social Security systems.

I asked the nominee if he was involved in any discussions about personnel or operations at Social Security. Mr. Bisignano said no. The whistleblower statement says he lied - that he frequently spoke with Michael Russo, one of DOGE's chief operators at Social Security. Mr. Bisignano also requested that senior Social Security staff not hire any new personnel without his explicit approval.

The account of the whistleblower was confirmed independently by the Washington Post. I asked the Chairman of this committee to work with me to verify this disturbing account on a bipartisan basis. But he would not commit to protecting their identity.

Refusing to investigate allegations of this magnitude marks the beginning of a dark chapter in the Finance Committee's history. If Congress surrenders its ability to hold truth to power, there are few other checks and balances to stop harm and corruption from seeping into our government.

The Chairman talks about how Mr. Bisignano has undergone the Finance Committee's rigorous vetting process. But the reality is that he's just gone through the motions. Real due diligence would involve investigating serious allegations about lying to the Committee. We've had no investigation. The Committee is racing ahead to rubberstamp the nominee.

This might sound like inside baseball. But if this nominee is willing to lie to senators and the Committee that oversees the program he has been tasked with running, there can be little doubt that he is willing to lie to the American public once he's on the job.

Seniors and families have already witnessed the lack of concern that Elon Musk, DOGE and Trump have for their earned Social Security benefits. Over the last several weeks, what has been happening at Social Security is nothing short of bedlam. Radical changes to customer service over the phone. Website connectivity problems. Dozens of regional and field office closure announcements. This whiplash is designed to confuse and discourage Americans from getting their benefits. If a senior or someone with a disability can't access their Social Security - that's DOGE stealing their money, full stop.

This isn't a good faith attempt to modernize Social Security. Elon Musk is on a quest to demonize Social Security. Just yesterday, he was on the campaign trail in Wisconsin with his longtime partner, Antonio Gracias, who is now embedded at DOGE. He continues to peddle lies about fraud at Social Security for political gain. In my view this is all a foundation for cutting benefits, privatizing Social Security, and outsourcing customer service.

The nominee the Committee will vote on today has made a career using business tactics that Americans hate. Swooping in, firing workers, selling off pieces of a company, and merging with a competitor. These practices may be good for shareholders, but they hurt American families.

Senate Democrats aren't going to stand by while Trump's cronies take a sledgehammer to Social Security, depriving seniors of their earned benefits, under the false banner of fighting fraud. As I reminded the Committee last week, the amount of fraud taking place from Social Security's retirement and disability benefits is 0.009 percent.

In the words of the whistleblower who bravely provided the Finance Committee with their testimony, Trump's nominee to run Social Security "will not temper the chaos, but rather bolster it." I urge a No vote.

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