

**Subcommittee on Social Security and Family Policy
of the Committee on Finance**

***Protecting the Social Security Number: An Issue of Privacy or Security? and S.
848: The Social Security Number Misuse Prevention Act of 2001***

CLOSING STATEMENT

I would first like to thank the witnesses for taking time out of their busy schedules to testify before this Subcommittee on this very important topic. I would especially like to thank Senator Feinstein for testifying today and for her commitment and hard work on this issue.

Today's hearing has shown that identity theft is a serious and growing problem. We have learned that at the core of identity theft is the theft or misuse of government issued Social Security numbers. This is kind of fraud and abuse can not continue. We must redouble our efforts to protect the integrity of Social Security numbers.

There are no quick fixes to the problems we have heard today. However, we can not ignore the problems. Legislation and programs crafted to address these issues must take into account privacy rights, the myriad uses of Social Security numbers in everyday commerce and the almost universal use of these numbers as personal identifiers. I look forward to working with Senator Feinstein and other members of the Congress, government agencies, and the private sector as we strive to safeguard social security numbers and prevent identity theft.

Once again, thank you all for being here today. I will leave the record open for two weeks to receive any additional testimony or information.