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## **Consumers for Paper Options Applauds Congressional Efforts to Restore Access to Paper Social Security Statements**

*Government Funding Package Directs Social Security Administration to Begin Restoring Mailed Social Security Earnings Statements*

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Jan. 27, 2014) – [Consumers for Paper Options](http://www.paperoptions.com), a coalition of individuals and organizations advocating for access to paper-based services and information, today applauded congressional action to restore the paper delivery of annual Social Security Statements. Congressional appropriators successfully inserted language supporting paper-based statements into the Joint Explanatory Statement to the Conference Report for H.R. 3547, the Fiscal Year 2014 funding bill which was signed into law on Friday, January 17th.

The conference report language, which has the authority of a binding statutory requirement, directs the Social Security Administration (SSA) to present a plan to Congress within 60 days that "[includes] a significant restoration of the mailing of statements" to individuals, a practice that was eliminated by the SSA in 2011. While earnings statements are currently available online, wage-earners must first create an online account and provide sensitive personal information before being granted access. This presents a significant burden for the nearly one-third of Americans without internet access, as well as those with cybersecurity concerns.

"Social Security statements are a tremendous resource, providing American workers a way to proactively verify the accuracy of their benefits, and, in turn, make informed retirement decisions," said John Runyan, executive director of Consumers for Paper Options. "Congress's latest action represents a significant step toward making sure that all Americans can access this important financial planning tool. We are grateful for the legislative branch's commitment to remedying this misguided policy, and especially for the work of Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA), who worked to move this effort forward. We look forward to reviewing the Social Security Administration's proposal in the coming days."

According to a national poll commissioned by Consumers for Paper Options, 72 percent of consumers surveyed said they would like for the government to continue to provide paper copies of essential documents like Social Security annual earnings statements and checks. Click to access findings from the [poll](#), which contains dozens of data points and found that an overwhelming majority of Americans oppose private sector and government efforts to eliminate paper-based information and services.

Consumers for Paper Options supports other Congressional efforts to restore and protect access to paper-based government information and services – including H.R. 3385, the SAVINGS Act, which was introduced by Rep. Matthew Cartwright (D-Pa.) The SAVINGS Act would protect access to savings bonds, which are no longer sold in paper form, by preserving the Tax-Time Savings Bond Program through 2018. In addition, the coalition supports H. Res. 97, a bipartisan resolution recently introduced by Reps. Sean



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Duffy (R-Wis.) and Mike Michaud (D-Maine), which seeks to reverse federal initiatives to eliminate paper-based information and services.

### **About Consumers for Paper Options**

Consumers for Paper Options is a coalition of individuals and organizations who believe paper-based communications are critically important for millions of Americans, especially seniors and the 30 percent of Americans without Internet access. While regulated entities and governments at every level need to streamline services, cut costs and improve efficiencies, preserving paper-based options for information and essential services for those who need or want them should remain a crucial priority. The goal of Consumers for Paper Options is to preserve access to information in a way that neither hinders the natural evolution of technology nor discriminates against those who may not, or cannot, use it. For more information, visit [www.paperoptions.org](http://www.paperoptions.org).