



News Release

SOCIAL SECURITY

Commissioner Astrue Thanks the Vice President for His Call to Exempt DDS Employees from Furloughs and Hiring Restrictions

Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security, expressed his appreciation that Vice President Joseph R. Biden also has urged Governor Edward G. Rendell, Chairman of the National Governor's Association, to exempt federally-funded state Disability Determination Service (DDS) employees from any furloughs, hiring restrictions, and other budget cuts. Earlier this year, Commissioner Astrue wrote his own letter to Gov. Rendell expressing his grave concerns that including DDSs in state-wide reductions saves no money and, in fact, hurts the most vulnerable residents.

"I thank the Vice President for helping us make the case to Governors across the country," Commissioner Astrue said. "Social Security funds 100 percent of DDS employees' salaries as well as overhead -- that's about \$2 billion nationwide this year. These funds cannot be used by the states for any other purpose, so states do not save money by cutting employees in DDSs -- they only slow getting benefits to the disabled, which runs counter to what the President and the Congress were trying to do with the \$500 million in the Recovery Act dedicated to accelerating disability decisions. Nevertheless, many governors are imposing across-the-board hiring freezes or furloughs that also affect DDS employees. For the good of the country, this has to end."

To read the Vice President's letter, [click here](#).

To read Commissioner Astrue's letter, [click here](#).

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