

The Faces and Facts of Disability



Social Security Administration

The Campaign

- Faces and Facts of Disability is a campaign to increase public awareness of the Social Security disability insurance program.
- The Faces and Facts of Disability website provides helpful information about the program and personal stories about people who benefit from it the most.
- Explore the website at

www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityfacts

Compelling Videos



Written Stories

For Angela, applying to receive disability payments was a humbling experience. Sharing intimate details about her disability made her extremely uncomfortable. But she's glad she did—and that Social Security was there for her when she needed it.

Angela lives with multiple sclerosis, a serious disease of the central nervous system. This condition disrupts the flow of information within the brain, and between the brain and body. People with multiple sclerosis can experience a range of debilitating symptoms, including muscle spasms, difficulty moving and maintaining

Before his accident, Tony was working as a lifeguard and pool manager, as he had done in previous summers. He had just finished high school. It was August, just weeks before he planned to start college.

Early one morning, he and another lifeguard took the day off and headed out to the beach for a day of body surfing. He explains, "You swim out, turn

When she received a letter in the mail telling her that she qualified for Social Security disability benefits, Melissa breathed a deep sigh of relief.

By that time, she had gone through three surgeries to ease pressure from tumors on her spinal cord. What began as a simple doctor visit for leg pain would lead to a diagnosis of *central nervous system sarcoidosis* and paralysis from the waist down. Sarcoidosis is an inflammatory disease that

Underlying Facts

- ❑ Social Security disability is insurance coverage that workers earn.
- ❑ The Social Security Act defines disability very strictly.
- ❑ Disability is unpredictable and can happen to anyone at any age.
- ❑ Social Security disability payments are modest.
- ❑ As experts projected for decades, the number of people qualifying for Social Security disability benefits has increased.
- ❑ Social Security works aggressively to prevent, detect, and prosecute fraud.

The Real Story

- An increase in the number of Social Security disability beneficiaries has strained the disability trust fund.
- Social Security's trustees have predicted this increase since 1995 due to the aging baby boomer population and more women entering the workforce.
- Unless Congress acts, these demographic changes will make us unable to pay Social Security disability benefits at full monthly amounts past 2016.

The Real Story

- The President's budget for 2016 proposes a responsible plan to temporarily reallocate a portion of the incoming Social Security payroll taxes from the trust fund used to pay retirement and survivors benefits to the trust fund used to pay disability benefits.
- This would have no adverse effect on the current financial solvency of the combined Social Security programs, which are adequately financed to pay full benefits until 2034.

The Real Story

- The President's budget also proposes allowing us to identify and test promising improvements to the disability program that Congress may want to consider as part of a longer-term solution.
- These measures would enable us to pay full benefits until 2034 while establishing an evidentiary basis for Congress to evaluate potential changes to the program.

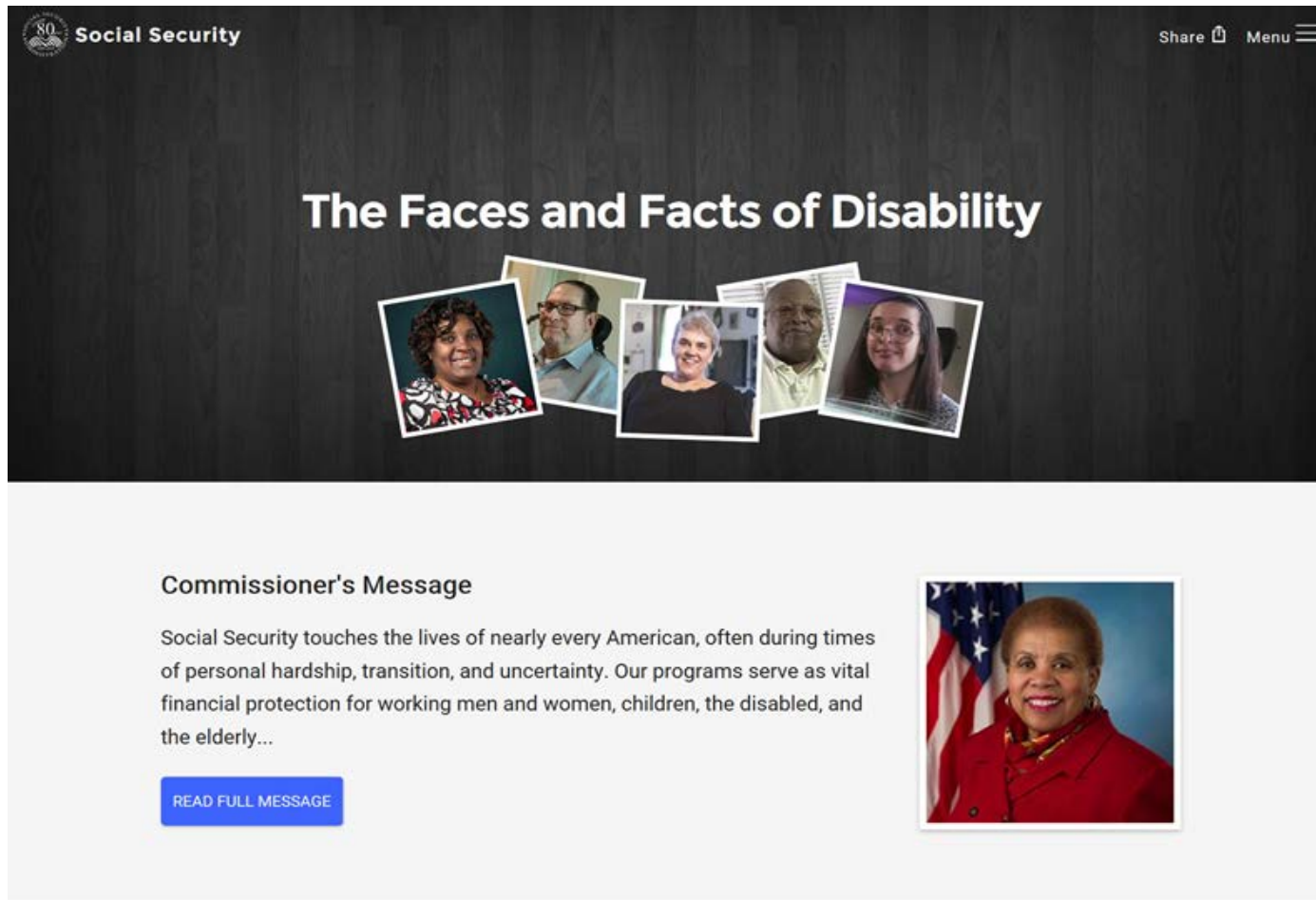
The Bottom Line

- We must never lose sight of the fact that Social Security disability beneficiaries are among the most severely disabled members of our communities.
- They survive on benefits they've earned through working and paying Social Security taxes.
- These benefits average less than \$1,200 a month—barely over the federal poverty line.

Vigilant Stewardship

- When making benefit determinations, we adhere to a very strict definition of disability as required by law.
- We prioritize continuing eligibility reviews according to their probable return on investment.
- Our aggressive anti-fraud efforts have resulted in a fraud rate that is a fraction of 1 percent, according to the Office of Inspector General's own data.

Help Raise Awareness



The screenshot shows the top section of the Social Security website. In the top left corner, there is the Social Security logo featuring the number 80 and the text "Social Security". In the top right corner, there are links for "Share" and "Menu". The main banner has a dark background with the title "The Faces and Facts of Disability" in white. Below the title are five small, overlapping photographs of diverse individuals. Below the banner, there is a section titled "Commissioner's Message" with a paragraph of text and a blue button labeled "READ FULL MESSAGE". To the right of the text is a portrait of the Commissioner of Social Security, a woman in a red jacket.


Social Security Share Menu

The Faces and Facts of Disability

Commissioner's Message

Social Security touches the lives of nearly every American, often during times of personal hardship, transition, and uncertainty. Our programs serve as vital financial protection for working men and women, children, the disabled, and the elderly...


[READ FULL MESSAGE](#)



www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityfacts

Help Raise Awareness

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Official Social Security Website

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You probably plan to receive Social Security benefits someday. Maybe you already do. Either way, you'll want a *my Social Security* account to:

- Keep track of your earnings and verify them every year;
- Get an estimate of your future benefits if you are still working;
- Get a letter with proof of your benefits if you currently receive them; and
- Manage your benefits:
 - Change your address;
 - Start or change your direct deposit;
 - Get a replacement Medicare card; and
 - Get a replacement SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S for tax season.

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Join The Millions!



Creating an Account is Easy!



[How To Create An Online Account](#)

www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount