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# United States Senate

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June 14, 2012

Dr. Doug Elmendorf  
Director  
Congressional Budget Office  
Ford House Office Building, 4th Floor  
Second and D Streets, SW  
Washington, DC 20515-6925

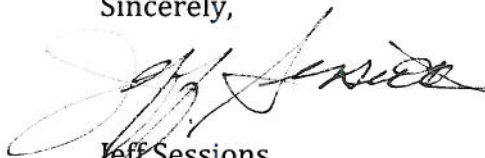
Dear Dr. Elmendorf:

Outlays for the Social Security Disability Insurance program (DI) have grown rapidly in recent years reflecting large increases in the number of claimants. However, program revenues have not kept pace, leaving the program in financial disarray. As CBO's March 2012 baseline illustrates, the DI trust fund will be exhausted in 2016 and unable to pay full benefits. Without reform, public pressure to use general revenue transfers to pay disability benefits will be extraordinary and will drain critical resources away from other federal priorities. I am concerned about the long-term sustainability of the Social Security disability insurance program and its impact on the federal budget, and I am looking for ways to control its growth and target its spending most effectively.

For this reason, I respectfully request that CBO conduct a study examining the recent growth in DI participation and spending and the factors that have driven that growth. The CBO study should include the effects of the recent recession, changes in federal policy, and longer-term changes in the socio-demographic characteristics of the work force. In addition, the study should discuss a range of policy solutions to the program's fiscal imbalance such as changes in program eligibility, benefits, administration, and ways to promote work among DI beneficiaries and help them remain in the workforce.

This report would be most useful if CBO could present it to the Congress no later than July 2012. If you have any questions relating to this request, please contact Tori Gorman (4-0857).

Sincerely,



Jeff Sessions  
US Senator