

United States Senate

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Andrew Saul
Commissioner, Social Security Administration
6401 Security Boulevard
3100 West High Rise
Baltimore, MD 21235-0001

Commissioner Saul,

We write to clarify our congressional intent following the passage of S. 578, the *ALS Disability Insurance Access Act* (Public Law No: 116-250), waiving the five-month waiting period for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) payments for those diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).

In December 2020, following passage of the bill, we heard from the Social Security Administration that people with medically determined ALS who are currently within the waiting period are expected to continue waiting to receive their benefits.

The five-month waiting period for SSDI benefits is cruel given the speed and severity of the disease. The purpose of S. 578 was to ensure that no one with a medically determined ALS diagnosis is waiting for their benefits. Our intent is clear: beginning on the date of enactment of S. 578, no one with ALS should be on a SSDI waiting list and all patients with medically determined ALS should receive their much-needed SSDI benefits immediately upon approval.

We urge SSA to implement S. 578 in accordance with legislative intent. We appreciate your attention to this important matter, and we look forward to working with you to ensure smooth and timely implementation of this legislation.

Sincerely,



Sheldon Whitehouse
U.S. Senator, Rhode Island



Tom Cotton
U.S. Senator, Arkansas



Chris Coons
U.S. Senator, Delaware



Mike Braun
U.S. Senator, Indiana