

from Social Security, the fugitive was found, put in custody and the illegal benefits stopped.

In another case, a person wanted for shooting was wanted since 1992. Through the information provided by Social Security, this individual was located in Virginia. Before we could even send officers down to extradite, he put himself on a bus and surrendered to our officers in Newark. The suspension of his SSI benefits was that strong of an encouragement. The partnership that Social Security and law enforcement has developed has proven to be a tremendous success, both in terms of taking hardened criminals off our streets and saving our taxpayers' hard-earned money.

Sheriff Fontoura of the Essex County Sheriff's office and I urge you to continue and expand this information partnership between law enforcement and Social Security Administration. The 52 percent clearance rate that our Department has achieved with the information supplied by SSA is notable only in that it underscores the potential for further success in expanding the mandate to use Title II information.

There are those who would portray horror stories of law enforcement that bring wheel-chaired elderly into custody for minor infractions using Title II information. Let me assure the Committee that this is farthest from the truth. The thrust of our efforts is locating the violent offender who is a fugitive from justice, not the incarceration of somebody for traffic tickets.

The laws associated with the use of this information, local protocols and our professionalism will protect this from happening. Expansion of using Title II information will allow for a broader base of information to be shared, and the success stories that I mentioned before will increase 100-fold. Government should not underwrite a legal sanctuary of information to protect fleeing felons. The people of Essex County, New Jersey and this Nation deserve better. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Dough follows:]

Statement of John D. Dough, Chief, Essex County Sheriff's Office, Newark, New Jersey

Good morning, Chairman Shaw, Ranking Member Matsui and Committee members. My name is John D. Dough and I am the Chief of the Essex County (New Jersey) Sheriff's Office. It is my privilege to address you today on behalf of Sheriff Armando Fontoura who is currently hosting "National Police Week" ceremonies in Newark, New Jersey.

The Essex County Sheriff's Department wholeheartedly supports and endorses the efforts of the Social Security Administration and its Office of the Inspector General in maintaining the integrity of Social Security. More specifically, the assistance that the Inspector General's Office offers local law enforcement in general, and our department in particular, is invaluable in our efforts to identify, locate and arrest fleeing felons.

The population of Essex County is over 800,000 rising to over 1,000,000 during workdays. The state's largest city—Newark—is within the County and we are just 5 miles from New York City. Unfortunately, the County has a high level of violent crime; in fact, one out of every four violent crimes in the State of New Jersey occurs in Essex County. As successful as law enforcement in Essex County has been in arresting violent offenders, our criminal justice system is flooded with criminal warrants for those who have failed to appear, skipped bail or who have been indicted but not apprehended. Consequently, we have over 20,000 warrants still outstanding of which half are criminal warrants. The Department receives over 1,100 warrants monthly from the courts.

Felons are notorious for not being truthful in their bail information as to their addresses and next of kin. And, while the fugitive is doing his or her best to keep