

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 22, 2018

Commissioner Phyllis Smith
Regional Commissioner
Social Security Administration
Regional Public Affairs Office
600 West Madison Street, Floor 10
Chicago, Illinois 60661

Dear Commissioner Smith:

We join together today to express our ongoing concern over the Social Security Administration's (SSA) planned closing of the Mitchell Street Field Office in Milwaukee.

We continue to believe it is essential that residents of Milwaukee's Southside, which is home to the largest Latino community in the state, continue to have access to in-person services in their neighborhood if SSA proceeds with its plan to close the Mitchell Street location. An average of 2,200 residents visit the Mitchell Street Field Office in person each month. While we understand that SSA intends to serve those 2,200 visitors per month via other existing Milwaukee Field Office locations, we question the viability of that plan given the transportation limitations and language barriers that many of these residents face.

Our concern is shared by the community. There has been an outpouring of concern by local stakeholders in response to SSA's announced plan to close the Mitchell Street Office. With that concern has come a strongly expressed desire to find an alternative Southside location.

From your responses, we understand that the current Mitchell Street Office has safety and accessibility issues that have prompted the move and SSA has been working with GSA to find an alternative space that meets SSA's requirements. With Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett's encouragement, we ask that you formally review the former Forest Home Library located at 1432 West Forest Avenue as a possible alternative SSA Field Office location. We also ask that you come prepared to discuss this and other viable options at our upcoming meeting on March 5, 2018 at the Office of Alderman Jose Perez. In order to meet SSA's tight timeline for the planned closure of the Mitchell Street Office, we have asked Alderman Perez to expand that meeting to include our representatives as well as the offices of Mayor Barrett, State Senator Tim Carpenter, State Representative JoCasta Zamarripa, and Milwaukee Supervisor Peggy West.

Thank you for your consideration of our requests. We look forward to meeting with members of SSA staff to work together to ensure that residents of Milwaukee's Southside continue to have access to a neighborhood location where they can easily access in-person SSA services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gwen Moore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tammy Baldwin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator