

## Eshoo Applauds Committee Passage of Social Security Number Protection Legislation

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — Rep. Anna G. Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, applauded today's passage of H.R. 1078, the Social Security Number Protection Act, by the House Energy and Commerce Committee and stressed the need for Congress to act quickly on this legislation.

"Our Social Security numbers can be used to access everything from confidential medical records to our financial histories," Eshoo said. "While the use of Social Security numbers offers convenience for our own personal use, they expose us to financial and personal risk if they wind up in the wrong hands."

H.R. 1078 requires the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), in consultation with the Attorney General and Commissioner of Social Security, to promulgate regulations restricting the sale and purchase of Social Security numbers. It further directs the FTC to ensure that its regulations are broad enough to prevent these numbers from being used to commit crimes, such as fraud or deception, while providing exemptions for legitimate purposes such as public health services and law enforcement.

Eshoo highlighted the growing threat of identity theft, including the recent theft of personal information of nearly 27 million Veterans and her own experiences, as motivation to see this bill enacted.

"As someone who has experienced the theft of my Social Security number, which was then used to file a fraudulent tax return in my name, I know first-hand about the disastrous consequences that can result from the theft and misuse of one's Social Security number," Eshoo said. "I can tell you there is nothing more chilling than to know someone has access to such vital personal information."

The bill will now be considered by the House Ways and Means Committee prior to moving to the House floor for consideration.

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