

S. 2492, Ending Improper Payments to Deceased People Act

As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on May 15,

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2025	2025-2029	2025-2034
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	*	*
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	*	*
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	0	*	not estimated
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2035?	No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply? Yes	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2035?	No	Mandate Effects	
		Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No
* = between -\$500,000 and \$500,000.			

S. 2492 would permanently require the Social Security Administration (SSA) to share all of its data on deaths with the Do Not Pay program—a program administered by the Department of the Treasury that allows agencies to identify ineligible recipients by checking various databases before payments are made. Under current law, that requirement expires on December 27, 2026.

SSA collects information on deaths and maintains a record of all deaths reported to the agency, dating to 1936. SSA has more than 142 million death records that contain the deceased person’s name, Social Security number, date of birth, and date of death, including 40 million records of deaths reported by states. SSA uses those data to administer its programs and shares the information with other agencies that administer federal benefit programs.

SSA provides the complete death file (also known as the full file of death information) to eight federal agencies, including the Internal Revenue Service, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and the Department of Defense. Other agencies that pay federal benefits can access that information using the Do Not Pay program.

See also

[CBO’s Cost Estimates Explained](#), [CBO Describes Its Cost-Estimating Process](#), [Glossary](#)



The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260) directed SSA to make the complete death file available to the Do Not Pay program through December 27, 2026. Before that law was enacted, the Do Not Pay program did not have access to the complete death file. After December 27, 2026, the Do Not Pay program will not include data on the 40 million deaths reported by states.

CBO expects that the expanded availability of information on deaths reduces the amount of mistaken payments. However, the agencies making the largest benefit payments already use the full file of death information, so the availability of that data through the Do Not Pay program is unlikely to significantly reduce payments to deceased people. In addition, the Department of the Treasury has mechanisms to recover improper payments that are identified after the fact, so many such payments are already recovered. For those reasons, CBO estimates that enacting S. 2492 would reduce direct spending by an insignificant amount.

Because the bill would extend current policy, CBO estimates that implementing it would increase agency administrative costs by an insignificant amount. Such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Noah Meyerson and Matthew Pickford. The estimate was reviewed by Christina Hawley Anthony, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phillip L. Swagel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Phillip L. Swagel
Director, Congressional Budget Office