Exhibit 15

Refer to:

S9H: SSA-2017-001087

April 3, 2019



Mr. Christopher Keough Robert S. Strauss Building 1333 New Hampshire Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20036 ckeough@akingump.com

Dear Mr. Keough:

This letter is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for the Supplemental Security Income Displays (SSID) (i.e., copies of the SSIDs, active and inactive, including computation history field and payment history field) concerning the 433 deceased individuals identified in your initial FOIA request (AR9240).

Per our August 14, 2018 meeting, State death information is exempt from disclosure under the FOIA. 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(3); 42 U.S.C. § 405(r)(6). Therefore, we are only able to provide the SSIDs of 316 deceased individuals for whom we have acceptable proofs of death in our records.

Enclosed are the SSIDs, both active and inactive, of the 316 deceased individuals for whom we have acceptable proofs of death in our records (941 pages).

Exemption 3

Under the FOIA Exemption 3, we redacted one occurrence of information that is protected from disclosure by the U.S. Public Health Service's (PHS) regulations. PHS regulations govern the disclosure of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Patient records. The FOIA does not require disclosure when another law requires confidentiality. 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(3); 42 C.F.R. § 2.15.

Exemption 6

Additionally throughout the enclosure, we redacted information that concerned third parties pursuant to the FOIA Exemption 6. While the enclosed SSIDs concern deceased individuals, they often contain information about third parties. When we receive a request from a member of the public to release personal information about another individual from our records, we must balance the individual's privacy interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing the information. We must determine whether disclosure would affect a personal privacy interest. Individuals clearly have a substantial personal privacy interest in the personal details furnished to the government. On the other hand, the only public interest we must consider is whether the information sought would shed light on the way an agency performs its statutory duties. We may not consider the identity of the requester or the purpose for which the information is requested. While the public has an interest in knowing how the Social Security Administration administers the Social Security Act, disclosing records containing personal

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information about named individuals would not shed light on how the agency performs its statutory duties. Therefore, disclosing this information would be a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, and the FOIA (5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6)) does not require disclosure.

Thank you for your payment and your patience as we processed your request. Please know that we are also mailing a copy of this response letter and a CD containing the responsive documents. The CD is password-protected. You will receive a separate letter with the password.

If you have questions, or would like further assistance with your request, you may contact our FOIA Public Liaison by email at <u>FOIA.Public.Liaison@ssa.gov</u>; by phone at 410-965-1727, by choosing Option 2; or facsimile at 410-966-0869.

You may also contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration for dispute resolution services. OGIS is an entity outside of the Social Security Administration that offers mediation services to resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road – OGIS, College Park, MD 20740-6001; email at ogis@nara.gov; telephone at 202-741-5770; toll-free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

If you disagree with this decision, you may file a written appeal with the Executive Director for the Office of Privacy and Disclosure, Social Security Administration, G-401 WHR, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21235. Your appeal must be postmarked or electronically transmitted to FOIA.Public.Liaison@ssa.gov within 90 days of the date of our response to your initial request. Please mark the envelope or subject line with "Freedom of Information Appeal."

Sincerely,

Monica Chyn

Acting Freedom of Information Officer

Enclosure

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