



# Comments on Proposed Regulations REG-117270-25: Trump Accounts Under Section 530A

*Jin Huang, Margaret Clancy, Michael Sherraden, Lissa Johnson, and Stephen Roll*

On behalf of the Center for Social Development (CSD) at Washington University in St. Louis, we submit these comments on proposed regulations (Docket REG-117270-25) governing the Trump Accounts under Section 530A of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). CSD has conducted research on Child Development Accounts (CDAs) for more than 30 years, including the SEED for Oklahoma Kids (SEED OK) policy experiment, an 18-year randomized, controlled trial testing children's accounts in the United States. This research has informed CDA policies affecting more than 30 million children globally.

We previously submitted comments in response to Treasury Notice 2025-68, recommending automatic enrollment as essential to the policy's success. These new comments focus specifically on automatic enrollment as addressed in the proposed regulations and provide recommendations for regulatory amendments to implement automatic enrollment within the existing legal framework.

**Our central recommendation is that Treasury should implement automatic enrollment for all eligible children.** These comments identify three complementary pathways for doing so: coordination with the Social Security Administration (SSA) upon SSN issuance, state-submitted elections using existing birth-record data infrastructure, and Treasury authorization of states as enrollment agents. Each pathway is legally plausible and consistent with the Treasury Secretary's existing authority under Sections 530A of the IRC.

## I. The Proposed Regulations Recognize the Treasury Secretary's Authority to Open Accounts

The proposed regulations correctly recognize that *the Treasury Secretary holds ultimate authority to open initial Trump Accounts*. Section 530A(b)(2)(C)(i), as enacted by Section 70204 of Public Law 119-21, authorizes the Secretary to establish accounts for eligible individuals. This authority is implemented in Section 1.530A-1(c)(1)(ii), which provides that if no authorized individual has made an election, the Secretary may do so, provided the Secretary has sufficient information to identify the eligible individual.

These provisions suggest that proactive account opening by the Secretary is contemplated by the statute and regulations, even if the current regulatory text does not yet supply a fully articulated automatic-enrollment framework.

## II. Treasury's Identified Barriers to Automatic Enrollment

The proposed regulations assert that Treasury will generally be unable to open accounts on behalf of eligible children, citing two principal barriers. The first is IRC Section 6103, which prohibits the use of IRS tax- return data without explicit statutory authorization. The second is the absence of sufficient nontax information to identify eligible children.

Treasury's conclusion that automatic enrollment is therefore not feasible may not fully account for the pathways described in these comments. These comments identify two complementary approaches: (a) federal coordination with the SSA, which could provide a mechanism for identifying eligible children without implicating Section 6103 or necessarily requiring congressional action, and (b) identification of eligible children through state-based pathways, especially data infrastructure that already exists at state vital-records offices. Together these approaches address both barriers Treasury identified. However, we recognize that Treasury also identified additional operational considerations, including responsible-party designation, financial-institution onboarding requirements, and related compliance obligations, which may require further administrative development and which these comments address in part in the implementation design discussion below.

## III. The SSA as the Solution

### A. The Primary Source of Eligibility Information

The resolution lies in the structure of Section 530A itself. Under Section 530A(b)(2)(A), an eligible individual is defined as a person for whom an SSN has been issued before the date of the initial Trump Account election.



SSN issuance therefore establishes the identity condition required for eligibility under Section 530A. SSA maintains the authoritative administrative record of SSN issuance, making it the primary federal source of information necessary for the Secretary to exercise the fallback authority already recognized in Section 1.530A-1(c)(1)(ii).

## B. SSA Data Are Not Subject to Section 6103

Section 6103, Treasury's first barrier, does not apply to SSA data. Section 6103 protects only "returns" and "return information" as defined in Section 6103(b). They are limited to information derived from or related to federal tax filings held by the IRS.

SSA administrative data are governed primarily by Section 1106 of the Social Security Act, a separate legal framework. Treasury receiving SSN notification from SSA is therefore categorically different from Treasury using IRS tax-return data.

Using SSA data would therefore avoid the Section 6103 concern, but to be legal, such disclosure would also need to satisfy SSA's own disclosure framework under Section 1106 of the Social Security Act and applicable Privacy Act requirements.

## C. Legal Authority for SSA–Treasury Coordination

The legal pathway for this coordination exists under current law. Section 530A(b)(2)(C)(i) authorizes the Secretary to open accounts for eligible individuals, and SSA maintains the administrative records that would give that authority practical effect. Establishing the necessary coordination framework would require administrative action by both Treasury and SSA, including development of an appropriate legal basis for SSA to transmit SSN issuance data to Treasury for this purpose. CSD believes this pathway is administratively achievable and encourages Treasury to work with SSA to evaluate the legal and operational steps required.

# IV. Implementation Design

## A. Revise the IRS–SSA Coordination Framework

IRS and SSA currently maintain interagency data-sharing arrangements for tax enforcement and identity verification. Treasury and SSA could expand such coordination to include notification for Trump Account opening at SSN issuance.

Such expansion would need to satisfy SSA's disclosure framework, including the requirements of Section 1106 of the Social Security Act. CSD believes this pathway is worth pursuing and encourages Treasury and SSA to evaluate the steps required.

## B. Proposed Amendment to Section 1.530A-1(c)(1)(ii)

The proposed regulations could be amended to specify the mechanism through which the Secretary obtains sufficient information to exercise the fallback account-opening authority.

We propose the following addition to Section 1.530A-1(c)(1)(ii):

For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may be deemed to have sufficient information to make an election with respect to an eligible individual upon receiving notification from the

Social Security Administration of the issuance of a Social Security number to such individual, pursuant to an interagency coordination agreement established between the Secretary and the Commissioner of Social Security under this section and Section 1106 of the Social Security Act. Such notification shall not constitute a disclosure of return information within the meaning of Section 6103.

## C. SSA Notification Is Not IRS Return Information

For clarity, the final rule's preamble could confirm that SSA notification of SSN issuance does not constitute tax-return information under Section 6103, as SSA data are governed by Section 1106 of the Social Security Act rather than by the tax-confidentiality provisions related to IRS return information.

## D. Layered Enrollment Design: Preserving Opt-In While Adding Automatic Enrollment

*Layer One:* Any authorized individual may open an account at any time through December 31 of the year following birth using Form 4547 or the electronic portal, with no regulatory modification required.

*Layer Two:* Beginning January 1 of the second calendar year following the child's birth year, any eligible child for whom no account has been opened under Layer One would be enrolled automatically. Under this layer, the Secretary, having received SSA notification of SSN issuance, could automatically open an initial Trump Account at a Treasury-designated trustee on behalf of the eligible child.

This approach ensures that every eligible child receives approximately 12 to 23 months to open an account voluntarily before automatic enrollment occurs. It also aligns automatic enrollment with the annual tax calendar, enabling Treasury and trustees to plan and execute enrollment on a predictable annual cycle.

Treasury may also wish to establish a temporary custodial structure during the initial enrollment period to ensure compliance with applicable financial-institution onboarding, customer-identification, and anti-money-laundering requirements until a responsible party is confirmed.

Following automatic account opening, the designated trustee would notify the child's parent or legal guardian within 30 days, using contact information available through SSA or other administrative channels. States could support this outreach through their existing data infrastructure. The notified family would have 90 days to opt out of enrollment.

## V. State-Based Enrollment Pathways

The SSA coordination pathway described above provides the foundation for automatic enrollment and is our suggested best pathway for achieving automatic enrollment for this long-term national policy. A second, less desirable pathway is for automatic enrollment to be implemented through state-level administrative infrastructure. Each of the two pathways below complements the federal SSA coordination pathway, which remains essential for full coverage. The layered enrollment design described in Section IV.D would apply to each pathway described below.

## A. State-Submitted Elections on Behalf of Eligible Children

The proposed regulations define “authorized individual” to include a parent or legal guardian acting on behalf of an eligible child. Treasury may wish to consider whether state agencies could be recognized as authorized to submit elections on behalf of eligible children under appropriate circumstances, using administrative data already held within state systems.

The predicate data infrastructure for such a pathway already exists at the state level. Under the federal Enumeration at Birth program, jointly administered by SSA and state vital-records offices, SSN issuance data flow back to state vital-records offices as part of the standard confirmation process. State vital-records offices therefore hold, for virtually every child born in a hospital setting, the child’s SSN, name, birth date, and parent or guardian contact information at or shortly after the time of SSN issuance.

A state agency in possession of this information could, in principle, submit a Section 530A election on behalf of the eligible child, triggering account opening by the Secretary or a designated trustee. Under this model, the state acts as the enrollment trigger while Treasury retains control over account opening, trustee assignment, and custodial administration. This preserves Treasury’s oversight role while distributing the data identification task to state agencies that are better positioned to capture it at birth.

Two conditions would need to be met for this pathway to be lawfully implemented. First, Treasury would need to issue a regulatory amendment recognizing state agencies as authorized submitters of elections under Section 530A and clarifying the federal program authority under which states may use SSN data held in vital records systems for this purpose.

Second, each participating state would need to enact legislation or issue appropriate executive authorization permitting the relevant state agency to use vital records data for Trump Account enrollment. The field of early childhood wealth-building policy has established precedent for this kind of inter-agency data sharing at the state level, where state health and human services agencies have been authorized by statute to transmit birth record data to state treasurers for administration of children’s accounts programs. Two successful examples of this inter-agency transfer are noteworthy: The State of Pennsylvania uses it for Keystone Scholars, and the State of California uses it for CalKIDS.

Together, these two enabling actions could allow willing states to begin enrolling newborns automatically at or near birth. The layered enrollment design described in Section IV.D would apply to accounts opened through this pathway in the same manner as under the federal SSA pathway.

## B. Treasury Authorization of States as Formal Enrollment Agents

A related variant of the state-based approach would involve Treasury formally designating state agencies as enrollment agents under Section 530A(b)(2)(C)(i), authorizing them to not merely submit elections but to open Trump Accounts directly on behalf of eligible children. Under this model, state agencies would act as Treasury’s agents in opening accounts at the Treasury-designated trustee, using birth record data they already hold.

The practical difference from the pathway described in Section V.A is the administrative depth: States would bear more of the enrollment processing function, while Treasury’s role would be primarily regulatory, oversight-focused, and custodial. Accounts opened under this pathway would still be opened at the Treasury-designated trustee in the initial stage, consistent with the clearing fund and custodian network model that CSD has proposed for program-wide implementation (see [CSD Policy Brief 25-60](#)). The same layered enrollment timing and opt-out protections described in Section IV.D would apply.

The enabling framework Treasury would need to issue is substantially the same as that for the state-submitted elections pathway described above, making the two approaches administratively compatible and potentially implementable under a single regulatory framework.

Treasury should also develop parallel implementation guidance for the state-based pathways described in Section V, including the enabling rule necessary to authorize state agency participation under Section 530A.

## VI. Conclusion

Treasury may wish to review the proposed regulations as a whole to identify conforming amendments necessary to ensure that provisions governing eligibility definitions, election methods, responsible-party designation, and account governing instruments are internally consistent with an automatic enrollment framework.

The same SSA coordination strategy described in these comments could also be considered for enrolling currently eligible children under age 18 at the time of program launch. Through a one-time coordination with SSA, Treasury could identify children with existing SSNs who have not yet had accounts opened.

## Supporting Research

The evidence supporting automatic enrollment is substantial and consistent across multiple children’s account programs and research contexts. We refer Treasury to the following CSD publications for supporting evidence:

### **A Strategy for Implementing Automatic Enrollment in Trump Accounts**

<https://csd.wustl.edu/25-50/>

### **Design and Delivery of Trump Accounts: Clearing Fund and Custodian Network With Automatic Enrollment**

<https://csd.wustl.edu/25-60/>

### **Policy Design for Multiple Funding Flows Into Trump Accounts**

<https://csd.wustl.edu/25-62/>

### **The Case for Automatic Enrollment in Trump Accounts**

<https://csd.wustl.edu/25-51/>

CSD also draws Treasury’s attention to another design concern at the end of the growth period: At age 18, Trump Accounts convert to traditional IRA treatment and balances become countable assets for means-tested programs such as Supplemental Security Income. This may, in turn, result in Trump Account enrollees losing eligibility for these means-tested programs if their Trump Account funds exceed programs’ asset limits. Treasury should

consider whether regulatory guidance can address this concern, and CSD encourages Congress to provide a permanent categorical disregard for Trump Account assets in means-tested programs.

## Contacts

CSD stands ready to work with Treasury to develop a legal and operational framework that addresses the additional requirements identified above and to support implementation of an automatic-enrollment design. Such a design would ensure that all eligible American children receive a Trump Account. CSD respectfully requests the opportunity to meet with Treasury and IRS staff to discuss the recommendations in these comments and to offer technical assistance as the implementation framework for Trump Accounts is developed.

**Jin Huang:** [jhuang23@wustl.edu](mailto:jhuang23@wustl.edu), 314-566-1494;

**Michael Sherraden:** [sherrad@wustl.edu](mailto:sherrad@wustl.edu), 314-740-8214



The **Center for Social Development** celebrates over 30 years of building knowledge and creating impact. A hub for implementing and testing applied social innovations that broaden well-being for individuals, families and communities, CSD incubates ideas that can be scaled to reach millions and creates new fields of study to enable all people to reach their potential. We also train emerging scholars and practitioners in the effective conduct of engaged social-science research. We invite you to join us in the work of building a just, inclusive, and sustainable future. [Learn more!](#)



## Center for Social Development

**BROWN SCHOOL AT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**

### **Center for Social Development**

Washington University  
MSC 1196-251-46  
One Brookings Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63130  
[csd.wustl.edu](http://csd.wustl.edu)

### **Follow us!**

[Facebook.com/csdwustl](https://www.facebook.com/csdwustl)  
[X.com/csdwustl](https://twitter.com/csdwustl)  
[LinkedIn.com/company/csdwustl](https://www.linkedin.com/company/csdwustl)  
[YouTube.com/@centerforsocialdevelopment698](https://www.youtube.com/@centerforsocialdevelopment698)