

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A directory server comprising:
2 a processor; and
3 a computer readable medium coupled to the processor, the computer
4 readable medium comprising code, executable by the processor, to implement a
5 method comprising:
6 receiving, by the directory server from an authentication requestor, an
7 authentication process message associated with an authentication request comprising
8 an account identifier, and information regarding a prior authentication method on the
9 account identifier and a current authentication method for the account identifier
10 associated with a transaction, the transaction is a current transaction and the current
11 authentication method for the account identifier including a signature for the transaction,
12 the information regarding the prior authentication method on the account identifier is
13 represented by a first value and the current authentication method for the account
14 identifier is represented by a second value, wherein the first value and the second value
15 are appended to the authentication process message, and wherein the current
16 authentication method involves the authentication requestor authenticating a user of the
17 account identifier in the transaction, wherein the authentication requestor is a service
18 provider;
19 verifying, by the directory server, the signature of the information;
20 modifying, by the directory server, an authentication response to include
21 the verification of the signature; and
22 transmitting, by the directory server, the authentication response to the
23 authentication requestor thereby bypassing an access control server for the transaction.

1 2. A method comprising:
2 receiving, by a directory server from an authentication requestor, an
3 authentication process message associated with an authentication request comprising
4 an account identifier, and information regarding a prior authentication method on the
5 account identifier and a current authentication method for the account identifier
6 associated with a transaction, the transaction is a current transaction and the current
7 authentication method for the account identifier including a signature for the transaction,
8 the information regarding the prior authentication method on the account identifier is
9 represented by a first value and the current authentication method for the account
10 identifier is represented by a second value, wherein the first value and the second value

11 are appended to the authentication process message, and wherein the current
12 authentication method involves the authentication requestor authenticating a user of the
13 account identifier in the transaction, wherein the authentication requestor is a service
14 provider;
15 verifying, by the directory server, the signature of the information;
16 modifying, by the directory server, an authentication response to include
17 the verification of the signature; and
18 transmitting, by the directory server, the authentication response to the
19 authentication requestor thereby bypassing an access control server for the transaction.