

NRLN President's Forum – New Congress, New NRLN Legislative Agenda

Today, January 3, 2023, marks the beginning of the new 118th Congress (2023 & 2024). The NRLN has posted its 2023 Legislative Agenda on the NRLN website at www.nrln.org. To read the updated document, click on the Action Network tab and select Legislative Agenda from the dropdown menu.

As I stated in a December 19 email, the NRLN Board identified protecting retirees from pension de-risking, converting a retirement plan to insurance company annuities, as one of its top 2023 legislative priorities with Congress in 2023. We also want to convince members of Congress to save Delphi salaried retirees' pensions by reintroducing and passing the Susan Muffley Act. Other top priorities for retiree income protection include Social Security Protection, Protection of Retirees in Mergers, Acquisitions and Spin-offs, Protecting Vested Pension Benefits from Plan Asset Transfers and Bankruptcy Reform.

With regard to retiree health benefits the top priorities are: End Taxpayer Rebates to Healthcare Insurance Industry, Stop ACO REACH from Destroying Medicare. Protect Medicare/Medigap/Advantage Benefits, Introduce and pass Health Coverage Tax Credits (HCTC) for 2022 and future years thus helping Delphi and Avaya NRLN members. Reduce the Cost of Prescription Drugs and Other Cost Reductions for Retirees.

Bills that were introduced in the 117th Congress died at the end of 2022. The Legislative Action Priorities Committee will be identifying the key bills the NRLN supported which did not pass. I will send letters to Representatives and Senators to ask them to reintroduce the bills.

As you know, in the November midterm elections the Republicans won control of the House for the first time since the 115th Congress. Democrats retained control of the Senate, expanding their majority to 51-49 (with a coalition of 48 Democrats and three independents who caucus with the Democrats).

We are waiting to see who the new Chairs and Ranking Members will be in the House for the Committees which receive bills on retirement issues. We anticipate there will be some different Chairs and Ranking Members on Senate Committees that handle retirement bills.

Learning the changes will be important to targeting their offices when we resume the NRLN Fly-in February 26 – March 1, after a two-year hiatus due to COVID. Any NRLN member interested in participating in the Fly-in, other than NRLN Board Members and Association and Chapter Leaders who have already been contacted, should send an email to Ed Beltram, VP-Communications, at contact@nrln.org.

Sunday, February 26, is the day for airline flights for attendees who live too far away for a Monday morning flight to Washington, DC. The NRLN Board will meet from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on Monday at the YoTel Hotel near Capitol Hill. Any attendee is welcome to view Board proceedings. At 1:00 p.m. presentations will begin on lobbying issues and there may be a guest speaker.

Tuesday and Wednesday (until time to depart of airport or train) will be devoted to advocating NRLN issues on Capitol Hill. All attendees are expected to make advance appointments with their Representative, Senators or members of their staffs.

The Fly-in will be a very important way to communicate our top 2023 Legislative Agenda priorities to lawmakers. I hope you will join us.

Bill Kadereit, President
National Retiree Legislative Network