



SENIORS ADVOCATE



PUBLISHED BY PROTECTSENIORS.ORG

VOL. 1. NO. 1

NOVEMBER 2006

WELCOME MESSAGE

Dear ProtectSeniors.Org Members:

Welcome to the first edition of the ProtectSeniors.Org newsletter, named Seniors Advocate. It's been a busy year in our Nation's Capitol. By the time this article appears the mid-term elections will be over and new leaders elected to lead the 110th Congress. This is important because these new leaders will control the country's legislative agenda and whether or not our issues are addressed.

This is an exciting time for us. It is also a critical time for retirees and our efforts to pass earned healthcare benefits legislation. Back in March, ProtectSeniors.Org was

formed in partnership with the Association of BellTel Retirees. Together one of our initial goals is to lobby Congress to pass earned health benefits legislation in the form of H.R. 1322, the Emergency Retiree Health Benefits Protection Act.

H.R. 1322, would accomplish the following:

Prohibit group health plans from making post-retirement reductions in retiree benefits;



by PAUL MILLER
Executive Director

Require plans to adopt provisions barring post-retirement cuts in retiree health benefits;

Require employers to restore benefits reduced after retirement;

Provides an exemption for employers who are unable to restore benefits restore benefits due to a level of substantial business hardship to be determined by the Secretary of Labor; and,

Create a loan guarantee program to assist employers in restoring retiree health benefits.

As a new lobbying organization ProtectSeniors.Org has faced a few hurdles.

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Seven State, 2,000 Mile Caravan to Protect Health Care Plans of 20 Million Baby Boomers and Retirees

An estimated 20 million baby boomers and retirees in the United States are baring the brunt of recent major employers' decisions to eliminate and downsize the corporate health benefits long promised and earned during their working years.

And the most shocking aspect of the growing national trend is that it is perfectly legal for U.S. companies to take away those promised health benefits.

In 2006, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a General Motors decision to rescind benefits earned by retired GM managers and their spouses.

Despite the promises and employment contracts retirees were guaranteed, they have been forced to pay more of their medical expenses out of pocket, return to the workforce.

ProtectSeniors.Org, is lobbying Congress on retirees' behalf; spearheading efforts for the passage of HR 1322, the **Emergency Retiree Health Benefits Protection Act**. If enacted, the law would make it illegal for employers to either reduce or cancel earned health benefits for

retirees. It would also require corporations who have already slashed benefits to reinstate them to their former workers.

With so many millions of American retirees and Baby Boomers potentially at risk, this fall, ProtectSeniors.Org organized a 2,000 mile billboard campaign that visited dozens of towns and cities in seven states and the streets of Washington, D.C. The campaign's goal was to raise the awareness of elected officials in key Congressional districts as well the general public regarding the future of retiree health care plans.

During the campaign the gigantic mobile billboard traveled through the streets and highways of New York, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C, New Jersey and Connecticut with a message to the Members of the U.S. Congress. The message read **"Members of Congress, America's Retirees Are Watching...Pay Attention! We Vote!"**

Over the course of the campaign, local and regional media outlets covered the ProtectSeniors.Org campaign, including local



ABC and CBS affiliates in Baltimore and Norfolk, and cable news outlets in Connecticut, New Jersey and New York.

Retirees, who have expressed growing concerns about the new corporate behavior that rescinds earned benefits, joined the caravan along the way. Protect Seniors.Org is a non-profit organization established to fight for retiree benefit protection on Capitol Hill.

For more information about Protectseniors.org campaigns on behalf of America's retirees call 1-800-398-3044 or visit www.protectseniors.org

WELCOME MESSAGE

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I believe given a new Congress we will be in a position to overcome the remaining obstacles. Our first challenge has been acquiring bipartisan support for our bill. To date, 79 Democrats have agreed to co-sponsor H.R. 1322, while zero Republicans have signed on. Members of the ProtectSeniors.Org Board of Directors and their lobbying team spent the past nine months reaching out to Republicans in an effort to gain their support.

I'm very pleased with our efforts to date. We have had positive responses from several Republicans who have agreed to sit down with us after the elections to discuss our bill and how we can re-introduce it in the new Congress with a bipartisan team.

In addition, ProtectSeniors.Org has met with over 50 members in the House, educating them on the importance of H.R. 1322. Our goal has been to target those members of the House, who have direct jurisdiction over this issue, and to educate them on its importance and impact on the Federal budget should Congress not pass this legislation.

In addition, we have formed a Political Action Committee (PAC). This committee allows us to collect contributions from ProtectSeniors.Org members and then support those Members of Congress who support you and H.R. 1322 specifically. Right before the election the ProtectSeniors.Org PAC distributed \$14,000 to candidates on both sides of the aisle. ProtectSeniors.Org believes we need to be a bipartisan organization. Anything short of that will not allow us to achieve our ultimate goal of passing this critical legislation.

As you can see it's been a very busy, but

productive year for an organization in its infancy stage. With your continued support and participation in ProtectSeniors.Org, I am confident we can pass H.R. 1322 in the new Congress. It's going to take the help of every retiree affected by the loss or potential loss of their healthcare benefits. Let's not wait until you lose the benefits you earned during your working years.

You held up your end of the deal by working long hours for less pay and time off in return for these earned benefits. Together we can hold corporate America responsible by requiring them to hold up

their end of the deal!

I would encourage everyone to get involved with ProtectSeniors.Org. Call us. Fax us. E-mail us. Keep us posted on what's going on in your community. Let's work together to get Congress to finally act on legislation that's way overdue. We can't do it without you. It's strength in numbers. The stronger we are the stronger our voice.

Let's make a statement in the new Congress that retirees have a strong voice and are united! Join the ProtectSeniors.Org team today and help us pass H.R. 1322. Get your friends to join as well.

President of American League of Lobbyist Joins ProtectSeniors.Org

ProtectSeniors.Org was founded in March 2006 with the express purpose of lobbying nationally for health care legislation that guarantees the protection of former corporate retirees' earned benefits.

To become a more effective presence on Capitol Hill, ProtectSeniors.Org hired Paul A. Miller, a long-time Washington lobbyist with an outstanding track record of success, to serve as the group's Executive Director and chief lobbyist.

Miller has been spearheading ProtectSeniors.Org efforts to have the Emergency Retiree Health Benefits Protection Act, passed in Congress. If approved, the law would make it illegal for employers to either reduce or cancel earned health benefits for retirees. It would also require corporations who have already slashed benefits to reinstate them to their former workers.

In addition to his work on behalf of ProtectSeniors.Org, Miller serves as the President of the American League of Lobbyists and has testified before Congress on the issue of Lobbying reform.

Miller also coordinates an annual *Hoops for Hope* charity event that pits members of Congress v. Lobbyists to raise money for children charities in the Washington, D.C. area and has had great success in getting leaders on Capitol Hill to support his *Capitol Pursuit Clothing Drive*, where Congress members and staffers agree to donate business attire to fellow Americans trying to reenter the workforce. In two years, the drive has succeeded in collecting over 13,000 men's and women's business suits to help get Americans back to work.

We welcome Paul Miller to the team and know we have a great leader at the helm.

Here is How To Sign Up to ProtectSeniors.Org

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Suggested Contribution Amount \$100 \$75 \$50 \$25 \$10

other \$ _____ Method of Payment: Check Visa MasterCard

Credit Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Three digit security code: _____ Signature _____

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