



NARFE Advocacy Update

2024 South Carolina Federation Conference

**Presented by John Hatton, Staff Vice President for Policy
and Programs**



Agenda

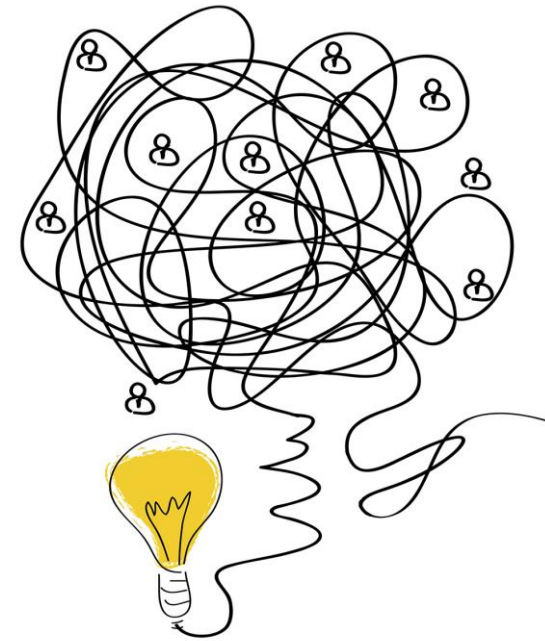
- Advocacy Priorities
- Grassroots Advocacy
- NARFE-PAC Update
- FEDcon24
- Questions & Answers

Advocacy Priorities



Advocacy Positions vs. Priorities

- **Advocacy Positions for 2023-24 (and soon, 2025-26)**
 - Proposals from chapters, federation boards, individuals
 - Developed by Advocacy Committee
 - Recommended to, and approved by, NEB
 - Provides guidance on whether to endorse, support bills
- **Advocacy Priorities**
 - Where to focus limited time, resources
 - Proactive efforts
 - Recommended to, approved by, National President





Overview

- Protect Earned Retirement and Health Benefits
- WEP/GPO Repeal or Reform
- More Accurate COLAs For FERS Retirees
- OPM Customer Service
- Relief from Federal Long Term Care Insurance Premium (FLTCIP) Increases
- Improving Medicare Integration with FEHB
- Federal Pay Increase
- Protecting a Merit-Based Civil Service



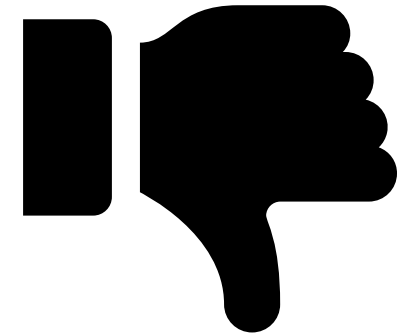
Protect Earned Retirement and Health Benefits (Long Term View)

- ZERO cuts to earned federal retirement and health benefits for federal retirees and employees since 1996
 - Last rollback: Delayed COLAs to federal annuities in FY1994 through FY1996
- Faced substantial budget threats over last 10 to 12 years
 - Eliminating or reducing COLAs
 - Reducing rate of return on TSP G Fund
 - Reducing contributions to health benefits
- Recent losses limited to increased retirement contributions for new hires in 2013/2014



Protect Earned Retirement and Health Benefits

- **Oppose cuts to earned retirement and health benefits**
- **Past proposals include:**
 - Increased contributions toward retirement
 - Reducing rate of return on TSP G fund
 - Reductions to/Elimination of COLAs
 - Elimination of FERS annuity supplement
 - Eliminate FERS entirely
 - Increase employee share of FEHB premiums





Protect Earned Retirement and Health Benefits

- **Debt limit fight was tied to budget negotiations**
 - Agreement reached.
 - Sets top-line numbers for defense, non-defense spending
- **Government funding**
 - 6 of 12 bills passed.
 - Deal reached on remaining 6 (including Defense, Homeland Security, Labor-HHS)
 - Deadline for passage: March 22.
- **Threats to federal benefits averted**
 - Outside organizations, RSC called for additional cuts to federal benefits
 - Nothing included in debt limit deal
 - No fiscal commission



WEP/GPO Repeal or Reform

- Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82/S.597
 - **310 cosponsors in House (as of 3/20/24)**
 - **53 cosponsors in Senate (as of 3/20/24)**
- **We are requesting a House Ways and Means Committee “mark-up” of H.R. 82**
- **Continue to increase cosponsorship for S. 597**





More Accurate COLAs for FERS Retirees

- **Support of the Equal COLA Act, H.R. 866/ S. 3194, ensuring FERS COLAs match the change in consumer prices (and the CSRS COLA)**
 - **50 cosponsors for H.R. 866 as of 3/20/24**
 - **7 cosponsors for S. 3194 as of 3/20/24**
- **If CPI increases above 2%, FERS retirees do not receive full COLA**
 - If between 2% and 3%, FERS COLA = 2%
 - If above 3%, FERS COLA = CPI minus 1%



OPM Customer Service

- **Support improvements to OPM customer service**
 - Congressional oversight of OPM RS
 - Support IT modernization and proper funding
- **NARFE has continued to receive member complaints re: OPM customer service**
 - Inability to connect to OPM
 - Delays processing transactions (e.g., changes to health benefits)
 - Delays starting survivor annuities



OPM Customer Service

- **Progress**
 - **House appropriations committee report**
 - Includes NARFE-drafted language expressing concerns about OPM customer service levels, requests reporting on progress
 - **Senate appropriations committee report**
 - Directs increased funding levels to improving OPM customer service, IT modernization, and implementation of the Postal Service Health Benefits program
 - **OPM piloting online retirement applications later this year**
 - Plans to implement government-wide if successful



FLTCIP Premiums

- **Support efforts to provide relief from premium increases**
- **Premiums Increased, Effective**
 - As high as 86 percent or more
 - Options provided to reduce coverage take no (or less of a) premium increase
 - Previous increases as high as 25 percent (2009), 126 percent (2016)
- **NARFE Requests**
 - Partial refund option – to OPM (July 2022 letter)
 - Rationale: enrollees not given accurate quote, locked into program now
 - OPM declined to provide option. Paid-up limited benefit option, reducing coverage options permitted.
 - Congressional Hearings, Premium Relief



Improve Medicare Integration with FEHB

- **Support policies to reduce health care costs through improved integration of Medicare with FEHB**
 - Maintain choice for retirees re: Medicare Part B enrollment
 - Provide more plan options that provide reimbursement for Medicare Part B premiums, increase reimbursement amounts
 - Ensure FEHB plans benefit from prescription drug prices negotiated by the Department of Health and Human Services for Medicare Part D plans
 - Allow cost savings through Part D integration option to gain benefits, including new ones from Inflation Reduction Act:
 - Drug manufacturer discounts
 - Cap on insulin prices
 - Caps on drug price inflation
 - Caps on out-of-pocket, catastrophic coverage expenses



Improve Medicare Integration with FEHB

- **Updates:**
 - **Medicare Prescription Drug plans rolled out for 2024 Open Season**
 - **Why to Opt Out?**
 - » IRMAA
 - » **Change in Tier Classification. Coverage?**
 - » **Loss of Drug Company discounts**
 - **2025 Call Letter**
 - **“In all instances” language added to “equal to or greater drug coverage” directive**
 - » “FEHB annuitants enrolled in an EGWP must have formulary access to all drugs covered under the corresponding FEHB formulary at the same or lower cost-share than they would have otherwise been responsible for if they enrolled solely in the FEHB plan.”
 - **Member transparency tools**
 - **PSHB Plans revealed**



Federal Pay

- **Support market-rate federal pay increases**
 - 5.2% increase for 2024
 - Parity with military pay raise
 - Based on recent changes in private-sector wages and salaries
 - Biden issued alternative pay plan to provide 4.7% across-the-board increase, plus 0.5% increase to locality pay (signed into law 12/23)
- **For 2025, NARFE supports a 4.5 % increase with 4% across- the board increase, plus .05% increase for locality (market-rate)**
- **President Biden FY25 Budget Proposal includes 2% raise**





Improving Government and Protecting the Merit System

- **Support the Saving the Civil Service Act, H.R. 1002/S.399**
 - Would prohibit return of Schedule F, protect merit based civil service
- **Support H.R. 159/ S. 59, Chance to Compete Act**
 - Would improve cross-agency hiring, expand the use of subject matter experts in the hiring process, and primarily focus on an individual's relevant experience and skills rather than self-ratings and degrees
 - Passed the House 422-2
- **Support additional efforts to modernize federal human capital management**

Grassroots Advocacy



Overview of Activities

- Benchmarks
- Action-letters via campaigns of our priorities (WEP/GPO, Equal COLAs, etc.)
- Phone “banking”
- Social Media
- Letter to the Editor (LTEs)
- Educational videos
- Community events
- Targeted grasstops actions



Legislative Action Center

Push for the Repeal of WEP/GPO,
H.R. 82 Through Twitter ("X")!



 Campaigns  Surveys



Support Repeal of WEP/GPO, S. 597 Through Twitter ("X")!

Support Repeal of WEP/GPO, S. 597 Through Twitter ("X")! We need you to help build support for The Social Security Fairness Act, S.597 which aims to repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), and Government Pension



Benchmarks – Quantitative

NARFE ACTION LETTER BENCHMARKS											
State	Total Action Letters by State (90 days)	Total Members in Each Fed./State	Average Action Letters Per 100 Member by Fed./State	Platinum 45% increase (per 100)	PLATINUM Total 1000 pts	Gold 30% Increase (per 100)	GOLD Total 800 pts	Silver 15% Increase (per 100)	SILVER Total 600 pts	Bronze No Increase, No Decrease (per 100)	BRONZE Total 400 pts
Texas	761	5,785	13.15	19.07	1,103	17.10	989	15.13	875	13.15	761
California	470	10,680	4.40	6.38	682	5.72	611	5.06	541	4.40	470
Florida	416	8,663	4.80	6.96	603	6.24	541	5.52	478	4.80	416
Virginia	346	10,430	3.32	4.81	502	4.31	450	3.81	398	3.32	346
Maryland	296	9,884	2.99	4.34	429	3.89	385	3.44	340	2.99	296
Pennsylvania	285	7,126	4.00	5.80	413	5.20	371	4.60	328	4.00	285
New Jersey	257	3,240	7.93	11.50	373	10.31	334	9.12	296	7.93	257
New York	242	5,039	4.80	6.96	351	6.24	315	5.52	278	4.80	242
Ohio	204	4,021	5.07	7.36	296	6.60	265	5.83	235	5.07	204
North Carolina	198	4,048	4.89	7.09	287	6.36	257	5.63	228	4.89	198
Colorado	180	3,454	5.21	7.56	261	6.77	234	5.99	207	5.21	180
Arizona	172	2,991	5.75	8.34	249	7.48	224	6.61	198	5.75	172
Michigan	161	2,684	6.00	8.70	233	7.80	209	6.90	185	6.00	161
Georgia	157	3,596	4.37	6.33	228	5.68	204	5.02	181	4.37	157
Washington	148	3,977	3.72	5.40	215	4.84	192	4.28	170	3.72	148
Minnesota	141	2,592	5.44	7.89	204	7.07	183	6.26	162	5.44	141
Illinois	131	3,832	3.42	4.96	190	4.44	170	3.93	151	3.42	131
Missouri	130	2,615	4.97	7.21	189	6.46	169	5.72	150	4.97	130
Iowa	118	1,886	6.26	9.07	171	8.13	153	7.20	136	6.26	118
Massachusetts	112	2,418	4.63	6.72	162	6.02	146	5.33	129	4.63	112
South Carolina	92	1,931	4.76	6.91	133	6.19	120	5.48	106	4.76	92
Tennessee	85	1,909	4.45	6.46	123	5.79	111	5.12	98	4.45	85
Oregon	84	2,036	4.13	5.98	122	5.36	109	4.74	97	4.13	84



Benchmarks - Qualitative



GRASSROOTS BENCHMARKS

Relationship building with members of Congress and their staff:	Platinum 100 pts	Gold 80 pts	Silver 60 pts	Bronze 40 pts
Member of Congress attends NARFE Federation/Chapter meeting	X			
Chief of Staff attends NARFE Federation/Chapter meeting		X		
Legislative Director, State/District Director or Legislative Assistant with policy jurisdiction attends NARFE Federation/Chapter meeting			X	
Any other staffer attends NARFE Federation/Chapter meeting				X
Meeting with member of Congress (in-person/virtual)	X			
Meeting with Chief of Staff, Legislative Director, State/District Director or Legislative Assistant with policy jurisdiction (in-person/virtual)		X		
Meeting with any other staffer (in-person/virtual)			X	



Benchmarks - Qualitative

Nature of Meeting Discussion:	Platinum 100 pts	Gold 80 pts	Silver 60 pts	Bronze 40 pts
Took requested official action	X			
Expressed support for NARFE position/policy.		X		
Discussed NARFE legislative priorities, urge co-sponsorship, thanking for co-sponsorship			X	
Shared personal stories, information material such as issue briefs and fact sheets				X

Correspondence:	Platinum 100 pts	Gold 80 pts	Silver 60 pts	Bronze 40 pts
Member of Congress proactively reaches out to you get your views on a policy issue or to maintain a personal relationship (e-mail or phone)	X			
Chief of Staff proactively reaches out to get your views on a policy issue or to maintain a personal relationship (email/phone)		X		
Legislative Director, State/District Director or Legislative Assistant with policy jurisdiction proactively reaches out to get your views on a policy issue or to maintain a personal relationship (email/phone)			X	
Any other staffer proactively reaches out to get in contact with you on a policy issue or to maintain a personal relationship (email/phone)				X
Member of Congress acknowledges e-mail/takes phone call.		X		
Chief of Staff, Legislative Director, State/District Director or Legislative Assistant with policy jurisdiction acknowledges e-mail or phone call with reply/answer.			X	
Any other staffer acknowledges e-mail or phone call with reply/answer.				X

NARFE-PAC



Why NARFE-PAC is Important

Helps elect Fed-
friendly members
of Congress

Builds strong
relationships with
lawmakers

Ensures federal
community is
political force

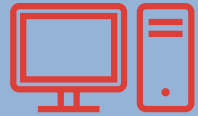
Pools individual
contributions to
maximize impact

Empowers
strongest
supporters



NARFE-PAC 2023-2024 Cycle Goals

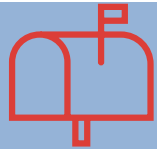
- Raise \$1,600,000: **\$759,282.91**
- Disburse \$1,200,000 for political contributions: **\$503,000**
- Send NARFE members to 125 local fundraisers: **69 members at 30 local events**



Visit www.narfe.org/narfe-pac to contribute



NARFE-PAC Magazine Article in the March Issue



NARFE-PAC's Letter Campaign



Calling Headquarters

- **1-800-456-8410, option 3**



NARFE-PAC



Contribute **monthly** through your annuity or by credit card. Get started at narfe.org/pac-sustainer.

Monthly contributors of \$10 or more receive a sustainer lapel pin

OR

Make a **one-time** contribution:

- \$25 – Basic lapel pin
- \$50 – Bronze lapel pin
- \$100 – Silver lapel pin
- \$250 – Gold lapel pin
- \$500 – Platinum lapel pin
- Other: _____

Contribution totals are cumulative for the 2023-2024 election cycle





NARFE-PAC Annuity Withholding Sustainer Program

Visit www.narfe.org/pac-sustainer



Home | Advocacy | NARFE-PAC | NARFE-PAC Member Homepage

NARFE-PAC Member Homepage

MAKE A ONE-TIME CONTRIBUTION

GIVE MONTHLY VIA CREDIT CARD

BECOME A NARFE-PAC SUSTAINER VIA FEDERAL ANNUITY

🔒 NARFE-PAC Materials for NARFE-PAC Leaders
This page includes materials for NARFE-PAC leaders, including the NARFE-PAC toolkit, documents covering the roles and responsibilities of a NARFE-PAC leader, contribution forms and more.

🔒 NARFE-PAC Annuity Withholding Form
Please complete each section of this form to register with NARFE that you want to be a NARFE-PAC sustainer via your federal annuity.

🔒 NARFE-PAC Contribution and Disbursement Reports
Contribution reports detail the number of contributors and amount of total NARFE-PAC contributions by chapter, state and region, and disbursement reports detail the congressional candidates who have received NARFE-PAC funds.

FEDcon24



Overview

- August 18-20, 2024, in St. Louis, MO, at the Hyatt Regency St. Louis at the Arch
- Standard room rate is \$130 per night
- Go to fedcon.narfe.org to register, learn more.



Content Development

- Business session to include candidate statements and discussion of bylaws
- Survey of Federation Presidents to inform additional surveys of members/likely attendees, to go out early this fall
- Utilized surveys, plus previous evaluations, within budget constraints to develop content



Breakout Tracks

- Advocacy
- Current/Active Federal Employees
- Federal Benefits
- Lifestyle
- NARFE Leadership



NARFE'S
BIENNIAL
NATIONAL
CONFERENCE

FEDCON24
LEARN • ADVOCATE • LEAD

AUGUST 18-20

📍 HYATT REGENCY ST. LOUIS AT THE ARCH

THE EFFORT TO ADVANCE NARFE'S MISSION STARTS WITH YOU.

JOIN US for FEDcon24, NARFE's biennial national training conference. Gain the knowledge necessary to **LEARN** how to make the most of your benefits, **ADVOCATE** to protect those earned benefits, and **LEAD** the organization that defends them into the future.

LEARN. ADVOCATE. LEAD.

REGISTER TODAY at fedcon.narfe.org



**DON'T MISS
EARLY BIRD
SAVINGS!**

Questions?