



# NARFE

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

Official Quarterly Newsletter of the  
Greater Houston Council of Chapters  
January 2010

<http://www.narfehouston.org>



President: Dave Bloomer VP: vacant

Secretary: Hazel Hicks Treasurer: Wilbur Doehring

## Senate Amendment Removes Threats to FEHBP



The Senate leadership's negotiated compromise to get the 60 votes needed to pass health care reform contains language drafted and suggested by NARFE that would move to safeguard the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP). The protective language was added by the Senate leadership in response to concerns raised by NARFE and federal-postal organization allies regarding a proposal that would have the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) play a significant role in national health care reform -- partially administering a health care delivery system consisting of at least two national, private nonprofit insurance plans.

The compromise will be added to the bill through the approval of the 383-page "manager's amendment" which includes the OPM-administered "multi-state" health plans and following FEHBP protections:

- Premiums of FEHBP and the proposed OPM-administered multi-state plans would be calculated in separate risk pools.
- The OPM Director would be required to ensure that the multi-state plans are administered separately from the FEHBP.
- FEHBP insurance carriers would not be required to offer coverage through the multi-state program.
- The OPM Director may establish separate units or offices within the agency to ensure that the administration of the multi-state plans do not interfere with the effective administration of FEHBP.
- The OPM Director may not allocate fewer financial or personnel resources to the agency's administration of FEHBP.
- The OPM Director may appoint additional personnel to carry out the administration of multi-state plans.

Senators voted 60-39 to accept the manager's amendment around 8 AM Tuesday, December 22, Be sure to tell your representatives to include this in the final bill by sending them an email from the national legislative site at:

<http://capwiz.com/narfe/issues/alert/?alertid=14454086>

## National Dues Referendum Fails by Narrow Margin



NARFE Headquarters reported that 65.41 percent voted for the national dues referendum, and 34.59 percent voted against it. Having failed to receive the necessary two-thirds majority of votes cast, the referendum was defeated. NARFE mailed 1,508 ballots to chapters and delegates-at-large. Out of 1508 total ballots 224 ballots were invalid (wrong number of votes, no signatures, etc.), and 256 ballots were not returned.

**NARFE Websites:**

<http://www.narfe.org> <http://www.txnarfe.org> <http://www.narfehouston.org>

## Attention Chapter Presidents and Members District 7 & 8



Please plan on attending a planning meeting for the 2011 Texas Federation Convention to be held in Galveston, TX. This planning meeting will be held on January 20, 2010, at 2:00 PM at Ryan's Family Steakhouse, 7211 Hwy 6, between Beechnut and Bellaire. Your Chapter participation will help insure the success of the 2011 Convention. Several key committee activities remain open and available. Complete timelines on actions needed will be handed out. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting. Chapter 1375 meets for lunch at 11:00 and you are invited to attend our meeting and program prior to the Texas Federation Convention meeting. --- Phil Kraus, President Chapter 1375.

## Chapter #864 Joins Greater Houston Council



All member chapters of the Greater Houston Council have paid their dues renewing their membership for 2010 and 2011. Additionally one new chapter has joined the Council. Golden Triangle Chapter 864 of Beaumont-Nederland is now a member of the Council. A webpage for the chapter has been added to the Greater Houston Council website. The Council will hold meetings this next year only on call of the President, since the main activity will be participating in planning meetings for the 2011 TFC Convention. The planning meetings will be announced by Phil Kraus, Convention Chair. Please encourage your chapter members to participate.

## NARFE Opposes Budget Commission & Fast-Track Procedure



The Senate leadership plans to bring up the House-passed debt extension. However, Senator Judd Gregg, R-NH, the ranking member on the Senate Budget Committee, plans to offer an amendment to H.R. 4313 that would create a commission which would force changes to entitlement and other program spending and tax policy through the use of a Congressional fast-track procedure. Gregg and Senate Budget Committee Chairman Kent Conrad, D-ND, plan to push for the budget cutting commission and fast-track procedure when Congress revisits the debt limit in February. NARFE is concerned that such a commission could single out earned federal civil service retirement and health benefits for reductions. Urge your U.S. Senators to oppose the fast-track commission -- use NARFE's Legislative Action Center at <http://capwiz.com/narfe/issues/alert/?alertid=14429286>.

## Protection from Medicare Increase sought for Federal Employees



NARFE is working to get legislation passed the Senate that would exempt civil service employees from any 2010 Medicare premium increase. The bill has already passed in the House. Essentially, it would shield all Medicare recipients from the increase. Under current law, only Social Security recipients don't have to pay a Medicare premium increase in a year in which there is no Social Security cost-of-living increase. NARFE is working ceaselessly behind the scenes to see that civil service retirees, who don't receive Social Security, but also face a no-COLA year in their benefits are also "held harmless." See "Medicare Rate Bill Still Pending," page 17, NARFE Magazine, January 2010.

### NARFE Websites:

<http://www.narfe.org>

<http://www.txnarfe.org>

<http://www.narfehouston.org>

## Chapter News



Each Chapter President has been asked to have their Publicity Chair or Newsletter Editor contribute information on their Chapter two weeks before the beginning of each quarter. Each Chapter has also been advised to update their meeting and event information quarterly for the website. Was information submitted for your chapter?

### **Golden Triangle Chapter 864**

Chapter 864 has monthly meetings scheduled for January 21st, February 18th, and March 18th, but no information on the agenda or speakers was provided.

### **Greater North Houston Chapter 828**

Chapter 828 will hold its Board Meeting at the Golden Corral, 13145 Northwest Freeway on January 12 at 12:30AM.

The Chapter 828 monthly meeting for January will be held on January 19th at the Golden Corral, 13145 Northwest Freeway.

The Chapter 828 monthly meeting for February will be held on February 16th at the Golden Corral, 13145 Northwest Freeway. Election of the Nominating Committee for 2011 Officers will be held.

The Chapter 828 monthly meeting for March will be held on March 16th at the Golden Corral, 13145 Northwest Freeway.

### **Northeast Houston Chapter 1349**

Chapter 1349 has monthly meetings scheduled for February 1st and March 1st, but no information on the agenda or speakers was provided.

### **Montgomery County Chapter 1350**

Chapter 1350 has monthly meetings scheduled for January 14th, February 11th, and March 11th, but no information on the agenda or speakers was provided.

### **Southwest Houston Chapter 1375**

The January meeting for Chapter 1375 will be held on January 20<sup>th</sup>. A nutritionist will be the speaker.

The February meeting for Chapter 1375 will be held February 17<sup>th</sup> and Mike Jackson will speak on Rodeo topics.

The March meeting for Chapter 1375 will be held March 17<sup>th</sup>. Bobbie Stevens, NARFE Service Officer will be the speaker.

### **Fort Bend Chapter 2030**

The first Chapter 2030 meeting of the year will be January 13<sup>th</sup> at Bamboo Village, 5151 Avenue H Rosenberg, TX 77471 (Hwy 90 just west of the underpass between Richmond and Rosenberg). Meeting locations will be discussed.

The February Chapter 2030 meeting will be held at 10:30AM (**Note earlier starting time**) on February 10<sup>th</sup> at the Another Time Soda Fountain, 800 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in Rosenberg, Texas. This is across the street from the Rosenberg Railroad Museum. The Nominating Committee for 2011 Officers will be appointed.

The March Chapter 2030 meeting will be held at 11:30 AM on March 10th, at Yucatan Mexican Restaurant, 100 Liberty St., Richmond, Texas. AARP Tax Advisor Steve Thomas will speak on Income Taxes for 2009.

### **NARFE Websites:**

<http://www.narfe.org>

<http://www.txnarfe.org>

<http://www.narfehouston.org>

## Greater Houston Council Quarterly Meetings



Greater Houston Council of Chapters meetings have been scheduled for the fourth Wednesday of the first month of each quarter in 2010 in case needed. Meetings will only be held however at the call of the President if needed to conduct business. Otherwise representatives and all NARFE members are encouraged to attend and participate fully in the planning meetings for the 2011 TFC Convention in Galveston which will be announced by Phil Kraus 2011 TFC Convention Chair.

## Important Long Term Care Announcement



The Office of Personnel Management announced that letters mailed last month to enrollees in the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program contained errors in the "**Benefit Amount**" section of their election letters. The errors affect enrollees with the automatic compound inflation option whose anniversary date for annual benefit increases is November 1, December 1, or January 1.

Personalized corrected letters will be mailed in December to affected enrollees, and those enrollees will be provided an extension of time up to March 15, 2010, to review their options and make a decision.

**Those who have already submitted their decisions based on the erroneous letters and want to reconsider their decision must call 1-800-582-3337.** That is also the number members must call if they have questions about their FLTCIP enrollment.

**NARFE Greater Houston Council  
C/O Dave Bloomer, President  
1934 Mustang Springs Drive  
Missouri City, Texas 77459**

**To:**

**NARFE Websites:**

<http://www.narfe.org>

<http://www.txnarfe.org>

<http://www.narfehouston.org>