



# Leadership Council of Aging Organizations

*James Firman, Chair*

## MINUTES

**November 1, 2017**

**AFL-CIO, 815 16th Street NW**

1. Guest Speaker: Stan Collender, [Executive Vice President at Qorvis MSLGROUP](#), founder, [Capital Gains & Games blog](#)
  - Follow at @thebudgetguy
  - Sunday blog post: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/stancollender/2017/10/29/gop-has-murdered-the-federal-budget-and-now-wants-us-to-round-up-the-usual-suspects/>
  - C-SPAN Washington Journal discussion: <https://www.c-span.org/video/?436380-3/washington-journal-romina-boccia-stan-collender-discuss-federal-budget>
  - Tax bill and other economic policies will produce annual deficits, starting this year, of \$1 trillion or more. OMB even admitting will be \$650 billion under current policy.
  - When tax proposal cost grows; defense spending is increased, small increase provided to NDD, and disaster relief approved; a foreign policy crisis emerges; and economic growth doesn't materialize, the dagger will be pointed at Medicare and Medicaid, Social Security, and NDD.
  - Will have to be prepared to increase efforts to defend the programs and benefits that exist now and not get funding to respond to growing needs.
  - Q&A
    - Q: Doesn't failed Kansas experiment show growth won't happen? A: GOP needs this vote for the election; Kansas isn't the US and this doesn't prove what will happen nationally. Need to keep messaging simple.
    - Q: Is it accurate that PAYGO applies to reconciliation and will force automatic cuts to Medicare? A: PAYGO rules are in effect; Ed Lorenzen of CFRB (@captainpaygo) has done the best analysis. Will result in 4% reduction in Medicare. GOP thinks there's no way the Democrats will vote against a waiver because they don't want cuts, but he thinks Democrats will put the onus on the GOP to fix the issue.
    - Q: The 401(k) issue will create chaos down the road – is there a way to message that? A: Just focus on the proposal making retirement more difficult. This proposal might be dropped, but it won't make the overall package better.
    - Q: How do we break through the noise and make messages resonate? A: Don't talk about the weeds of the tax bill; just say it's a direct attack on seniors (current and soon-to-be).
    - Q: Messaging during shutdown was don't cut Social Security and Medicare to cut taxes for the rich; will that work now? A: Yes; it can be all over the airwaves if you talk about the direct attack on seniors.
    - Q: Why not make the argument about the states that are struggling with little to no taxes in place? A: This is an emotional, not substantive, debate and facts don't overcome emotions.
    - Q: Median household income in states with higher taxes is substantially better. A: People in poorer states say they're not getting tax relief and the President is telling them they will. You won't convince people based on substance.
    - Q: What will the immediate effect be on people's pocketbooks? A: This won't be retroactive, and it might not pass by the end of the year. Most will see a small effect, and an increase in interest rates might wipe it out entirely. They'll also see the effect on programs they rely on almost immediately.
    - Q: Is there a message beyond just urging Congress not to do this? A: Don't move a bill with a phony deadline; do it the right way with a deliberative process. Do a consensus bill

(the '85 bill took three years after several votes). What's the economic need for tax cuts now? If you do move tax reform, it should ease the burden on the middle class and seniors. Keep it simple.

- Q: What are credible sources that most of the benefits are going to millionaires? A: Tax Policy Center, Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, Price Waterhouse, Joint Tax Committee.
- Q: Since cuts to programs are slated for the next reconciliation, does it make sense to drag out the debate into the election year to make those cuts more difficult? A: Yes. FY19 reconciliation can be started early next year; might have votes for another budget resolution, but isn't sure.
- Q: Where go to for analyses of potential program cuts since JCT and TPC will just do distribution tables? A: Will have to rely on CBO.
- Q: Looking back at Reagan, G.W. Bush processes, how does the next cycle look? A: Bond market went after Reagan so he signed tax increases. We don't know when we've gone too far on deficits. Will have to see when bond market says it doesn't want to take on any more debt, and any impact on interest rates, mortgages that might force changes.

## 2. Approval of the Minutes

- Approved by voice vote (twinkling!)

## 3. Committee Reports

### • Community Services

- FY18: Drafting letter supporting budget deal to raise caps, still organizing Hill meetings
- OAA reauthorization: Planning meetings with Hill offices already expressing interest.
- NDD United Faces of Austerity 2.0 report: Please review and promote
- Care Corps demonstration bill: Non-LCAO sign-on sent to Hill; sponsors still interested in dialogue with anyone with concerns (will share contact info).
- Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act signed into law.
- New National Survey of OAA Participants letter: Aaron Tax shared that longitudinal survey still leaves out transgender older adults. Has drafted another letter to share comments that tracks the last LCAO correspondence on this issue. Discussion of submitting letter as chair's letter or sign-on; given organizations' interest, will circulate for sign on.
- OAA reauthorization process discussion: Organizations asked to note if interested in participating.
- Next meeting: Nov. 30 at 10 am

### • Health

- New co-chair: Natalie Kean from Justice in Aging
- Open enrollment discussion: will be ongoing issue. Edits to sign-on letter to CMS due noon Friday, will be circulated Monday with sign-ons by Tuesday.
- Seniors Tax Hike Prevention Act: Introduced by Sens. Brown and Portman to roll back the Medical Expense Deduction threshold for 64+. Sens. Capito and Nelson are original cosponsors. Considering an LCAO support letter.
- Money Follows the Person (MFP): Hopeful Portman-Cantwell bill introduced soon. Rep. Dingell looking at House companion bill and addressing HCBS spousal protection expiration next year.
- Nursing home regulatory standards: Robust committee discussion; Consumer Voice drafting a non-LCAO sign-on letter opposing delays or reopening of the rule. Deadline: Nov. 15.

- Puerto Rico disaster relief: LCAO letter regarding Medicaid sent to Hill. Update from Linda Bennett (AFSCME): Governor sent letter in support of House CHIP bill that increases their allotment, despite no mention of match. There's a push for more generous assistance in the next supplemental.
  - Patient Choice and Quality Care Act: Sign-on letter being circulated, contact Brian Lindberg to sign on.
  - Extenders: No specifics yet on offsets, whether MFP in the mix in Senate bill. Expect Chronic Care to move with it.
  - Next meeting: Nov. 28 at 3:30 pm
  - Income Security
    - No October meeting.
    - Sending around list to sign up for Committee.
    - Next meeting: Nov. 29 at 2 pm
4. Tax Reform Discussion
- Draft on themes related to transparent process, meaningful retirement security, providing adequate revenues and not adding to deficit, fairness.
  - Could use help on messaging on two-step process of tax cuts leading to program/benefit cuts.
  - More details provided on implications of changes to estate tax, Cadillac tax, State and Local Tax (SALT) deduction.
  - Will circulate draft chair statement for review and comment so can send out on Friday. Won't get into details on any of these themes. Will continue to work with LCAO working group.
  - Potential Hill targets: moderates, deficit hawks, defense hawks, SALT states.
5. Announcements
- FrameWorks would like to do hour-long session, maybe after an LCAO meeting, to share their findings and recommendations on aging messaging and offer training.
  - National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare (NCPSSM): DPCC review of GOP budget and tax proposals and effect on seniors. NCPSSM President & CEO Max Richtman testifying.
  - NCPSSM: Open house at new location, at 111 K Street NE on Nov. 7
  - Alliance for Aging Research: Flyer on CMS webinar on preventive care, Dec. 6 Twitter Storm on flu.
- Diane: open house at new location at 111 K Street NE on Nov. 7

**Next Meeting: December 6**