

LCAO Income Security Committee Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2018 at 2:30 pm

WeWork, 1440 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005

Conference Room 8A

Call-In #: 641-715-3200 p/w: 635743#

1. Retirement Account bill-- Jeremy Woodrum, Office of Rep. Joe Crowley (NY-14)
 - a. Introduced this last Congress, modified for this Congress.
 - i. SAVE UP Act: Universal Pension Program
 - ii. 114th Congress: HR 5731
 - b. Targeted towards those that receive no retirement benefits through their employer
 - c. A mandate to all employers to contribute \$0.50 per hour to an employee's retirement account.
 - i. Could go private, similar to government retirement accounts.
 - ii. Low-end estimations, without employee contributions, could generate mid 100,000s.
 - iii. Refundable savers credit, refunding half back to an employee that contributes.
 - iv. Would provide assistance to small employers to carry this out.
 1. Up to 10 employees
 - v. Significant tax penalty for not participating in the mandate.
 - d. Looking for support. Can contact Jeremy at: Jeremy.Woodrum@mail.house.gov
2. Social Security proposal-- Keith Miller, Senate Comm. on Aging (Sen. Bob Casey, PA)
 - a. Improving Social Security benefits for especially vulnerable groups.
 - b. Working with SSA on language and logistics in the bill.
 - i. Increase benefits for survivor benefits for a spouse, widow or widower, or surviving divorced spouse with disabilities.
 1. These beneficiaries can claim at age 50 with a significantly reduced amount. This bill would increase that amount.
 - ii. Increase benefits for widow with child amount by raising age limit from 16 to 18.
 - iii. Allowing the minimum survivor benefit to grow past the current standard (based on when the person claimed, delayed or not).
 1. Widowed beneficiaries who wait until their full retirement age to claim benefits (based on deceased spouse) are receiving no additional benefit if their spouse dies before full retirement age
 - iv. Requiring SSA to proactively provide information to widows, orphans, etc. upon the death of a spouse, parent, etc.
 - v. Email Keith.Miller@aging.senate.gov for more information
3. Social Security office scheduled to close soon
 - a. Rally sponsored by AFGE, ARA, SSW, NCPSSM, and others
 - b. Location: 1401 Wilson Blvd Arlington, VA (Rosslyn)
 - i. Action Alert: Thursday, May 3rd at 12pm

1. Contact Brendan Kelly (bkelly@retiredamericans.org) to RSVP
4. Legislative Update
 - a. Housing Rental Reforms
 - i. Secretary Ben Carson unveiled a package of rent reforms titled: Making Affordable Housing Work Act.
 1. These reforms would cut housing benefits, increase rents, eliminate income deductions for medical or childcare expenses, and allow Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) and property owners to change rent policies and impose work requirements for residents.
 - b. Joint Select Committees on Multiemployer Pensions & Budget/Appropriations
 - i. Both met and had their first hearings.
 1. Committee on Budget/Appropriations hearing on opportunities to improve federal budget process on 4/17
 - a. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8US_8arJ1lg
 2. Committee on MEP had a hearing on the history and structure of system on 4/18.
 - a. Hearing was on the history and structure of the program.
 - i. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-puXGHUrYk>
 - b. Committee website has great materials.
 - i. <https://www.pensions.senate.gov/>
 - c. Introduced Legislation
 - i. Elder Poverty Relief Act, Sen. Ron Wyden (OR)
 1. S.2653: “Birthday Bump” for SSI/Social Security recipients over age 82
 2. POC: Tom.Klouda@finance.senate.gov
 - ii. Social Security Administration Accountability Act, Rep. Brian Higgins (NY-26)
 1. HR 5431: Requires SSA to justify office closings and track backlog statistics
 2. POC: Erin.Meegan@mail.house.gov
 - d. Upcoming Legislation
 - i. Strengthening Social Security Act, Rep. Linda Sanchez (CA-38)
 1. Looking to introduce, looking for support.
 2. Overall increase in Social Security benefits, changes to CPI-E, pays for it by eliminating the taxable cap on wages (scrap the cap).
 3. POC: Meghan.McConnell@mail.house.gov
5. Next Meeting: May 30, 2018 at 2:30pm
 - a. Pending speakers, topics
 - i. Chris Bigelow on the Joint Select Committee on Budget/Appropriations
 - ii. Representative from PBGC

In attendance:

Jasmine Jefferson, Social Security Works

Breana Clark, B'nai B'rith

Eva Dominguez, Alliance for Retired Americans

Katie Smith, AFSCME

Amy Shannon, WISER Women

Ben Belton, Center for Medicare Advocacy