

DRAFT of:

CHAPTER 256 **LEGISLATIVE MEETING**  
WEDNESDAY, **APRIL 8, 2015**, 9:30 – 11:30 A.M.  
2555 S. SHIELDS ST. FORT COLLINS, CO.  
COFFEE SHOP @ THE RAINTREE ATHLETIC CLUB

**ATTENDEES:** Kathleen Quinn, Ron Briggs, Eugene Doering, Gordon Gartner, Curtis Halvorson, Tom Gantzel, Mildred Weidemann, Harold Worth.

**Old Business:** Included under later discussion of The Strategic Plan and the Future of NARFE (FON)

**New Business:**

1. **March 24th Letter from President Richard Thissen and NARFE NewsWatch**

- President Thissen's letter to the U.S. House of Representatives which addressed the House Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Resolution, H Con. Res. 27 which is seeking another \$318 billion from federal workers who have already contributed more than \$120 billion to

deficit reduction. Instead, he urges our support offered by the House Budget Committee minority members which does not disproportionately target the federal community.

In his letter, President Thissen also referenced NARFE's opposition to converting the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) into a voucher program in a race to the bottom; increasing the benefits of federal employees toward their retirement without any corresponding benefit increase; reducing the return on the Thrift Savings Plan G fund, and eliminating the defined benefit retirement program.

Referenced materials:

**(a) The Washington Post article:** Federal Workers could pay more for health care, get less for retirement under GOP plan.

Excerpt: It projects that dropping the interest rate the G Fund pay to match short-term rates could save up to \$32 billion over 10 years.

(b) **Government Executive:** GOP budgets cutting retirement benefits face rocky paths in both chambers

(c) NARFE News Watch press releases and links for complete stories. Copies of articles referenced in above messages were available

Discussion involved NARFE'S on--going battle to retain the earned benefits of both federal workers and federal retirees and the high number of federal workers and retirees who invested in the G Fund.

## **2. March 27th Legislative Hotline:**

On Wednesday, March 25, the House of Representatives passed its Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Resolution, H. Con. Res.27, by a vote of 228-199. Budget assumes \$318 billion in savings from federal and postal employees and retirees. Proposed savings are outlined.

### **Some key changes:**

- Increase in retirement contributions for all current federal employees of roughly 6 percent.

- Encouraging total annuity Supplement; and
- Increasing postal employees' share of their FEHP premiums.

### **3. March 30th April Legislative News Update for Chapters:**

- House FY 16 Budget: Budget budgets submitted by Rep. Tom (R-GA), assume \$318 billion in savings by negatively impacting federal employees and retirees.
- The first Price budget included \$20 billion in additional 'emergency' defense spending that would not be subject to sequestration, but would need to be offset by other spending cuts.
  - The second Price budget included an extra \$2 billion in defense spending, and did not require any offset for that additional \$22 billion in "emergency" spending not subject to sequestration.

Note: The second Price budget, was the one that passed the House. Seventeen Republicans and all of the Democrats opposed the budget.

Handouts of this lengthy document were available for review. It is very in-depth and covers 'emergency' defense spending, Medicare, etc.

#### **4. NARFE Strategic Planning Process and the Future of NARFE (FON):**

(a) **Letters from Rodney L. Adelman, Region VII Vice President and Ted Van Hintum**, Strategic Planning Committee Representative for Region VII.

(b) Attachments included 5 documents including The Strategic Plan Process from the April 2015 issue of NARFE magazine, page 46.

Comment: Ron Briggs, past acting legislative chair is most familiar with the process from the beginning. He presented an in-depth overview of the process and noted comments he received from previous discussions both at legislative meeting and at board meetings.

Comments he received include a need for increased transparency regarding the FON. He spoke of NARFE'S goal of establishing an increased national link with

chapters. Ted Van Hintum, Colorado Federation President has been very proactive and involved with these goals.

Comments for consideration in attaining goals:

- NARFE currently lacks the political and financial resources necessary to increase our impact at the highest levels of decision and policy making within the government.

- Government does have a significant role in policy decision making, However, it is critical to have the best people in these positions.

Concern has been raised regarding the agency's ability to provide enough representation of the overall population vs. a select group of the population. The need to provide better service to our members was also raised.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10. **The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 13, 2015 at 9:30 at the same location.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Committee

Committee Chair

April 9, 2015