



# NRLN Review

**NRLN**  
NATIONAL RETIREE  
LEGISLATIVE NETWORK

## ***NRLN Review*, Summary for September 2020**

The ***NRLN Review*** provides a monthly report on National Retiree Legislative Network actions, events in Congress and important retirement news.

### **NRLN Action Alert – President and Congress: Get Your Act Together on USPS**

An NRLN Action Alert on September 9 noted you may have seen news reports and editorials about the controversy between some members of Congress and the White House on whether the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is capable of handling large volumes of mail-in ballots and other mail with its current level of funding.

The NRLN is not taking sides in this controversy. The NRLN's concern is that the USPS needs to have the capability to deliver prescription drugs, pension checks, Medicare information and other critical mail to seniors on time.

The Action Alert asked NRLN members to email the sample letter, with your comments added, to tell President Trump, your Senators and Representative that they need to get their act together for USPS mail delivery to seniors. Click here to access the Action Alert. <https://www.nrln.org/SE.html#/>

### **NRLN President's Forum on Voting Resources**

NRLN President Bill Kadereit invited Bob Martina, NRLN Vice President – Grassroots, to join him in the NRLN President's Forum message issued on September 3. The message provided information on voting resources and U.S. Postal Service Concerns.

The website <https://www.vote.org/>, a non-partisan, non-profit organization, can be a resource. This website can be used to determine whether you are registered to vote. If you are not registered to vote there is a link to register. There are links to find your polling place location or to request an absentee ballot. (This website invites you to make a voluntary contribution to vote.org. That decision is up to you.)

Some states are not up-to-date on mail-in voting (for example Washington state). If your state has mail-in voting, direct any questions you have to the office of your Secretary of State. To contact the office of your Secretary of State, go to the website for the National Association of Secretaries of State at <https://www.nass.org/membership>. The Secretary of State Office may refer you to county or local election officials.

### **NRLN President's Forum on First NRLN Podcast**

An NRLN President's Forum was issued on September 18 to announce the first NRLN Podcast as part of our effort to better inform NRLN members and reach a wider audience. To access our Podcast message ***The NRLN – Creating a Better Future for Retirees*** go to the NRLN website at [www.nrln.org](http://www.nrln.org). Click on the Podcast link posted below the Action Alert message in the center column of our website's home page.

When the Podcast player appears under the **Introduction to the NRLN** headline, click on the arrow on the black bar to start the audio. If you need to pause the audio, click on the pause icon. To resume the audio, click on the arrow again.

### **NRLN President's Forum on New Video**

Bill Kadereit announced in his NRLN President's Forum message on September 22 that the NRLN is resuming its 2020 Video Series as part of its video/podcast program. In this video episode he covered the ***History of Medicare Privatization Through Medicare Advantage Plans*** and the results after 23 years of taxpayer subsidies.

To see videos or to listen to podcasts, click anywhere on the large Videos and Podcasts artwork in the center of the [www.nrln.org](http://www.nrln.org) home page, then select and click on a selection on the Video or Podcast library page. To enlarge the video to the size of your screen, move your cursor over the small video and click on the 4 arrows icon in the lower right corner. At the end of the video, to return the video to the small size click on the 4 arrows icon again.

### **NRLN President's Forum on Episode 3 Video**

NRLN President Bill Kadereit's Episode #3 video/podcast, ***Medicare A-D Revenue, MA Plan Rebates/Market Share & Medicare 10-year Budget*** was posted on September 30 on [www.nrln.org](http://www.nrln.org). The objective of this video/podcast is to examine revenue sources for Medicare Parts A, B and D and the impact that increased Medicare enrollment and out-of-control healthcare costs will have on retirees

To see videos or to listen to podcasts, click on "*LISTEN OR WATCH OUR LATEST EPISODE*" on the large Videos and Podcasts artwork in the center of the [www.nrln.org](http://www.nrln.org) home page. Then select and click on a selection on the NRLN Videos and Podcasts library webpage. Instructions on the Icons to click to watch videos or listen to podcasts are posted on the webpage.

### **Lower Copay for Insulin for Seniors with Diabetes**

This information was shared with NRLN members in a September 11 email. There are an estimated 3.3 million seniors with diabetes. According to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS), during the Medicare enrollment period October 15th – December 7th, 2020, original Medicare and Medicare Advantage beneficiaries will have the option of selecting a Medicare Part D plan that provides access to a broad set of insulins at a maximum \$35 copay for a month's supply.

CMS said that starting, January 1, 2021 seniors with diabetes who selected one of these Medicare Part D plans or Medicare Advantage plans with prescription drug coverage will save on average an estimated \$446 per year, or 66%, on their out-of-pocket costs for insulin.

### **NRLN's Prescription Drugs Whitepaper Updated**

The NRLN's whitepaper: *Congress and President Must Act to Reduce Price of Prescription Drugs Talk Is Cheap – Drugs Are Not!* has been updated. It includes the latest prescription drug bills introduced in Congress that the NRLN supports and the recent executive orders to lower the cost of prescription drugs. Click here to read the whitepaper.

<https://www.nrln.org/executive%20summaries/WP%20Prescription%20Drugs%20100120.pdf>

### **NRLN Legislative Committees' Work**

The NRLN's Legislative Affairs Committee (LAC) composed of Judy Stenberg, Chairwoman, Deb Morrissett, Joe Mazzei, Al Duscher and Bob Martina submitted the following bills for the Legislative Action Planning Committee (LAPC) to consider for action during its September 14 conference call.

-- **H.R.5216** – Quality Care for Nursing Home Residents Act of 2019.

-- **S. 2943** – Quality Care for Nursing Home Residents Act of 2019.

-- **H.R.6971** – Medical Nutrition Therapy Act of 2020

-- **H.R. 5364 & S. 2817** – End Price Gouging For Insulin Act.

LAC's recommended tabling and monitoring **H.R.7765 – Certainty For Older Living Americans (COLA) Act**; COVID-19 bills -- **H.R.7546, H.R.8020, S.4286, S.4350, S.4423, and S.4509.**

The LAPC composed of Bill Kadereit, Chairman, Alyson Parker, Judy Stenberg, Bob Martina and Ed Beltram made the following decisions on its September 14 conference call.

-- **H.R.5216** – Quality Care for Nursing Home Residents Act of 2019. Letters were emailed on September 14, 2020 to Chairwoman Anna Eshoo (CA-18) and Ranking Member Michael Burgess (TX-26) requesting vote in the House Subcommittee on Health on H.R. 5216.

-- **S. 2943** – Quality Care for Nursing Home Residents Act of 2019. Letters were email on September 14, 2020 to Chairman Chuck Grassley (IA) and Ranking Member Ron Wyden (OR) requesting a vote in the Senate Committee on Finance on S. 2343.

-- **H.R.6971** – Medical Nutrition Therapy Act of 2020. Letters were emailed on September 15, 2020 to Chairman Richard Neal (MA-01) and Ranking Member Kevin Brady (TX-08) requesting vote in the House Committee on Ways and Means on H.R. 6971. Letters were emailed on September 15, 2020 to Chairman Frank Pallone (NJ-06) and Ranking Member Greg Walden (OR-02) requesting vote in House Committee on Energy and Commerce on H.R. 6971.

-- **H.R. 5364 & S. 2817** – End Price Gouging For Insulin Act. Tabled. According to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS), during the Medicare enrollment period October 15th – December 7th, 2020, original Medicare and Medicare Advantage beneficiaries will have the option of selecting a Medicare Part D plan that provides access to a broad set of insulins at a maximum \$35 copay for a month's supply. NRLN will email this information to NRLN members.

The LAPC accepted the LAC's recommendation to table and monitor **H.R.7765 – Certainty For Older Living Americans (COLA) Act**; COVID-19 bills -- **H.R.7546, H.R.8020, S.4286, S.4350, S.4423, and S.4509.**

Click here to see bills **H.R.5216, S. 2943** and **H.R.6971** posted on the NRLN bills webpage.

<https://www.nrln.org/SE.html/congresslegs.html#/bills> .This webpage feeds the NRLN Report Card. Click here to access the NRLN Report Card for your state. <https://www.nrln.org/SE.html/congresslegs.html#/legislators> Then click on your state on the USA map. When the webpage with your state's members of Congress appear, click on EXCEL DOWNLOAD. When the download is complete, click on Enable Editing for the bill titles to appear.

Click here to read the letters noted above posted in Letters to Washington.

<https://www.nrln.org/ARCHIVES-W.HTML>

## **Pharma Campaign Contributions Updated**

Bob Martina, NRLN VP – Grassroots, updated the NRLN website on September 18 with information on contributions from the pharmaceutical / health products industry to politicians during the 2019-2020 election cycle. Click here to view the data from OpenSecrets.Org, Center for Responsible Politics.

<https://www.nrln.org/Pharma%20Contributions%20to%20Congress%202019-20%2008-21-20.htm>

## **Key News Articles Posted in September**

During September, 86 links to news articles related to retirement issues were researched and posted daily IN THE NEWS on the NRLN website home page. The headlines below are text and not links to the articles. To read the articles go to [www.nrln.org](http://www.nrln.org) and under IN THE NEWS in the right column scroll down and click on the headline to access the article you want to read. Below are examples of the headlines.

**House Oversight Democrats to subpoena AbbVie in drug pricing probe – Sept. 1**

*Opinion: Social Security trust fund to run out by 2031: CBO – Sept. 2*  
**CMS unveils redesigned Medicare provider comparison website for consumers – Sept. 3**  
*Bold Action Needed to Save Medicare, Says MedPAC Commissioner – Sept. 4*  
**Opinion: What has COVID-19 done to our retirement savings? – Sept. 8**  
*Medicare Out-of-Pocket Costs You Should Expect to Pay – Sept 8*  
**Opinion: More executive orders will not make medicines cheaper – Sept. 10**  
*Trump says he has signed new executive order to lower drug prices – Sept. 13*  
**Multiemployer plans get tiny reprieve in latest PBGC report – Sept. 14**  
*Opinion: Long-term care insurance: There's no good alternative – Sept. 16*  
**A Pandemic Upshot: Seniors Are Having Second Thoughts About Where to Live – Sept. 18**  
*Study: Private insurers pay 2 1/2 times what Medicare does for hospital services – Sept. 18*  
**Opinion: Prescription Drug And Healthcare Costs Are Rising – Sept. 21**  
*It's Not Just Insulin: Lawmakers Focus on Price of One Drug, While Others Rise Too – Sept. 22*  
**Social Security missteps could push millions of elderly Americans into poverty – Sept. 24**  
*FDA Takes Actions to Help Lower U.S. Prescription Drug Prices – Sept. 24*  
**Trump's drug card plan sows confusion – even within administration – Sept. 25**  
*Poll finds support for independent arbiters resolving 'surprise' medical bills – Sept. 28*  
**Can Trump Deliver On Promise Of \$200 Drug Cards To Medicare Beneficiaries? – Sept. 28**  
*Congress may cap Medicare Part B premium spike for 2021 – Sept. 29*  
**High drug prices driven by profits, House panel report finds – Sept. 30**

#### **Twitter and Instagram:**

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