



NARFE Advocacy Update

Tennessee Federation Conference, April 18, 2023

**Presented by John Hatton, Staff Vice President for Policy
and Programs**



Agenda

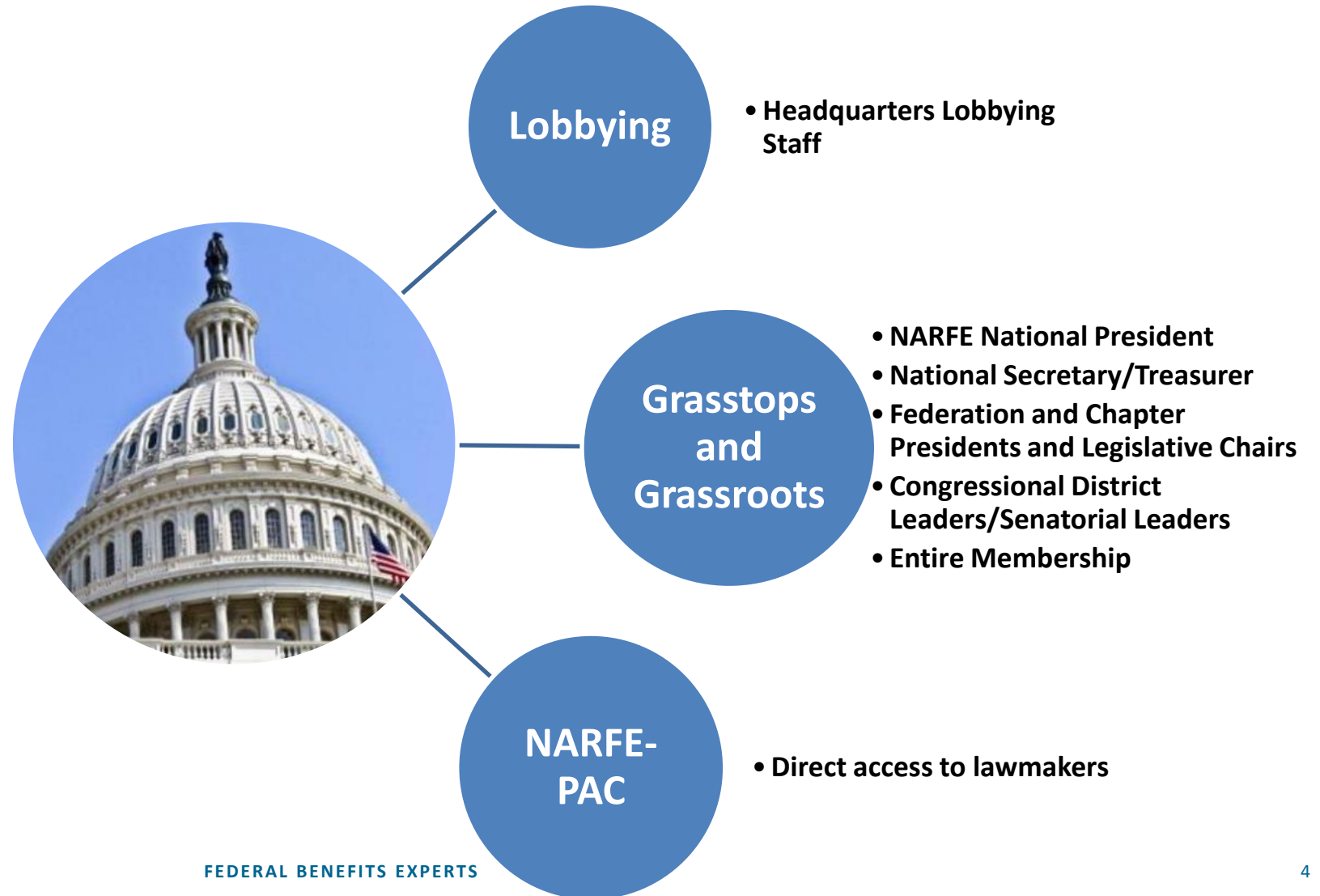
- NARFE's Collaborative Strategy
- Grassroots and Grasstops Initiatives
- A Look Back
- Advocacy Priorities
- NARFE-PAC
- Questions & Answers

NARFE's Collaborative Strategy



A Three-Legged Approach

- **Protecting the earned pay, rights and benefits**
 - Federal and postal employees
 - Retirees and annuitant survivors





Tactics

- **Grassroots**

- Entire NARFE membership

- Demonstrates size and influence of the federal community in lawmakers' districts and states
 - Letter-writing, meetings, phone calls, engagement in community events

- **Grasstops**

- NARFE leaders

- Often used for targeted action
 - » Utilize established congressional relationships, testify at hearings, mobilize NARFE federation and chapter members to act

NARFE's Collaborative Approach



Tactics

- **Lobbying**
 - Headquarters advocacy team and lobbyists
 - Meet with lawmakers and staff on Capitol Hill
 - Help draft legislation and provide guidance on federal community matters
 - Interact with administration and agencies
- **NARFE-PAC**
 - NARFE's political arm
 - Support fed-friendly incumbents and candidates
 - Ensures NARFE's seat at the table among other interest groups

Grassroots and Grasstops Advocacy



Overview of Initiatives

- **Advocacy Leader Trainings & Resources**
 - **NARFE Advocacy Leader Guide**
 - **Advocacy Webpages**
 - **FedCon22**
 - Advocacy Track
 - **LEGCon23**
 - June 14, 20 – 22
- **Latest News and Information-Sharing**
 - NARFE Voices – monthly grassroots e-newsletter
 - NewsLine – weekly e-newsletter
 - NARFE Magazine



Overview of Initiatives

- **Legislative Action Center**
 - Action Letters
 - Phone Scripts

- **Grassroots Campaigns/Targeting**
 - Welcome Packets to New Lawmakers
 - Follow Up Request to Gain Cosponsors for H.R. 82/ S. 597 (repeal of WEP/GPO)
 - Additional Targeted Action Alerts
 - Public Service Recognition Week LTEs
 - Grassroots Advocacy Month

A Look Back



Long-Term View

- ZERO cuts to earned federal retirement and health benefits for federal retirees and employees since 1996
 - Last rollback: Delayed COLAs to federal annuities in FY1994 through FY1996
- Faced substantial budget threats over last 10 to 12 years
 - Eliminating or reducing COLAs
 - Reducing rate of return on TSP G Fund
 - Reducing contributions to health benefits
- Recent losses limited to increased retirement contributions for new hires in 2013/2014



Postal Reform – Key Concerns Addressed

- **Maintaining Choice re: Medicare Part B for Current Postal Retirees**
 - Past bills forced current retirees to enroll in Medicare Part B as a condition of continued receipt of earned retiree health benefits.
 - Part B adds premium costs, previously declined.
- **Protect FEHB for All**
 - Earlier versions of H.R. 3076 could have increased premiums for some postal retirees and all nonpostal federal employees and retirees.
 - Actuarial analysis confirmed NARFE's concerns.
 - New version ensures separate risk pools created by bill do not adversely impact premiums for either the federal program or the new postal program.



WEP/GPO Repeal

- **First Committee Advancement Ever**
 - Secured 305 cosponsors (290 triggered House Consensus Calendar rule)
 - Committee advanced unanimously (but without recommendation) in September 2022
 - Committee leaders (and members) indicated support for addressing issue, publicly expressed intention to work on compromise
 - But also expressed concerns re: solvency, new inequities
 - **NARFE continued push for House floor vote**



WEP/GPO Repeal

- House committee leaders continued to discuss possibility of including a compromise in year-end legislation (possible tax extenders package)
- BUT, no provisions related to WEP or GPO included in year-end legislation.
- Possible holdups:
 - No tax extenders package
 - No deal on pay-for for WEP reform between Neal and Brady?
 - Objections if GPO not included
- Still able to build off progress going into 2022

Advocacy Priorities



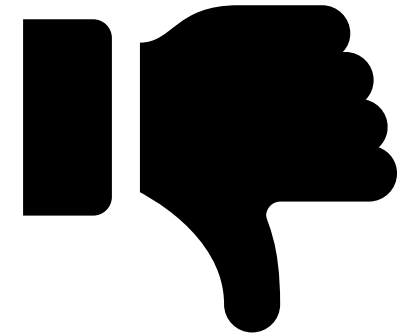
Overview

- Protect Earned Retirement and Health Benefits
- WEP/GPO Repeal or Reform
- More Accurate COLAs For FERS Retirees
- OPM Customer Service
- Relief from Federal Long Term Care Insurance Premium (FLTCIP) Increases
- Improving Medicare Integration with FEHB
- Federal Pay Increase
- Protecting a Merit-Based Civil Service



Protect Earned Retirement and Health Benefits

- **Oppose cuts to earned retirement and health benefits**
- **Past proposals include:**
 - Increased contributions toward retirement
 - Reducing rate of return on TSP G fund
 - Reductions to/Elimination of COLAs
 - Elimination of FERS annuity supplement
 - Eliminate FERS entirely
 - Increase employee share of FEHB premiums





Protect Earned Retirement and Health Benefits

- **Debt limit fight looming – tied to budget negotiations**
 - Deadline predicted in July-September
- **Budget negotiations**
 - Deadline for congressional leaders (D and R) and Biden to reach an agreement on government funding: prior to October 1, 2023
 - Unless they reach an agreement or pass a short-term continuing resolution (CR), the government will shutdown
 - Top-line agreement precedes appropriations bills
- **Threats to federal benefits loom**
 - Outside organizations already calling for additional cuts to federal benefits
 - Expect congressional budget proposals that target federal benefits
 - Possible pay-for in budget negotiations?



WEP/GPO Repeal or Reform

- **Support repeal of WEP and GPO**
 - Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82 (again)
 - Goal: 290 cosponsors in the House
 - Allows the bill to be placed on the House Consensus Calendar
 - Current cosponsors: 224 (as of 4/17/23)
 - 305 cosponsors in House in the past Congress
- **Support reintroduction of reform bills, inclusion of repeal in larger Social Security reform**





More Accurate COLAs for FERS Retirees

- **Support of the Equal COLA Act, H.R. 866, ensuring FERS COLAs match the change in consumer prices (and the CSRS COLA)**
- **If CPI increases above 2%, FERS retirees do not receive full COLA**
 - If between 2% and 3%, FERS COLA = 2%
 - If above 3%, FERS COLA = CPI minus 1%



OPM Customer Service

- **Support improvements to OPM customer service**
 - Congressional oversight of OPM RS
 - Support IT modernization and proper funding
- **NARFE continues to receive member complaints re: OPM customer service**
 - Inability to connect to OPM
 - Delays processing transactions (e.g., changes to health benefits)
 - Delays starting survivor annuities



FLTCIP Premiums

- **Support efforts to provide relief from premium increases**
- **OPM intends to renew contract with John Hancock for FLTCIP**
- **Enrollee letter indicated premiums would rise again**
 - Did not indicate how much
 - Previous increases as high as 25 percent (2009), 126 percent (2016)
- **OPM actions**
 - Independent Actuary & Consultant Hired
- **NARFE Letter Requested Partial Refund Option**
 - Not given accurate quote re: premiums, locked into program right now



Improve Medicare Integration with FEHB

- **Support policies to reduce health care costs through improved integration of Medicare with FEHB**
 - Maintain choice for retirees re: Medicare Part B enrollment
 - Provide more plan options that provide reimbursement for Medicare Part B premiums, increase reimbursement amounts
 - Ensure FEHB plans benefit from prescription drug prices negotiated by the Department of Health and Human Services for Medicare Part D plans
 - Allow cost savings through Part D integration; reimbursement for IRMAA



Federal Pay

- **Support market-rate federal pay increases**
 - 5.2 percent average increase for 2024
 - Parity with military pay raise
 - Based on recent changes in private-sector wages and salaries
- **Biden budget includes 5.2 percent average pay increase for 2024**
- **FAIR Act would provide an 8.7% average increase in pay in 2024**





Improving Government and Protecting the Merit System

- **Support legislation to prohibit return of Schedule F**
- **Support H.R. 159/ S. 59, Chance to Compete Act**
 - Would improve cross-agency hiring, expand the use of subject matter experts in the hiring process, and primarily focus on an individual's relevant experience and skills rather than self-ratings and degrees
 - Passed the House 422-2
- **Support additional efforts to modernize federal human capital management**

LEGCon23



Grassroots Advocacy Training

- Virtual Conference
- Schedule
 - Know Before You Go: June 14
 - Legislative Training Days: June 20-21
 - **Virtual Lobbying Day: June 22**



LEGCON23
LEARN • ADVOCATE • LEAD



Grassroots Advocacy Training

- Program
 - Congressional Speakers, Staff Panel
 - Rotating Breakout Sessions
- LEGCon23 will help you:
 - Make the most of your virtual meetings
 - Develop into a more influential advocate year-round
 - Learn how NARFE-PAC can help you build your grassroots relationships
- Registration is open. Early bird pricing ends April 14.



LEGCON23
LEARN • ADVOCATE • LEAD

NARFE-PAC



Why NARFE-PAC is Important

Helps elect Fed-
friendly members
of Congress

Builds strong
relationships with
lawmakers

Ensures federal
community is
political force

Pools individual
contributions to
maximize impact

Empowers
strongest
supporters



NARFE-PAC 2021-2022 Cycle Goals

- Raise \$1,850,000: **\$1,702,094.44**
- Disburse \$1,350,000 for political contributions: **\$1,333,500**
- Send NARFE members to 120 local fundraisers: **132**



NARFE-PAC 2021-2022 Cycle Review

- 167 NARFE-PAC Supported Candidates Won Election
 - 12 new candidates
- 14 NARFE-PAC Supported Candidates Lost Election
 - 4 new candidates
- **92 percent win rate overall, 75 percent for new candidates**



Tennessee: Contributions to NARFE-PAC 2021-2022 Cycle

- **National only members**
 - Contributors – 39
 - Sustainers – 2
 - Total contributions – \$1,451
- **Chapter members**
 - Contributors – 27
 - Sustainers – 2
 - Total Contributions – \$995



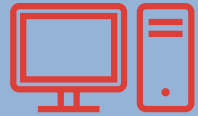
NARFE-PAC Goals for 2023-2024

Raise **\$1.6 million**

Disburse **\$1.2 million**

Increase members
on annuity
withholding by 30
percent

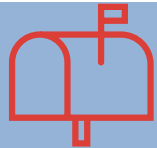
Attend **125** in-
district fundraisers



Visit www.narfe.org/narfe-pac to contribute



NARFE-PAC Magazine Article in the March Issue



NARFE-PAC's Letter Campaign



Calling Headquarters

- **1-800-456-8410, option 3**



NARFE-PAC



Contribute **monthly** through your annuity or by credit card. Get started at narfe.org/pac-sustainer.

Monthly contributors of \$10 or more receive a sustainer lapel pin

OR

Make a **one-time** contribution:

- \$25 – Basic lapel pin
- \$50 – Bronze lapel pin
- \$100 – Silver lapel pin
- \$250 – Gold lapel pin
- \$500 – Platinum lapel pin
- Other: _____

Contribution totals are cumulative for the 2023-2024 election cycle





NARFE-PAC Annuity Withholding Sustainer Program

Visit www.narfe.org/pac-sustainer



Home | Advocacy | NARFE-PAC | NARFE-PAC Member Homepage

NARFE-PAC Member Homepage

MAKE A ONE-TIME CONTRIBUTION

GIVE MONTHLY VIA CREDIT CARD

BECOME A NARFE-PAC SUSTAINER VIA FEDERAL ANNUITY

🔒 NARFE-PAC Materials for NARFE-PAC Leaders
This page includes materials for NARFE-PAC leaders, including the NARFE-PAC toolkit, documents covering the roles and responsibilities of a NARFE-PAC leader, contribution forms and more.

🔒 NARFE-PAC Annuity Withholding Form
Please complete each section of this form to register with NARFE that you want to be a NARFE-PAC sustainer via your federal annuity.

🔒 NARFE-PAC Contribution and Disbursement Reports
Contribution reports detail the number of contributors and amount of total NARFE-PAC contributions by chapter, state and region, and disbursement reports detail the congressional candidates who have received NARFE-PAC funds.

Questions?