

# Report From the Regions

## A Review of NARFE Accomplishments

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s NARFE members, we realize the benefits associated with our NARFE membership.

We know that, historically, NARFE has protected our earned benefits (our annuities and health care benefits) and has successfully prevented adverse legislation from being passed that would have resulted in such things as our Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) premiums going up and our cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) being delayed.



When we look at what has transpired over the past few years, we can see a trend by certain members of Congress and the White House to attack our earned benefits. Some NARFE members believe that Congress will not reduce our benefits, since those benefits were promised to us when we became faithful employees of the government. These same members believe that even though our country has a huge deficit, our annuities will be protected. They forget the old saying that “what Congress giveth, Congress can taketh away.” Let’s take a look back to see just some of the accomplishments that NARFE has had in the legislative area:

- **Since 1993:** NARFE has fought successfully to ensure that Congress has not legislated any reductions to our earned economic and health security.

- **2004:** NARFE successfully

persuaded a conference committee to reject a House provision that would have cut federal civilian retirement benefits by \$38.3 billion between 2004 and 2014.

- **2004:** NARFE successfully defeated House budget enforcement legislation that would have resulted in \$99 billion in automatic reductions in federal civilian and military retirements over a 10-year period.

- **2005:** NARFE successfully persuaded a conference committee to reject part of the House Budget Resolution that would have required cuts in federal civilian retirement benefits of \$2.3 billion over five years.

- **2005:** NARFE successfully ensured that no action was taken on a Republican Study Committee proposal that would have (1) changed the federal civilian annuity calculation from a high-three years to five years; and (2) required annuitants with less than 30 years of service to contribute more to FEHBP.

- **2005:** NARFE successfully supported legislation to offer dental and vision insurance to current federal employees and retirees.

- **2006:** NARFE successfully ensured that no further action was taken on a Senate budget enforcement bill that would have required automatic reductions in federal civilian and military retirement benefits between 2006 and 2016, which would have resulted in a savings to the government of \$104 billion dollars.

- **2006:** NARFE successfully persuaded Congress not to reduce Federal Employees’ Compensation Act benefits for Fiscal Year 2007.

- **2007:** NARFE continues to maintain its vigilance to guard against legislation that would adversely affect our present earned benefits and to

work to advance other issues such as enactment of Premium Conversion and repeal of the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) (see NARFE’s Legislative Program for the 110th Congress on the NARFE Web site and in the January *NARFE* magazine).

Members and potential members who say that NARFE isn’t doing anything for them should be reminded of the success stories above, which constitute only a partial listing of NARFE’s accomplishments. Without NARFE, we would probably be experiencing delayed COLAs and increased FEHBP premiums. How much would those two items cost each one of us? Surely, it would cost us a lot more than the 10–15 cents a day that our membership costs.

In addition to protecting our benefits, NARFE is also affiliated with a number of affinity partners, including insurance companies, moving companies, travel companies and hotels. NARFE has its own credit union, which can save you money. Because I am a NARFE member, my vehicle insurance premiums (with GEICO) have been reduced by more than \$60 per year, which exceeds the cost of my \$39 yearly membership.

NARFE needs you. Make sure that your membership is current. Encourage all of your government co-workers and retired friends to join our pro-active organization. Together we can protect our earned benefits, as well as work for the passage of Premium Conversion and the repeal of GPO/WEP. Your NARFE membership benefits you in innumerable ways. Make this your organization, and remember our motto: NARFE—Your Future Is Our Focus. ■