



## SENATE VOTES

### **1 \$250 Stimulus Payment**

The Senate passed the stimulus bill conference report, which included several pro-retiree measures. Chief among them was a \$250 payment to Social Security recipients. The bill also included relief for COBRA payments for health care coverage for workers who lost their jobs as well as help for Medicaid programs, on which much nursing home care depends. The conference report passed 60-38. A **YES** vote is the pro-retiree vote. H.R. 1, Roll Call No. 64, February 10, 2009.

### **2 Entitlements Task Force**

Senator Gregg, R-NH, introduced an amendment to the budget resolution that would create a task force to focus on federal spending, but concentrating on Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Congress would not have the ability to amend any task force recommendations, which could result in benefit cuts in those vital programs without full and open debate. The amendment failed 44-54. A **NO** vote is the pro-retiree vote. S. Con. Res. 13, Roll Call No. 123, April 1, 2009.

### **3 Part D Premiums Increase**

Senator Ensign, R-NV, introduced an amendment to the budget resolution that would increase Medicare Part D prescription drug premiums based on income. This means-testing approach, already in place for Part B physician services premiums, undermines the social insurance basis of Medicare. The amendment failed 39-58. A **NO** vote is the pro-retiree vote. S. Con. Res. 13, Roll Call No. 128, April 2, 2009.

### **4 Fair Medicare Premiums**

The Senate defeated a motion to invoke cloture and proceed to a bill, introduced by Sen. Stabenow, D-MI. The bill would prevent steep increases in Medicare Part B physicians services premiums, because of no Social Security cost of living adjustment for 2010. Without relief, 11 million Medicare recipients would have higher premiums. The motion failed 47-53. Sixty votes are necessary to invoke cloture. A **YES** vote is the pro-retiree vote. S. 1776, Roll Call No. 325, October 21, 2009.

## **5 Medicare Advantage Overpayments**

Senator McCain, R-AZ, moved that the Senate send the health care reform bill back to the Finance Committee in order to restore overpayments to Medicare Advantage insurance companies and begin the means-testing of Medicare Part D premiums. Medicare Advantage overpayments are, on average, 14% higher than costs in traditional Medicare. They shorten the financial stability of the Medicare Trust Fund by two years. The motion failed 42-58. Sixty votes are necessary under an agreement for the health care debate. A **NO** vote is the pro-retiree vote. H.R. 3590, Roll Call No. 358, December 4, 2009.

## **6 Eliminate CLASS Act**

Senator Thune, R-SD, introduced an amendment to the health care reform bill that would eliminate inclusion of the CLASS Act. The CLASS Act is a voluntary, affordable, and self-funded program which would provide long term supports and services benefits after workers pay into the program through payroll deductions for at least five years. The amendment failed 51-47. Sixty votes are necessary for passage under an agreement for the health care debate. A **NO** vote is the pro-retiree vote. H.R. 3590, Roll Call No. 360, December 4, 2009.

## **7 Fair Executive Pay**

Senator Lincoln, D-AR, introduced an amendment to the health care reform bill that would limit the annual tax deductions by health insurance companies to \$400,000 or the compensation of the Presidents. Savings would go to the Medicare Trust Fund. The amendment failed 56-42. Sixty votes are necessary for passage under an agreement for the health care debate. A **YES** vote is the pro-retiree vote. H.R. 3590, Roll Call No. 365, December 6, 2009.

## **8 Drug Reimportation**

Senator Dorgan, D-ND, introduced an amendment to the health care reform bill that would permit the importation of prescription drugs from nations with safe pharmaceutical infrastructures by registered importers and individuals. Many Americans have resorted to purchasing safe drugs at lower costs from nations like Canada in order to meet their health care needs. The amendment failed 51-48. Sixty votes are necessary for passage under an agreement for the health care debate. A **YES** vote is the pro-retiree vote. H.R. 3590, Roll Call No. 377, December 15, 2009.

## **9 Close Doughnut Hole**

The Senate invoked cloture on a substitute to the health care reform bill introduced by Senator Reid, D-NV. Included in the substitute was a provision to begin closing the Medicare Part D doughnut hole coverage gap. The gap would close by \$500 in 2010 and beneficiaries would receive 50% discounts on name brand drugs while in the gap. The motion to invoke cloture on the substitute passed 60-39. Sixty votes are necessary for to invoke cloture. A **YES** vote is the pro-retiree vote. H.R. 3590, Roll Call No. 394, December 23, 2009.

## **10 Health Care Reform**

The Senate passed sweeping health care reform. The bill included immediate assistance for older Americans such as closing the Medicare Part D doughnut hole coverage gap, eliminating co-payments for Medicare preventive care screenings, and providing premium assistance for pre-Medicare eligible retirees. The bill passed 60-39. A **YES** vote is the pro-retiree vote. H.R. 3590, Roll Call No. 396, December 24, 2009.