



# PROTECT SENIORS.ORG

...DEDICATED TO SAVING YOUR EARNED HEALTHCARE BENEFITS

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September 30, 2009

The Honorable John F. Tierney  
2238 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington DC, 20515

Dear Congressman Tierney:

On behalf of all the Board of Directors of ProtectSeniors.Org, I would like to thank you for taking time out of your schedule to sit down and talk with us this afternoon in regards to healthcare reform, and the efforts to include HR 1322 style language in the legislation.

As you know, the membership of ProtectSeniors.Org is comprised of both management and union retirees and both groups have been working hard to help you pass H.R. 1322. Our position remains that without H.R. 1322 language included in your overall healthcare reform bill, both union and management retirees, 65 years and older, will be the big losers when it comes to comprehensive healthcare reform.

During our discussion today you mentioned that you were getting some pushback from the unions on the language included in the current Healthcare Reform Bill: HR 3200, Section 165. Our organization's belief is that this is because of a misunderstanding of the intent of this language. Without this important section, both union and management retirees will be left without healthcare at some point in the imminent future. We have already begun to see an increase in the number of large corporations dumping retiree healthcare, and the effects of this have been devastating. For unions, there is a sense that somehow this language would prohibit them from negotiating their own contract. This is simply not the case. The reality for the union retirees is that corporations do not have to bargain for healthcare and without Section 165; therefore all retirees; both former union and former management will be the ones who lose their healthcare coverage.

We are concerned that retirees, 65 years and older, are the one group being left behind when it comes to comprehensive healthcare reform. The fact that you are getting resistance on language meant to help **all** 18.5 million retirees is evidence of this fact. ProtectSeniors.Org wants to support HR 3200, but without the inclusion of language similar to Section 165, our group cannot in good conscious support the bill.

**PAUL MILLER**  
Executive Director

**C. WILLIAM JONES**  
Chairman of Board

**JAMES E. CASEY, JR.**  
President

**EILEEN T. LAWRENCE**  
Secretary, Treasurer

If we did we would be supporting a bill which would result in our immediate loss of our valuable retirement benefit which we earned. On average it would cost \$800+ per month to replace what we Medicare eligible Verizon retirees have right now.

ProtectSeniors.Org is committed to protecting retiree healthcare benefits for all its members, both union and management retirees. We are not willing to support any legislation that would help one group of retirees while harming another portion of our membership. Again, we are hopeful that Congress will listen to those of us representing all retirees, not those who are looking to sacrifice retiree benefits for their own gain, or worse, use healthcare as a bargaining chip down the road.

Your leadership is needed now more than ever. We have been willing to compromise in our support of Section 165 in the current bill (with the retroactive date of January 1, 2009), but unless this language is included in the final healthcare legislation, ProtectSeniors.Org has no choice but to vigorously oppose this legislation and ask our membership to work to defeat it. We refuse to sit by and allow some, who are clearly confused about the intent of Section 165, to use retirees as a bargaining chip for future negotiations.

With your help and support, ProtectSeniors.Org is confident we can prevail. Quite simply, this is the right thing to do and we hope your colleagues will agree and include the current text of Section 165 in the final version of HR 3200.

On behalf of all the management and union retirees from over 285 corporations that our organization represents, we implore Congress to take action today and protect retiree healthcare benefits.

Sincerely,

*James Casey*

James Casey  
President, ProtectSeniors.Org

CC: Chairman George Miller, House Education & Labor Committee  
Representative Rob Andrews, House Education & Labor Committee  
Chairman Henry Waxman, House Energy & Commerce Committee  
Chairman Charlie Rangel, House Ways & Means Committee