Senator David Vitter Encourages Coalition to Keep Fighting

Sean Ferritor, The Seniors Coalition’s Executive Director last month met with TSC ally and U.S. Senator David Vitter to discuss the federal government’s budget crisis and the Senator’s effort to pass the Social Security Lock Box bill.

“Senator Vitter is a good friend of America’s seniors, and he’s been working very hard to protect the Social Security Trust Fund from Congressional raids,” Ferritor said after the meeting. “The Senator has specifically asked TSC to help him pass his Lock Box bill and the Coalition has been collecting petitions from its members and supporters as part of that effort.

In fact, Ferritor personally delivered another stack of petitions and presented them to Vitter at their meeting.

“The Senator said that he’ll be reintroducing his bill in the new Congress, so we’ll continue with our petition campaign supporting the lock box,” Ferritor promised. “As I told the senator, our members are profoundly concerned about the future of Social Security and they really appreciate everything he is trying to do on Capitol Hill. We’ll certainly continue to work together.”

Ferritor is making the rounds on Capitol Hill, checking in with the various Representatives and Senators who, in the past, have introduced legislation supported by the Coalition to make sure that they will reintroduce their bills during the new 113th Congress. “So far, all our friends on the Hill are still fighting for America’s seniors,” he says.

TSC, Twenty Other Organizations Demand IPAB Repeal

The Seniors Coalition has joined twenty other prominent limited government organizations in signing a letter urging Congress to pass H.R. 351, the Protecting Seniors’ Access to Medicare Act. The bill will specifically repeal the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) which is in charge of rationing medical care under ObamaCare.

“While we certainly want to repeal all of ObamaCare, we, and our allies, believe it’s important that we focus specifically on IPAB,” explains TSC President and CEO Dr. Joseph Bridges. “IPAB really is the heart of ObamaCare. Its mission is to slash Medicare reimbursements and limit the medical care seniors can receive. That’s why some people call IPAB ObamaCare’s ‘Death Panel’.”

The open letter to Congress continued page 2
TSC, Twenty Other Organizations Demand IPAB Repeal

is signed by prominent organizations like Americans for Tax Reform, Americans for Prosperity, the Family Research Council, Citizens Against Government Waste and the National Taxpayer’s Union.

“We often team up with other prominent like-minded organizations like this,” says Bridges, “Together we can raise the profile of an important issue, and it shows the politicians that grassroots conservative groups are unified in their opposition to IPAB.”

The IPAB is a committee of non-elected bureaucrats, activists or health care “experts” that rules on which medical procedures will be allowed under ObamaCare. The committee’s members are not elected, and their rulings are practically impossible to overturn, making IPAB the most undemocratic and unaccountable bureaucracy in the country.

“This committee is absolutely terrifying,” Bridges says. “A bunch of cronies will effectively be making life and death decisions for millions and millions of Americans. IPAB must go, and accomplishing that goal is a top priority for the organizations fighting for limited government in Washington, D.C.”

Dear Friend,

The new Congress has come to town, and The Seniors Coalition is busy trying to make new friends with the new members and cementing old relationships with those Representatives who have helped us in the past.

These relationships will be very important in the months ahead because 2013 promises to be a very, very active year for TSC.

Everyone on Capitol Hill is talking about reforming Social Security and Medicare, so we have to be on our guard. You see, “reform” to a lot of politicians means stealing as much as they can from these programs to pay for other ridiculous government boondoggles. As this edition of The Senior Class points out, one of the biggest reforms being considered is the “Chained Consumer Price Index.” It’s a new way for the government to compute Social Security CoLAs that will slash your benefits. TSC, of course, opposes it.

With Medicare, the most important issue is the rate at which physicians are reimbursed by the government. Congress recently passed a bill that temporarily prevented these payments from being cut, however, temporary “Doc Fixes,” as they are called, are not good public policy. The Coalition will be pushing for permanent reforms that don’t short-change current retirees or doctors.

We will also continue to fight for a complete repeal of the Death Tax, we’ll oppose any effort to extend Social Security benefits to illegal aliens, and we will be standing side by side once again with Senator David Vitter for a Lock Box.

As I said, it’s going to be a very busy year!

Keep fighting!

Dr. Joseph L. Bridges
President & CEO
The Seniors Coalition
Coalition Opposes “Chained CPI” Scheme to Cut Social Security

The Seniors Coalition is strongly opposing any long-term budget deal between House Republican leaders and the President that includes using the “Chained Consumer Price Index” gimmick in order to cut Social Security benefits to both current and future retirees.

“Some politicians want to avoid slashing the bloated federal budget or fixing entitlement programs, so they are preparing to cut Social Security CoLAs” warns Coalition Executive Director Sean Ferritor. “TSC has long maintained that the current system for computing Cost-of-Living Adjustments is broken and doesn’t reflect the true rate of inflation for the goods and services purchased by senior citizens. However, some politicians in both parties want to make matters worse by changing that flawed system and using the even less accurate Chained Consumer Price Index as the basis for measuring inflation.”

For the past several years, The Seniors Coalition has been warning retirees that the Obama Administration was willing to manipulate inflation figures in order to cheat them out of their Social Security benefits. “We are profoundly troubled that even House Republican leaders now seem eager to join in on this new CoLA fraud,” Ferritor says. “For the foreseeable future we believe inflation will be a profound problem thanks to the Administration’s policy of “Quantitative Easing” and deliberately devaluing the U.S. dollar. By effectively “cooking the inflation books” and not using the more accurate CPI-E calculation to compute CoLAs, the politicians in Washington are sentencing all seniors, especially poor and middle income seniors, to live with both skyrocketing inflation and promised Social Security payments that do not keep pace with this higher cost of living.”

Ferritor hopes public pressure from seniors on rank and file House Republicans will convince them to reject any deal that relies on the Chained Consumer Price Index gimmick to produce so-called budget “savings” “All TSC members should contact their Representatives and U.S. Senators IMMEDIATELY at 202-224-3121 and urge them to vote NO on this deal,” Ferritor urges.

Tell Us Why TSC is Important to You

Many members of The Seniors Coalition have been with us for years. We’d like to hear your stories about why you joined TSC and what TSC means to you. Please send your comments and a picture of yourself if you have one to spare, to:

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113th Congress— Legislative Agenda

**Medicare:** Support reintroduction of the Congressional Health Care for Seniors Act to reform Medicare by allowing seniors to enroll in the same health care plan as Members of Congress.

**Social Security:** Continue to push vigorously for passage of the Social Security Lock Box. TSC is still collecting petitions and making personal visits to lobby in favor of this bill.

**Death Tax Repeal:** Support 100% repeal of this out-dated law. TSC will coordinate with other conservative groups and Members of Congress.

**CoLA Reform:** Support reintroduction of the Guaranteed 3% CoLA for Seniors Act and continue collecting petitions in support of the CPI for Seniors Act, to favorably reform the way CoLAs are computed.

**Social Security for Illegal Immigrants:** Push for reintroduction of the No Social Security for Illegal Immigrants Act as well as the Social Security Totalization Agreement Reform Act.

The “Chained Consumer Price Index” will bind seniors to a new CoLA formula that is even less fair than the one the government now uses.
Legislative Report from Sean Ferritor

Here is what is going on with TSC on Capitol Hill.

First and most importantly, I recently sat down for a great meeting with Senator David Vitter. He agreed to reintroduce his lock box bill this Congress and once again asked TSC members to help him pass it. I promised the Coalition wouldn’t let him down.

Next, I just got off the phone with Congressman Elliott Engel’s staff. In the last Congress he introduced the Guaranteed 3% CoLA for Seniors Act, and his legislative assistant promised me that Representative Engel would do so again this session. This is very good news because we’ve been supporting this proposed legislation as part of our effort to reform the entire Social Security CoLA system.

Next, I continue to meet weekly with representatives of other limited government groups. Surprisingly, morale is still high despite Obama’s reelection, but we all understand that the big-government liberals control most of the power in Washington, and Republican leaders in the House can’t always be counted on to do the right thing. It’s a tough situation.

Finally, I’ll be personally delivering more of your signed petitions to Congressional offices over the coming weeks. Delivering your signed petitions always lifts my spirits, and it’s the very best way to make an impression on congressional staffers. They pay attention to phone calls, but nothing beats a bunch of petitions signed by real live constituents to make a politician wake up and take notice!

As always, if you have any questions or comments about our legislative or grassroots lobbying program, please feel free to give me a call at 202-261-3594.