

## **U.S. FORUM CONNECTION #176, August 2018**

This publication is intended for your information about issues important to education, women and children. How you choose to use the information included here is up to you.

This free newsletter is sponsored by the United States Forum of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International. The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International is an organization of leading women educators with over 80,000 members. Delta Kappa Gamma members wishing to subscribe to this **FREE** newsletter should send a request to the editor Angela O. Bedenbaugh at [Bedenbaugh.Angela@gmail.com](mailto:Bedenbaugh.Angela@gmail.com). We urge you to share this newsletter with other interested individuals who are not members of Delta Kappa Gamma or members who do not subscribe to this publication.

### **IN THIS ISSUE**

#### **HOW ESSA IS CHANGING SCHOOL REPORTING**

#### **SOCIAL SECURITY THREAT**

#### **SOME CURRENT FEDERAL REVENUE INFORMATION**

#### **SOCIAL SECURITY LEGISLATION NOW IN CONGRESS**

#### **PROPOSED 28TH AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION**

#### **HOW ESSA IS CHANGING SCHOOL REPORTING**

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) has a requirement which is challenging the schools. In the past each school district was required to report a per student expenditure. ESSA requires that every school in the district calculate its per student expenditure and report this information by this December. Because this hasn't been done before many school districts are finding the requirement a challenge. Due to this more detailed report and the problems in collecting that data, some schools will be given an extension on reporting the data. One example of the problem involves school buses. If a school bus serves more than one school, 1) how is the bus driver's salary apportioned? 2) how is the amount of gasoline expended on each school determined? Any other shared expenditures face the same challenge.

#### **SOCIAL SECURITY THREAT**

The passage of tax legislation in this session of Congress resulted in a large decrease in national revenues and added to the national debt. One way the government could reduce its expenditures is by cutting Social Security payments and/or Medicare payments. That this is seriously being considered can be seen by the concern among several organizations which seek to protect Social Security and Medicare and by several bills in Congress designed to protect Social Security and Medicare. At least two of these organizations are beginning to actively consider a Constitutional Amendment which would protect Social Security and Medicare and also the Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA). If the Constitution were to be amended to protect Social Security and Medicare these programs would not be subject to Congressional action to alter them.

#### **SOME CURRENT FEDERAL REVENUE INFORMATION**

Currently the inheritance tax on estates over 5.5 million dollars is 40% tax on the amount over 5.5 million dollars. Although the recent tax bill did not change the inheritance tax, at least one organization has as its primary goal the total elimination of the inheritance tax. Obviously this could further reduce federal revenue and could lead to the search for cuts in federal programs.

Another source of federal revenue would be to eliminate the limit on FICA(Social Security) taxes collected. Currently individuals earning more than \$128,700 do not pay FICA taxes on wages over that amount.

### **SOCIAL SECURITY LEGISLATION NOW IN CONGRESS**

The Social Security And Medicare Lock-Box Act (H.R.1218) would prohibit Congress from utilizing money in the Social Security and Medicare Trust Fund for anything other than Social Security and Medicare. It should be noted that in the past Congress has used some of the money in the Social Security and Medicare Trust Fund for other purposes.

The Social Security Guarantee Act (H.R.991) would guarantee that Social Security would continue to be paid and that it would include reasonable Cost Of Living Adjustments (COLA).

The Social Security Expansion Act (H.R.1114; S.427) This bill would increase the base amount of Social Security starting in 2023 and would use the Consumer Price Index for Elderly Consumers to calculate Cost Of Living Adjustments (COLA). This latter act probably has the most chance of passage because it has identical wording in both the House and Senate versions of the bill and also it has a larger number of cosponsors in each house.

### **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

There are currently 27 ratified amendments to the Constitution. As mentioned in a previous issue of the Connection the Equal Rights Amendment needs to have only one more state to ratify it followed by Congressional action to modify the time for ratification.

There are two other Constitutional Amendments which have recently surfaced. One proposed amendment seeks to guarantee Social Security and Medicare.

Another proposed amendment addresses term limitations on U.S. Senators and U.S. Representatives. Groups are being organized on a state by state basis to amend the Constitution to limit the number of terms an individual can serve in Congress. The organization behind this action is called National Term Limits Convention Campaign. In its current form it would limit a Representative to three terms and a Senator to two terms. So far only the Florida State Legislature has passed authorizing legislation, but other states are organizing to address this issue. (It is interesting that the group designates this as the 28<sup>th</sup> amendment which ignores the Equal Rights Amendment.)

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### **FORUM FACEBOOK PAGE LINK**

For those of you desiring discussion of legislative topics there is a U. S. Forum Facebook page online at <http://www.facebook.com/DKG.US.Forum>

**FORUM WEB SITE:** <http://www.usforumdkg.org/>

### **CONTACTING YOUR LEGISLATOR**

If you wish to contact your senator to express your opinion, you can call the Congressional Switchboard at 1-866-327-8670 [this is a toll free number]. Another way of contacting your senator is via email or a telephone number which is not toll free both of which are available at [https://www.senate.gov/general/contact\\_information/senators\\_cfm.cfm](https://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm)

**Email access and addresses**

<http://www.house.gov/> for members of the House of Representatives  
<http://www.senate.gov/> for members of the U.S. Senate  
White House 1-202-456-1111

**FIVE CONSTITUENT CONTACTS WILL CAUSE A LEGISLATOR TO PAY SERIOUS ATTENTION TO A GIVEN ISSUE.**

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