

BOARD SPOTLIGHT

By Josh Bell, Second Vice President



Hello everyone, I hope you've all enjoyed our mild winter however it's Iowa and we are not out of the woods yet!

In January myself and 1st Vice President Sgt. Steve Hanson with the Fort Dodge Police Department had the opportunity of representing the Iowa State Police Association (ISPA) at the National Association for Police Organizations (NAPO) Pensions and Benefits Seminar in Sunny Las Vegas, NV. It was funny for us Iowans to observe the locals wearing winter coats in 60-degree weather.

During the conference NAPO had several speakers discussing topics from emerging issues facing pension plans to current healthcare trends. I would like to share 2 bills that have been designed to help retirees.

1. The Public Safety Retirees Healthcare Protection Act H.R. 4897) Sponsored by Rep. Dan Lipinski: (D-IL)
 - The Pension Protection Act of 2006 included a provision that allows public safety retirees to take up to a \$3,000 tax-free out of their pension funds annually to pay health care premiums. H.R.4897 increases that annual amount to \$6,000.

2. Public Servants Protection and Fairness Act
 - 98 Co-Sponsors (96 D's 2 R's)
 - Estimated that 7 in 10 retirees will get a higher benefit under the new formula (avg. \$75 /mo)
 - Benefit Guarantee: If an individual's benefit is higher under WEP than the new formula, they automatically receive the higher benefit.
 - Relief payments of \$150/month for current retirees receiving Social Security payments impacted by WEP.

Speakers explained that Medicare only covers about 62% of expenses associated with health care services. Having a secondary insurance plan can be beneficial. A few Healthcare planning resources:

- Medicare: www.medicare.gov

- www.Eldercare.org

- State Health Insurance Programs (SHIP)

- www.benefitscheckup.org

- www.socialsecurity.gov

Steve and I also spoke with vendors and are working with them to come to this year's conference hosted in Des Moines. We are currently in talks with a company to make it easier for our members to follow us and stay engaged. Stay tuned for the big news!!! Again, it's my pleasure and honor to represent each and every one of you and your families. Any questions feel free to contact me or anyone of our current board members. Stay safe and God Bless.