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# From the Chair My View for the Year Ahead

By Thomas Edwalds

I want to thank Tony Litterer for his service as the chairperson of the Taxation Section Council and for mentoring me and preparing me for this role.

I feel deeply honored to be starting my term as the chairperson of the Taxation Section Council. My motto for the year is “First, do no harm.” This newsletter, *TAXING TIMES*, is generally regarded as one of the best newsletters published by the Society of Actuaries (SOA) and is read and referenced by many outside of the actuarial profession. Our sessions at major SOA meetings have earned “best session” awards several times within the past couple of years. Our webinars draw sizeable audiences and get high marks for quality. I intend to do what I can to make sure that this section continues to maintain this record of accomplishment, which mostly means that I will let the people who have produced these great results continue to do what they have been doing and make sure that they get the recognition that they deserve. My thanks to all of the volunteers who have helped this section achieve these excellent results.

A challenge that we will address in 2020 is the need to attract new members, particularly younger members. In December I had the pleasure of attending the Fellowship Admission Course banquet, where my daughter received her designation as a fellow of the Society of Actuaries. (I just had to work that into this column.) At dinner, I suggested to the new FSAs at our table that they should join the Taxation Section and consider running for the section council. They seemed to be taken aback by the suggestion, and



they mentioned the sections that they had joined (mostly Financial Reporting and/or Product Development). I pointed out that few actuaries work primarily on tax issues, but that many need to stay current and understand the implications of tax regulations for product development and company profitability.

I do not know if any of these new FSAs will actually join the Taxation Section, but it is clear from my conversation with them that we need to let actuaries know that membership in the Taxation Section is not restricted to an elite group of experts. If it were, I could not have joined!

I am looking forward to serving the members of the Taxation Section this year, and I hope that it will be a year of growth in membership. I hope to get the chance to meet many of you, and I hope that you will consider getting involved more substantially with the Taxation Section. We need ideas for session and webcast topics, and we need volunteers to help in ways both big and small. Anything you can do to help would be greatly appreciated! ■

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