

TRANSACTIONS OF SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES
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COMMENTS ON PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE
CONSTITUTION TO PERMIT PUBLIC EXPRESSION
OF PROFESSIONAL OPINION

ANNA MARIA RAPPAPORT:

I am opposed to the passage of the Constitutional Amendment because I feel that it will not enable the Society to meet its common responsibility. I would like to spell out this responsibility as I see it.

Actuaries, and only actuaries, have the special expertise needed to understand many problems and issues with public policy implications. Legislators and regulators must decide these issues when they make law. I feel that it is the responsibility of the profession to clarify the alternatives and their public policy implications. We should spell out for legislators the information they need to make an intelligent choice. The choice is theirs—our responsibility is not to give one viewpoint and thereby attempt to choose for them but rather to spell out the meaning of all viewpoints and thereby to enable them to choose from a basis of understanding.

JAMES L. CLARE:

In public life it would be quite in order for the Society of Actuaries to put forward facts and demonstrations. Making decisions and forming judgments are, however, exclusively the responsibility of legislatures. If individual actuaries wish to be a party to such decisions and judgments, they should get elected, as has actually been done by at least one member of the Society.

I appreciate very much the clarity and frankness with which the Constitutional Amendment has been presented. Both in Article X, and in the arguments in favor of the amendment numbered 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6, as distributed in the middle of October, there was no doubt that we were talking about "opinions" and "positions." These aspects are quite pertinent for members as individual citizens but *not* for us collectively as a *professional* body. Only the argument in favor numbered 4 should, in my opinion, carry any weight, and that was only one argument out of six.

I favor participation in public life and constructive lobbying both by individuals and especially by organizations. To be effective, such lobbying must start early and be pursued thoroughly and vigorously. In life insurance, in the United States there are the Life Insurance Association of America and the American Life Convention, and in Canada there is

the Canadian Life Insurance Association. In pension and welfare plan areas, in the United States there is the Association of Private Pension and Welfare Plans, and in Canada there is the Canadian Pension Conference (which has just begun presenting briefs to federal cabinet ministers). There is therefore no need for the Society of Actuaries, in my view, to depart from being a professional body and to take up lobbying. Of course, if Fellows wish the Society to become a lobbying body, then they should vote in favor of the Constitutional Amendment. If, however, Fellows feel, as I do, that the Society should remain a completely professional body and should only participate in public life through shedding light on issues through facts and demonstrations, then they should vote against the Constitutional Amendment.