



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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EDITORIAL

THIS month's issue is essentially devoted to the Manhart case. There has been much controversy surrounding the Society's and Academy's Brief to the United States Supreme Court as Amici Curiae. Is the Brief primarily a statement of facts or primarily an expression of opinions? This is not for the Editors of *The Actuary* to judge. Seven actuaries, however, felt strongly enough to send a letter directly to the U.S. Supreme Court taking exception to the Brief's content and to the manner in which it was developed, approved, and submitted.

Article X of the Society's Constitution specifies the procedures by which an expression of opinion can be made by or on behalf of the Society of Actuaries:

Public Expression of Professional Opinion

No opinion shall be publicly expressed by, or on behalf of, the Society of Actuaries, the Board of Governors, or any committee except on matters within the special professional competence of actuaries and then only in accordance with authority given and procedures determined in each instance by the Board of Governors, and the following conditions:

1. An opinion of the Society shall require advance approval by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the Fellows who vote in a mail ballot. Such ballot shall not be deemed to authorize expression of opinion unless votes are received from a majority of all Fellows. The public expression, if any, shall indicate the result of this vote and shall state any substantial contrary opinion expressed by responders to the ballot.
2. An opinion of the Board of Governors or of a committee authorized by the Board to express an opinion shall be publicly expressed only if it has been approved by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of all the members of the Board or of the committee as the case may be. It shall indicate that it does not purport to represent the views of the Society of Actuaries, but only of the Board or committee that expresses it. It shall state any substantial contrary opinion expressed by members of the Board or committee."

As you read this issue, I think it is very important for you to decide your own feelings about this situation and let us, at *The Actuary*, the Board of Governors, or others have your comments on this volatile subject.

I would hope that we, at *The Actuary*, receive much response to the contents of this month's newsletter. It is extremely important for us, as actuaries, to get involved with and respond to these important issues.

J.L.W.

LETTERS

Membership Requirements

Sir:

While I am in general agreement with Mr. Boynton's discussion of the problems facing the Membership Committee, I come to a completely different conclusion.

The three most important facts for the Academy today are (1) that there is a significant value to the broad based education of the FSA or FCAS, (2) that government(s) will continue expansion of regulations involving definitions of "qualified actuary" and (3) that the public has no great trust in government regulations as being the best way to assure the public good.

What the Academy Can Promote

The Academy should promote four things to various "publics."

(1) To all publics the Academy wishes to speak for all actuaries. Any government recognized "actuary" will be admitted to the Academy as an Affiliate if I agrees to abide by the Guides to Professional Conduct. Failure to abide by the Guides will lead to disciplinary action by the Academy. Any action taken will be made public.

(2) The Academy encourages broad based education through examination. The Academy's leadership comes predominately from Members who have completed all of a set of such examinations.

(3) The Members, because of their broad education, can assist governments in defining the term "qualified actuary" to suit each particular situation.

(4) The Members are the best group to maintain current a set of Guides to Professional Conduct.

What the Academy Cannot Promote

(1) The Academy cannot promote the idea of being superior to government. The statement "The Board would evaluate each set of examinations for reasonableness and comprehensiveness" appears unworkable. Governments generally will allow experience to "qualify" a person. The Academy would be hard pressed to defend an examination only qualification based on its history of 1965-69 and the 900 from ERISA.

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