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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

By Jeffery M. Rykhus

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### IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

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#### Dear SI&PF Section,

**W**e forge ahead in the midst of uncertainty about health care reform, public pensions, Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and even other, smaller, social insurance programs like flood insurance. I have no idea what the coming year will bring to any of these programs, but I do know that they will be contentious subjects in the media.

It is always challenging to publish a newsletter that covers the breadth of interests of the people in the section and which, at the same time, captures timely ideas that are important to actuaries today. In publishing this newsletter, the contributors and I wish to provoke you to think carefully, to contribute and to comment. To accomplish our goal means, sometimes, enlisting authors who risk publishing before their topics are a settled matter, who don't know whether they will be lauded or pelted with rotten fruit and run out of town. I appreciate the bravery of those authors who publish in this newsletter and who think differently than the norm.

This edition of *In The Public Interest* opens with an article by Tia Goss Sawhney, exhorting us to evaluate the role actuaries play in the public pension crisis. Fast on the heels of the Blue Ribbon Panel report, Tia's article calls for all actuaries to evaluate what actuaries do when working with public pensions and how we may better serve the public. This is a forward-looking topic that demands responses addressing the future. Please respond to me at jrykhus@gmail.com with your comments, if you wish to be included in a follow-up article of reader responses.

Rebecca Owen follows with a beautiful summary of an emerging issue regarding Hepatitis C treatment choices and cost of treatment within the Medicaid world. As she said, it is always difficult to put an article like this to rest, as there is always new information that won't become part of the article.

In "Let's Talk: Interview with an Actuary in the Public Interest," Anna Rappaport details her extensive public service and volunteer work and explains her concept of a life portfolio. Anna has done so much already and there are many different things she is still doing. Her concept of a life portfolio is really quite interesting. You would be extremely well-served to read Anna's article, even if you already know much about her.

The next article, "Forecasting & Futurism Section To Aid In Upcoming Delphi Study," is a short note about the Delphi Study technique coupled with "Land This Plane," a reprinted article from December 2013. It addresses the upcoming SI&PF Delphi Study on Social Security. Thank you, Ben Wolzen-ski, and thank you to the Forecasting & Futurism Section for working with the SI&PF Section to "land their plane" properly, using the Delphi method to study Social Security reform proposals.

Once again, *Living to 100* has a presence through Kai Kaufhold, from Germany, who summarizes three papers presenting state of the art research from

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the most recent *Living to 100* conference. It appears that *Living to 100* will have a continuing, and quite welcome, international presence in this newsletter. So embrace it by turning to the scholarly pages of Kai's article.

For a bit more of that international flavor from north of the border, peruse Émilie Bouchard's article, where she introduces herself and describes the current state of Canadian research.

In our Actuarial Tips And Tricks corner, Greger Vigen writes "A Less Visible Path," where he discusses many of the lesser-known programs of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Greger also puts together a mean list of resources for those inclined to follow his advice and learn more about the small bits of the ACA.

Finally, for a little light-hearted fun, Ari Halpern, *New York Times* crossword puzzle author, has designed a friendly challenge. This is modest challenge, with another more difficult puzzle on deck for next time. Let me know if you want more puzzles or have anything you wish to submit.

Thanks for trying out all the articles and for participating in my venture to invite comments, action and volunteerism. If you have any time to share your editing or writing skills, email me or SOA staff members Leslie Smith and Meg Weber, at our email addresses from the masthead.

Sincerely,

Jeffery M. Rykhus

Editor, *In The Public Interest* 



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