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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

By Jeffery M. Rykhus

The current issue of *In The Public Interest* is a short synopsis of what is going on in our section today, with some significant holes. We haven't recently published any articles on Social Security, other than Bruce Schobel's factual treatment of the annual changes to Social Security published in the Jan. 2014 issue, and his summary of the annual Social Security Trustee's Report. We certainly welcome more articles on Social Security. We also could benefit from more articles on public pensions. While our section covers some of the broadest areas of any section, it is difficult to publish something from Medicare, Medicaid, health care reform subsidies, public pensions, and Social Security in every single issue. We also would like to include more international articles to compare social insurance programs in other countries to those in the United States.


In this issue we include an article by Sandy Mckenzie describing the research report "An SOA Project on Communicating the Financial Health of Public Pension Plans." This SI&PF-sponsored research was released in 2014 and has been the subject of a fair amount of debate and discussion given the subject matter. We expect this will continue to be a topic that engenders actuarial debate and hope that the discussion results in better understanding of the issues and, ultimately, in better-informed public policy. Sven Sinclair addresses this debate in his "Vice Chairperson's Corner" and shares his philosophical and practical outlook on the way actuaries should address the controversies that arise in our profession. Sven also describes the current activities of the section and the recent successful webcast on Social Security retirement benefit calculation.

R. Dale Hall also takes a philosophical look at the staid topic of mortality patterns among the oldest old. He suggests a practical way that people can use recent mortality data to better prepare themselves to fund retirement, using the Life Preparancy Age in his article "Mortality Age Patterns: Trends, Projections, and Life Preparancy," in the Living To 100 Section. In "Let's Talk: Interview With an Actuary in the Public Interest," John Bertko describes his career working toward universal health care coverage and on being a technical consultant for recent major health care programs such as Medicare Part D and the Affordable Care Act.

Finally, since Medicaid continues to be a lynchpin in expanding health care coverage to all, we have included two articles regarding the subject, “Medicaid Expansion: A Comparison of Two States Under Section 1115 Demonstration Waivers,” by Christopher T. Pettit and Robert M. Damler, and “Medicaid And the ACA,” by Robert M. Damler and Marlene T. Howard, a reprint courtesy of the American Academy of Actuaries. Thanks to Mr. Damler for providing a double whammy for this issue of *In The Public Interest*.

Sincerely,

Jeffery M. Rykhus

Editor, *In The Public Interest* 



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