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# Letter from the Editor

By Jeffery M. Rykhus

**W**elcome to a new year and a time of potentially significant change, at least for our U.S. members. The new presidential administration promises change on many fronts that, depending on your point of view, may be positive or negative. In particular, they have promised change, especially in health care reform under the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

On one hand, the stage is set for participants in the individual market to potentially lose their health care coverage or be required to pay more for it. There could also be more limited options available in many counties, if repeal of the ACA or other changes spook insurers. On the other hand, insurers, providers, actuaries, consumers and others all have an opportunity to influence the direction that health care reform will take, and it's possible that this administration will listen closely to those individuals and organizations that seek to opine on the subject. Personally, I'm excited to see the results of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Milliman Actuarial Challenge currently underway "to increase the stability of the health insurance market."

I think this year can be a tremendous opportunity for individual health care actuaries, as the health care landscape changes and takes a new shape. There will be much more to learn and new things to put into your actuarial toolkit. We are potentially at a major turning point, perhaps lasting decades, not only in health care, but also in all other aspects of social insurance.

At the time this publication is going to press, Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and the ACA are all potential candidates



for change within this administration. Although some might be alarmed at what they see as the perfect storm of political forces aligning to reduce social insurance programs, I think that these changes will be less drastic than some fear, primarily because no political party wants to eliminate so much that they are voted out of office. As I write this, members of congress considering changes to the ACA are far from reaching any consensus, and who knows when a replacement law will be considered.

The Social Insurance and Public Finance Section (SI&PF) will be closely following upcoming legislation and the administration's new policies. Stay tuned. In this time of anticipated change, the SI&PF council welcomes articles that examine the actuarial issues around social insurance and public finance. Contact me or anyone on the SI&PF council if you'd like to contribute an article. ■



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