

Legislative Report (Winter 2019)

by Bill Lesniak

Mary Johnson and Gary Germain, Co-Vice Presidents of NYSRTA Legislative Committee gave a clear statement in report to the committee on the issues that we are fighting for on the Federal level.

On Social Security: We can be assured that Social Security is stable and can pay full benefits until at least 2034. But, what then? How will our children and grandchildren fare? After 2034 it will be able to pay about 79% of all benefits owed. The modest increases that current recipients have received the last few years fail to keep pace with their financial needs as medical costs rise and prices rise for basic necessities. Basing the cost of living index on a CPI for Elderly would assure that their buying power does not erode over time. That is why we are supporting a bill to strengthen and expand social security.

On medical support: Medical costs are soaring, but something can be done about the increasingly astronomic cost of prescription drugs. Medicare is currently unable to negotiate prices for Medicare approved prescription drugs. We are supporting a bill that would change that. Prescription drug price negotiation has been a priority for us for several years. Now it is getting the attention it deserves in Washington.

On Safe Schools: The tragedy of school violence has sent shock waves through this country. We will support efforts at the State and Federal level to ensure safe schools.

On the State level we will be meeting with our Legislators within the next couple of months to discuss our state agenda. Participated in a NYSRTA legislative conference call January 18, 2019 to update our agenda which will most likely deal with. **Improving Pension COLA, School Safety with concern for Mental Health, Ethics Reform, New marijuana issues with the Governor's push to legalize it.**

Advocate: packets should be out the first week of March