



# NARFE NEWSLETTER

GREATER BOWIE-CROFTON AREA CHAPTER 1747  
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

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April 2022

**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS** are held at the Bowie Senior Center, 14900 Health Center Drive Bowie, 20716 in Room 4. Meeting dates are the third Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM except in July and August. There is never a charge to attend and all meetings are open to the public. Please check your current newsletter or our website for any changes.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS** are held the first Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM in Conference Room 125, Bowie Senior Center. All chapter members are welcome.

**POSTAL ADDRESS:** NARFE Chapter 1747, P.O. Box 504, Bowie, MD 20718

**NOTE:** Chapter meetings are cancelled when Prince George's County schools are closed due to inclement weather. Otherwise, meetings are held as scheduled.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

- April 6** Preparing Retirement Forms  
Federal Benefits Institute Webinar, 2:00pm
- April 7** (Held March 24<sup>th</sup>) Executive Board Meeting  
Zoom Meeting, 10:00am
- April 17** Types of Available Home Care, Jennifer McAndrews  
Bowie Senior Center, 10:00am

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Frank Lee

nation's founding according to the Census. "If a bigger number retire than in the past, that's a big potential crash for the labor force," said William Frey, a demographer at the Brookings Institution.

The long-term pullback by baby boomers has serious consequences. Their smaller contribution to the labor force suggests slower economic growth ahead for the U.S. and potentially negative effects on the economy's overall productivity. Reduced availability of older workers will complicate the Federal Reserve's ability to steer interest rate policy and manage inflation. According to Time magazine, the U.S. like many other countries doesn't have enough workers to make and move all the things that people want to buy, and companies have to raise wages and thus prices to attract available workers resulting in inflation. There are also huge implications for public finances. Having fewer workers is likely to mean reduced tax revenues, including payments into Social Security.

In the first quarter of this year, 30.3 million baby boomers reported they were out of the labor force because of retirement, according to the Pew Research Center's analysis of government data. That is 2.7 million more than in the first quarter of 2020, a much bigger increase than the average growth of roughly 2 million retired boomers annually over the last decade.

With more than 75 million baby boomers retiring sooner rather than later, it's clear that employers will need a strong workforce plan for replacing exiting workers. According to Monster, a job search website, filling the workforce gap will be a challenge. The ranks of the Gen X workers are simply not enough, while many millennials lack the needed work experience. The emerging labor shortage is a problem that does not have a short-term solution.

While many have claimed that labor shortages last year were driven by young people who didn't want to work, retiring boomers were the biggest force behind the trend, according to CNN. According to Pew Research, over a third of the workforce, or around 41 million workers, come from the Baby Boom Generation, born from 1946 to 1964.

In large numbers, many have reassessed their finances and other factors and have concluded that they are about as well off retiring now as they would be going back to work. It looks as though many of these older workers will never come back.

The number of adults 55 and older who are participating in the labor force — that is, working or looking for work — has barely budged this year and is actually down from last fall, according to government statistics.

With Americans having fewer babies, the working-age population is projected to grow over the next 10 years at a fraction of recent decades. Last year, the U.S. population grew at 0.1%, its slowest rate since the



## **Senate Passes \$1.5 Trillion Omnibus Spending Bill**

The Senate voted 68-31 Thursday, March 10 to pass a \$1.5 trillion omnibus bill that will fund federal government agencies for the remainder of fiscal year 2022, following in the footsteps of the House, which passed the measure the previous evening.

The bill now goes to President Biden's desk. The bill includes \$730 billion in total non-defense funding, a 6.7% increase over enacted levels. It's the largest increase in non-defense funding in four years. The bill also provides \$782 billion in defense funding, a 5.6% increase from enacted levels.

The omnibus, provides \$13.6 billion in emergency assistance to Ukraine and NATO allies, exceeding the White House's request for \$10 billion last week. The omnibus directs agencies to brief lawmakers on a variety of federal workforce issues in the coming months.

The omnibus spending package directs the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Personnel Management to brief the appropriations committees, no later than 90 days after the bill passes, on the challenges agencies face hiring qualified federal employees in a reasonable amount of time.

The omnibus also requires OPM to develop a governmentwide human capital strategy focused on the current state of the federal STEM workforce, as well as anticipated STEM talent needs. Lawmakers expect OPM to complete the report within a year, and should include existing hiring authorities, recruitment and hiring practices and the "feasibility of streamlining of restructuring those authorities and pathways to improve recruitment and hiring of STEM talent."

The omnibus requires the General Services Administration to provide the committees with an update on the "future of federal office space," no later than 180 days after the bill passes. Lawmakers are specifically looking for GSA to provide an update on how agencies can reduce their office space requirements "based on lessons learned from the use of telework during the pandemic."

The spending deal gives the IRS its largest spending increase in decades, as well as a long-sought-after direct hiring authority, which will allow the agency to bring employees onboard more quickly to deal with its current backlog of tax returns and correspondence. The bill gives \$12.6 billion to the IRS — that's a 5.6% increase from enacted levels, and is the largest budget increase the agency has received since 2001. The bill gives the IRS \$275 million for business systems modernization, which will help the agency modernize its legacy IT systems and improve IRS web applications — a \$52 million increase above enacted levels.

### **Postal Service Reform Act of 2021**

**Urgent Need for Reform:** The Postal Service incurred its fourteenth consecutive net annual loss in 2020. It may run out of cash to fund its operations prior to 2024. Key Reforms in the Postal Service Reform Act of 2021:

- **Medicare Integration:** The Postal Service Reform Act of 2021 would require future Postal Service retirees, who have been paying into Medicare their entire careers, to enroll in Medicare. Because a quarter of postal retirees do not enroll in Medicare even though they are eligible, the Postal Service is stuck paying far higher premiums than any other public or private sector employer. By more closely integrating Medicare, the Postal Service estimates it could save approximately \$22.6 billion over 10 years.
- **Eliminating the Requirement to Prefund Retiree Health Benefits:** The Postal Service Reform Act of 2021 would eliminate the requirement that the Postal Service pre-fund retiree health benefits for all current and retired employees for 75 years in the future. The Postal Service estimates this provision would drastically reduce its prefunding liability and allow it to save roughly \$27 billion over 10 years.

- **Service Performance Transparency:** The Postal Service Reform Act of 2021 would require the Postal Service to develop a public-facing, online dashboard with national and local level service performance data updated each week to provide additional transparency and promote compliance with on-time delivery of mail.

- **Six-Day Integrated Delivery:** The Postal Service Reform Act of 2021 would require the Postal Service to deliver both mail and packages at least six days per week across an integrated network.

- **Non-Postal Services:** The Postal Service Reform Act of 2021 would allow the Postal Service to enter into agreements with State, local, and tribal governments to provide non-commercial property and services that provide enhanced value, do not detract from core postal services, and provide a reasonable contribution to Postal Service institutional costs.

### **Coronavirus Status**

A new subvariant of omicron called BA.2 has emerged as a new coronavirus threat. Because it is more transmissible than omicron, seniors who are not fully vaccinated or have underlying conditions are particularly vulnerable. Please protect yourself and your family from covid by being fully vaccinated and wear face masks when appropriate. For the week ending March 23, Maryland averaged:

New Cases	-3%	282
Deaths	-37%	5
Hospitalizations	-5%	340

All states have ended their mask mandates. The Bowie Senior Center has ended all coronavirus restrictions including a mask mandate and proof of vaccination.

### **MD Federation Mini-Conference**

The MD NARFE Federation will hold a mini-conference at the Bowie Comfort Inn on May 2-3, 2022. This is an opportunity for members to meet Federation officials and see how the MD Federation operates. If you would like to attend the mini-conference, please send me a request before April 20. You can choose to attend one day or both days.

**LEGISLATIVE CHAIR**  
**Ed Bice & Frank Lee**

### **MD Tax Relief**

Maryland state leaders announced Monday that they have reached a bipartisan agreement to provide \$1.86 billion in tax relief over five years for Maryland retirees, small businesses and low-income families.

The tax relief agreement includes the following provisions for fiscal year 2023 through 2027:

- **Tax Relief for Retirees:** Marylanders 65 and older making up to \$100,000 in retirement income, and married couples making up to \$150,000 in retirement income. As a result, 80% of Maryland's retirees will receive substantial relief or pay no state income taxes at all. (\$1.55 billion).
- **The Work Opportunity Tax Credit** incentivizes employers and businesses to hire and retain workers from underserved communities that have faced significant barriers to employment. (\$195 million)
- **Family Budget Boosters** will provide sales tax exemptions for child care products such as diapers, car seats, and baby bottles and critical health products such as dental-hygiene products, diabetic-care products and medical devices. (\$115.6 million)

The governor's office said the agreement also makes a one-time \$800 million investment in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future while maintaining a record level in the Rainy-Day Fund.

The agreement uses the state's surplus to make strategic and historic investments that:

- Support public safety and victims of crime;
- Ensure Maryland's world-class health system by supporting hospitals, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities;
- Expand Medicaid dental coverage for adults, in-home medical care and autism services;
- Help families by expanding access to child care, providing bonuses for public school staff, and increasing student aid at higher education institutions;
- Spur local economies and job opportunities through capital funds for school construction, affordable rental housing, state facility maintenance and local transportation infrastructure; and Protect against the growing threat of cyberattacks.

This agreement follows bipartisan discussions that included state Budget Secretary David Brinkley, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee Chairman Guy Guzzone and House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Maggie McIntosh.

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### MEMBERSHIP CHAIR Angela Hyman

#### Chapter Activity Report 02/01/2022-03/23/2022

<b>454</b>	Chapter 1747 Members as of 03/23/2022
<b>01</b>	New Chapter Members – Stephen Wharton
<b>03</b>	Members Dropped for Non-Renewal
<b>04</b>	New Prospective Members
<b>13</b>	Members Renewed
<b>01</b>	Members Reinstated

### Spring Member Challenge

Spring is a time for Renewal!! We're moving into our second month of the Member Challenge. Here's a reminder as the weather warms up and you get out more to meet with family, friends and coworkers to talk with them about NARFE and invite them to join our Chapter.

Thank you for helping to spread the news about NARFE.



### TREASURERS REPORT Vanessa Washington

Balance on: Jan 31, 2021	\$9,327.84
Income:	\$406.47
Expenses:	\$706.60
Balance on: Feb 28, 2022	\$9,027.71
Useable Balance on Jan 31, 2022	\$9,027.71
 Reserve for Alzheimer's Fund	 \$0.00

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**Greater Bowie-Crofton Area  
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