



FEDERAL FLORIDIANS BEWARE

There is a bill H.R. 3115/ S. 1496 that is detrimental to federal employees everywhere, but more so in Florida, because our own Senator Rick Scott sponsored this bill. It gives federal agencies and the postal service the right to terminate an employee without cause, with the exception of political appointees. I don't care what your political affiliation is, you have got to open your eyes to how these type of bills affect your quality of life. A bill like this can terminate your employment because someone doesn't like the way you look. It's a backhanded way to get rid of the unions because you have no appeal. It amazes me how Congress is so broken. We have one group that is constantly trying to remain politically correct and the other that is focusing on stupid stuff. The end result is nothing gets done. Federal employees, especially retirees are treated like caca which is the Spanish word for doo-doo.

We recently participated in LEGCON23 which gives us an opportunity to meet with the politicians or their staff on ZOOM. I was involved in seven (7) meetings and it should have been more, but I wasn't given

the opportunity. The only representative that showed up was Representative Darren Soto(9th District). He gave us a lot of time and was interested in each one of the participants point of view. It was exhilarating!

It bugs me that most of Congress consists of millionaires who receive health insurance for pennies and have no worry about how they will pay their bills or keep their homes. If you don't know what it's like to be concerned about bills, how can you relate to those of us who do? Federal and government employees, retirees, and families, are sick of being used as the answer to balancing the budget. We were promised benefits and we earned them fairly by giving decades of dedicated service. Past proposals have targeted our benefits, such as reducing or eliminating cost of living adjustments, decreasing the government share of health insurance premiums, reducing the initial retirement benefits for employees approaching retirement, and even reducing the rate of return on federal and military retiree savings in the Thrift Savings Plan G Fund. All of these represent promises some members of Congress have no problem breaking. These members of Congress, like Senator Rick Scott never think about the hardship it will cause us.

Why in the world would we want to support Senator Rick Scott in his bid for re-election? This is the same multi-millionaire who wanted to sunset Social Security and Medicare. The only reason he pulled back is because he is running for re-election. He hasn't forgotten his intentions, he has merely delayed it until he is re-elected. We have to

fight back! This man does not need to be given more time to stab us in the back. What is the purpose of sunseting Social Security and Medicare or firing employees for no cause? His answer is to save the government money. Do these people have a brain or is it easier to just throw federal and government employees under the bus? How about this proposal, when the debt ceiling comes up for vote, if they can't agree and federal employees and retirees don't get a check, neither does Congress. Let's all suffer together! See if you have nothing to lose, you have no incentive to come up with a solution. If they really want to balance the budget, try not to spend money on ridiculous political investigations and try to figure out how to lower home owners insurance costs. How many people in Congress are still in denial about climate change? Representative Aaron Bean's (District 4) staff aide was so negative on H.R.82/ S.597 which eliminates WEP (Windfall Elimination Provision) and GPO (Government Pension Offset) he told us point blank that it cost too much money. We countered with H.R.2337 which would give civil service employees \$150 and he countered with "that hasn't been sponsored in the 118th Congress". Our answer, "Representative Bean could sponsor it as a show of support for federal employees. It's a start, \$150 is better than nothing." His answer was "we'll think about it." This was the aide, not the Representative talking.

I asked Senator Scott's aide ,what was keeping him from supporting the federal employees, because to date he has not signed on to one bill in support of federal employees and retirees. I stated the numbers and pointed out that we needed his support and he needed

ours. I don't recall getting an answer. I did get a reprimand later for my statement, but I'm trying to help all of us, including myself.

Congress needs to know what's on our minds.

Let's stop suffering in silence, faith without works is dead! The most valuable thing you own is your vote. There are 321,637 federal employees and retirees. Think how many other people we influence daily. The political consensus is that you influence at least 5 other people when you vote. That's 1,608,185 votes. We have a voice and we need to be more strategic about using it. Stop voting along party lines like a robot and vote for your family. If you want my vote, tell me what do I get out of the deal? How are you going to help my family? We need people in Congress who can think, rather than push our buttons with fake agendas. Senator Scott isn't going to miss a meal. He was CEO of Columbia/HCA which was fined \$840 million in criminal fines and damages over unlawful billing practices according to the Department of Justice in 2000 and an additional \$881 million fine in 2002, which is considered one of the largest healthcare fraud settlements in U.S. history, according to PolitiFact. I lived approximately 2 miles from one of the hospitals that abruptly closed down. My reason for quoting these published facts is to point out that someone associated with \$ 1.7 billion in fines for health-care violations is probably not considering how to be fair to federal employees about their health care program or Social Security and Medicare, unless he has had a come to Jesus revelation.

The bottom line is, we have to make some noise with our vote. If Florida fights with our ballot, we can send a message to the rest of the United States. Everybody from Florida wants to be President and save the country, when they haven't done one good thing in Florida. If you can't get Social Security, but your homeowners insurance has gone up by \$2000 in a year and groceries and gas have increased by huge amounts, where is the money coming from. Who is getting food assistance, nowadays? Definitely not civil service employees on fixed incomes. Let's be fair! We have lived and worked for our country all of our lives and we can't even get help for hardships. I can't put it all on the President when my Representatives and Senators who are my first line of defense aren't doing anything. Half of Congress is fighting for billionaires who golf everyday and can eat steak seven days a week and we're trying to keep our heads above water. What's more important here, them or us? I say my family matters more to me, how about you? Don't put anyone in office who is doing nothing to help you. I don't care what party they belong to and you shouldn't care either. Some of you may say, this is too harsh, but I'm telling the truth and the truth shall set us free. Like Steve Austin says " if you don't know, you better ask somebody."

If you have a different opinion, that's fine, you have the right to think differently. Please feel free to use your voice and write in. As always, we need members to step up and be willing to meet with our representatives. Volunteer to be a CDL(Congressional District Leader) or SDL(Senate District Leader). Let's work together to make a change. Shout out to everyone who participated on the Florida

LEGCON23 team. Federation President Evelyn Seabrook, Federation Vice-President & SDL Greg D'Alessio, Legislative Chair Emeritus & CDL Mark Silverstein, Benefits Expert Tammy Flanagan, President DVP Emeritus Richard Carroll and CDL Cherry Lightner. While, DVP Emeritus Richard Carroll is a retired military officer, I am unsure of the other participants military service, but for all of those who have served to keep us free, THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!

Submitted by

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