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*Protecting America's  
Heartbeat for over 90 Years!*

## Virginia Federation of Chapters (VFC)

Over 18,500 Members Strong

 59 Chapters

 10 Area Vice Presidents



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## National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE)



## Virginia Federation of Chapters

## 2014 State Legislative Plan

*Protecting Earned Benefits of Active & Retired Federal Employees and the Interests of Virginia's Senior Citizens*



# 2014 State Legislative Plan - Virginia

## Enhanced Protection of Incapacitated Adults

Financial exploitation of vulnerable seniors is a growing problem. We support legislation that would: (1) expand the singular focus under current law on *mental* incapacity to include *physical disability*, as well as *social isolation*, in the definition of “incapacitated adult;” (2) increase the criminal penalty from the current lesser charge of larceny to a Class 3 felony; and (3) provide for asset recovery through the seizure or forfeiture of property used in connection with the exploitation.

## Income Tax Subtraction for Retiree Health Insurance Premiums

All currently employed Virginians with a company or agency health plan are allowed to subtract their health insurance premiums from their pre-tax income. However, most retirees do not have the same or similar benefit. A new 2013 Virginia law permits adults 66+ years old to deduct (not subtract) premiums paid for medical insurance if earned annual income is at least \$20K and federal adjusted gross income

does not exceed \$30K. Yet, most retirees do not fit within this narrow window, either because they do not work (and therefore do not have earned income) or their federal adjusted gross income, including work and annuities, exceeds \$30K. Since health care costs continue to rise, and most retirees are on fixed incomes, we support legislation that would amend VA58.1-322(C) to allow retirees to subtract their health insurance premiums from federal adjusted gross income, thereby lowering Virginia taxable income by the same amount.

## Required Geriatrics Training for Professional License Renewal

Complex problems associated with aging will require many more healthcare providers with special geriatrics training, now only in extremely limited numbers in Virginia and across the country. The Virginia General Assembly has continued to fund over the last several years the Geriatric Training and Education (GTE) Initiative that promotes the geriatric skills of local professionals and non-professionals who provide services to older Virginians. However,

the program is modest and will not address the critical shortfall. We urge the Virginia General Assembly to take stronger legislative action in 2014 by mandating that medical and health care professionals providing direct care to seniors in Virginia be required to take appropriate continuing medical education (CME) credits in geriatrics as a condition of their license renewal.

## Senior Absentee Voting

One of the main reasons for long voting lines at the Virginia polls in November 2012 was elderly curbside voting – the practice of taking a voting machine out to the curb so an elderly voter can cast a ballot from his/her vehicle. Compounding this problem, many seniors do not meet the official definition for a “disability” excuse to qualify for absentee voting under current Virginia law. Early 2013 legislative proposals to allow seniors age 65+ years to vote absentee without having to formally designate a specific excuse (“no excuse” absentee voting) initially received strong bipartisan support. We recommend that the Virginia General Assembly reintroduce and pass in 2014 this common-sense legislation that would allow no-excuse absentee voting for Virginia’s seniors.