

# RETIREES



We're looking for one adventurous retiree from each of MSEA's 10 Regions to be a volunteer coordinator on the Retiree Committee. We would also like to form a special MSEA Veterans Group. If you're interested, please feel free to contact the committee chairs with any questions or to volunteer your much-needed time and energy!

**Chair Mike Kelley**  
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The cost for retirees to belong to MSEA is just \$12 a year as stated in the MSEA Constitution: Article VI, Section 8: *Any retired Union member age fifty (50) years or older or with at least ten (10) years of membership, or a disabled Union member, shall be entitled to retain membership in the Union for \$1.00 per month, to be paid in advance at the rate of \$12.00 per year. Retiree's dues are to be pro-rated from the date of retirement to the next January 1st. Thereafter, the retiree's dues shall be payable on January 1st, with thirty days advance notice given by MSEA Central Office. **By paying your retiree dues of only \$12 per year, you will continue to receive the MSEA News. Please make checks payable to Michigan State Employees Association and mail to: MSEA Central Office, 6035 Executive Dr., Suite 104, Lansing, MI 48911***



According to a **Kaiser Family Foundation study**, *Medicare Beneficiaries' Out-of-Pocket Health Care Spending as a Share of Income Now and Projections for the Future*, more than one-third of people with traditional Medicare spent at least 20% of their total income on health care in 2013. Health care is a heavy financial burden for many retirees and will continue to consume a larger share of total income over time, according to the analysis. By 2030, out-of-pocket health costs are projected to consume half of the average per capita Social Security Income.

Among all Medicare beneficiaries, out-of-pocket costs consumed an average 41% of beneficiaries' per person Social Security income in 2013. Older women and beneficiaries ages 85 and older tended to have higher average out-of-pocket spending as a share of average Social Security income than others.



Beginning in April 2018, Medicare will mail **new Medicare cards** with new Medicare numbers to everyone with Medicare. The cards will be mailed in waves, to various parts of the country from April 2018 until April 2019.

Your new Medicare number will replace your Social Security Number on your ID card and will be unique to you in order to help protect you against fraud and keep your personal information more secure. Medicare will mail your new card to the address you have on file with Social Security. There's nothing you need to do. To update your official mailing address, go to your Social Security account: <https://ssa.gov/myaccount/> or call 1-800-772-1213.

Beware of scammers. One technique used by scammers is a phone call from a person claiming to work with Medicare. They're allegedly calling about the new Medicare cards. The scammer claims there's a problem with your card. They may say your new card was lost or someone tried to use your ID number. To resolve the situation, the scammer just needs your Social Security number for verification. In another version, the scammer claims you must pay money to receive your new Medicare card. They may ask you for payment information, so they can "complete the process" for you. They may even ask you to mail them your old card.

Never provide personal information to a stranger. Do not share personal details with anyone who calls you unsolicited. Do not confirm or give your full name, address, Social Security number or any other personal information. Guard your card!

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**Senate Bill 815, sponsored by Sen. Ken Horn (R-Frankenmuth)**, would eliminate a requirement that allows only vans that are modified with a wheelchair lift to receive discounted vehicle registration. The Michigan Vehicle Code currently allows a van owned by an individual who uses a wheelchair, or an individual responsible for transporting a member of their household who uses a wheelchair, to receive a 50% discount on their registration. The tax is calculated based on the weight and type of vehicle, and is levied by the Secretary of State when the vehicle is registered.

The bill would allow vehicles that have been modified with a permanently installed wheelchair lift, or hand controls designed to replace the brake and gas pedals of the vehicle, to qualify for the discounted registration. The bill has been referred to the House

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.



On April 5, Gov. Rick Snyder signed **Senate Bill 0662, sponsored by Sen. Rick Jones (R-Grand Ledge)**, where veterans clubs and other fraternal organizations can host visiting club members without fear of state sanction. The legislation was the result of the DeWitt Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) chapter getting a violation from the Michigan Liquor Control Commission last year. The reason was that a member of the VFW, American Legion, Eagles or other fraternal organization could drink at their home club, but not at an out-of-town club. Jones, as well as the VFW, was surprised at this. They had been operating under the assumption for years that card-carrying members could drink in any member club. So Jones raised the issue in the Legislature, and a few months later, traveling memberships are now in state law. The bill is Public Act (PA) 104.



**Republican-sponsored House Bill 5223**, would require drug manufacturers to supply annual reports to the state outlining their prescription drug pricing strategies and their drugs' profit margins, and providing for a \$100,000 fine if they fail to do so. While it would create a small measure of transparency in the pharmaceutical industry, it would offer far less consumer protection than a plan introduced earlier this year by House Democrats. The **House Democratic plan (HB 5690-5691)** would establish a Prescription Drug Consumer Protection Board, to review any potential price increases and hold companies accountable by requiring them to explain any increases or pay a fine if those increases exceed certain limits. The bills have been referred to the House Health Policy Committee.



**PROTECT SENIORS**

**State Rep. Klint Kesto (R-Commerce Twp)** on March 13 testified before the House Law and Justice Committee, calling a four-bill package (**HB 5027-5029, 5032**) to stop elder abuse "critically important" for Michigan's growing population over the age of 65. The legislation will create new laws penalizing specific acts against elder or vulnerable adults. The bipartisan plan:

- Creates a crime for assaulting or restraining an elder or vulnerable adult;
- Sets sentencing guidelines for assault, ranging from one year in prison for assault to 25 years for causing death;
- Sets sentencing guidelines for restraining at up to four years of incarceration;

-- Amends the sentencing guidelines to include the offense of embezzlement from elder adults, with punishment ranging from 93 days to 20 years depending on the amount.

"Vulnerable citizens are increasingly being targeted by criminals, whether to defraud them out of their life savings or for armed robberies," said Kesto, chair of the committee. "This legislation is critically important. If we don't increase penalties to make this criminal behavior more serious, it will continue to grow and get out of control."