



August 24, 2020

The Honorable Tim Kaine
United States Senator from Virginia
231 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Cassidy
United States Senator from Louisiana
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Kaine and Cassidy,

On behalf of the 2.2 million members of AMAC – Association of Mature American Citizens – we are pleased to support enactment of S. 4180, the “Protecting Benefits for Retirees Act.”

We have read much about how Social Security benefits for those turning 60 this year will be hurt due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Often referred to as being in the “pandemic notch,” those born in 1960 and who turn 60 in 2020 face a hit to their future Social Security benefits because of a potentially negative national Average Wage Index (AWI) for this year. Each person’s Social Security “primary insurance amount” (PIA) is initially computed at age 62 when they are first eligible for benefits. But to compute that benefit, Social Security uses AWI data from 2 years prior to establish important base parameters known as “bend points,” which essentially raise basic benefit values from one year to the next. Due to the pandemic, it is probable that the AWI for 2020 will be negative which, if the standard formula is used, would result in lower bend point values, and thus a lower PIA for those born in 1960.

Senators Kaine and Cassidy, we are very pleased you have joined forces to propose the “*Protecting Benefits for Retirees Act*” which offers a legislative fix to the “pandemic notch” problem. The bill, when enacted, would prevent the national average wage index (AWI) from going negative under any circumstance, thereby protecting those turning 60 this year from a cut in their future Social Security benefits due to COVID-19

Accordingly, I am pleased to offer our organization’s full support for enactment of S.4180, the “Protecting Benefits for Retirees Act.”

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Carlstrom".

Bob Carlstrom
President,
AMAC Action