Washington Update

NASACT MEMBERS FEATURED IN *60 MINUTES* SEGMENT ON RECOVERY OF LIFE INSURANCE BENEFITS

Calling attention to the issue of recovering life insurance benefits for their citizens, several state treasurers and comptrollers appeared on a segment of 60 Minutes during the April 17 broadcast. Over the past several years, states have been conducting audits to reveal instances in which insurance companies failed to locate beneficiaries or heirs and pay them the money they are rightfully owed. Recovered money often ends up in states' unclaimed property programs and online databases, numbering in the hundreds of millions of dollars. The 60 Minutes segment discusses the settlements that many insurance companies have entered into to pay off the unpaid policies and also identifies a few holdout companies that continue to resist calls to honor the policies that should have been paid, but in many cases weren't because families did not know the policies existed.

The video of the segment and the transcript can be found at www.cbsnews.com/news/60-minutes-life-insurance-investigation-lesley-stahl.

TREASURY COLLECTS MORE THAN $3 BILLION IN DELINQUENT DEBTS FOR STATES

The Treasury Department's Bureau of the Fiscal Service has released its fiscal year 2015 *Annual Report to the States: Treasury Offset Program (TOP) Delinquent Debt Collection*. The report details each state's success in collecting delinquent debts through a unique partnership with the federal government. Debts successfully recovered through TOP include delinquent child support and state income tax obligations, unemployment insurance compensation fraud debts, and more. This fourth annual report provides important information to the American public describing how all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and three territories are maximizing their delinquent debt recovery efforts through participation in TOP. In each of the last five years, federal collections for delinquent debts owed to states have ranged between $3 and $3.2 billion.

From the program's inception in FY 2011 through February 2015, TOP's Unemployment Insurance program for states recovered more than $1 billion in improper payments to individuals who received benefits as a result of fraud or failure to report earnings.

TOP is used to intercept eligible federal and state payments to delinquent debtors, in accordance with the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 and other legal authorities. Federal law requires state agencies to certify that the debt is valid, delinquent and legally enforceable and that the agency has complied with all due process prerequisites prior to offset.

The TOP report, including a state-by-state breakdown, can be found at https://www.fiscal.treasury.gov/fsservices/gov/debtColl/pdf/top/TOP_annual_report_to_states_fy15.pdf.

GREAT ACT INTRODUCED

Senators Tom Carper (D-DE) and Ron Johnson (R-WI) and Representatives Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Steve Russell (R-OK) have introduced the Getting Results through Enhanced Accountability and Transparency Act of 2016 (GREAT Act).

The bill would give Congress and federal agencies more tools to better measure and manage waste and inefficiencies in government programs. Specifically, the bill would do the following:

• Amend the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act (GPRA) to address gaps in the responsibilities of the deputy heads of executive agencies by giving them responsibility for addressing coordination and duplication issues, both within their agencies and between their agencies and other agencies.

• Amend GPRA to require agencies to formally address duplication issues in their performance plans.

• Require the Government Accountability Office to report on the cost of unnecessary duplication and the cost savings and revenue generation possible through addressing recommendations included in GAO's annual report on fragmentation, duplication and overlap.

• Require the Office of Management and Budget to consider recommendations put forward by the GAO when developing or making adjustments to federal government priority goals.

• Require agency performance improvement officers and the interagency council they serve on to address issues of coordination and duplication, consult more widely in their work with non-federal stakeholders, and make their operations more transparent to Congress.

Commentary on the bill from its cosponsors can be found at https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/media/minority-media/senate-and-house-leaders-introduce-bipartisan-legislation-to-reduce-waste-unnecessary-duplication-across-federal-government.

THE WEEK AHEAD: GAO COMMENTS ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

Wednesday

The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee will host Comptroller General Gene Dodaro to discuss "Government Reform: Ending Duplication and Holding Washington Accountable."

www.hsgac.senate.gov/hearings/government-reform-ending-duplication-and-holding-washington-accountable

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