

NRLN ANNUAL MEETING TRIP REPORT- January 11, 12, 13 &14, 2010

The general details of the meeting agenda are included in the February 10, 2010 ERS Newsletter on engineeringretirees.org and for more meeting details look on the nrln.org website. A highlight of particular interest included in the newsletter is the NRLN Legislative Agenda for 2010.

At the NRLN Annual Meeting on January 11, 12, 13, 14, 2010, I continued the networking with NRLN officers, staff, and other membership representatives as well as meeting new group members such as the Delta Pilot Association representatives. This year the third meeting day was changed to a day for meeting with our congressional members or their staff on the Hill. I coordinated with Judy Stensberg, President of Oregon Washington Pension Equity Council (U S West Retirees) who lives in Issaquah, to setup and make joint visits with congressional staff. NRLN provided an information packet in a red folder to be left for the Representative and Senators. The packets included a cover page informing them about NRLN and the NRLN 2010 Legislative Agenda which includes talking points on health care, pension protection, prescription drugs, bankruptcy law reform, Pension Benefits Guarantee Board (PBGC) rules reform, and protection of retirees in global mergers and acquisitions. For details on these issues visit the NRLN web sites, nrln.org. Judy and I had meeting meetings with Senator Maria Cantwell's chief of staff, Senator Murray's legislative director, and Senator Max Baucus' legislative director. Judy also met with Congressman Dave Reichert's staff after I left for the airport. These will be valuable contacts for ERS and NRLN on critical retiree issues.

Judy Stensberg is the state leader for the NRLN Legislative Grass roots network, Capwiz. This is the network for quick response to Congress on issues of critical concern to retirees. ERS email addresses are on the Capwiz network. When we receive Action Alerts emails, we all need to respond as quickly as possible. When responding to an alert, enter your zip code to find your representative, alter the form letter to your own point of view, sign it, and send your email. I personally do not like to sit down and write letters/emails but I force myself to do it. I became familiar with the web site the first time and after that it became quick and easy. ERS effectiveness in protecting retirees and our retirement benefits depends on all of us responding to these Action Alert. It does have an impact on our Senators and Representatives when they get swamped with emails on an issue. If you have not been receiving action alerts, please go to nrln.org, click on Email Sign Up, scroll down to Subscription Manager, enter your email address and click Go. If the system response is "unable to verify user – Email", go back to top of page and resubmit your information. I am asking each and every member to make a contract with me to respond to all Action Alerts.

ERS President
Dave watt