



PENSION ISSUES

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U.S. Congress Passes Bipartisan Retirement Legislation

The U.S. Senate passed an omnibus [bill](#) today, providing for continuing spending and operation of the federal government in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020. The legislation includes [H.R. 1994](#), the *Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act* (SECURE Act), which provides a number of changes to employer-sponsored retirement plans and individual retirement accounts (IRAs). H.R. 1994 was a bipartisan bill originally passed in the U.S. House in May 2019 with a vote of 417-3 but has since stalled in the U.S. Senate. The FY 2020 appropriations bill is now under consideration by the President for his signature.

The SECURE Act features many provisions, including adding a safe harbor for selecting lifetime income providers in defined contribution plans, increasing access to retirement plans by making it easier for smaller employers to join open multiple employer plans (MEPs), and requiring part time workers to be covered in existing employer plans. The American Academy of Actuaries (the Academy) issued a detailed [alert](#) of the U.S. House bill during its passage in May.

Also attached to the appropriations bill was, [S. 2788](#), the *Bipartisan American Miners Act of 2019*, which would transfer funds from the Interior Department's Abandoned Mine Land fund to help cover the pension benefit obligations of the 1974 United Mine Workers of America Pension Plan, and secures lifetime health care benefits for miners affected by issues such as coal company bankruptcies.

The Academy issued a [position statement](#) on lifetime income in employer-sponsored defined contribution plans in October 2017, that largely supported many of the SECURE Act's key provisions.

If you have any questions regarding this *Academy Alert*, please contact Philip Maguire, pension policy analyst (maguire@actuary.org; 202-785-7868).