



January 17, 2012

Gerald W. McEntee  
President

Lee A. Saunders  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Vice Presidents**

Ken Allen  
Portland, OR

Henry L. Bayer  
Chicago, IL

George Boncoraglio  
New York, NY

Anthony Caso  
Boston, MA

Greg Devereux  
Olympia, WA

Danny Donohue  
Albany, NY

David R. Fillman  
Harrisburg, PA

Michael Fox  
Harrisburg, PA

Albert Garrett  
Detroit, MI

Raglan George Jr.  
New York, NY

Sherryl A. Gordon  
Trenton, NJ

Lakesha Harrison  
Oakland, CA

Danny J. Homan  
Des Moines, IA

Salvatore Luciano  
New Britain, CT

John A. Lyall  
Worthington, OH

Roberta Lynch  
Chicago, IL

Glenard S. Middleton Sr.  
Baltimore, MD

Gary Mitchell  
Madison, WI

Douglas Moore Jr.  
San Diego, CA

Henry Nicholas  
Philadelphia, PA

Eddie L. Parks  
Westerville, OH

Randy Ferreira  
Honolulu, HI

George E. Popyack  
Oakland, CA

Greg Powell  
Austin, TX

Laura Reyes  
San Diego, CA

Lillian Roberts  
New York, NY

Eddie Rodriguez  
New York, NY

Lawrence A. Roehrig  
Lansing, MI

Joseph P. Rugola  
Columbus, OH

Kathy J. Sackman  
Pomona, CA

Ellot Seide  
South St. Paul, MN

Mary E. Sullivan  
Albany, NY

Braulio Torres  
San Juan, PR

David Warrick  
Indianapolis, IN

Jeanette D. Wynn  
Tallahassee, FL

899-1111

Members of the Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 1.6 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I write to urge you to oppose H.R. 1173, the misnamed Fiscal Responsibility and Retirement Security Act of 2011. The bill repeals the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) program, which was designed to be a voluntary insurance program to help American workers pay for long-term care services and supports that they may need in the future.

The need for the CLASS program is huge and growing. Nearly 70% of people turning 65 today will need, at some point in their lives, help with basic daily living activities, such as bathing, feeding and dressing. Repealing the CLASS program and replacing it with absolutely nothing offers no help to millions of Americans who want to maintain their health, independence, and dignity when they lose the capacity to perform basic daily activities without assistance.

Medicare does not cover long-term care services. Medicaid does cover long-term care but Medicaid pays only for services for people with very limited financial means. Private long-term care insurance can be costly and difficult to purchase, especially if an individual has a pre-existing condition. Indeed, only about one-in-ten Americans age 55 and older has long-term care insurance.

The CLASS program is not perfect and has some challenges, but now is not the time to accept the status quo for the financing of long-term services and supports, which relies by default almost exclusively on Medicaid. Repealing the CLASS program is not a solution and promotes a fiscal default policy of increasing Medicaid costs and requiring middle-class Americans to impoverish themselves to get long-term care. We urge you to oppose H.R. 1173.

Sincerely,

Charles M. Loveless  
Director of Legislation

CML:lbm

**American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO**

TEL (202) 429-1000 FAX (202) 429-1293 TDD (202) 659-0446 WEB www.afscme.org 1625 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-5687