



DIRK KEMPTHORNE
President & Chief Executive Officer

February 8, 2017

The Honorable Tim Walberg
U.S. House of Representatives
2436 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-2207

The Honorable Lisa Blunt Rochester
U.S. House of Representatives
1123 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-2207

Dear Representatives Walberg and Blunt Rochester,

On behalf of the American Council of Life Insurers (ACLI), I am writing to express our support for H.R. 4604, the Increasing Access to a Secure Retirement Act of 2017. We thank you for your leadership on this bipartisan legislation and on retirement security issues. This bill would help more individuals access guaranteed lifetime income in retirement by clarifying and strengthening existing rules for employers when selecting an annuity provider.

The American Council of Life Insurers (ACLI) is a Washington, D.C.-based trade association with approximately 290-member companies operating in the United States and abroad. ACLI advocates in state, federal, and international forums for public policy that supports the industry marketplace and the 75 million American families that rely on life insurers' products for financial and retirement security. ACLI members offer life insurance, annuities, retirement plans, long-term care and disability income insurance, and reinsurance, representing 95 percent of industry assets in the United States.

The current Department of Labor annuity selection safe-harbor regulation poses significant challenges to plan fiduciaries when determining whether an annuity provider is financially able to make all future payments under an annuity contract. This standard is difficult to meet in part because it is hard to know how to draw this conclusion. The annuity provider selection safe harbor should not require plan fiduciaries to second guess determinations by state insurance departments regarding the ability of a licensed provider to satisfy its long-term financial obligations.

Currently, Americans are faced with confusing and sometimes ambiguous regulations when trying to choose a lifetime income product. With 65% of U.S. households on track or nearly on track to be financially secure in retirement, once these individuals begin to draw down their benefits, they may face challenges ensuring that their savings will last their lifetime. Permitting employers to rely on an annuity provider's prudential regulator will encourage plans to offer these important lifetime income solutions to their employees and, thus, ensure their retirement income security.

Thank you for your leadership on H.R. 4604. We look forward to working with you and your staffs on this important issue.

Sincerely,

GOVERNOR DIRK KEMPTHORNE