

Legislative Report
September 2017
Val Coluni

1. THE 2017 VIRGINIA STATE ELECTIONS

We will be voting for many STATE officials in November (Governor, Lt. Governor, General Attorney and members of the State General Assembly). Some political experts believe the process is weakened when many voters "stay-at-home." They also believe that Virginia is the only State with a competitive race for Governor this year. (Gillespie vs. Northam) The issues are many, complicated and emotional. We must have a large voter turnout to insure our personal/group positions are adequately considered by the eventual winners. Please PARTICIPATE!!

"ALL FAILURES OF A DEMOCRACY FLOW FROM CITIZENS STAYING AT HOME AND TURNING THEIR BACKS ON THEIR COMMUNITY" (Remarks recently made by a consumer rights advocate)

2. GERRYMANDERING AND FILIBUSTERING--DUAL AND HISTORICAL DANGERS TO OUR DEMOCRACY.

It is not only gerrymandering (drawing political voting districts to favor a political party) but also filibustering (in the U.S. SENATE; using a 19th century rule that allows a political party to use a 60 vote threshold to suspend debate on the floor thereby preventing further debate on a pass/fail vote dealing with submitted legislation. This tactic has been used by both political parties as a weapon of obstruction to thwart the political/legislative objectives of their opponent. Neither political party is motivated to change this as they maybe giving up an advantage now and/or in the future.

On gerrymandering the U.S. Supreme has agreed to hear several state cases on this subject to determine whether it is acceptable under the U.S. Constitution. The Court will hear these cases in either September/October 2017. But with the filibuster it can only be changed if the U.S. Senate votes to discontinue it. Your "PRESSURE" on your U.S. Senator is the best way to make it happen!!

3. THE GOOD NEWS FOR 2018 SOCIAL SECURITY RECIPIENTS. You will be getting a raise in 2018 and it will be better than the raises in the past few years. Remember there was no raise in 2015 and only a 0.3 percent raise in 2016. You will be personally notified in December 2017/January 2018.