



THE ERISA INDUSTRY COMMITTEE

Advocating the Employee Benefit and Compensation Interests of America's Major Employers

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ERIC OVERVIEW

Since 1976, The ERISA Industry Committee (ERIC) has remained the only organization in Washington, DC committed exclusively to the employee benefits interests of America's major employers. Our action on legislation, regulations, and other matters is determined solely by our members who are directly responsible for benefits policy within their companies. As a result, ERIC has been extremely influential and successful in its efforts and its mission.

- ERIC is a respected advocate and a unified voice in Washington, D.C.
- ERIC is a network of 1,500 benefits and human resources colleagues
- ERIC provides you with expert resources and timely information
- ERIC provides outstanding educational and leadership opportunities

ERIC is a non-profit trade association governed by an active, working Board of Directors and several committees made up of our members' benefits, tax, legal, and human resources professionals who meet quarterly to determine our policy.

The major committees include Retirement Security Committee, Health Policy Committee, Legal and Fiduciary Responsibility Committee, as well as several important task forces on narrower issues. The active membership of ERIC's Board and committees represents our commitment to advocating solely employer interests.

INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND EDUCATION

ERIC is a major source of information for benefits professionals concerned with developments in Congress, the regulatory agencies, the courts, and the benefits community by providing crucial 'inside-the-beltway' benefits and compensation information major employers need to know to run their businesses effectively.

Membership with ERIC gets you access to many highly praised resources, including the [ERIC Executive Report \(click here for a sample\)](#), which is our weekly newsletter containing updates on Capitol Hill action and the latest regulatory developments. It also includes access to the members-only side of [ERIC OnLine](#) where you will find such helpful resources as ERIC position papers, comment letters, and legislative analyses -- all highly regarded by members of Congress and regulatory agencies for their accuracy and timeliness. ERIC's briefing books cover every topical major employee benefit issue, including nonqualified deferred compensation, fiduciary liability, and retiree health care.

ERIC provides [Washington Update \(click here for a sample\)](#) and [FocusOn \(click here for a sample\)](#) conference calls each month. **Washington Update** reviews the month's legislative efforts and advises members what to look for in the weeks ahead. ERIC's **FocusOn** calls provide an in-depth examination of the latest hot topic in employee benefits with an industry expert or government representative leading the call and an opportunity for questions and answers.

THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

The next several years will be a time of extraordinary challenges and perhaps trials for major employers and those who support employer benefit programs. Faced with increasing global competition, business demands, increasingly restrictive regulations, and unprecedented litigation, many employers are reconsidering how – and even whether – they will provide health care coverage and retirement security and what forms of compensation will advance their business goals in the 21st century. At the same time, policymakers perceive that employers are retreating from a commitment to providing benefits.

There is much discussion presently on Capitol Hill regarding pension and health care reform, and ERIC is deeply involved in this timely conversation. Any major employer that offers pensions and/or health care benefits to its employees should have an advocate with a proven track record who can demonstrate results. ERIC is that organization.

ERIC ADVOCATES WITH YOU AND FOR YOU!

From Congress, to the courts, to the regulatory agencies, ERIC is engaged on all fronts. ERIC membership is your most valuable and cost effective means of assuring that your voice is clearly heard and that your interests are advocated on complex employee benefit issues that increasingly affect your bottom line. For many companies, we are their principal voice on complex employee benefits issues in Washington and we reinforce the efforts of Washington representatives.

Our mobilization and leadership of coalitions extends that influence even further on both retirement and health care issues. The unified voice of ERIC's members on Capitol Hill and within key regulatory agencies ensures your interests are covered as major legislation and regulations move toward becoming law.

ERIC's [Spring and Fall benefits conferences and quarterly committee meetings](#) ([click here for sample meeting agendas](#)) are an opportunity to directly influence benefits policy, as well as gain a better understanding of key legislative developments, regulatory initiatives and other policy matters. Our members have the opportunity to hear from and question lawmakers, policymakers, and officials who are active in the benefits area – generally, the same people who draft the laws and regulations. In addition, we provide technical “how to” workshops for our members.

The **ERIC Legal Conference** brings together ERIC members and government officials to discuss, among other things, employer concerns regarding nonqualified deferred compensation, fiduciary responsibility, attorney-client privilege, and in-house benefits litigation. It also is an opportunity for ERIC members to share best practices and successful approaches to a number of benefits issues during closed-door, roundtable discussions designed to give ERIC members "take-away" information to be applied to their companies' benefits practice.

ERIC also works closely with our members' **Washington Representatives**. We hold regular monthly briefings on employee benefits issues, legislation and regulations and look to the Washington Representatives as an important link to corporate headquarters, as well as for advice and counsel.

Whether it is through committee conference calls, specialized *FocusOn* calls, ERIC's conferences, or daily contact with ERIC staff, members know they can rely on ERIC to help find useful solutions.

ERIC INNOVATION – A PROACTIVE AGENDA AHEAD OF THE PACK

We are also excited about the reception we have received in meetings with key stakeholders as well as Members of Congress about interest in ERIC's [New Benefit Platform for Life Security](#). The *New Benefit Platform* calls for exciting and forward-looking reforms in the delivery of both health and retirement benefits that are market-

ERIC members and staff testify regularly on policy and legislative issues before Congress, and on proposed regulations before federal agencies. We file [amicus briefs \(click here for a sample\)](#) in federal and state courts in cases affecting the benefits plans of major employers, and participate in policy discussions around the country on the future of national retirement income, health and other employee benefits policy. Our briefs are often cited by the courts, including the Supreme Court.

[Our testimony, comments, and other materials](#) have a reputation for accuracy and thoroughness and are sought by policymakers and companies alike.

HEALTH CARE POLICY

ERIC is a highly visible, effective advocate of market-based health care reform and ERISA preemption. We believe that improving the quality, cost-effectiveness, and accessibility of our health care system demands adherence to market principles that have made possible the success of major employer plans.

We strongly support legislation that preserves and strengthens ERISA preemption and reduces government interference with employers' efforts to provide cutting-edge, comprehensive health care benefits to their employees. We oppose benefit mandates and other government regulations that disrupt employer flexibility in health plan design.

It is with these basic principles in mind that ERIC members and staff review, analyze and recommend changes to all pending health care reform regulation and legislation, including bills designed to expand portability and accessibility of coverage.

based and we believe it has captured the excitement of policymakers and other stakeholders.

ERIC's *New Benefit Platform* is the result of two years of effort by a task force of experienced retirement and health benefit professionals with practical experience in retirement and health care coverage. It seeks to create a framework for a 21st century life security plan that is more efficient, increases portability, controls costs, is more transparent, and breaks down the "silos" separating retirement and health in order to empower consumers and ensure the delivery of high-quality retirement and health coverage to all Americans. The *New Benefit Platform* is only one example of ERIC's commitment to a proactive agenda.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Leadership opportunities abound for ERIC members including participation on the Board of Directors, committees, task forces, and membership meetings. Collaboration and influence on legislation and regulations is only half the story: ERIC also provides the opportunity for individual collaboration with your major employer peers in other companies.

Joining ERIC and taking advantage of available leadership and peer-collaboration opportunities protects your company's interests on a daily basis.

All ERIC member companies are entitled to a seat on ERIC's Board of Delegates. This provides you with an opportunity to actively engage in the policy debate surrounding benefits and to take a leading role in establishing benefits policies that facilitate your company's needs.

ERIC membership also provides an expanse of corporate and congressional knowledge through membership in its committees in the areas of Retirement Security, Health Policy, and Legal and Fiduciary Responsibility. ERIC also routinely develops task forces for its members on hot issues such as pension funding and accounting, defined contribution plan issues, and retiree health.

RETIREMENT SECURITY

ERIC advocates and supports the strengthening of our voluntary system of retirement benefits that has enabled our members to offer benchmark retirement benefits to their active employees, retirees and their families.

We are actively involved in recommending proposals for Pension Protection Act regulations, seeking to ensure a favorable legal and regulatory climate for traditional defined benefit plans, hybrid plans and defined contribution plans, assisting in battling 401(k) fee lawsuits, fighting efforts to restrict pension fund investments, and fending off proposals to limit or further restrict nonqualified deferred compensation.

We are also actively involved in disentangling unnecessarily complex pension rules and improving pension funding, as well as working for additional funding relief for companies facing unexpected funding requirements as a result of the economic crisis. Moreover, we are watching very closely for any efforts to “reform” ERISA’s claims and remedies rules.

CONTACT ERIC

ERIC membership is your most valuable and cost effective means of assuring that your voice—and the voice of other major-employers—is clearly heard. ERIC is prepared, with your active participation, to meet the clear, present, and difficult challenges that lie ahead. To learn more about ERIC and how it can help your organization, please contact us at 202-789-1400 or click below to send us an e-mail.

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Membership

Please print or type.

Company Name: _____

Your Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-Mail: _____ Company Web Address: _____

Referred by: _____
Name Company

Number of Employees _____ Type of Industry _____

Please describe the type of employee benefit plans offered to the majority of your company's employees (e.g., defined benefit, cash balance/hybrid, and/or defined contribution/401(k) plans, health care coverage, retiree medical, other):

Please list your company's memberships in other employee benefit organizations (e.g., The Business Roundtable, Employee Benefit Research Institute, the National Association of Manufacturers, U.S. Chamber of Commerce):

PLEASE FAX OR MAIL YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO:

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Membership questions? Please call Mark Ugoretz at 202/789-1400.