



NASAA

NORTH AMERICAN SECURITIES ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION, INC.

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January 24, 2017

Senator Susan Collins
Chair
U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging
G31 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: The SeniorSafe Act of 2017

Dear Senator Collins:

On behalf of the North American Securities Administrators Association (“NASAA”),¹ I am writing to express strong support for your work to better protect vulnerable adults from financial exploitation through the introduction of the SeniorSafe Act of 2017. Your legislation will better protect persons aged 65 and older from financial exploitation by increasing the likelihood it will be identified by financial services professionals, and by removing barriers to reporting it, so that together we as state securities regulators and other appropriate governmental authorities can help stop it.

Senior financial exploitation is a growing problem across the country. Many in our elderly population are vulnerable due to social isolation and distance from family, caregiver, and other support networks. Indeed, evidence suggests that as many as one out of every five citizens over the age of 65 has been victimized by a financial fraud. To be successful in combating senior financial exploitation, state and federal policymakers must come together to weave a new safety net for our elderly, breaking down barriers for those who are best positioned to identify red flags early on and to encourage reporting and referrals to appropriate local, county, state, and federal agencies, including law enforcement.

The SeniorSafe Act consists of several essential features. First, to promote and encourage reporting of suspected elderly financial exploitation by financial services professionals, who are positioned to identify and report “red flags” of potential exploitation, the bill would incentivize financial services employees to report any suspected exploitation by making them immune from any civil or administrative liability arising from such a report, provided that they exercised due care, and that they make these reports in good faith. Second, in order to better assure that financial services employees have the knowledge and training they require to identify “red flags” associated

¹ The oldest international organization dedicated to investor protection, the North American Securities Administrators, Inc. was organized in 1919. Its membership consists of the securities administrators in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. NASAA is the voice of securities agencies responsible for grass-roots investor protection and efficient capital formation.

with financial exploitation, the bill would require that, as a condition of receiving immunity, financial institutions undertake to train certain personnel regarding the identification and reporting of senior financial exploitation.

The SeniorSafe Act's objectives and benefits are far-reaching. Older Americans stand to benefit directly from such reporting, because early detection and reporting will minimize their financial losses from exploitation, and because improved protection of their finances ultimately helps preserve their financial independence and their personal autonomy. Financial institutions stand to benefit, as well, through preservation of their reputation, increased community recognition, increased employee satisfaction, and decreased uninsured losses.

In conclusion, state securities regulators strongly support passage of the SeniorSafe Act of 2017. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or Michael Canning, NASAA Director of Policy, at (202) 737-0900, if we may be of any additional assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike Rothman".

Mike Rothman
NASAA President and Minnesota Commissioner of Commerce

CC: The Honorable Claire McCaskill
United States Senator