



A National Alliance of Life Companies

# NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF LIFE COMPANIES *An Association of Life and Health Insurance Companies*

## December 2011

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The news in this publication, including links to background and supplemental information, is also available on the NALC members' website at <http://members.nalc.net>.

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## A Letter from the Executive Director

December 19, 2011

Dear Member:



Thank you for your continued support of the NALC in 2011. We are fortunate to have such a strong membership group. Dawn and I appreciate the opportunity to work with you. We wish you a great holiday season, and a great 2012.

I am reading a book co-authored by New York Times columnist Tom Friedman called "That Used To Be Us." It's a great read. The book highlights our failings as a country and the steps we must take to maintain our position of leadership in the world. In one passage of the book, he quotes an official from Singapore discussing his country's competitiveness, who says "We are not good enough. We must never think that we are good enough. We must continuously improve. There is no alternative: adapt or die."

We can learn lessons from countries like Singapore. There are plenty of ways government needs improvement: government deficits, the inability of our political leaders to work together, lack of planning for our infrastructure needs. In the business sector, we need look no further than Wall Street and the real estate crisis as areas of recent failure that need improvement.

The key is - whether in government or business - to understand that the world is not static. We must aggressively address our shortcomings. If we do, we have a better chance of adapting, surviving and thriving.

Historically, the United States has risen to the challenge. We have been energized by crises and emerged stronger than ever. Look no further than World War 2 and the Sputnik crisis in government, or the reinvention of the auto industry and emergence of a technology cluster in Silicon Valley as great examples of American business inventing, adapting and thriving. While we have our weaknesses, we continue to have dynamic labor markets, a creative work force, and good access to capital.

What's the bad news? As Friedman notes, today we have a much more competitive world. No Berlin Wall. No Chairman Mao. Fewer restrictions on trade and the flow of capital. In the old days, we could afford to rest and admire our work. In the new world, we must constantly be at the top of our game, understanding that change occurs much more rapidly, and that competition can come from unexpected places.

This is a challenging and exciting time. Let's remember the depth of the challenges we face, and always strive to be the adapters. If we do, we will continue to thrive and prosper.

Best to you all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Hodges". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jim Hodges  
Executive Director

# NALC Highlights

*Register Now!*

## 2012 Spring Conference

2012 Spring Conference

April 18 - 20, 2012

[La Costa Resort & Spa](#)

[Carlsbad, California](#)



It's not too early to make your plans to attend the NALC 2012 Spring Conference at the La Costa Resort and Spa. Please visit the registration page at <http://www.nalc.net/conference/registration.htm>. There you will find the following:

- Online conference and golf outing registration.
- Online or hard-copy hotel reservation form.
- Sponsors and remaining sponsorship opportunities.
- Conference schedule [coming soon].

We will send out conference updates regularly telling you of additions to the conference schedule, sponsorship opportunities, area information, and other useful items. Please register before the price increase and the room block expiration!



## NAIC Focus

### 2012 Officers

Members of the NAIC elected its 2012 officers at its recent national meeting. The newly elected officers will assume their duties on Jan. 1, 2012.

- **President:** Florida Insurance Commissioner Kevin M. McCarty
- **President-Elect:** Louisiana Insurance Commissioner James J. Donelon
- **Vice President:** North Dakota Insurance Commissioner Adam Hamm
- **Secretary-Treasurer:** Montana Commissioner of Securities and Insurance Monica J. Lindeen

Kevin M. McCarty is the Commissioner of the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation. McCarty became Florida's first appointed insurance commissioner in January 2003. He is responsible for Florida's insurance market, including oversight of company solvency, policy forms and rates, market investigations and new insurance business. McCarty began his career in public service in 1988, becoming an expert in workers' compensation issues with the Florida Department of Labor and Employment Security. McCarty earned a bachelor's degree in political science and a J.D. from the University of Florida.

James J. Donelon was appointed Louisiana Insurance Commissioner in February 2006 and has been elected three times to the position. A retired State Judge Advocate for the Louisiana Army National Guard, Donelon's career at the Department of Insurance includes serving as Chief Deputy Commissioner and Executive Counsel. He is also a former Parish Council Chairman and State Representative where he chaired the Committee on Insurance. Donelon is a graduate of the University of New Orleans and Loyola School of Law.

Adam Hamm was appointed North Dakota Insurance Commissioner in October 2007 and was elected to a four-year term in November 2008. He currently serves as Chair of the NAIC Life Insurance and Annuities Committee, and Chair of NAIC's Audit Committee. Prior to becoming commissioner, he served as a prosecutor for the Cass County State's Attorney's office. Hamm also worked as an attorney in private practice specializing in commercial litigation, administrative agency law and transportation law. Hamm is a graduate of Sam Houston State University and received his Juris Doctorate degree with distinction from the University of North Dakota School of Law in 1998.

Monica J. Lindeen was elected Commissioner of Securities and Insurance, Montana State Auditor in November 2008. Lindeen is Vice-Chair of the NAIC Health Insurance and Managed Care Committee, Chair of the NAIC Designation Program Advisory Board, a member of the NAIC Executive Committee and Audit Committee, and serves on a number of task forces related to implementing health insurance reform. Lindeen served in the Montana House of Representatives from 1999-2006. From 1994-1996, she was a part-time faculty member in the Montana State University (MSU) Billings English Department and taught simultaneously as a graduate assistant in the Department of Educational Foundations. Lindeen earned a bachelor's degree in English/History from MSU Billings.

### **2012 Zone Officers Elected**

NAIC members also elected 2012 zone officers during the Fall National Meeting. The newly elected zone officers will assume their duties on Jan. 1, 2012.

#### **Midwestern Zone**

- Chair: John M. Huff – Missouri Department of Insurance Fin. Institutions & Prof. Registration (DIFP)
- Vice Chair: Stephen W. Robertson – Indiana Department of Insurance
- Secretary/Treasurer: Ted Nickel – State of Wisconsin Office of the Commissioner of Insurance

#### **Northeastern Zone**

- Chair: Thomas B. Considine – New Jersey Department of Banking & Insurance
- Vice Chair: Joseph G. Murphy – Office of Consumer Affairs & Business Regulation Massachusetts Division of Insurance Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- Secretary/Treasurer: Thomas B. Leonardi – Connecticut Insurance Department

#### **Southeastern Zone**

- Chair: Jim L. Ridling – Alabama Department of Insurance
- Vice Chair: Wayne Goodwin – North Carolina Department of Insurance
- Secretary/Treasurer: Sharon P. Clark – Kentucky Department of Insurance

#### **Western Zone**

- Chair: Christina Urias – Arizona Department of Insurance
- Vice Chair: Gordon Ito – Hawaii Department of Commerce & Consumer Affairs Insurance Division
- Secretary/Treasurer: Eleanor Kitzman – Texas Department of Insurance

## **NAIC Adopts Revisions to Reinsurance Models**

### ***Key Changes Permit Reduction in Reinsurance Collateral Requirements for Non-U.S. Reinsurers***

At its fall meeting, the NAIC adopted revisions to the Credit For Reinsurance Model Law and Regulation, which modernizes U.S. state-based regulation of reinsurance by reducing reinsurance collateral requirements for non-U.S. reinsurers.

Under the current NAIC Credit for Reinsurance Model Law & Regulation, in order for U.S. ceding companies to receive reinsurance credit, the reinsurance must either be ceded to U.S. licensed reinsurers or secured by

collateral representing 100% of U.S. liabilities for which the credit is recorded. The revisions to the reinsurance models would reduce these reinsurance collateral requirements for non-U.S. licensed reinsurers domiciled in qualified jurisdictions.

Other key elements of the revisions include:

- A state will evaluate a reinsurer that applies for certification, and will assign a rating based on the evaluation. A certified reinsurer will be required to post collateral in an amount that corresponds with its assigned rating (0%, 10%, 20%, 50%, 75% or 100%), in order for a U.S. ceding insurer to be allowed full credit for the reinsurance ceded.
- Each state will have the authority to certify reinsurers, or a commissioner has the authority to recognize the certification issued by another NAIC-accredited state.
- The NAIC will publish a list of qualified non-U.S. jurisdictions. The commissioner must document any reasons for approving a jurisdiction not on this list.
- A new notification provision was added requiring a U.S. ceding insurer to notify its domestic regulator if reinsurance ceded to an individual reinsurer or group of affiliated reinsurers exceeds certain specified amounts.

## Testimony Before Congress on Dodd-Frank Implementation

On November 16, the NAIC reaffirmed the strengths of state-based regulation at a hearing of the House Financial Services Subcommittee on Insurance, Housing and Community Opportunity. Joseph Torti, III, Rhode Island Deputy Director and Superintendent of Insurance and Banking, testified on behalf of the NAIC.

The chair of the subcommittee, Congresswoman Judy Biggert (R-Ill.), commended the work of state regulators and affirmed that insurance continues to be a growing and vibrant source of financial security for many Americans.

"State insurance regulation has been subject to stringent review at the federal level many times, and this type of review is healthy for our system," said Torti. "But it is critical that scrutiny of our system be balanced against the strengths that helped the insurance sector weather the financial crisis far better than others."

The focus of the hearing was on three legislative proposals before the committee that would modify the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act as it relates to insurance regulation. Torti's testimony emphasized the collaborative relationship between state regulators and the federal agencies that supervise other financial sectors.

"To be clear, the NAIC has no position on the Dodd-Frank Act or any current legislative proposals to modify it," testified Torti. "The NAIC does, however, strongly believe that the implementation of Dodd-Frank by the federal financial agencies or any legislative efforts to amend it should reflect the strength of our national state-based system of insurance regulation." Read Superintendent Torti's testimony at [http://www.naic.org/documents/111116\\_testimony\\_torti\\_house\\_financial\\_services.pdf](http://www.naic.org/documents/111116_testimony_torti_house_financial_services.pdf).

Go to [http://www.naic.org/index\\_financial\\_reform\\_section.htm](http://www.naic.org/index_financial_reform_section.htm) for the NAIC's special section on Dodd-Frank implementation. This press release is available at <http://naic.org/newsroom.htm>.

## NCOIL Notes

### Sen. Leavell Takes on NCOIL Presidency

#### *Announces 2012 Leadership and Priorities*

New Mexico Senator Carroll Leavell took over as NCOIL President during the organization's recent Annual Meeting in Santa Fe, New Mexico, vowing to amplify NCOIL efforts to preserve and enhance state regulation.

The slate of incoming NCOIL officers also includes Sen. Vi Simpson (IN) as President-Elect, Rep. Charles Curtiss (TN) as Vice President, Rep. Greg Wren (AL) as Secretary, and Sen. Neil Breslin (NY) as Treasurer.

After taking the gavel on November 20, Sen. Leavell announced 2012 Committee leadership:

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| • Financial Services & Investment Products:          | Sen. Ruth Teichman (KS)        |
| • Health, Long-Term Care & Health Retirement Issues: | Sen. Jake Corman (PA)          |
| • International Insurance Issues:                    | Sen. Travis Holdman (IN)       |
| • Life Insurance & Financial Planning:               | Sen. Mike Hall (WV)            |
| • Natural Disaster Insurance Legislation:            | Rep. William Sandifer III (SC) |
| • NCOIL-NAIC Dialogue:                               | Rep. George Keiser (ND)        |
| • Property-Casualty Insurance:                       | Rep. Steve Riggs (KY)          |
| • State-Federal Relations:                           | Sen. Keith Faber (OH)          |
| • Workers' Compensation Insurance:                   | Rep. Barry Hyde (AR)           |

Sen. Leavell said, "NCOIL will be a vital resource for state legislators as we address the policy implications of an increasingly intrusive federal government that seems bent on empowering itself at the expense of state authority. From healthcare reform to the Dodd-Frank Act's financial services regulatory overhaul, state legislators must be prepared to deal with the countless rules and regulations coming out of Washington."

"In the coming year," Leavell added, "NCOIL will evaluate and respond to the FIO's forthcoming report on U.S. insurance regulation. We will augment our efforts on SLIMPACT—the only surplus lines reform initiative that fully responds to Dodd-Frank—and we will seek to further enhance regulatory uniformity and reciprocity in certain key areas. Our robust system of state-based insurance oversight has been a resounding success and state legislators will continue to reject unnecessary federal preemption."

### NCOIL Model to Ensure Timely Payment of Death Benefits

In an effort to ensure that consumers are made aware of their unclaimed property, the National Conference of Insurance Legislators (NCOIL) today unanimously approved a Model Unclaimed Life Insurance Benefits Act. Members of the Executive Committee put the finishing touches on the model law—which will require insurers to compare in-force life insurance policies and retained asset accounts with a U.S. Social Security Death Master File (DMF) to identify any matches—at the Annual Meeting here.

Model sponsor and NCOIL Past President Rep. Robert Damron (KY), said "At present, insurers are not using the DMF consistently to learn of policyholders' deaths, leaving beneficiaries of life insurance policies in the dark and causing death benefits to remain in limbo. Life insurers need to utilize technology at hand, such as the DMF, to close regulatory gaps and to better serve life insurance consumers."

NCOIL President Sen. Carroll Leavell (NM), said “As evidenced in highly publicized state third-party audits and ongoing state regulator and treasurer investigations, there is a clear need to modernize industry practices concerning unclaimed life insurance benefits. As we head into 2012 legislative sessions, the model provides a needed template for the states.”

The model requires that insurers match DMF records, or an equally comprehensive service, with in-force life insurance policies and retained asset accounts each quarter. It also calls for timely insurer efforts to confirm an insured or account holder’s death, locate any beneficiaries, and provide claims forms and instructions. In the event that benefits go unclaimed, the model provides clear procedures for life insurers to notify state treasury departments and escheat the funds, per unclaimed property laws.

The Executive Committee took action just two days after the Life Insurance & Financial Planning Committee amended and then approved model. Amendments made would require all life insurers to use the DMF and extended timeframes for insurer compliance, among other things.

The model law, originally drafted to amend the NCOIL Beneficiaries’ Bill of Rights on retained asset accounts, was introduced as a stand-alone bill in October. Legislators here also agreed to review the issue ongoing, including whether DMF searches should also be required of state unclaimed property departments.

Representatives of the American Council of Life Insurers (ACLI), Center for Insurance Research (CIR), Life Insurers Council (LIC), National Alliance of Life Companies (NALC), and National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators (NAUPA) were on hand to participate in the debate.

## News from the States

### Missouri Insurance Regulators Put Small Life Insurance Plan Into Receivership

#### *Dexter-Based Association Sold Coverage for Funerals*

A judge has placed a small, Dexter-based life insurance company into rehabilitation and turned it over to the Missouri Department of Insurance. Department Director John M. Huff was named receiver of Watkins Life and Benefit Association, which allows the department to take over operations of the company. Because of its financial condition, the company's board of directors consented to the rehabilitation order.

With about 2,000 policyholders, Watkins is licensed to do business only in Missouri. With premium sales of just \$45,000 in 2010, Watkins is one of the smallest of Missouri's approximately 400 licensed life insurance companies. With the company in rehabilitation, the department's priority will be to process existing claims and uphold commitments to policyholders.

Huff says policyholders of the company should continue to pay their premiums, also referred to as assessments, to keep their coverage intact. These payments should be mailed to:

Receivership Supervisor  
Room 530  
PO Box 690  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

"This small company was formed sixty years ago mainly to provide insurance coverage for funeral contracts," said Huff. "Unlike most life insurance companies, Watkins is an assessment plan formed by a mechanism that is no longer allowed under Missouri law."

Rehabilitation is a legal step taken by the court to protect policyholders by preserving a company's assets. The department as the rehabilitator assumes management of the company, attempts to correct existing problems, continues operations, maintains policyholder accounting and develops a plan of rehabilitation or petitions the court for liquidation.

Those with questions can call the Missouri Department of Insurance Consumer Hotline at 800-726-7390 or contact the department online at [insurance.mo.gov](http://insurance.mo.gov). More information about the receivership is available at <http://insurance.mo.gov/companies/receiv.php>.

## Mississippi's Chaney Wins Second Term

Mississippi Insurance Commissioner Mike Chaney won election to a second term in what he sees as a dramatically changing regulatory landscape. From the Affordable Care Act to the implications of Dodd-Frank, federal legislation has become much of the focus of a state regulator, Chaney said. The advent of Solvency II and proposed counterpart changes in the United States also has him concerned about a potential weakening of U.S. standards.

"We've probably had more changes in the last four years in the regulation of insurance than we had in the previous 100," Chaney said. "It seems like the pendulum has swung from one extreme to the other and it needs to be back towards the middle."

Then a state Senator, Chaney, 67, had planned on retiring until the opportunity to run for insurance commissioner came up four years ago. The three-way contest included Elmer L. "Louis" Fondren, a state representative in the 1970s who went on to serve as a Jackson County judge, and Reform Party candidate Barbara Dale Washer.

Chaney has taken a leading role in states' efforts to implement the Nonadmitted and Reinsurance Reform Act, a part of Dodd-Frank that sought to establish a uniform, national standard for regulating surplus lines. Fifteen months after passage, the National Association of Insurance Commissioners and the National Conference of Insurance Legislators have backed rival arrangements for allocating taxes and some states have still not fully implemented the law.

## On the National Front

### FDIC Proposes Rule on Mutual Insurance Holding Companies Supporting NAMIC Stance

A proposed rule issued by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) recognizes state regulation of mutual insurance holding companies while providing insurers with greater certainty and clarity, the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies (NAMIC) said today.

"The FDIC is right to propose that mutual insurance holding companies continue to be under the jurisdiction of state regulators, and not treated separately from other insurance companies," said Charles M. Chamness, president and CEO of NAMIC. "NAMIC has been advocating against duplicative and unnecessary regulation

since Washington began debating its response to the 2008 financial crisis, and the FDIC's proposed regulation is consistent with our view."

The proposed rule, published in today's Federal Register, would specifically state that a mutual insurance holding company would be included under the definition of "insurance company" as defined by the Dodd-Frank Act. As such, mutual insurance holding companies would remain under the regulatory jurisdiction of the states, and would not be subject to the FDIC's orderly liquidation authority created as part of the Dodd-Frank Act.

"Congress was very clear in crafting the Dodd-Frank Act that it would defer to the state-based regulatory system for property/casualty insurance," Chamness said. "Both of the law's namesakes said specifically on the House and Senate floor that they did not intend for mutual insurance holding companies to be under the FDIC's authority. Today's proposed rule will ensure that the FDIC remains true to that intent."

## Industry News

### 2012 Could Be Rebuilding Year for Annuities

By Linda Koco, Contributing Editor, AnnuityNews

At an insurance conference this year, an agent in the audience stood up and asked a panel of company executives about when they are going to come out with some new products. A review of new products shows that annuity carriers have definitely unveiled new products this year, but certain product lines got most of the attention. More on that in a minute.

Questions from the field about new products usually surface when the economy is uncertain and the regulatory environment is in flux. That's because carriers tend to rein in product development, and sometimes sales as well, as they respond to conditions. Some carriers do this to protect existing profitable business, while others pull back to assess whether the designs they have in development still have market appeal and likelihood of profitability.

Either way, independent agents, brokers, marketing organizations and other distributors often feel as if their cupboards are bare during these periods. That is the way some agents and distributors are feeling now. The tidal wave of riders, options, features, underwriting classes, flexibility and "more" of the mid-2000s seems to have shrunk to a mere trickle.

It's not that independents have no products to offer. Tried-and-true insurance products usually stay put. However, independent distributors also want new products — ones that might better serve client needs, give the advisor something new to talk about and provide a point of differentiation from competitors.

Even insurance advisors that sell advice rather than product keep an eye out for the new. They build their practices on advising what would be best for the particular client and if they think certain existing products are not best, they let the product manufacturers know, in no uncertain terms.

So, what happened with new annuity products in 2011? Hardly any rollouts of traditional fixed deferred annuities. No surprise there. Due to prolonged low interest rates, these products didn't sell as well as in years past. That is because their interest rate advantage over bank certificates of deposit is slim. (A five-year fixed annuity may pay 1 percent or so higher, for instance.) Besides, many carriers have let it be known that they wanted to curtail exposure to annuity products with rate guarantees, due to uncertainty about reserves and capital requirements.

Lots of “tools.” A lot of carriers, in all product lines, have been providing web-based tools, training programs and services to help producers in one way or another. It’s not the same as offering a new product, but since the carriers say the tools should help increase efficiency, effectiveness and knowledge, producers who use them might see an impact on the bottom line. Examples include reporting tools, price/feature comparison services and retirement planning guides to use with customers.

A bashful group of variable annuities. Bashful because the products — either newbies or upgrades — that debuted were not show-stoppers. Some did include interesting subaccounts (including gold bullion, mortgage and exchange-traded funds) and share classes (I-share and O-share) but the lion’s share of the attention was on new or changed guaranteed living benefit (GLB) features.

The GLB focus is a good thing, from a producer’s perspective, because VA producers say customers really like the GLBs. Some producers even say that VAs won’t sell without the guarantees.

But as product watchers had predicted early in the year, the GLBs of 2011 were generally not as plump as previously. For instance, depending on product, the 2011 pricing for the features was a bit higher than in previous years, and/or the payouts have lower percentages or have additional types of restrictions. This has proven not to be a deterrent to sales. VA producers have told InsuranceNewsNet that they would prefer to have VAs with the more conservative guarantees rather than have no GLBs at all. And a third-quarter VA report issued by the Insured Retirement Institute (IRI) and compiled by Morningstar, shows that more than 60 percent of new VA sales do include a GLB.

Still, some VAs did include richer features in the year. For instance, Kevin Loffredi, vice president of insurance solutions for Morningstar, writes in the third quarter report released by IRI that VA step-up features showed higher fixed percentages than in previous quarters.

Another factor to keep in mind is that VA development ebbs and flows during a year. For instance, the third quarter saw only 40 material new filings, according to Loffredi, but second quarter was “highly active” with 162 new filings.

The year is ending on news that Sun Life Financial, Toronto, is closing its U.S. variable annuity and individual life products to new sales at year end. The carrier did roll out at least two new VAs during the year, one of them a fee-free VA, and it did rank in 13th place on a tally of the top 20 VA sales leaders in the United States kept by LIMRA. So, the exit news sits like a lump in the throat to producers who wrote the carrier’s products. It is also a sign of how today’s difficult market conditions can affect even a leading seller of VA products.

Indexed annuities moving right ahead. That’s right. On the index side of the annuity house, product development was alive and well in 2011. Depending on the carrier, the products included designs with multiple index crediting options (as many as six, plus a fixed account in one product); living benefit guarantees; inflation features; designs for exclusive distribution; and various income riders.

Even this month, as the year is winding down, two more carriers debuted new indexed annuity products, the Hartford Financial Services Group and Genworth.

The VA connections of those two carriers are worth noting. As many readers know, Genworth left the VA market early in 2011. And The Hartford was formerly the top seller of VAs, in another day, and still sells the products (ranking in 17th place on LIMRA’s list). But now both are making plays in indexed annuity business.

Time was when most carriers — with a few exceptions -- in the VA business paid no heed to the indexed annuity business, let alone dabbled in it. Even today, most of the pedigree in the indexed business is of the fixed annuity carrier variety. So, the fact that some VA carriers past and present are giving indexed annuities the once over, to the point of rolling out products for sale, is a heads up for the future.

So are these related facts: According to AnnuitySpecs.com, the number of indexed annuity carriers shown in the firm's third quarter sales report came to 42. Meanwhile, according to Morningstar, the number of VA carriers in the firm's third quarter sales report came to 37 parent companies (roughly 50, if broken out by issuing entities). As for third quarter sales results, indexed annuities sold nearly \$9 billion while VAs sold over \$40 billion.

The devil is always in the details, but a quick glance at those numbers and the product development trajectory suggests that index annuity product activity was hot in 2011, that VA activity certainly was present even though a few VA players did leave the market.

Income products are getting ready. This says "income products," not "income annuities," because a lot of the development in this area involved GLB riders and options being added to VAs or indexed annuities, not income annuities as such. In addition, several players from the wirehouse/securities side of the financial business — players such as Schwab, Barclays and Putnam — added income funds or options to their products in a clear move to beef up their retirement income solutions for the boomer generation now hitting retirement age.

There were a few new immediate annuities during the year, and a couple of longevity annuity offerings — products that virtually never appeared on annuity product lists, say five or more years ago. Therefore, it appears that some carriers and financial firms were not only adding GLBs but also looking to come out with other retirement income strategies or products.

The answer to the question

The agent's question about when new products will be coming out may find an answer in these three words: "Maybe next year."

In the second half of 2011, and especially in the past two months, a number of insurance company executives, analysts and other industry leaders have been talking about growth, saying they want to stop the de-risking and back-pedaling and start growing this business, despite the uncertainty, the low-interest rates and the regulatory uncertainty.

Every time that kind of discussion surfaces, new product innovation usually follows. So perhaps next year will be The Year.

*Linda Koco, MBA, is a contributing editor to AnnuityNews, specializing in life insurance, annuities and income planning. Linda can be reached at [linda.koco@innfeedback.com](mailto:linda.koco@innfeedback.com).*

## Calendar of Industry Events

<b>March 3-6, 2012</b> NAIC Spring National Meeting	Hilton New Orleans New Orleans, Louisiana
<b>March 9-11, 2012</b> NCOIL 2012 Spring Meeting	Location TBD
<b>April 18-20, 2012</b> NALC 2012 Spring Conference	LaCosta Resort & Spa Carlsbad, California
<b>July 12-15, 2012</b> NCOIL 2012 Summer Meeting	Location TBD
<b>August 11-14, 2012</b> NAIC Summer National Meeting	Atlanta Marriott Marquis Atlanta, GA
<b>September 19-21, 2012</b> NALC 2012 Fall Conference	Kingsmill Resort Williamsburg, Virginia
<b>November 15-18, 2012</b> NCOIL 2012 Annual Meeting	Grand Hotel Marriott Resort Point Clear, Alabama
<b>November 29-December 2, 2012</b> NAIC Summer National Meeting	Gaylord National Hotel & Convention Center Washington, DC
<b>March 8-10, 2013</b> NCOIL 2013 Spring Meeting	Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill Washington, D.C.