



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESIDENT BUSH AND BEN STEIN JOIN TO DISCUSS IMPORTANCE OF FINANCIAL LITERACY

Today's Event Marks Continuation of Stein's Summer Campaign to Promote Retirement Planning

Washington, D.C., June 23, 2005 — While Americans are turning their attention to beaches and barbecues, Ben Stein has something else in mind. As the honorary chairperson of the National Retirement Planning Coalition (NRPC), Stein is conducting a summer campaign of speaking engagements and press interviews to educate Americans on the importance of financial literacy and the need to prepare for their financial futures.

Today, Stein is sharing the stage with President George W. Bush to discuss the importance of financial literacy for Americans of all ages. Held at Stein's Alma Mater, Montgomery Blair High School in Silver Spring, Maryland, President Bush and Stein will cover some of the foremost financial issues facing our nation. These issues include the need for better financial education in America, and the importance of individualized retirement planning and Social Security reform.

"It's staggering when you see statistics on the number of Americans who haven't adequately prepared for their financial futures," said Stein. "As a nation, we need to get our priorities straight, and planning for our retirement years needs to be at the top of the list. I am delighted to join President Bush to help Americans of all ages take steps to secure their financial futures."

Stein wants all Americans to understand that the quality of their retirement is directly related to the quality of their retirement income, which is based on the quality of their retirement planning. And, unfortunately, many Americans are still not getting the message.

Recent research underscores Americans' pervasive lack of adequate retirement planning:

- Savings lag – 64 percent of full-time U.S. workers are either behind in their retirement savings, or haven't yet started. Widows in particular are likely to be behind – 70 percent are living "paycheck to paycheck."¹

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- Longer retirements require more income – 53 percent of Americans expect to live from 16 to 30 years or more in retirement. At the same time, 34 percent think they will retire between 50 and 64², indicating that increasingly Americans may have to fund retirements lasting decades.
- Gripped by fear? – 95 percent of Americans have some financial-related concerns when it comes to retirement. 42 percent expressed fears related to retirement income: either that they will run out of money prematurely, or that they will have to downgrade their lifestyle in retirement.³
- Five-year slump – Over the last five years, only 16 percent of respondents in a recent study feel they have made progress in planning and saving for retirement.⁴
- Poor national savings rates – Of those who have begun saving for retirement, the typical working American household has only saved \$18,750, and expects Social Security and pensions will cover the majority of their retirement expenses.⁵
- Wrong priorities – 70 percent of Americans are most concerned with short- and mid-term financial spending, while placing retirement savings at a distant third priority.⁶

As more of the 77 million baby boomers move closer to retirement, many need to shift their traditional thinking from a focus on simply saving for retirement, to ensuring that their hard-earned nest eggs work better for them. Making sure that they will have enough retirement income to supplement Social Security, help cover retirement expenses and last the duration of their retirement, is key to retirement planning success.

“It’s summer, and not everyone wants to think about retirement planning,” continued Stein. “But, the problem will not be solved by barbecuing or sun tanning it away. You have to actually do something concrete in the way of retirement planning, and the time to start is now.”

About The NRPC (www.RetireOnYourTerms.org)

The National Retirement Planning Coalition brings together thirteen leading financial industry and advocacy organizations for the purpose of educating consumers and financial industry professionals on the issues surrounding retirement planning. NRPC members include the Actuarial Foundation, the American Council of Life Insurers (ACLI), the American Savings Education Council (ASEC), the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, the Financial Planning Association (FPA), For Our Grandchildren – A Social Security Education Project, the International Foundation for Retirement Education (InFRE), LIMRA International, the National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC), the National Association for Variable Annuities (NAVA), the

National Preretirement Education Association (NPEA), the Retirement Solutions Foundation, and the Women’s Institute for a Secure Retirement (WISER).

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¹ MetLife Employee Benefits Trend Study, April 2005

² NAVA 2005 Retirement Horizon Study

³ NAVA 2005 Financial Retirement Fears Study

⁴ Prudential Financial “*Roadblocks to Retirement*” Study, May 2005

⁵ “*Fidelity Retirement IndexSM*,” June 2005

⁶ Prudential Financial “*Roadblocks to Retirement*” Study, May 2005