

# Earnings Limit For Older Persons May Be Repealed

By Monroe S. Miller

Jim Latham, as I've observed a hundred times in the years I have known him, is an "information vac". My presumption is that he reads widely and extensively. Whenever he comes across an article or information piece that could be of value to golf course superintendents, he forwards it to me (the editor). He passed this interesting news article to me on the night of Bob Welch's retirement party. I'm not sure what Jim is doing with his nose in the *News Bulletin* for the American Association of Retired Persons (that's where he found this information). Maybe he is looking for ways to help Bob adjust to his newlyfound leisure!

It appears the outlook for eliminating the Social Security earning limit improved recently when the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Otis R. Bowen, urged its repeal. The limit is

the law that reduced Social Security benefits by \$1.00 for every \$2.00 of earnings over \$8,400.00 each year for persons in the 65-69 age group.

Support for removing this limit has not been forthcoming until now. Although individual lawmakers have occasionally backed its repeal, there hasn't been the support that now seems to be on the increase. The prevailing rationale is that removal of the limit would push up the cost of Social Security and thus increase the federal deficit.

Bowen has been joined by Social Security Commission Dorcas Hardy in urging the repeal. Bowen feels that it puts an unfair 50% tax on elderly earnings and discourages productive labor. He concedes an increase in short-term costs (due to benefit increases for those elderly on outside earnings), but

thinks that the change would help reduce deficits over the long haul because of increased tax revenues. He assumes removal of the limit would encourage many older people to work more.

As Jim said, "the limit repeal could open the door to bringing more Senior Citizens into the seasonal work force, or extend the work time for those who are already seasonal employees. Spring and fall periods on golf courses might benefit, especially when school-age crew members are not available."

I've yet to meet a golf course manager who has enough help in the spring and autumn months. I think we'll be able to count on Jim Latham to track the progress of this issue. A change could be helpful to retired persons and golf course superintendents.

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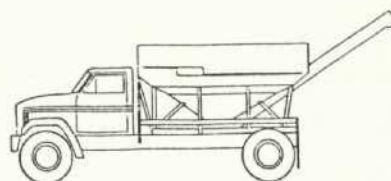
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