

AARP Seminar Informants?

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This is getting ridiculous. The latest attack on our industry is coming from the not-so-adviser-friendly AARP. Now the AARP has taken it upon themselves, with unclear motivations, to "police" financial seminars. You've got to be kidding?!

According to AARP's website (http://www.aarp.org/money/consumer/articles/_no_free_lunch.html) AARP is encouraging seniors and retirees to "volunteer" to be a "seminar monitor." The "monitors" are encouraged to attend financial seminars (to which they have been invited) and to bring with them an AARP provided checklist. The purpose of the checklist is to gather information on the seminar presentation and the speaker, so the information can be sent into AARP for their "review." If it is too inconvenient for someone to attend a seminar, the AARP encourages the person to just send them the seminar invitation for their review. (According to its website, AARP views its role as *an extension of the regulators* – because the regulators are under-staffed.)

This is absolutely the most ridiculous, presumptuous, over-reaching initiative I think I have seen during my seventeen years in the financial services field. The AARP's website is loaded with sweeping generalizations about financial seminars and the advisers who choose to market their services through seminars. **Attention AARP: *THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH AN ADVISER INTRODUCING THEIR SERVICES TO RETIREES, SENIORS, OR ANYONE ELSE, THROUGH A SEMINAR!***

Any adviser doing seminars should thoroughly review AARP's website to get a better understanding of what they are communicating to retirees. Read everything on their website. Print-out the checklist. Pretend you are a seminar attendee...how would you answer the questions about your seminar? Anything stick out as a problem? Better fix it.

This is becoming a witch hunt. We, as financial professionals, should start fighting back or we'll end up being faced with the same two ugly choices as the Salem "witches"...confess and be burned or deny and be drowned. I strongly recommend that independent financial advisers, marketing companies, insurance companies, and other interested parties, band together immediately and spend the time and money necessary to fight against this assault...it is a WAR and we had better recognize it and start shooting back.

About the Author: David D. Holland is an independent financial planner/investment adviser/annuity agent in Ormond Beach, Florida. David, and industry veteran, Mike Mastowski, are the founders of Retiree Adviser Marketing Corporation (RAM). RAM provides independent agents with access to high quality annuity products and helps them expand their services to include real retirement advice. RAM also gives agents the opportunity to access David's marketing and planning system – the same system which allowed him to average \$15 million in annuity production for three years in a row. **RAM agents are invited to participate in a full-day training session with David, where they can learn his system, freely ask questions in a small group atmosphere and find out how to leverage their time with free customized retirement plans and RAM's 50 basis-points RIA platform. To get more information about RAM's services, call 888-422-7007 or visit www.retireeadviser.com.**