

ANNUITIES

Athene President: Retirement Industry Poised to See Decades of Consecutive Growth Potential

By Terrence Dopp

NEW YORK //BestWire// - Athene Holdings Ltd. could see “several decades” of opportunity as the aging population and under-saving create a need for retirement planning and guaranteed income, President Grant Kvalheim said.

Each day, roughly 11,000 Americans reach retirement age, with the current number of Americans older than 65 now at 58 million and anticipated to reach 82 million by 2050, he said.



At the same time, 75% of people are facing income of less than \$75,000 annually in retirement and almost half don't participate in a retirement plan, he said. Athene currently estimates the “savings gap” at \$4 trillion in the United States and as much as \$45 trillion globally.

“This industry has a substantial tailwind behind it of an aging population that is unprepared,” Kvalheim said at Apollo Global Management’s investor day. “This tailwind to our business will exist for several decades, and that aging population is woefully underprepared.”

A third of pre-retirees also say they are concerned about running out of money in retirement, Kvalheim said.

Athene was the largest writer of total annuities in 2023 with \$38.19 billion issued, according to the most recent BestLink data. It held a market share of 10.69% of the total issued for the year, according to the data.

Total U.S. annuity sales rose 19% to \$215.2 billion in the first half of 2024, setting a new record for the first six months of a year, according to preliminary figures from LIMRA’s Individual Annuity Sales Survey ([BestWire, July 24, 2024](#)).

Breaking out the second quarter, total annuity sales of \$108.5 billion were up 25%, compared with the same period a year earlier, LIMRA said. Every product line except fixed immediate annuities posted double-digit gains in what turned out to be the second highest quarterly total ever recorded.

Kvalheim said with the addition of Athene’s first registered index-linked annuity product, the company now competes in 85% of an annuities market that is growing.

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The annuities market grew by 30% in 2023 and Athene had the capital, products and distribution to take advantage of the growth, he said.

Underwriting entities of Athene Holding Ltd. have current Best's Financial Strength Ratings of A+ (Superior).

(By Terrence Dopp, senior associate editor, Best's Review: Terry.Dopp@ambest.com)