

FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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Medicare Turns 50: A Special New Website Marks a Half-Century of Health Care for Seniors

The Alliance is pleased to launch www.medicare50th.org. Click on the link to read the personal stories of what Medicare has meant to several Alliance members personally since its inception, and how much it has changed their lives. As we approach the July 30 anniversary we will add new features and details about Alliance events to mark the occasion and ways you can help remind policymakers to protect this essential, earned benefit.

Opposition to Trans Pacific Partnership Continues to be High Priority for Activists

The Hill quoted Alliance executive director **Richard Fiesta** in a story about seniors groups and their positions on the Trans Pacific Partnership trade deal.

“This is as important to us as the issues surrounding Social Security and Medicare,” said Alliance executive director **Richard Fiesta**. “We are dedicating a lot of resources.”

The Alliance is urging U.S. House members to oppose plans to cut \$950 million from Medicare to fund the Trade Adjustment Assistance program, which assists displaced workers. Those cuts include \$700 million through a sequestration provision and another \$250 million over ten years for hospital dialysis centers treating people with acute kidney injuries.

“A lot of members and staff aren’t fully familiar with [TPP’s] effect on prescription drug prices,” continued Fiesta in *The Hill*. “We’re getting a lot of ‘Gee, I didn’t know that.’”

“Cutting \$950 million from Medicare to pay for something completely unrelated makes absolutely no sense and will compromise the integrity of the program,” he added later.

The Alliance is stressing to U.S. House members that corporations should be asked to step up to the plate and fund TAA, not the more than 53 million seniors or disabled Medicare beneficiaries.

Half of Older Households Have No Retirement Savings

A newly released Government Accountability Office [study](#) revealed that more than half of all American households with someone 55 or older have no retirement savings.

The study also found that poverty rates are higher for people who are 75 and older. Additionally, more than a quarter of households age 55-64 have neither a pension nor any form of retirement savings and have a median net worth of only about \$9,000.

Alliance President **Barbara J. Easterling** highlighted the need to expand earned Social Security benefits so older Americans can retire with dignity.

“Growing numbers of lawmakers recognize that too many seniors have only their Social Security earnings to support them in retirement,” she said.

Medicare Turns 50: LBJ Answered His Own Questions with its Implementation

“That is what Medicare is all about. What to do? How to live? Who will pay the doctor? Who will pay the hospital? Who will pay for the medicine? Who will pay the rent? Well, these are questions that older Americans that I have known all of my life have dreaded to answer. Now Medicare is changing a lot of that.” –President **Lyndon B. Johnson**, April 8, 1966

The Alliance for Retired Americans is a national organization that advocates for the rights and well-being of over 4.3 million retirees and their families.