

# FRIDAY ALERT



**Alliance for Retired Americans**

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July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015

Spanish version: [www.alianzadejubilados.org](http://www.alianzadejubilados.org)

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## Supreme Court Decision on Same- Sex Marriage Benefits Older Seniors

On June 26<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down states' same-sex marriage bans, effectively legalizing same sex marriage in all 50 States. This case builds on the Court's 2013 *Windsor* decision that struck down the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and allowed for federal recognition of same-sex marriages.

Until last Friday, LGBT seniors living in states where same-sex marriage was not recognized did not have the same benefits and protections as heterosexual couples and could not claim equal state and federal tax benefits. They also could not claim the Social Security spousal survival benefit that allows surviving spouses to receive Social Security equivalent to what their spouse with a higher earnings record received.

Alliance President **Barbara J. Easterling** celebrated the Court's ruling, saying, "This decision is a victory for older gay couples who had previously been denied equality in states where same-sex marriage was not the law of the land."

## White House Conference on Aging Webcast

The 2015 White House Conference on Aging will be held on July 13<sup>th</sup> in Washington, DC. It marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Medicare, Medicaid, and the Older Americans Act as well as the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Social Security.

"The White House Conference on Aging is a unique opportunity for the Alliance to make expanding our earned Social Security benefits part of real retirement security, so that every American can retire with dignity," said **Ruben Burks**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. "This is more important than ever now, with employer-sponsored defined benefit pensions such a high-level conservative target."

There will be a livestream of the July 13 event on the WHCOA's [website](#).

## Connecticut Alliance Holds its Convention

More than 70 people attended the Connecticut Alliance for Retired Americans' annual convention last week in Meriden, CT. At the convention, **Bette Marafino** was re-elected President, **Win Heimer** VP, **Joelle Fishman** Recording Secretary, **Mary Elia** Corresponding Secretary, **Florence Martin** Treasurer, and **Nina Wolfson** Assistant Treasurer.

Alliance Executive Director **Richard Fiesta** attended the convention and congratulated the Connecticut Alliance on those elected. "The Connecticut Alliance has been an outstanding partner

in our efforts to stand up for America's retirees. I congratulate the newly elected leadership and look forward to working with them in the future."

Other speakers included State Representative **Matthew Lessor**, Middletown Mayor **Dan Drew**, Social Security Works Communications Director **Lacy Crawford**, and Connecticut AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer **Lori Pelletier**.

### **Medicare Turns 50: Join us in Celebration**

Have you had a chance to check out the personal stories of Alliance members featured on our [www.medicare50th.org](http://www.medicare50th.org) website?

This week's Medicare quote from the past: "I believe honor thy mother and father is not just a good commandment to live by, it is good public policy to govern by. That is why I feel so strongly about Medicare." - Senator **Barbara Mikulski** (D-MD)

### **National Legislative Conference Next Week – Sen. Stabenow Now Confirmed**

The Alliance will hold its National Legislative Conference and Lobby Day in Washington, DC from July 7<sup>th</sup> - July 10<sup>th</sup> at the Washington Hilton. In addition to having an opportunity to speak with Members of Congress and their legislative staffs about retirement security, conference attendees will attend trainings and action sessions that will improve their advocacy skills. We are pleased to announce that Senator **Debbie Stabenow** (MI) will be joining us next week.

Previously-announced speakers include AFL-CIO President **Richard Trumka**; House Democratic Leader **Nancy Pelosi** (CA); Sen. **Elizabeth Warren** (MA); Rep. **Keith Ellison** (MN), co-chair of the House Progressive Caucus; Rep. **Ruben Gallego** (AZ); Rep. **Jan Schakowsky** (IL), co-chair of the Congressional Task Force on Seniors; White House Conference on Aging Executive Director **Nora Super**; and several others. Pre-conference registration has closed, but you can register on-site.