

# FRIDAY ALERT



**Alliance for Retired Americans**

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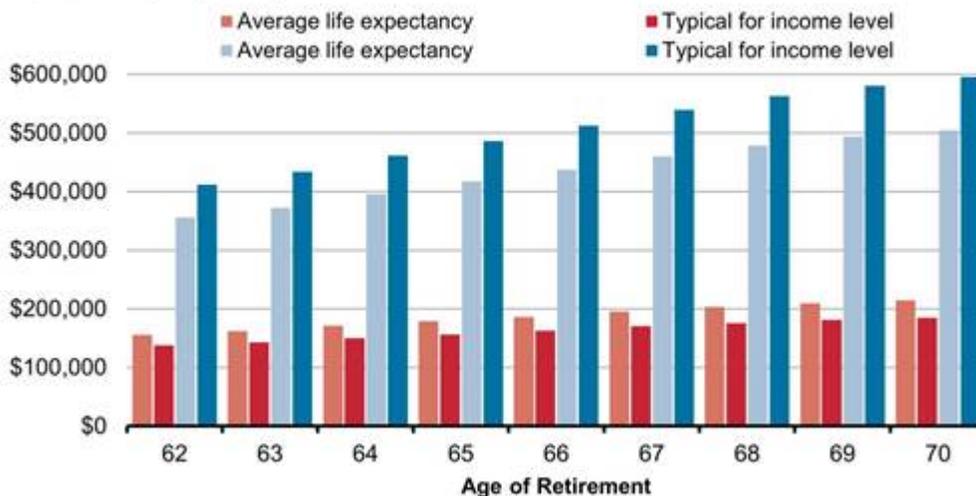
## Growing Income Inequality Affecting Social Security Benefits

The gap in life expectancy for the top 1% and bottom 1% of the income distribution has reached 15 years for men and ten years for women, [according to research published this week](#) by a Stanford University economist.

At the same time a new Government Accountability Office study details the dramatic effect this difference in life expectancy is having on men's lifetime Social Security benefits, as illustrated below.

### Lifetime Social Security

Expected lifetime Social Security benefits for men earning \$20,000 a year (in red) and \$80,000 a year (in blue)



Government Accountability Office | WSJ.com

While Social Security has always paid more benefits to those who earn more over the course of their lifetime, the gap is growing due to both the differences in life expectancy and the historically flat wages for those in the middle to lower-income ranges. And, as the **Wall Street Journal** reported, “a growing share of the benefits are going to men with high incomes and a shrinking share to those with lower incomes.”

“The American economy is not working for middle and lower-income people the way it used to,” said **Robert Roach**, President of the Alliance. “To have a secure retirement, including earned Social Security benefits, we need to fight for jobs that pay a decent wage and have retirement benefits, like a pension.”

## Social Security “File and Suspend” Loophole Closes May 1

Important changes are happening to Social Security next month. The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 closed a Social Security loophole called “file and suspend”. This option allowed a beneficiary to file for and then immediately suspend their benefits, enabling their spouse and/or dependents to file on their earnings record while they continue to accrue Social Security credits. The bill has also made changes to “restricted applications”, which allowed an individual to collect on their spouse’s earnings record, while they delay receiving benefits on their own earnings record.

Read more about this change, determine whether it applies to your family and how to file before the April 29 deadline in this [USA Today](#) article.

## Opposed to Raising the Social Security Retirement Age? Sign our Petition today.

A recent [report](#) by the Center for Economic and Policy showed that 44% of workers age 58 and older are employed in either physically demanding jobs or jobs with difficult working conditions. Yet, House Speaker **Paul Ryan** (R-WI) and House Ways and Means Committee Chairman **Kevin Brady** (R-TX) continue to call for raising the retirement age.

[Send a message to Speaker Ryan and Chairman Brady that seniors have earned their Social Security benefits over a lifetime of hard work and many simply can't work any longer.](#)

Chairman Brady does not understand what it means to work a long day, recently stating, “Look, we all know what we need to do on Social Security. You have to gradually raise the full retirement age to 70..., means test wealthier Americans ... and create a true cost of living for seniors.”

Tell Chairman Brady he is wrong. The retirement age is high enough.

“Please help us fight Speaker Ryan’s and Chairman Brady’s plans for deep cuts to Social Security,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “To achieve retirement security for all Americans we need to expand Social Security, not cut it.”

## Midwest Regional Conference: Today is Last Day for Special Hotel Rate in Detroit

Today is the deadline to register for the Alliance’s quadrennial [Midwest](#) Regional Conference, to be held May 4-5, 2016 at the MGM Grand Hotel in Detroit. It is also the last day to benefit from the discounted hotel rate. Please note that the rate only applies to the dates of the conference.

The [Northeast](#) Regional Conference will take place in Washington, DC on May 19-20. During each conference we will elect four regional board members and prepare for the 2016 general election. Questions? Contact **Joni Jones** at [jjones@retiredamericans.org](mailto:jjones@retiredamericans.org) or 202-637-5377.