

FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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Spanish version: www.alianzadejubilados.org

GOP Offers New Health Care Bill That's Even Worse Than Last Version

Speaker **Paul Ryan** and the **Trump** Administration are trying again to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Desperate to repeal the ACA within the first 100 days of the Trump Administration, the House GOP leaders endorsed an amendment put forward by Rep. **Tom MacArthur** (R-NJ) that would allow states to repeal several essential health benefits currently covered by the ACA and prohibit insurers from disqualifying people with pre-existing conditions. Among people ages 55 to 64, [84 percent](#) had at least one pre-existing condition in 2014.

As of Friday morning, the bill did not yet have enough support to pass, but the leaders say they may bring it to a vote next week.

The bill allows insurance corporations to charge older customers five times more for the same policies as younger adults. It cuts \$880 billion from Medicaid, which pays for long-term care for millions of Americans, and it weakens Medicare to give tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans.

The amendment won over the majority of support from the conservative House Freedom Caucus, who originally did not support the GOP leadership's American Health Care Act (AHCA) because they did not believe it did enough to repeal the ACA. However, the support of the Freedom Caucus may not be enough to make up for lost support among the [Tuesday Group](#), a moderate group of Republicans that MacArthur chairs.

Republican leaders are pushing the bill forward and attempting to [recruit](#) additional support from moderates.

"Incredibly, Republicans in Congress tried to exempt themselves from this latest proposal, maintaining popular Obamacare provisions for themselves and their staff," said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. "Republican members of Congress must remember that this bill hits older Americans the hardest. We strongly oppose it and are giving Alliance members the information they need to tell their members of Congress what we think of it."

URGENT Action Needed – Health Care Vote is Imminent

Please pick up your phone and dial 1-866-828-4162 to be connected to your member of Congress' office right away and tell them to vote NO on the AHCA.

"The Ryan-Trump plan will increase premiums, eliminate protections for pre-existing conditions, cut the life of Medicare, and do nothing to bring down the price of prescription drugs," said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance.

“We must resist this latest effort to dismantle health care,” he added. “We must again tell Congress that we demand quality health care at affordable prices.”

Make sure your voice is heard. Call 1-866-828-4162 and tell your member to vote NO on the American Health Care Act.

Trump Tax Plan – Another Gift to Billionaires

President Trump outlined [major tax cuts](#) Wednesday that would add trillions to the national debt. The package proposes lowering the existing top corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 15 percent and eliminates deductions for state and local income taxes and medical expenses.

The so-called plan consisted of a one-page summary containing bullet points, with details still to be worked out. It provides a massive tax break for corporations and also for companies that now pay taxes through the personal income tax code, such as Trump’s own real estate empire. During a news conference, Treasury Secretary **Steve Mnuchin** said that President Trump has no intention of ever releasing his own income taxes as previous presidents have done.

“The President seeks to add trillions of dollars to the deficit so he can pay for massive tax giveaways to corporations, billionaires, and his own family,” said President Roach. “It is reckless and it is not meant to give relief to middle class retirees and workers.”

New Hearing Benefit for Alliance Members & Families

Announcing a valuable new benefit for Alliance members and their families who have concerns about hearing loss, the Alliance has teamed with Hear In America to offer a hearing benefit plan.

Registration for the plan is FREE for you AND any of your extended family members. Once registered, you will be directed to reputable providers for a FREE hearing screening and evaluation.

If needed, hearing aids are available through Hear In America at discounts up to 70% off manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP), with included follow-up care and loss and damage coverage for three years.

If you think you may have a hearing problem, this is a great way to get the help you need to vastly improve your quality of life. For more information or to register, call **1-800-286-6149** or click here: www.hearinamerica.com/ara.

Trump’s Personal Travel May Come at Expense of Senior Taxpayers

Throughout President Trump’s first 100 days in office, the media has documented his travels to his luxurious resort at Mar-a-Lago. The President’s travel to Palm Beach County, Florida requires an enormous amount of logistical and security support, and this support is currently not reimbursed by the federal government. Despite several letters sent by county officials, there has been no indication that the administration will reimburse the extra expenses.

After seven visits, the cost of the visits to the county has already [reached](#) \$4 million. To offset these high costs, the county is considering raising property taxes. Palm Beach County already has the third-highest average property tax bill in Florida. Those who are on a fixed income and rely on Social Security would be hit particularly hard by the tax hike.



Mar-a-Lago

According to the latest U.S. Census data, 23 percent of the county's residents, the highest of any age group, are 65 and older and eligible for Social Security benefits. Currently, over 19,600 residents of the county receive their earned Social Security benefits.

"If the President wishes to travel all around the country, he should be paying the bill, not taxpayers," said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. "Residents who are living on Social Security should not have to choose between basic necessities and paying for the President's visits."

Advocates Honored at Connecticut Alliance's Awards Luncheon

The Connecticut Alliance for Retired Americans held its 12th Annual Awards Luncheon on Monday. Two lifelong activists were recognized for their service.

Judith Stein, founder and Director of the Center for Medicare Advocacy, received the **Charlene Block Award**, which recognizes an individual who has continually spoken out for the needs of workers and retirees. She has been a constant and powerful voice for protecting Medicare.

Amelia Smith, a Connecticut State Employees Association (CSEA) and Connecticut Alliance activist, received the **Kevin Lynch Award** for her lifelong dedication to both CSEA and CTARA.

Mr. Fiesta spoke at the luncheon and praised the award recipients. "I was pleased to thank two vocal and passionate activists who have consistently put others before themselves," said Fiesta.