

FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

815 16th Street, NW, Fourth Floor • Washington, DC 20006 • 202.637.5399
www.retiredamericans.org • aracommunications@retiredamericans.org

July 31st, 2015

Spanish version: www.alianzadejubilados.org

In Honor of Medicare's 50th Anniversary, Alliance Members Hold Celebrations Nationwide

Retirees and allies around the country participated in more than 100 Medicare events celebrating 50 years of guaranteed health coverage for seniors this week. In Washington, DC, the Alliance for Retired Americans participated in a celebratory press conference with House Democratic Leader **Nancy Pelosi** (CA) and Reps. **Doris Matsui** (CA), **Jan Schakowsky** (IL), **Xavier Becerra** (CA), and **Joe Crowley** (NY) to honor the program's accomplishments and reiterate support for preserving it for the future. Alliance executive director **Richard Fiesta** and Alliance member **Susan Thomas** of Maryland spoke at the event. You can watch the video on [YouTube](#). Minutes later, U.S. Senate Democratic Leader **Harry Reid** (NV) led a Senate celebration.

From Maine to Hawaii, Spokane to Miami, Alliance members celebrated in unique ways. Check out the pictures on our [Facebook page](#).

"Today's Medicare system is an enormous success that didn't happen on its own," said **Barbara Easterling**, President of the Alliance. "It took years of advocacy by older Americans, organized labor, and their allies to enact this program. Now we must continue to fight to strengthen and improve these earned benefits for future generations."

"Thank you to all of our members across the country who worked so hard to make this anniversary one we will all remember," added **Ruben Burks**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance.

Alliance Joins Rep. Becerra to Strengthen Social Security's Disability Trust Fund

Last week, Rep. Becerra introduced legislation that would combine the Social Security Old Age and Disability Trust funds. Such a move would improve their solvency and ensure that America's disabled workers and retirees can continue to receive their earned benefits well into the future. According to the 2015 Social Security Trustees report, the SSDI trust fund would no longer be able to pay full benefits in 2016 unless Congress takes action. Becerra's bill would ensure that both remain solvent through 2033.

Maryland Alliance member **Susan Flashman** gave remarks at the press conference where Rep. Becerra introduced the bill. "Because I can't work, these benefits have been a financial lifeline for me," she said. "I earned those benefits by working nearly all my life, so in no way do I feel like I am getting a handout."

Rep. Honda Acts to More Accurately Calculate Social Security Cost of Living Adjustments

Representative **Mike Honda** (CA) is introducing legislation that will require Social Security Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs) to be based on the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E). This index more accurately reflects the actual cost of living for older Americans which can

sometimes be higher because seniors spend more on housing and health care than the general population.

“It just makes good common sense to base Social Security cost of living increases on the real world prices of items that seniors have to spend money on,” said Mr. Fiesta. “This bill will change the rules to help older Americans sustain their families and maintain a decent standard of living in their retirement.”

Videos from 2015 Legislative Conference Online

New videos from the Alliance’s 2015 Legislative Conference are now available on our [conference web page](#). Check out remarks by Leader **Pelosi**, Senator **Bernie Sanders** (VT), Representative **Ruben Gallego** (AZ), and Union Veterans Council President **Will Fischer**.

Medicare Turns 50: President Obama Celebrates Medicare’s Anniversary

“Happy 50th birthday, Medicare and Medicaid! Two programs, one promise: that every American deserves a basic measure of dignity and security.”- President **Barack Obama**

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.