

# FRIDAY ALERT



**Alliance for Retired Americans**

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

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## Alliance Celebrates Social Security's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with More than 40 Events Today

Members of the Alliance are hosting more than 40 events today, August 14<sup>th</sup>, to celebrate and educate the public about the importance of protecting and expanding Social Security on its 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Together with Medicare's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday events held in July, as well as Social Security anniversary celebrations held recently or on the horizon, the Alliance is holding more than 150 events in July and August to mark the two anniversaries. The Alliance is working with Social Security Works, a partner organization, to release new reports showing how important Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid are to seniors in all 50 states: <http://www.socialsecurityworks.org/resources/state-reports>

From Pennsylvania to California and Maine to Mississippi, the events range from rallies and birthday parties with cake and music to policy discussions with members of Congress. In Montpelier, Vermont, Alliance members will gather on the lawn of the State Capitol to celebrate Social Security with a picnic lunch and musical performance by the Montpelier City Band. Rallies in Lincoln, Nebraska and Belleville, Illinois encouraged members of Congress to rethink their positions when it comes to supporting cuts to Social Security benefits. Other events are planned at local gathering spots in Charleston, South Carolina and numerous senior centers in other states.

"For eighty years, Social Security has enabled millions of Americans to retire with dignity," said Alliance President **Barbara Easterling**. "Here's to another eight decades of providing America's seniors with a secure retirement and a decent standard of living. Thank you to everyone who is taking part in our anniversary events and helping to spread our message about expanding our earned benefits."

Check out our [Flickr](#) page for recently added photos of celebrations across the country.

## Congressional Republicans Move to Dismantle Medicare

Last week, House Republicans on the Ways and Means Committee [signaled](#) that they would begin writing legislation to privatize Medicare and turn it into a voucher system. The proposal, spearheaded by Rep. **Kevin Brady** (R-TX), would also combine the Part A and B deductibles, shifting additional costs on to beneficiaries who do not use hospital care. The action could be particularly dangerous should the GOP win the White House and retain control of Congress in 2016.

"Just as we finished celebrating 50 years of Medicare keeping seniors out of poverty, recent events have shown that House Republicans have declared war on Medicare and are committed to

tearing apart this important and incredibly successful program,” said Alliance Secretary-Treasurer **Ruben Burks**.

## **Senator Brian Schatz Introduces Legislation to Expand Social Security**

Yesterday, U.S. Senator **Brian Schatz** (D-HI) introduced S. 1940, the [Safeguarding American Families and Expanding Social Security Act](#), which would change the cost of living adjustment formula (COLA) to better reflect the needs of older Americans. Current beneficiaries would be expected to see their Social Security benefits increase by an average of \$65 per month. This legislation is fully paid for by lifting the cap on income subject to the Social Security tax (currently at \$118,500) which would also extend the life of the trust fund for decades into the future.

“Sixty-two percent of households aged 55-64 have saved less than one times their annual salary, not nearly enough to sustain a family,” said Alliance executive director **Richard Fiesta**. “The Safeguarding American Families and Expanding Social Security Act will increase monthly payments for current retirees, base payments on the real costs seniors face when calculating benefits and make the Social Security system solvent for decades to come. It is one of several bills that the Alliance supports that would expand Social Security benefits.”

## **Consumer Reports: One-Third of Consumers Face Higher Drug Prices in Last 12 Months**

According to a [Consumer Reports survey](#) of 1,037 U.S. adults who currently take a prescription drug, people paid an average of \$39 above the usual cost for their prescription in the last year — and one in 10 said they paid at least \$100 or more out-of-pocket. Rising drug prices are especially problematic in the case of generics. A recent analysis by the research firm Pembroke Consulting found that from August 2013 to August 2014, half of all generic drugs had increased in price.

## **The Union Veterans Council Has a New Website**

The Union Veterans Council recently launched its new [website](#), complete with information on how to become a member as well as resources for current members.

The Union Veterans Council brings union members who are veterans together to speak out on the issues that impact veterans most, especially the need for good jobs and a strong, fully funded and staffed Department of Veterans Affairs. It has been an important ally of the Alliance since its founding.

## **Fiesta Speaks at the A. Philip Randolph Institute National Educational Conference**

Mr. Fiesta traveled to Savannah, Georgia on Wednesday and Thursday to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the A. Philip Randolph Institute. The event featured forums that discussed the future of the labor movement. The A. Phillip Randolph Institute was founded in 1965 by **A. Philip Randolph** and **Bayard Rustin** to forge an alliance between the civil rights movement and the labor movement. For fifty years, it has advocated for social and economic justice.