

# FRIDAY ALERT



## Alliance for Retired Americans

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## Alliance Stands with AFL-CIO President Trumka against Hate

After **President Trump's** press conference in which he blamed "both sides" for the violence last weekend in Charlottesville, Virginia, AFL-CIO President **Richard Trumka** [resigned](#) from Trump's manufacturing council this week. One counter-protester was killed and 19 were injured when a white supremacist drove a car into a group of demonstrators.

President Trumka and Ms. Lee were joined by several CEOs who also exited the group in protest of the President's comments. Trump [said](#) that there were "some very fine people" among the white supremacist and neo-Nazi groups.

"We cannot sit on a council for a President who tolerates bigotry and domestic terrorism," President Trumka said in a statement Tuesday. "President Trump's remarks today repudiate his forced remarks yesterday about the KKK and neo-Nazis. We must resign on behalf of America's working people, who reject all notions of legitimacy of these bigoted groups."

"We join President Trumka in denouncing President Trump's remarks," said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. "We must not let President Trump's hateful misdirection get in the way of our advancement as a nation. We live in the greatest country in the world, and by standing together, it can only get better. Our hearts and prayers go out to the family and friends of **Heather Heyer** and the two state police officers who lost their lives on Saturday."

## Alliance Members Hold More than 60 Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid Birthday Celebrations

Alliance members across the country continued to celebrate Social Security's 82nd anniversary and Medicare and Medicaid's 52nd anniversary this week, reminding their elected representatives of the millions of Americans who depend on the programs to pay their bills, avoid poverty and receive guaranteed medical care. Monday marked the official anniversary of Social Security being signed into law in 1935.

In [Panama City](#) Florida Alliance Vice President **Dave Jacobsen** and Secretary **Barbara DeVane** led FLARA members and young workers in serving cupcakes and providing Rep. **Neal Dunn's** (R-FL) staff with information about the programs. FLARA members also met with Sen. **Marco Rubio's** (R) staff in Tallahassee and Rep. **Matt Gaetz's** (R) staff in Pensacola, stressing the need to prevent cuts and privatization of the programs. In Gainesville and Palatka, members demonstrated at the local offices of Rep. **Ted Yoho** (R).



FLARA members outside Rep. Dunn's office in Panama City on Monday.

In Corrales, New Mexico, Alliance members held a town hall meeting with Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-NM), who answered questions and concerns about the programs from constituents. Idaho Alliance members celebrated the birthdays on the steps of the state capitol building in Boise.

In Illinois, Alliance members in Champaign called on **Congressman Rodney Davis** (R) to abandon his reckless agenda of undermining critical earned benefits. Missouri Alliance members celebrated the anniversaries with veterans at their annual bingo party in St. Louis. More cake cutting ceremonies happened in Tucson, Arizona with Rep. **Raul Grijalva**; Oakland, California; Reno, Nevada; Albuquerque, New Mexico; and New Haven, Connecticut this week.

“Elected officials should realize how important Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid are to the American people by the sheer number of activists willing to fight for it,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “We will have hosted 66 events by the time the summer is over.”



Andrea Wassner of the Social Security Administration (far left) joined AFGE members and Idaho Alliance members Jake Ellis and Joe Alcala in Boise on Saturday.

## Excessive Costs of Older Prescription Drugs Cost Medicaid Billions

An increase in the cost of older -- even generic -- drugs has cost Medicaid billions of dollars, according to an [analysis](#) by Kaiser Health News. The report shows that the rise in the cost of 313 name brand drugs cost Medicaid over \$3 billion more in 2016 compared to 2015. A rise in the price of generic and non-brand drugs cost the government \$258 million more in just a year.

The prices of thirty percent of prescription drugs have increased 100 percent or more in the past 5 years. The increase in Medicaid payments is shouldered by taxpayers, leaving states with less ability to fund other essential services. Generic drug prices can rise for a number of reasons, including a lack of an essential ingredient or as a result of companies choosing to end production when the profit margin is too low.

“Lowering prescription drug prices should be one of the core goals of every politician in America,” said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. “Rising drug costs hurt taxpayers who are paying for the outrageous profits of pharmaceutical corporations and the enormous salaries and bonuses of pharmaceutical executives.”

## Trump Administration Agrees to Continue Health Care Subsidies - For Now

Although the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is the law of the land, President Trump has suggested a number of changes that would make it less effective, including an end to some [key subsidies](#) that are used to reduce premiums and out-of-pocket costs for lower income Americans. The payments are estimated at \$7 billion for this year.

Trump has repeatedly stated that he is willing to let the health care law “implode” and have millions of people lose their health care in order to force lawmakers back to the negotiating table. The Administration did [give in](#) to pressures from Congress and Governors this week and said that the payments would make this month’s payment. However, the funds only cover one month, and there is no guarantee that payments will continue after that.

A new report by the **Congressional Budget Office** (CBO) found that ending these subsidies would be a disaster for the ACA’s insurance marketplace. According to the [report](#), ending them could raise premiums on some plans by as much as 20% as well as significantly increase the deficit.

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The Alliance for Retired Americans is a national organization that advocates for the rights and well-being of over 4.4 million retirees and their families’