

# FRIDAY ALERT



**Alliance for Retired Americans**

815 16th Street, NW, Fourth Floor • Washington, DC 20006 • 202.637.5399

[www.retiredamericans.org](http://www.retiredamericans.org) • [aracommunications@retiredamericans.org](mailto:aracommunications@retiredamericans.org)

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

April 1, 2016

---

## Supreme Court Split in *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association* is a Win for Labor

The U.S. Supreme Court [split 4-4](#) on Tuesday on a legal challenge to a vital source of funds for organized labor. The split affirmed a lower-court ruling that allowed a union to collect agency-fees from non-members for their work on their behalf.

“Tuesday’s U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association* left standing the sound, settled labor law that protects working people,” said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. “And seniors know that when you are compensated more fairly during your working years, you can save more and enjoy a better retirement.”

The *Friedrichs* decision is considered a victory for organized labor but it could be short lived if a conservative justice ends up replacing **Antonin Scalia**.

The next President would make a nomination to replace Scalia if Republicans in the U.S. Senate refuse to confirm **Merrick Garland**, President **Obama’s** nominee. That’s another reason why Alliance members will be fighting to ensure that the next President is committed to protecting the rights of working men and women.

## Seniors in Physically Demanding Jobs Rely More on Social Security

The Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR) recently [published](#) new findings about the demographics of older Americans working physically demanding jobs. Of workers 58 and older, 37% of males and 31% of females hold a job that is physically demanding. About 10 million people 58 and older in America have these types of jobs.

Many conservative politicians have called for raising the full Social Security retirement age. The CEPR report shows just how devastating that would be for older Americans. Raising the retirement age to 70 would mean millions of workers forced to continue in jobs that become increasingly risky as they get older.

These risks fall disproportionately on minorities and workers with lower levels of education. Physically demanding jobs often include standing for most of the day and lifting heavy objects. Sometimes it can also include unsafe work environments such as working around hazardous materials or laboring outdoors.

There is also a racial and economic component to the findings. More than half of older Latino workers are employed in jobs that are either physically demanding or in a dangerous environment. Meanwhile 68% of older workers in physically demanding jobs do not have a high school diploma or GED.

“Too many supporters of raising the retirement age assume that older workers are in office settings that have central heating and air conditioning and very few physical demands,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “To ignore this set of older workers is to be out of touch with the realities of the American workplace.”

### **In Canada Old Age Security Eligibility to be Lowered Back to 65 Again**

Canadian Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau’s** [first budget](#) will lower the “official” retirement age when people can begin receiving Old Age Security (OAS) benefits, the Canadian equivalent of Social Security, from age 67 to 65.

The change helps Trudeau fulfill a promise made during his election campaign last fall. The new Liberal government will undo the previous Conservative government decision to move the eligibility age to 67. It is an important step, Trudeau said, in “how we care for our most vulnerable in society.” The previous government said it would raise the eligibility age for the OAS by two years beginning in 2023 in order to protect the sustainability of the plan.

“Canada’s government is moving in the right direction on this issue,” said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. “Now the United States should follow suit and expand earned Social Security benefits in this country.”

### **Sign up for Midwest Regional Conference in Detroit Extended to April 8<sup>th</sup>**

The quadrennial [Midwest](#) Regional Conference will be held May 4-5, 2016 at the MGM Grand Hotel in Detroit, Michigan. Friday April 8, 2016 is the deadline to register. The hotel room rate in Detroit only applies to the dates of the conference. The [Northeast](#) Regional Conference will take place in Washington, DC, 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.



Alliance Regional Board Members with President Roach after being sworn-in at the at Southern Regional Conference in Orlando: Left to Right: **Kenny Goodfriend**, Boca Raton, FL - AFT; **Ken Pease**, Fairfax, VA - APWU; Robert Roach, Jr.; At-Large: **Sherri Dennis**, Columbia, MS – Workers United; **Jim Rivers**, Arlington, TX – CWA.

---

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.