

FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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Hillary Clinton Supports Letting People Over 50 Buy into Medicare

At a recent campaign stop in Virginia, **Hillary Clinton** announced a [proposal](#) that would let people over the age of 50 buy into Medicare.

Secretary Clinton's proposal would benefit older adults and employers, who pay the majority of health insurance costs for workers in the 50+ age category. Given that many areas of the United States are severely limited in the number of health insurance plans available to them, this would provide another option. An added benefit: since Medicare is more efficient at keeping healthcare costs down, including adults under 65 would help slow the growth of overall healthcare expenditures.

The new proposal will build on what the Affordable Care Act (ACA) has achieved so far, making up for the lack of a public option from the ACA.

"While the Affordable Care Act has helped many Americans obtain health insurance coverage for the first time, rising costs are still a major concern," said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. "We need a president with realistic and specific solutions."

Alliance Leaders Meet with Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation Management

Earlier this month, President Roach, Alliance Executive Director **Richard Fiesta**, and Alliance Legislative Representative **Eva Dominguez** met with several top leaders of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC), an independent agency that protects workers' and retirees' private sector defined benefit plans. The group discussed a wide range of issues related to protecting the retirement incomes of the more than 40 million American workers and retirees with private pensions.

The PBGC insures both single-employer and multi-employer pension plans. [Multiemployer plans](#) provide retirement security to more than 10 million people and their families and are portable: workers won't lose their benefits if they change jobs within the same industry. However, PBGC needs additional tools in order to protect multiemployer plans.

If a single-employer plan fails and PBGC becomes responsible for it, the agency directly pays benefits due to retirees (and future retirees) up to legal limits. PBGC does not directly pay the benefits of people in failed multiemployer plans. Instead, the agency provides financial assistance to the plans themselves, which continue to pay retirees.

In 2015, PBGC paid for monthly retirement benefits, up to a guaranteed maximum, for nearly 826,000 retirees in 4,800 single-employer and multiemployer pension plans that cannot pay

promised benefits. For more consumer info on PBGC, including the resources it provides, go to <http://www.pbgc.gov/about/factsheets/page/pbgc-facts.html>.

“We are grateful for the opportunity to work together with PBGC to protect retirees’ pensions and to ensure that defined benefit plans remain a key part of Americans’ retirement security,” said President Roach. “We need to make sure that the PBGC has the right tools now and in the future to ensure it meets its obligations and protects the pensions of millions of people.”

He added, “If more young workers had union jobs, the funding of the pension system would improve, and those workers could enjoy a secure retirement years later.”

U.S. Government Study Shows Why the TPP Should Not Be Passed

On Wednesday the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) issued its estimate of the economic impact of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

“The ITC Report proves that our concerns about the TPP were well founded,” said Mr. Fiesta in a [statement](#). “It admits that there will be fewer manufacturing jobs and assumes that workers who lose jobs would immediately find new ones. That has not been our experience with any previous global trade agreement, and we have no confidence that the TPP would be any different.”

The report did not take into account the high drug costs that are expected to result from the TPP. The TPP agreement would enable drug companies to fight the cost-control measures already used by Medicare and Medicaid and may prevent Congress from enacting additional cost-control measures in the future. More information about the link between the TPP and drug prices is available at <http://retiredamericans.org/trans-pacific-partnership-tpp>.

Oral Health America: Medicare Should Include Dental Benefits

On Thursday, Oral Health America (OHA) released a state-by-state report of the oral health of the country's 65+ population and the success or failure of states to address those needs. [The 2016 State of Decay](#) is the 3rd in a series of reports from OHA surveying the state of oral health for older Americans. The report shows that 59% of lower income older adults have no dental insurance and that older adults with dental insurance are 2.5 times more likely to visit the dentist on a regular basis. Sadly, 58% of lower income older adults have no plan in place to pay for dental care once retired.

The Alliance and OHA both advocate for financially viable Medicare Dental Benefits.

“Fifty-two percent of all older adults are either unsure or don’t know Medicare does not include dental coverage,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “We need to increase awareness so that we can expand Medicare to address this.”

Alliance Activists from the Northeast Elect Regional Board Members

At the Alliance's Northeast Regional Conference in Washington, D.C. this week, **Roger Boudreau** of Rhode Island; **Susan Flashman** of Maryland; and **Paul Schuh** of New York were elected to the Regional Board. **Jody Weinreich** of Pennsylvania was re-elected.



Left to right: Susan Flashman, Roger Boudreau, Jody Weinreich, and Robert Roach, Jr.

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.