

FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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Spanish version: www.alianzadejubilados.org

Donald Trump Elected President of the United States

Republican **Donald Trump** was elected to be the 45th President of the United States. He won key states including Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin that most pundits had predicted would back **Hillary Clinton**. The result is due in part to low turnout in certain areas.

The [U.S. Elections Project](#) estimates that 130.8 million Americans cast a ballot in 2016, out of 231 million eligible voters — meaning that just 56.5 percent of Americans voted. Sec. Clinton won the popular vote 47.7% - 47.5% according to the latest reported tallies.

CNN's exit polling found that Trump won among voters aged 65 and older by a [margin](#) of 53%-45%. Fifty-one percent of union households went for Clinton, compared to 49% for Trump.

Democrats were able to pick up Senate seats in Illinois and New Hampshire: Rep. **Tammy Duckworth** and Governor **Maggie Hassan** won their races. **Catherine Cortez Masto** will succeed **Harry Reid** as Senator from Nevada. Democrats also gained a net of 6 seats in the U.S. House as of Thursday's tally, and in Virginia voters defeated an initiative to include "right to work" language in the state constitution.

"We will continue to work with our friends on Capitol Hill to improve the lives of all Americans," said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. "We will remain true to our values in defending Social Security, Medicare, and pensions from attack."



Newly-elected U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL)

Millions Could Lose Health Care Coverage under Trump

The health care of millions of Americans is at risk following Tuesday's election. GOP politicians have tried to weaken Medicaid and repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA) since its inception. Repealing the ACA is on Trump's "first 100 days" agenda and the Republican House and Senate leadership are ready to act.

Health policy experts say that one of the first provisions that may be repealed is the 2014 expansion of Medicaid, which enabled more than 15.7 million Americans to receive health insurance. Also likely is a move to block grants, which would allow states to further cut benefits and eligibility.

There are currently 73 million Medicaid beneficiaries, including 4.6 million low-income [seniors](#).

The Untold Story in 2016: Voting Rights under Attack

Tuesday was the [first presidential election](#) following the 2013 U.S. Supreme Court *Shelby County v. Holder* decision that gutted the 1965 Voting Rights Act. For 50 years, the Voting Rights Act strove to protect minority and older voters.

Fourteen states enacted voting restrictions in 2016 including efforts to shorten early voting periods, reduce the number of polling locations, require state-issued IDs to vote. Although largely unnoticed by the media, these state law changes may have contributed to the lower turnout.

According to an article in *The Nation*, there were 868 fewer polling places in Arizona, Texas, and North Carolina, states with a long history of voting discrimination. In North Carolina, there were 158 fewer early polling places in 40 counties with large numbers of black voters and turnout was down 16 percent during the first week of early voting compared to 2012. In Wisconsin, a [new law required voters](#) to have a state issued ID to cast their ballot. According to a federal court 300,000 registered voters lacked such an ID and there were long lines at DMV offices to obtain them.

"Democrats won the popular vote despite unprecedented efforts to keep older Americans and working people from voting," said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. "Voter suppression tactics have a disproportionate impact on retirees and we will continue to fight for the right of all Americans to cast a vote."

Older Americans Working Longer, Claiming Social Security Later

Last week the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#) reported that retirees are working longer and waiting to collect their Social Security benefits. The Social Security Administration (SSA) found that fewer workers are claiming benefits when first eligible at age 62, instead waiting until the current full retirement age of 66. Some Americans are working even longer, to age 70 and higher.

The earlier that recipients claim their earned benefits, the smaller their monthly benefit will be. However, retirees tend to receive the same total benefits over the course of their retirement whether they claim them sooner or later.

The fraction of Social Security claims at age 62 has fallen by about a third over the past 15 years. From 1995 through 1999, almost half of eligible 62-year-olds claimed Social Security as soon as they could. By 2010-2015, less than one-third did. Some politicians who want to cut Social

Security are emboldened by older workers' choices, citing these trends as reasons to raise the retirement age.

“Raising the retirement age would cut retirement benefits for all Americans, burdening retirees who cannot work longer and who rely on Social Security for their retirement security,” warned **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance.

Happy Veterans Day

“I want to wish a Happy Veterans Day to the many Alliance members who are veterans,” said President Roach. “The Alliance will continue to work to ensure that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs fulfills the health care needs of our members who served.”

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.