

FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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Summer Anniversary Events Culminate as Social Security Turns 83

Alliance members continued to bring attention to the need to protect retirement security this week. They hosted 35 events marking the anniversaries of Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, bringing the total number of summer events to 121.

Alliance members invited local labor, political, and retiree groups to join in the effort to raise awareness of the importance of the programs and the latest threats to them. Seniors across Florida gave “Retiree Hero” awards to Reps. **Ted Deutch** (Coral Springs) and **Lois Frankel** (Boca Raton) for their 2017 pro-retiree voting records from the Alliance and commitment to older Americans. They also called out **Reps. Neal Dunn** and **Brian Mast** as “Retiree Zeroes” in [Tallahassee](#) and Port St. Lucie for their 0% pro-retiree scores on the Alliance Voting Record.



Anniversary celebration in Beaumont, Texas



Retirees celebrate with Rep. Tom O'Halleran in Phoenix

Reps. **Jeff Denham**, **Devin Nunes** and **Rodney Davis** were called out as “Retiree Zeroes” at events in Modesto and [Fresno](#), California and [Champaign](#), Illinois while Reps. **Nancy Pelosi**, **Lloyd Doggett** and **Ben Ray Lujan** were saluted as “Retiree Heroes” in San Francisco; Austin, Texas; and Corrales, New Mexico.

The Nevada Alliance hosted an anniversary event with the local Women of Washoe in Reno and National Alliance Vice President **Jo Etta Brown** swearing in new officers for the group. Retirees with the North Carolina Alliance in Fayetteville included a spokesperson from the Social Security Administration (SSA), while Alliance members in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, New York and Washington state celebrated by distributing information on Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid in their communities.



Rep. Ted Deutch is named a "Retiree Hero"



Florida Secretary Barbara DeVane (at podium) with other Alliance members in Tallahassee

"We continue to call on lawmakers to protect, strengthen and expand Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid for current and future retirees," said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. "These efforts are especially important given that the House budget for FY 2019 would cut Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security by over \$1.5 trillion combined over the next 10 years."



Richard Fiesta with Rep. Grijalva

Alliance Executive Director **Richard Fiesta** spoke at the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) National Council of SSA Field Operations Local Council 220, the national Social Security Employees Union, in Las Vegas, Nevada on Saturday. He also addressed attendees and presented **Rep. Raúl Grijalva** with a "Retiree Hero" award at the Arizona Alliance's celebration in Tucson on Tuesday. **Cecilia Valdez** was presented with the Grijalva Champion of Social Security award at the event.

Administration Nominates a Social Security Privatizer as a Trustee

The administration announced the nomination of **James Lockhart** to be one of the two public trustees for the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds. If confirmed by the Senate, he would serve for four years.

Lockhart served as the Deputy Commissioner of the Social Security Administration under President **George W. Bush**. During that time, he advocated for privatizing Social Security benefits into personal accounts, and suggested investing Social Security in the stock market during a [congressional hearing](#). He also served as the Executive Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) under President **Ronald Reagan**.

In addition to his long history of support for privatization of earned benefits, Lockhart has also proposed [raising the retirement age](#) and making cuts by slowing the growth of benefits. He is now co-chair of the Bipartisan Policy Center, which promoted “back door privatization” in the form of benefit cuts and expanding subsidies for private savings. The commission’s latest [report](#) suggests creating retirement savings accounts through a third-party for employers who don’t want to offer pension plans, raising the age of eligibility for receiving benefits, and shifting responsibility from the government and employers to individuals.

“It is crucial that we fight to protect Social Security and its beneficiaries,” said **Joseph Peters Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “James Lockhart’s nomination is another step in the misguided strategy by many of our leaders to raise the Social Security retirement age, privatize it and take away earned benefits for which retirees worked their entire lives.”

New Documents Show Federal “Election Integrity Commission” was Sham

President Donald Trump’s Election Integrity Commission, formed to investigate voter fraud, had [pre-determined the findings of that report](#), according to documents made public last Friday.

After a series of lawsuits, the commission was disbanded. Despite this, one of the commission’s members, Maine Secretary of State **Matthew Dunlap**, feared he was being excluded from the commission’s work, which he suspected was being conducted entirely by commission chairman and Kansas Secretary of State **Kris Kobach**. Dunlap sued to force Kobach to turn over commission materials. Dunlap won, and on Friday, he released those records to the public.

The records show that prior to the beginning of the investigation, Kobach and others had created a draft of the final report complete with several different sub-headings on voter fraud, with conclusions listed and evidence to be filled in later. They also show that the commission, which requested the personal information of every voter in the country over the objections of several secretaries of state, intended to seek confidential information from jury rolls from clerks of courts around the country. Kobach further intended to promote his Crosscheck program, which independent experts have found to be wrong in [99% of purported matches](#).

“A rigged investigation is just another in a long line of attempts to ‘fix’ a non-existent problem at the cost of voters’ rights,” said Executive Director Fiesta. “This investigation clearly hoped to make it more difficult for thousands of seniors and people of color to vote. We must remain vigilant about stopping attempts to purge lawful voters from the rolls prior to the midterm elections in November.”

To confirm your voter registration, contact your local board of elections or visit www.vote.org. If you have recently moved or changed an address, you must contact your local board of elections to update your information. It is especially important to confirm your registration if you have not voted within recent election cycles. Vote.org can provide specific information on your polling location, absentee ballots and voting, and set up election reminders. For those who have not registered to vote, you can do so online or by contacting your local board of elections.

