

# 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)

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

August 23, 2019

## Wyoming Senator: Trump Talked About Cutting Social Security and Medicare if Re-elected

Senator **John Barasso** (WY) [told the media](#) this week that Republicans in Congress are encouraging the president to try to cut earned retirement benefits and that Trump has “talked about it being a second term project.” Barasso also said that Trump will not admit to the plan publicly during the upcoming presidential campaign.

Barasso says cuts to Social Security and Medicare are needed to lower the deficit. This week *The New York Times* [reported that](#) the deficit is increasing more quickly than expected because of the 2017 tax cuts and will exceed \$1 trillion by 2020.

Other lawmakers who are close to the president, including Rep. **Matt Gaetz** (FL) and Rep. **Mark Meadows** (NC), last month [suggested that](#) “entitlement reform” -- i.e. Social Security and Medicare cuts -- is necessary to reduce the deficit.

“President Trump won’t admit it publicly, but his friends can’t wait to help him cut the health and retirement benefits we worked a lifetime to earn. The retirement security for millions of Americans are in their sights. We cannot allow this to happen,” said **Robert Roach Jr.**, President of the Alliance. “Retirees should not have to pay the price for tax cuts which only benefited the wealthy.”

## Alliance Members and Allies Call on Congress to Put “People Over Pharma Profits”

On August 20th state Alliance members participated in a “People Over Pharma Profits” Day of Action to urge their elected officials to take strong action to lower prescription drug prices. The Alliance and other organizations organized dozens of actions in 34 states.



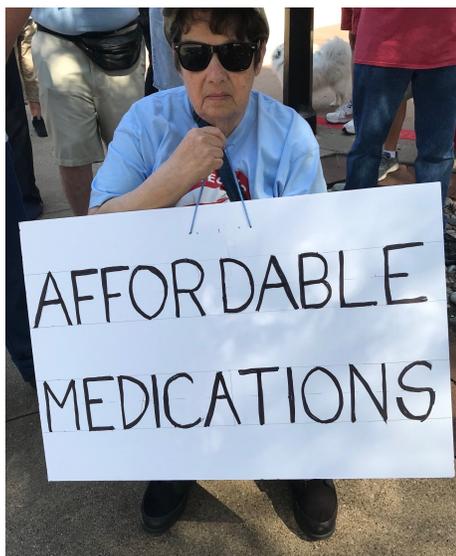
Rep. **Gwen Moore** (center) stands with WI Alliance Executive Director **Karen Royster** (left) and Vice President **Marlene Ott** (right)



WSARA President **Jackie Boschok** speaks at rally in Seattle.

At each Alliance action, members delivered a mock “prescription to lower drug prices” to their senators’ and representatives’ local offices. The prescription calls for allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices; removing elements of the United States Mexico Canada (USMCA) trade agreement that locks in high drug prices; allowing consumers to purchase lower-priced drugs from countries with safe drug supplies; and changing regulations to get lower-priced generics to market faster.

“It is outrageous that nearly 1 in 4 older Americans say they did not fill a prescription their doctor prescribed in the last year because they could not afford it,” said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. “Americans pay the highest prices for prescription drugs in the world. Our elected officials have a duty to bring down drug prices and put an end to pharmaceutical corporation price gouging.”



Alliance member **Susan Cooper** at a day of action event in Texas.

The Alliance “prescriptions” were delivered to 21 members of Congress or their offices including: **Sen. Richard Blumenthal** (CT), **Sen. John Cornyn** (TX), **Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto** (NV), **Sen. Lisa Murkowski** (AK), **Sen. Ron Johnson** (WI), **Sen. Jacky Rosen** (NV), **Sen. Tom Tillis** (NC), **House Speaker Nancy Pelosi** (CA), Rep. **Don Bacon** (NE), Rep. **Rodney Davis** (IL), Rep. **Lloyd Doggett** (TX), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (NM), Rep. **Stephanie Murphy** (FL), Rep. **Mike Simpson** (ID), Rep. **Lori Trahan** (MA), Rep. **Susan Wild** (PA) and Rep. **Joe Wilson** (SC).

In addition, Alliance activists from every state joined the Day of Action and sent more than 15,000 letters to their senators and representatives urging them to put lower drug prices at the top of the legislative agenda when they return to Washington in September.

## **Pharmaceutical Corporation Announces New \$59,000 Arthritis Biologic**

Pharmaceutical corporation AbbVie has released a rheumatoid arthritis treatment -- Rinvoq -- which will cost \$59,000 per year.

The corporation received FDA approval for Rinvoq last week. AbbVie claims it is more effective than its other high-priced arthritis biologic treatment, Humira, which costs \$60,000 per year. Rinvoq will be available to consumers later this month.

“Our system is broken. Few seniors can afford to pay \$60,000 a year for treatment of one condition. But Rinvoq and Humira are the tip of the iceberg,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Alliance Secretary-Treasurer. “The prices of prescription drugs have jumped [10.5 percent](#) -- five times the rate of inflation -- since January. We must continue to demand Congress rein in the pharmaceutical corporations.”

## Hearing Aids Aren't Just For Hearing Anymore

Hearing aids are a simple solution to a common and harmful problem -- but that is not their only benefit. Hearing aid technology has evolved substantially over the years and continues to advance. Some models even include fall protection, detection and alert capability as well as heart rate measurement.

The Alliance, with our partner HEAR In America, is working to make this treatment more easily available and less expensive for you and your extended family. We encourage you to consider whether you or anyone in your extended family should have their hearing checked. If so, contact Hear In America today to find out if hearing aids would benefit you. For more information or to register for a FREE screening and evaluation, call 1-800-286-6149 or click here:

[www.hearinamerica.com/ara](http://www.hearinamerica.com/ara).

Hearing aids are now considered necessary medical treatment rather than the luxury they once were. Falling is a major health issue for retirees. According to the National Alliance for Caregivers, more than 65 million people (29 percent of the U.S. population) currently provide care for a disabled, chronically ill or an aged friend or family member. And according to the National Council on Aging, every 11 seconds an older adult is seen in an emergency department for a fall-related injury. One in every three older Americans – about 12 million – fall every year.

---

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.