



FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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State of the Union: Retiree Issue Falsehoods

President **Trump** mentioned several retiree issues during his State of the Union address Tuesday night, and what he said was inaccurate.

- The president claimed he won't cut Social Security and Medicare, but he already has.
- He said drug prices are lower, but each year they have increased. In 2020 [the average increase is 5%](#).
- He claimed people with pre-existing health conditions have been protected.

To separate fact from fiction, download a copy of the Alliance's [FACT CHECK](#).

"President Trump wants us to believe he has protected Social Security and Medicare, lowered drug prices, and looked out for those with pre-existing conditions, but the facts say otherwise," said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. "We urge retirees to make sure their friends and neighbors have the right information about the most important issues to them."

House Passes PRO Act in Major Move to Strengthen Unions

On Thursday, the U.S. House of Representatives [passed the Protect the Right to Organize Act](#), a comprehensive package protecting workers' right to organize a union. Commonly referred to as the PRO Act, the bill passed with bipartisan support [224-194](#).

The right to organize is critical to protect workers' rights and strengthen retirement security. The bill would make it easier for workers to certify unions, eliminate state right-to-work laws, and provide strong protections against employer retaliation, [among other important measures](#).

Workers with union contracts earn higher wages in their working years, boosting their Social Security benefits in retirement. They are also far more likely to have employer-provided health insurance and retirement benefits, including a pension.

"This legislation is a powerful boost as we battle 'Right to Work' efforts that weaken unions and threaten our right to a dignified retirement after a lifetime of hard work," said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. "Now we need the Senate to follow suit and the president to sign the PRO Act into law."

Medical Journal: Medicare Would Save Billions a Year Just by Negotiating Insulin Prices

New research confirms that not allowing Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices is hurting beneficiaries and taxpayers. In fact, Senate Majority Leader **Mitch McConnell's** refusal to bring up for a vote a bill requiring the Department of Health and Human Services to negotiate prices is costing the government [at least \\$4 billion each year](#).



The research was published in the [JAMA Internal Medicine](#), a medical journal published by the American Medical Association, this month. Researchers calculated that in 2017 Medicare Part D spent \$7.8 billion (after rebates) on 31 different types of insulin, which is used to treat diabetes. They then compared the prices paid to the prices negotiated by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). If Medicare had used the

same prices and list of approved drugs as the VA, it would have saved \$4.4 billion in just one year.

H.R. 3, the Lower Drug Costs Now Act passed by the House in December, would require Medicare to negotiate lower prices for 250 drugs, including insulin. Not only would seniors and the government save money, annual out of pocket drug spending for Medicare would be capped at \$2,000, and traditional Medicare would include hearing, dental and vision benefits. Majority Leader McConnell and President Trump say they will not support the bill.

“How much more evidence do we need?” asked **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “The Senate needs to pass H.R. 3 now.”

Jo Etta Brown Appointed Chair of Nevada Commission for Women



Jo Etta Brown

Governor Steve Sisolak has appointed Alliance Executive Vice President **Jo Etta Brown** as Chair of the Nevada Commission for Women. Ms. Brown has served on the commission since 2016. The commission works to study the changing and developing roles of women in society and recommend proposed legislation.

“It is an honor, and I think of my grandmother who was a suffragette,” said Vice President Brown. “2020 marks 100 years since women’s suffrage. I look forward to marking the anniversary by honoring my grandmother’s memory and activism through my work with the commission.”

Register Now for One of the Alliance’s Four Regional Conferences

The Alliance will hold its quadrennial regional conferences in the following cities:

- Midwest Regional Conference - April 27 - 28, 2020 in Detroit, Michigan
- Western Regional Conference - May 12 - 13, 2020 in Las Vegas, Nevada
- Northeast Regional Conference - May 28 - 29, 2020 in Washington, DC
- Southern Regional Conference- June 5 - 6, 2020 in Orlando, Florida

At each conference, attendees will elect four regional board members and prepare for the upcoming 2020 elections. [Additional information and registration are here.](#) Questions? contact **Joni Jones** at either ARAConference@retiredamericans.org, jjones@retiredamericans.org or 888-373-6497.

Hear in America...and Everywhere Else!

People with hearing loss wait 5 to 7 years on average before seeking a professional diagnosis and treatment. They dismiss the concerns of their friends and coworkers, denying the problem or worrying about the cost of hearing aids.



The Alliance can help you or a family member find affordable hearing aids. You can take advantage of discounts up to 70% off the Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price on hearing aids purchased through the Alliance's partnership with [Hear In America](#).

When you call **Hear In America**, an agent will put you in touch with qualified providers who can help you determine if hearing aids are right for you or a family member. The benefits of hearing aids are wide-ranging. Studies show they facilitate more effective communications, lead to a better social life, better overall physical health, and even improved cognitive ability and emotional well-being.

Contact **Hear In America** to arrange for a FREE hearing screening and evaluation today to find out if hearing aids would benefit you. For more information or to register, call 1-800-286-6149 or [register online](#).