



# FRIDAY ALERT

 **Alliance for Retired Americans**  
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## Pharmaceutical Corporation Doubles Price of Promising Coronavirus Treatment

Rising Pharmaceuticals, a U.S.-based drug corporation, [raised the price of a drug](#) being used to treat coronavirus in China and other countries by 97% in January of this year as the spread of the virus accelerated.

The drug, Chloroquine, has been on the market for 20 years and is approved to treat malaria. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is currently testing Chloroquine as a treatment for Coronavirus, and President Trump mentioned it in Thursday's daily White House briefing as a potential treatment option.

After public pressure, Rising has promised to lower the price of the drug back to its pre-outbreak price. However, this is not the first time Rising Pharmaceuticals has come under fire for its business practices. The corporation was found to have engaged in price fixing in 2019 and was required to pay \$3 million in fines and restitution as part of a lawsuit in Pennsylvania.

"It is absolutely outrageous that Rising Pharmaceuticals would seek to maximize its profits during a global health crisis," said Alliance Executive Director **Richard Fiesta**. "Congress must take action to stop pharmaceutical corporations from engaging in price gouging and profiteering."

## Senator Casey Introduces Bill to Protect Older Americans From Coronavirus

Senator **Bob Casey** (PA), ranking member of the Senate Aging Committee, has introduced [S. 3544, The Coronavirus Relief for Seniors and People With Disabilities Act](#) this week. Rep. **Debbie Dingell** (MI) introduced H.R. 6305, the House version of the bill, on Thursday.

If passed, the bill would:

- Improve infection control in nursing homes;
- Ensure low-income seniors can afford to seek treatment by reducing the cost of their Medicare Part B premiums and cost sharing;
- Expand home care so more seniors and disabled individuals can get care at home rather than a nursing home; and
- Help community providers offer 3 meals a day, 7 days a week to seniors in their homes during the emergency by increasing funding.

“The Coronavirus is especially devastating for older Americans, both physically and financially,” said Alliance President **Robert Roach, Jr.** “The provisions in Senator Casey’s bill are urgently needed and long overdue. We are fighting to make Congress include this bill in the next stimulus package.”

TAKE ACTION: [Send a message to your Senator demanding that S.3544 is included in the next stimulus package.](#)

## Coronavirus Pandemic Puts Spotlight on Importance of Absentee Voting



Amid public health concerns about in-person voting, states from Connecticut to Hawaii have decided to postpone their 2020 primary elections. In most cases the deadline for requesting an absentee ballot has also been extended and voters can request a ballot online from the Secretary of State’s website in most states.

“While we hope that the public health crisis will be resolved by the November elections, it isn’t too soon to make your plan to vote,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**,

Alliance Secretary-Treasurer. “I encourage you to first confirm that you are registered to vote at [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org), and then request an absentee ballot if your state allows no-excuse absentee voting.”

## Community Organizations and Retailers Make Changes to Protect and Support Older Americans

The coronavirus is particularly dangerous to older people who are at a higher risk of infection. In response, several retailers have made changes to make it easier for older Americans to get the food and supplies they need to stay in their homes.

This week Stop and Shop, Safeway, Giant and other retailers announced new “senior shopping hours,” [designated times for older people to shop when stores are less crowded and hectic.](#) Health officials however, continue to advise that whenever you are out of your home you should stay more than 6 feet away from other shoppers, and wash your hands thoroughly or use hand sanitizer before and after entering a store.



Food banks and food delivery services for homebound seniors or people with disabilities, such as Meals on Wheels, continue to operate in most communities. To find a food bank near you visit [www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org). Local Area Aging Agencies can answer questions about meal delivery and other home based supports in your community.

## Alliance Midwest and Western Regional Meetings Postponed

In light of the CDC discouraging large gatherings and non-essential travel to help contain the spread of coronavirus, the Alliance has postponed its Midwest (Detroit, April 27-28) and Western (Las Vegas, May 12-13) regional meetings.

The Alliance will continue to evaluate the situation and follow all national, state and local guidelines regarding meetings and travel. New dates will be set when it is deemed safe to schedule meetings.

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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.