



FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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Spanish version: www.alianzadejubilados.org

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The Alliance wishes President Trump and Melania Trump a speedy recovery from the coronavirus. No one should have to suffer from this horrible disease. Please take precautions, wear a mask and practice social distancing.

Voting Rights Opponents Appeal to U.S. Supreme Court

The Pennsylvania Alliance's recent voting rights victory is being [appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court](#) by Pennsylvania Republican state legislative leaders and the Republican National Committee. The Supreme Court has not yet said whether it would accept the case.



“Voting rights opponents are not giving up on their efforts to make it harder to vote in this election,” said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. “We committed to this fight. All seniors should be able to cast a ballot that will actually be counted without putting their health at risk.”

The Republicans are objecting to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruling that it is legal to both use drop boxes for ballot returns in Pennsylvania and require ballots that are postmarked by Election Day but arrive up to 3 days after the election to be counted.

A record number of citizens have already requested absentee ballots, significantly increasing the workloads of county election board staff members, who are currently under stay-at-home orders. Meanwhile, the U.S. Postal Service, which will be relied on to deliver more than a million anticipated ballots, is under severe financial and operational pressure, and may be unable to deliver all voters' ballots in a timely manner.

Biden Releases Plan to Improve Nursing Home Care

Joe Biden's presidential campaign on Thursday [unveiled a plan](#) to increase safety, oversight, and transparency in nursing homes and other long term care facilities.

The plan proposes that infectious disease specialists be at every location; increases pay and benefits for nursing home workers; and requires more communication between operators and residents, particularly during a crisis like the coronavirus crisis.

“The Covid-19 crisis has brought problems in nursing homes to the public’s attention and made improvements an immediate necessity,” said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. “We applaud the Biden campaign for taking steps to address these issues quickly in a **Biden-Harris** administration in a few months.”

Postal Employees Fight Measures to Slow the Mail

The Washington Post reported this week that many U.S. Postal Service (USPS) employees are quietly pushing back on so-called cost cutting measures implemented by Postmaster General **Louis DeJoy** that are causing significant mail delivery delays.



The workers view DeJoy’s actions as [violating the spirit, if not the letter, of the law](#) and have taken steps to make sure that mail continues to move efficiently. For example mechanics in New York drew out the dismantling and removal of mail-sorting machines for so long that their supervisor gave up on the order. In Ohio, postal clerks culled prescriptions and benefit checks from bins of stalled mail to make sure they did not remain undelivered.

Logun Buckley, organizer for the Iowa Alliance, speaks at a rally against changes, including removal of a sorting machine, at the Post Office in Waterloo, Iowa, Saturday, Aug. 22, 2020.

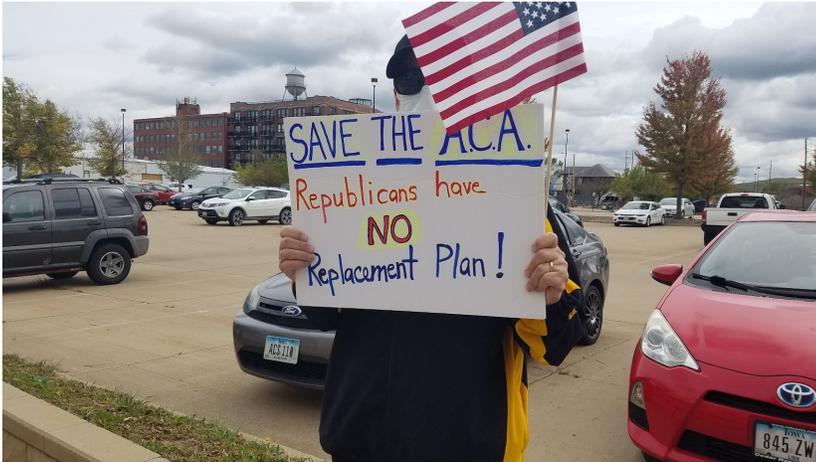
(photo credit: Brandon Pollock, *The Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier*)

Postmaster General **Louis DeJoy** is fighting a court order to halt his actions, telling a judge that reinstating overtime to ensure timely delivery of mail-in ballots for the November 3rd election could be abused by workers.

“DeJoy’s claim is ridiculous, since employees must have overtime approved by a supervisor,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “It is baseless and it is offensive to the hardworking postal employees.”

Additionally, DeJoy failed to ensure that at least 1.8 million addresses in its database were updated, a routine action the Postal Service takes several times a year. *TIME* described the lapse as [“highly unusual.”](#) An election official in one of the affected states said that the outage resulted in a roughly 10-day delay in processing its mail ballot distribution.

Judge Amy Coney Barrett is Latest Threat to the Affordable Care Act



Iowa Alliance members joined Progress Iowa and other allies to fight for the ACA in Cedar Rapids this week.

The future of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) has [come into serious question](#) with President **Trump**'s nomination of **Amy Coney Barrett** for Supreme Court Justice to succeed **Ruth Bader Ginsburg**.

On November 10th, the Supreme Court will hear the case *Texas v. United States* concerning the ACA. The lawsuit, originally brought by Republican attorneys general in 2018, argues that the ACA is

unconstitutional, and many legal analysts think Barrett is likely to strike it down if her nomination is confirmed.

“In case anyone needed one more reminder of what is at stake in the upcoming elections, the future of the ACA and coverage for 20 million people is at risk,” said Executive Director Fiesta. “If the ACA is struck down, we will lose our coverage for preexisting conditions, forfeit free preventive care and re-open the doughnut hole prescription drug coverage gap.”

Vote Early - and Beware “Naked Ballots”

In addition to the ruling in the Pennsylvania Alliance’s case, the state Supreme Court in Pennsylvania ruled in mid-September that “[naked ballots](#),” mail ballots arriving without inner secrecy envelopes, must be thrown out. That is because Pennsylvania uses a two-envelope mail ballot system: a completed ballot goes into a “secrecy envelope” that has no identifying information before going into a larger mailing envelope that the voter signs.

“This is another reason to double check the rules in your state and formulate a plan in advance for how you will vote,” said **President Roach**. “Go to www.vote.org to familiarize yourself with the process and minimize the chances that your ballot will be questioned or thrown out on a technicality.”

The next states to kick off early voting in-person are the following:

- Oct. 2 - Montana
- Oct. 5 - California, Iowa, Maine, Nebraska
- Oct. 6 - Indiana, New Mexico, Ohio
- Oct. 7 - Arizona