



FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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For the People Act Advances in the U.S. Senate

The Senate Rules Committee has advanced S1, the For the People Act, despite a contentious hearing that produced a [deadlocked 9-9 vote](#) along party lines. Under Senate rules, Majority Leader Chuck Schumer can advance the bill to the Senate floor.



The bill will protect Americans' right to vote and ensure that elections are safe and accessible for all. It will also help combat voter suppression efforts. Several state legislatures have already introduced more than 300 anti-voter bills this year. This is particularly harmful for seniors, who [voted by mail in large numbers](#) in the 2020 election.

Senator Amy Klobuchar speaks during the Senate Rules Committee Hearing on S1.

“Older Americans take voting seriously,” said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance for Retired Americans. “Lawmakers should be making it easier for everyone to cast their ballots instead of putting up unnecessary barriers and making it more difficult to vote.”

Several provisions of the bill are quite popular with the American public, according to a [Pew Research Poll](#). But it will be difficult for supporters to pass S1 in the Senate despite its popularity. Currently, there are no Republican Senators who are co-sponsoring the bill.

Congress Takes Significant Steps to Strengthen the Postal Service

The U.S. Senate [confirmed two of President Biden's](#) nominees to the U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors this week: **Ron Stroman**, a former deputy postmaster general, and **Amber McReynolds**, chief executive of the National Vote at Home Institute. A third nominee, former American Postal Workers Union (APWU) General Counsel **Anton Hajjar**, is still awaiting confirmation.

On Thursday the House Committee on Oversight and Reform passed the 2021 Postal Reform Act, with bipartisan support. The bill still must be passed by the full House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.

APWU President **Mark Dimondstein** released a [statement](#) that said the bill “will place USPS on the path toward financial stability by taking the critical step of repealing the unfair pre-funding mandate, adding much-needed transparency to the Postal Service, and enacting prospective Medicare integration. The pre-funding mandate requires USPS to fully pre-fund retirement health benefits for future postal workers who have not even been born yet. This burden—which no other organization is forced to bear—is responsible for 84 percent of the Postal Service’s net losses since 2007.”

“Older Americans rely on the Post Office to deliver their prescription drugs and other critical mail,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “The activism of thousands of Alliance members who attended demonstrations and wrote to their members of Congress helped make this happen. We need to keep the pressure on until this bill is signed by President Biden.”

CFPB Offers Financial Resources for Seniors

To mark Older Americans Month, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) has published four free resource guides on [financial caregivers](#), the [Social Security Advance Designation](#), [planning for diminished capacity and illness](#), and [managing someone else's money](#).

It can be more complicated for older adults to maintain their financial well-being, and they may be more vulnerable to fraud and abuse. A [CFPB analysis showed](#) that the number of people reporting elder financial exploitation quadrupled between 2013 and 2017, with victims losing an average of \$34,200.

These CFPB guides can help older Americans take control of their finances by giving them the power to plan for the future. They also provide guidance for loved ones so they know how to get involved and protect seniors from fraud.

“It is important for older adults to have access to helpful information that will help them navigate the financial world as they age,” said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. “We urge retirees to consult trusted sources like the CFPB for guidance when they need it.”

KHN: Trouble Managing Money May Be an Early Sign of Dementia

by Michele Andrews, *Kaiser Health News*

After Maria Turner’s minivan was totaled in an accident a dozen years ago, she grew impatient waiting for the insurance company to process the claim. One night, she saw a red pickup truck on eBay for \$20,000. She thought it was just what she needed. She clicked “buy it now” and went to bed. The next morning, she got an email about arranging delivery. Only then did she remember what she’d done.

Making such a big purchase with no forethought and then forgetting about it was completely out of character for Turner, then a critical care nurse in Greenville, South Carolina. Although she was able to back out of the deal without financial consequences, the experience scared her.

“I made a joke out of it, but it really disturbed me,” Turner said.

It didn’t stop her, though. She shopped impulsively online with her credit card, buying dozens of pairs of shoes, hospital scrubs and garden gnomes. When boxes arrived, she didn’t remember ordering them.

Six years passed before Turner, now 53, got a medical explanation for her spending binges, headaches and memory lapses: Doctors told her that imaging of her brain showed all the hallmarks of chronic traumatic encephalopathy. CTE is a degenerative brain disease that in Turner’s case may be linked to the many concussions she suffered as a competitive horseback rider in her youth. Her doctors now also see evidence of Alzheimer’s disease and frontotemporal dementia, which affects the frontal and temporal lobes of the brain. These may have roots in her CTE.

Turner’s money troubles aren’t unusual among people who are beginning to experience cognitive declines. Long before they receive a dementia diagnosis, many people start losing their ability to manage their finances and make sound decisions as their memory, organizational skills and self-control falter, studies show. As people fall behind on their bills or make unwise purchases and investments, their bank balances and credit rating may take a hit.

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