



FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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Retirees Mourn the Death of AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka

The 4.4 million members of the Alliance for Retired Americans are united in mourning the untimely death of **Richard Trumka**, President of the AFL-CIO. He was 72.



President Trumka at the Alliance's July, 2015 Legislative Conference in Washington, DC

“Richard Trumka was a legendary labor leader and he was also my friend. Working people had no more committed advocate, and he will be greatly missed but never forgotten,” said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. “He was our Alliance founding Secretary-Treasurer and he helped build a retiree movement that will be an important part of his legacy. He also established a Retirement Security Working Group at the AFL-CIO devoted to protecting the pensions that have been promised to millions of workers and retirees across the country. He fought to make sure all workers have a voice on the job, a fair wage and a secure retirement -- a mission we will continue to fulfill in his memory.”

“Richard Trumka had a special connection to the Alliance for Retired Americans and a deep commitment to retirement security for all,” said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. “As a fellow western Pennsylvanian I first met President Trumka when he was a leader of the United Mine Workers of America, working tirelessly to make sure workers received the pension, health care and Social Security benefits they have earned. He inspired us all each and every day. We will miss him deeply.”

The Alliance sends its heartfelt condolences to his family, friends and all who worked with him over his many years of service to workers everywhere.

Alliance Poll: Seniors Would Cross Party Lines to Vote for Candidates Who Support Medicare Drug Price Negotiation

More than 70 percent of voters over age 65 say they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who favors allowing Medicare to negotiate with drug corporations to lower prescription drug prices, including strong majorities across party lines, according to a [poll](#) released Tuesday by the Alliance.

An 87% majority of voters over age 65 favor allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices, including 48% who are strongly in favor. Among Democratic seniors, 89% are in favor, as are 87% of Republican seniors and 81% of independent seniors. Voters over the age of 65 in rural areas (84%) favor the proposal with strong intensity as well. The poll was conducted by Lake Research Partners.

“The findings have major implications for both Democrats and Republicans in the 2022 midterm elections,” said Executive Director Fiesta. “Americans pay the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs, and they want lawmakers to take action now to lower the amount they pay at the pharmacy counter. This poll confirms that high drug prices are a top-of-mind issue for seniors when making voting decisions.”

Voters over the age of 65 are the most consistent voters, especially in midterm elections. In both 2020 and 2018 more than a quarter of all votes cast were by people over the age of 65. In the 2018 midterm elections, 66% of all registered seniors turned out to vote, and in 2020 senior turnout was 74.5%, the highest percentages of any age group.

“The 2022 midterm electorate will have an outsized senior vote. This poll highlights a risk and an opportunity for elected officials and candidates,” Fiesta continued. “Even in today’s polarized political environment, a significant percentage of senior voters of both parties would cross party lines over this issue.”

Read the full Alliance statement [here](#).

Alliance Members Continue to Commemorate Medicare, Social Security Anniversaries

U.S. Senate Majority Leader **Chuck Schumer** and Sen. **Kirsten Gillibrand** (NY) both participated in a [Celebration of Progress](#), recognizing the anniversaries of the enactment of Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and the Americans with Disabilities Act last Friday, July 30, on Medicare and Medicaid’s actual 56th anniversary. The program was presented by NYSARA and Citizens Action, the Health Foundation of Western and Central New York, Medicaid Matters New York, Metro New York Health Care for All, the New York Association for Independent Living and the NY Statewide Senior Action Council.

NYSARA President **Barry Kaufmann** presented a segment on the importance of keeping the Social Security system strong by fighting against the newest attack on Social Security and Medicare, the Trust Act. Social Security’s official 86th birthday will take place on August 14.

The Florida Alliance (FLARA) continued hosting Medicare and Medicaid anniversary events on Monday, with Southern Florida Representatives **Ted Deutch**, **Lois Frankel** and **Debbie Wasserman Schultz** joining members virtually. All three members of Congress received the Retiree Hero Award for their 100% pro-retiree scores in the Alliance's 2020 Congressional Voting Record.

Later on Monday at a second anniversary event, FLARA honored central Florida Reps. **Val Demings** and **Darren Soto** with the Alliance for Retired Americans' Retiree Hero Award for their perfect 100% pro-retiree scores in the Alliance's 2020 Voting Record.



Rep. Colin Allred gave remarks to the Texas Alliance on Wednesday this week.

In Texas, Rep. **Colin Allred** sent [videotaped remarks](#) for a Texas Alliance virtual Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid event on Wednesday. District Director **Renee Edwards** spoke on behalf of Rep. **Eddie Bernice Johnson** and District Director **Anne Hagan** represented Congressman **Marc Veasey**.

“Thank you to everyone who helped deliver the message that we must expand Social Security, not cut it, and allow Medicare to negotiate lower prescription drug prices so we can strengthen and expand it. We can use the drug savings to provide all beneficiaries with guaranteed dental, hearing and vision care under Medicare,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance.

KHN: ‘Wisdom and Fear’ Lead 90% of U.S. Seniors to Covid Vaccines

By Phil Galewitz, *Kaiser Health News*

Amid the latest surge in covid-19 cases and hospitalizations, the United States on Tuesday hit a milestone that some thought was unattainable: 90% of people 65 and older are at least partly vaccinated against the disease.

That's more than [49 million seniors](#) vaccinated. Overall, 70% of adults have been inoculated, at least partly, and nearly 68% of people over 12.

“This really shows our elders are wiser than the rest of us,” said Dr. David Wohl, professor of medicine in the division of infectious diseases and director of the vaccine clinics at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine.

Wohl said political leanings that have skewed vaccination rates across the country have had much less of an impact on older adults. “The threat of covid-19 is so real for those 65 and over that it transcends many of the other issues that are complicating vaccination rates,” he said. “Wisdom and fear have really led to impressive immunization rates.”

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