



Alliance for Retired Americans

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President Shuler, Secretary-Treasurer Redmond Bring Bold Vision For Labor Expansion

History was made at the AFL-CIO Convention in Philadelphia on Sunday as **Liz Shuler** was elected AFL-CIO President and **Fred Redmond** was elected Secretary-Treasurer. Ms. Shuler is the first woman to be elected federation president, and Mr. Redmond is the first black Secretary-Treasurer in AFL-CIO history.



President Shuler with Secretary-Treasurer Redmond

From 2009 until 2021, President Shuler served as the AFL-CIO's Secretary-Treasurer, and she has also served as Executive Vice President of the Alliance for Retired Americans. She began her labor career as an organizer, working to unionize clerical workers at Portland General Electric in Oregon. She worked her way up through the ranks at the IBEW in her capacity as a lobbyist and chief of staff to the international president.

Secretary-Treasurer Redmond was formerly the International Vice President for

Human Affairs for the United Steelworkers (USW) and has used his platform as a union leader to fight for civil rights and combat economic inequality throughout his career.

The two leaders shared their vision for the federation in their acceptance speeches, calling for action in organizing and pushing the labor movement forward past the COVID-19 pandemic. They stressed the importance of inclusivity in expanding the scope of the AFL-CIO, and President Shuler [announced](#) the AFL-CIO's goal of organizing and activating 1 million workers throughout all 50 states to participate in the electoral process.

Alliance President **Robert Roach, Jr.** applauded the enthusiasm. "I think we're addressing key issues with inclusivity and the mobilization of voters, and I'm very optimistic about the direction of the federation," he said. "I know that President Shuler and Secretary-Treasurer Redmond will put union retirees' interests at the forefront of their agenda."

Biden Speaks about Social Security and Medicare at Philadelphia AFL-CIO Convention

Speaking before the [AFL-CIO convention](#) in Philadelphia on Tuesday, President **Joe Biden** discussed Social Security and Medicare as he provided an overview for what is at stake in the 2022 midterm elections.

He also offered a scathing review of Sen. **Rick Scott's** (FL) proposed economic plan, criticizing the extreme measures of the National Republican Senatorial Committee Chairman's proposal that include [major cuts](#) and potential elimination of Social Security and Medicare.

Other plans similar to Sen. Scott's proposals have also been prevalent within the Republican Party. [Sen. Lindsey Graham \(SC\)](#) has recently reiterated his support for uprooting Medicare and Social Security altogether through "entitlement reform," and Senate Minority Leader [Mitch McConnell](#) (KY) and Sen. [Marco Rubio](#) (FL) have supported cutting earned benefits.

President Biden emphasized the importance of Medicare in lowering health care costs in his [address](#), promising to empower the program to negotiate lower drug prices with pharmaceutical corporations and to ensure diabetes patients pay no more than \$35 a month for insulin.

Biden also touted the record number of jobs created since he was elected president, and again called on Congress to pass the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act. The PRO Act would stiffen penalties for employers who violate workers' rights and strengthen protections for employees against retaliation. It would also benefit retirees, since union workers have higher wages and can negotiate for benefits such as health care, pensions and employer contributions to retirement plans, which leads to higher income in retirement.

"Retirees need to be on high alert. Republican candidates for the Senate and House have declared their intent to cut the Social Security and Medicare benefits we've earned over a lifetime if they regain control of the Senate," said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance.

Workers Encouraged to Track Down Lost Pension Benefits

Retirement benefits can easily be lost through each change of employment, leaving many Americans with unclaimed retirement income as they approach retirement age.

In a blog for the [Administration for Community Living](#), **David Bonello** of Trellis Pension and Retirement Rights stressed some important steps to identify and locate these lost pension benefits. He emphasizes the importance of keeping documents related to eligibility, such as benefit statements or notices from the Social Security Administration. In addition, contacting former employers or even former colleagues can help with clarifying procedures for accessing retirement benefits.

The Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA), the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) and the [Pension Rights Center](#) offer other resources for locating lost pension benefits.

"A lot of people don't know about lost pensions and retirement income that they may be eligible for," said Alliance Secretary-Treasurer **Joseph Peters, Jr.** "It's important to make people aware of the benefits they earned through years of hard work."

Kaiser Health News: Preventive Care May Be Free, but Follow-Up Diagnostic Tests Can Bring Big Bills
By Michelle Andrews



When **Cynthia Johnson** learned she would owe \$200 out-of-pocket for a diagnostic mammogram in Houston, she almost put off getting the test that told her she had breast cancer.

“I thought, ‘I really don’t have this to spend, and it’s probably nothing,’” said Johnson, who works in educational assessment at a university. But she decided to go forward with the test because she could put the copay on a credit card.

Johnson was 39 in 2018 when that mammogram confirmed that the lump she’d noticed in her left breast was cancer. Today, after a lumpectomy, chemotherapy, and radiation, she is disease-free.

Having to choose between paying rent and getting the testing they need can be a serious dilemma for some patients. Read more [here](#).

Cynthia Johnson was reluctant to pay \$200 out-of-pocket for a test used to diagnose her breast cancer after she detected a lump.

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.