Robert Roach, Jr. and Joseph Peters, Jr. Re-elected as Alliance Leaders at National Meeting

The Alliance’s 2022 National Membership Meeting took place online Wednesday and Thursday, July 27-28. On the first day, Robert Roach, Jr., who has been President of the Alliance since September of 2015, was re-elected to a four-year term.

“Robert Roach at the National Alliance Meeting this week

“I am so proud to lead the Alliance, and even more proud of the work members have done over the last several years,” said President Roach. “Our collective advocacy has ensured that more than ten million Americans will get the pension benefits they earned, and that Social Security and Medicare remain strong. Thank you to everyone who participated and helped make our national meeting a success.”

Joseph Peters, Jr., who has been Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance since September of 2015, was also re-elected to serve four more years. “It has been an absolute honor to serve as your Secretary-Treasurer over the past seven years,” said Secretary-Treasurer Peters.

“I have enjoyed this opportunity thoroughly, and it’s been a privilege to work together to advance the interests of retirees across the country.”

Julie Horwin of Arizona, who was elected Executive Vice President, told participants, “I am honored that you elected me as one of the executive vice presidents…I promise you that working with you, my brothers and sisters, I will do whatever it takes to help continue the work of the
Alliance.” She succeeds **Jo Etta Brown**, who was honored in a special Alliance resolution for her many years of advocacy, service and support to the Alliance.

**Wendy Boszak** of Nevada was elected to the Community Advocacy Network (CAN) Board. **Jean Dobashi** (Hawaii) and **Gail Dietrich** (Nevada) will continue their positions on the national executive board. Ohio Alliance President **Norm Wernet** was Elections Committee Chair and led the Alliance election proceedings.

**National Meeting Includes VIP Remarks, Greetings**

Rep. **John Larson** (CT) spoke at the National Meeting about the latest developments to his bill to expand Social Security, H.R. 5723, Social Security 2100: A Sacred Trust, and thanked the Alliance for its support of Social Security expansion.

AFL-CIO President **Liz Shuler** sent a personalized video to participants. “Retirees have borne some of the greatest burdens throughout this pandemic,” said President Schuler. “But even in the face of so many challenges, [The Alliance] has been on the front lines…fighting for fairness for our members, communities, and retirees nationwide. Thank you!”

**Fred Redmond**, Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL-CIO and also Executive Vice President of the Alliance, praised Alliance members for their work to protect pensions, Social Security, Medicare, and lower the price of prescription drugs. American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) President **Everett Kelley** also sent a video greeting.

**New Resolutions Honor Leaders, Address Social Security and Right to Vote and More**

The Alliance’s policy agenda is set during quadrennial meetings of its membership and our board.

New York State Alliance President **Barry Kaufmann**, Resolutions Committee Chair, facilitated discussion and the enactment of fifteen resolutions at the national meeting on Wednesday.

Resolutions calling for strengthening and expanding Social Security and Medicare, addressing income inequality, and protecting the right to vote were adopted. Also passed were new resolutions calling for passage of the PRO ACT, which would make it easier for workers to form and join a union, and protecting the rights of federal workers. Lastly, the national meeting adopted resolutions honoring the work of **George Kourpias, Ruben Burks, Jo Etta Brown, Richard Trumka**, and **John Sweeney**, all of whom worked to transform the lives of retirees and the labor movement.

**Celebrating the 57th Anniversary of Medicare**

Alliance members in Ohio, Pennsylvania and other states are holding events to both celebrate and remind all Americans of the importance of Medicare to retirement security.

“63 million Americans depend on the guaranteed health care benefits Medicare provides,” said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. “These benefits were earned over a lifetime of work and are essential for a secure retirement.”

“It is time to strengthen and expand Medicare now by allowing it to negotiate lower drug prices and provide guaranteed vision, dental, and hearing services to all beneficiaries.”
“The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022” Renews Hope for Action to Lower Drug Prices

A surprise announcement on Wednesday from Sens. Chuck Schumer (NY) and Joe Manchin (WV) revived hopes for Democrats to pass significant legislation on a range of issues, including prescription drug prices, climate, energy, and health policy.

Central to the deal dubbed “The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022” is the prescription drug pricing reform that includes allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices, as well as a $2,000 annual out-of-pocket cap on drug costs for beneficiaries under Medicare Part D. Senate Democrats are looking to add insulin measures to the deal.

Additionally, the agreement includes three years of additional subsidies for Affordable Care Act premiums, a boost from the two years that Sen. Manchin previously approved.

The deal also includes provisions that Democrats previously thought they had lost that address climate change and tax policy. In addition to imposing a corporate minimum tax of 15 percent, the agreement calls for nearly $400 billion in domestic energy and manufacturing investments that will curb carbon emissions.

Overall, the bill is expected to reduce the national deficit by $300 billion and help address inflation. Democrats will likely look to push this bill forward as quickly as possible.

Democrats still need the support of Sen. Kyrsten Sinema (AZ), who has previously voiced opposition to tax increases.

“The deal is very promising. We hope to make the 57th Medicare anniversary summer a historic occasion,” said President Roach. “We’ve been waiting for a deal that includes Medicare drug price negotiation for decades.”

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.