



# FRIDAY ALERT



**Alliance for Retired Americans**

815 16th Street, NW, Fourth Floor • Washington, DC 20006 • 202.637.5399

[www.retiredamericans.org](http://www.retiredamericans.org)

Spanish version: [www.alianzadejubilados.org](http://www.alianzadejubilados.org)

**September 16, 2022**

---

## **Pennsylvania Alliance Files Motion to Fight Voter Suppression in Lehigh County**

The Pennsylvania Alliance, continuing to fight voter suppression efforts in Pennsylvania, [filed a legal motion](#) stating that the restrictions proposed in a Lehigh County lawsuit could be ruinous to Pennsylvania Alliance members' ability to cast votes easily.

The motion was filed after America First Legal Foundation, a legal advocacy group led by former **Trump** Administration officials **Stephen Miller** and **Mark Meadows**, sued Lehigh County election officials to ensure that a person drops off only one ballot, unless authorized to deliver another for someone else. The county should do that, the suit says, by stationing people to monitor activity at its five ballot box locations. The Pennsylvania Alliance's motion intervenes in the case and opposes the lawsuit.

"Older Pennsylvanians take voting seriously. If this lawsuit is successful, it will make it much harder for seniors in Lehigh County to cast their ballot," said **Jody Weinreich**, President of the Pennsylvania Alliance. "For example, we know that many older people rely on friends or family members to give them a ride to return their ballots – and those drivers simply may not be available to take them between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m."

"The plaintiffs in this case are asking the court to impose a blatant voter suppression scheme in Lehigh County," added **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. "We are going to fight to ensure that all older voters are able to cast a ballot without unnecessary barriers or intimidation."

## **Social Security's Cost-of-Living Increase Likely to be Largest in Four Decades**

Retirees will learn the amount of the Social Security COLA increase for 2023 on October 13, and the [current estimate, according to \*The New York Times\*, is that it will be 8.7%](#). That would make it the largest in four decades.

The 2023 COLA will provide a considerable boost to all of the 70 million Americans who rely on their earned Social Security benefits.

"The expected COLA will be an enormous help but it is not enough. Congress could increase benefits even further by passing H.R. 5723, 'Social Security 2100: A Sacred Trust,' which was introduced by Rep. **John Larson** (CT), or the Social Security Expansion Act, S. 4365, introduced by Sen. **Bernie Sanders** (VT). Both of these bills make the wealthiest Americans pay their fair

share,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “By removing the artificial earnings cap that is currently \$147,000 per year, we could strengthen the Social Security Trust Fund while providing all retirees with increased benefits.”

That cap is expected to increase to [\\$155.100](#) for 2023, according to an annual report released by the Social Security Board of Trustees on June 2.

Social Security expansion bills supported by the Alliance also require COLAs to be based on the CPI-E, the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly. The CPI-E reflects health care and housing costs, items that seniors actually spend their money on – a change that would result in fairer COLAs every year, not just every few decades.

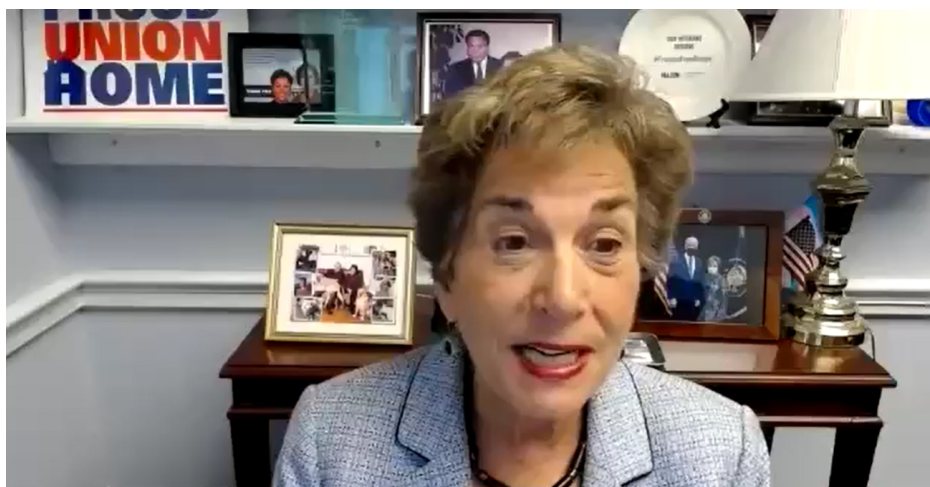
### ***Kaiser Health News: While Inflation Takes a Toll on Seniors, Billions of Dollars in Benefits Go Unused*** **By Judith Graham**

Millions of older adults are having trouble making ends meet, especially during these inflationary times. Yet many don’t realize help is available, and some notable programs that offer financial assistance are underused.

A few examples: [Nearly 14 million adults](#) age 60 or older qualify for aid from the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (also known as food stamps) but haven’t signed up, according to recent estimates. Also, more than 3 million adults 65 or older are eligible but not enrolled in [Medicare Savings Programs](#), which pay for Medicare premiums and cost sharing. And 30% to 45% of seniors may be missing out on help from the [Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidy](#) program, which covers plan premiums and cost sharing and lowers the cost of prescription drugs.

Read more [here](#).

### **Alliance Celebrates Drug Price Provisions in Inflation Reduction Act**



**Rep. Jan Schakowsky** (IL), who has led the fight for lower drug prices in Congress, **David A. Lipschutz** of the Center for Medicare Advocacy, and Executive Director **Fiesta** broke down the [benefits of the Inflation Reduction Act](#) (IRA) and answered questions about how it will be implemented during a [celebratory webinar](#) with Alliance members Thursday.

Rep. Schakowsky speaks during Thursday's webinar

In giving **President Biden** credit for passage of the IRA, Rep. Schakowsky noted that millions of seniors will benefit from Medicare being able to negotiate lower drug prices; insulin prices being

capped at \$35 per month; and Part D drug costs for Medicare beneficiaries being capped at \$2,000 per year. She advised participants in the webinar to also take advantage of the free vaccines available through the IRA in order to prevent diseases like shingles and pneumonia.

Fiesta also traveled to Frederick, Maryland on Monday to discuss the law at a senior town hall event organized and hosted by **Rep. David Trone** (MD).

### **President Roach Joins Minnesota Governor Tim Walz at Machinists Picnic**



Alliance President **Robert Roach, Jr.** was in Andover, Minnesota September 10 with Governor **Tim Walz** and Minnesota Alliance President **Michael Madden** for the Local Lodge 112 IAMAW Locomotive Machinists annual picnic.

“People are worried about what we’re learning in school – I share that with them,” said Gov. Walz, a former teacher, at the event. “...I don’t believe we spend enough time teaching the history of the labor movement!”

“Union workers enjoy better wages, better health care and a more secure retirement later in life,” added President Roach. “That is why we must pass the PRO Act to make it easier for people to join a union.”

President Roach (left) with Gov. Walz