



FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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Ohio Alliance Files Voting Rights Lawsuit Over New Photo ID Requirement

The Ohio Alliance, Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless, Ohio Federation of Teachers and Union Veterans Council have [filed a lawsuit](#) over an Ohio law requiring voters to show photo ID at the polls. Previously, voters had been able to show alternative forms of identification, such as utility bills or bank statements.

The measure also limits the number of days to request and return an absentee ballot and eliminates early in-person voting the Monday before an election.

The suit alleges that the changes make it substantially harder to vote in person and by mail, while at the same time making it more difficult for voters to correct any mistakes made in the process, especially for young, elderly, and Black voters, as well as members of the military and others living abroad.

“The Ohio Alliance is the latest chapter to go to court to block burdensome voting restrictions that are designed to suppress the vote,” said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. “We will never stop fighting to protect our hard won constitutional rights and our democracy.”

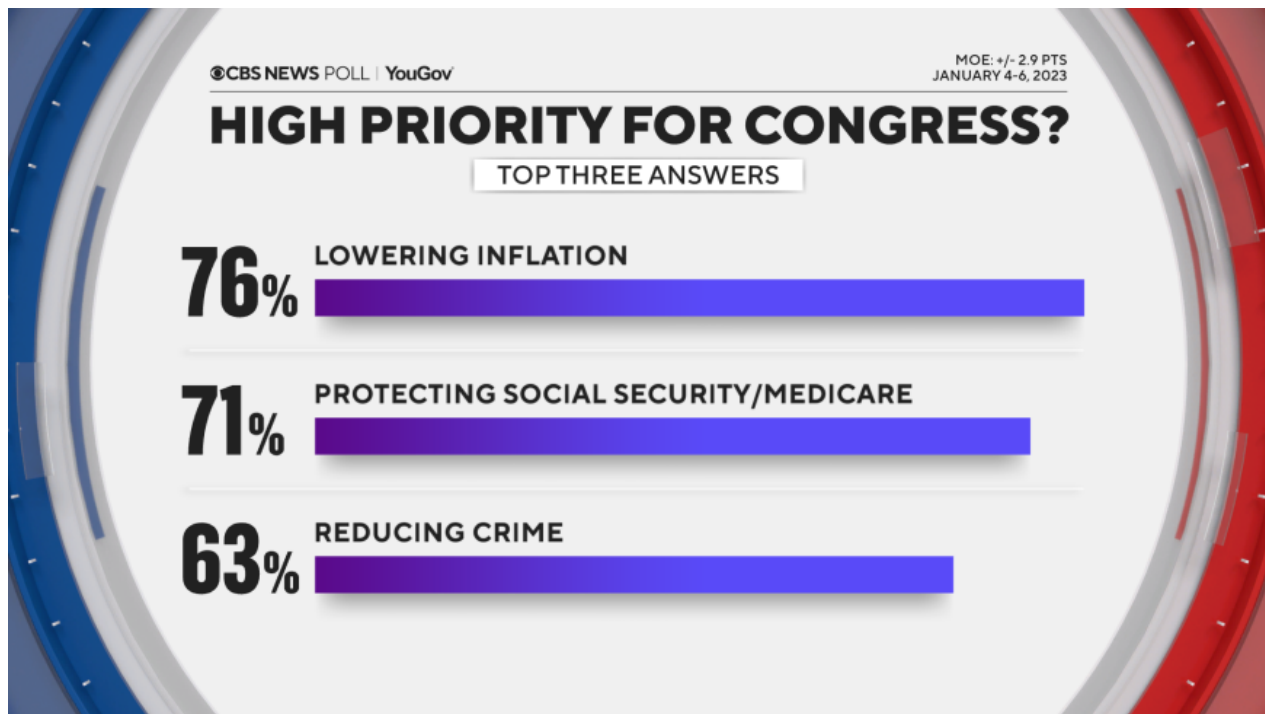
House GOP’s Plans to Cut Social Social Security and Medicare Advance

Rep. **Chip Roy** (R-TX) [said](#) last Sunday on CNN’s “State of the Union” that Republicans don’t plan to alter benefits for current Social Security and Medicare recipients.

However, at least 127 members of the House Republican Study Committee have released a budget for fiscal 2023 that will increase the eligibility ages for Social Security and Medicare, and reduce benefits for people 54 and younger by changing the Social Security benefit formula.

In addition, many House Freedom Caucus members [demanded](#) that **Kevin McCarthy** commit to leverage the debt ceiling vote to force President **Biden** and Democrats to agree to slash Social Security and Medicare in exchange for voting for him as Speaker.

House Democratic Whip **Katherine Clark** (MA) [said](#) that GOP plans to use the debt limit to force cuts to Social Security and Medicare show that “the keys have been handed over to extremists.” She added that the threats amount to “taking our seniors hostage.”



The GOP plans come despite a recent *CBS News/YouGov* [poll showing](#) that 71% of Americans believe that protecting Social Security and Medicare should be a high priority for the new Congress.

“The House Republicans are making dangerous and unreasonable demands,” said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. “We must not allow them to use our earned benefits as a bargaining chip.”

HHS Announces Key Dates for Implementation of Medicare Drug Price Negotiation

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has announced [key 2023 dates](#) for the Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Program which lowers drug costs for millions of Americans.

For the first time in history, because of the Inflation Reduction Act, Medicare will have the ability to negotiate prescription drug prices. That process begins this year, and the first negotiated prices will go into effect in 2026.

By September 1, 2023, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services will publish the first 10 Medicare Part D drugs selected for the Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Program. The negotiated maximum fair prices for these drugs will be announced by September 1, 2024 and prices will be in effect starting January 1, 2026.

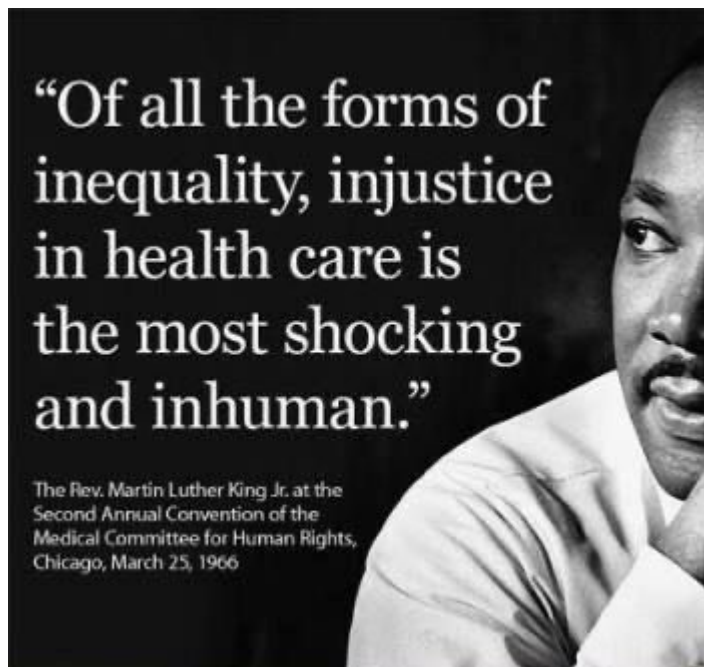
Other major provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act took effect on January 1, including:

- Insulin co-pays are capped at \$35 per month for Medicare beneficiaries;
- All recommended adult vaccines are free for Medicare beneficiaries;
- Corporations that raise the price of drugs sold to Medicare faster than the rate of inflation must pay rebates back to Medicare

“Relief from skyrocketing drug prices has finally begun,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “Millions of seniors will be paying less for important drugs this year, with more relief to come.”

Remembering Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. – And His Statements Concerning Health Care

Martin Luther King Jr. Day is Monday, January 16, and many of Dr. King’s words remain as relevant today as they were during his lifetime.



On March 25, 1966 in Chicago, at a press conference before his speech at the second convention of the Medical Committee for Human Rights, King [said](#), "Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and the most inhuman."

Decades later, racial minorities are still [less likely](#) to receive preventive health care services when compared with white counterparts. Minorities, including Black Americans, also generally wait longer for those services and the services rendered are often of lower quality. For many conditions, minorities experience worse health outcomes.

"So many situations effortlessly lend themselves to a quote from Dr. King," said **President Roach**. "In 2023, as we swear in

new Members of Congress, we urge our elected leaders to remember Dr. King when they consider changes to our nation’s health care policies.”

President Roach continued, “When some members of the new Congress talk about their [plans to slash Medicare and Social Security](#) funding, we must consider the most vulnerable members of our community, including seniors, racial minorities, members of the disabled community and those with the least access to quality care. Let us remember Dr. King as we work to strengthen and preserve Medicare and make health care a priority for all Americans.”

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.