

# June 2023

May '23							July '23						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6							1
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
28	29	30	31				23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 Juneteenth	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
2	3	Notes				

- =House and Senate Recess
- =Senate Recess Only
- =House Recess Only
- Blue Text =Federal Holiday, National Offices Closed
- Green Text =Holiday
- Red Text =Alliance Dates of Note

# July 2023

June '23							August '23						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3			1	2	3	4	5
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
25	26	27	28	29	30		27	28	29	30	31		

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 58th Anniversary of Medicare & Medicaid	31	Notes				

- =House and Senate Recess
- =Senate Recess Only
- =House Recess Only
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# August 2023

July '23							September '23						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1						1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
30	31												

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14 88th Anniversary of Social Security	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	Notes				

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# Anniversary Summer 2023



# This Summer, Retiree Issues Are Front and Center



# McCarthy Commission on “Entitlements”

- “I’m going to make some people uncomfortable”
- “The majority driver of the budget is mandatory spending. It’s Medicare, Social Security...”
- Model suggested is Base Realignment and Closure Commission – Congress can only vote yes or no on the entire package
- White House is strongly opposed
- Some Democratic House and Senate members have backed other Commission ideas, including Senator Mitt Romney’s TRUST Act
- Alliance is monitoring this one closely



# House Republican Study Committee

## Drastic Changes to Social Security

- Raise the retirement age to 69 starting with workers who turn 62 in 2033
- **Withhold payments** to early retirees and/or higher earners
- RSC has 175 members

# Republican Study Committee on Medicare

## Gut Medicare

- Privatization!
- Give beneficiaries a “voucher” to purchase private insurance
- End guaranteed benefits
- Very similar to former Speaker Paul Ryan’s proposal





# Repeal Medicare Drug Negotiation

- House Republican Study Group Budget → **Repeal** Drug Negotiation and Lower Drug Price Provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act
- Multiple lawsuits to block the law

PhRMA sues over Medicare drug pricing provisions

**Merck sues HHS over drug negotiation, claims program 'tantamount to extortion'**

**Bristol Myers Squibb follows Merck in suing US over Medicare price negotiation program**

US Chamber of Commerce sues over government's drug pricing power

# Senate Support for Raising the Retirement Age

Sen. Lindsey Graham: “...To get out of this mess, people like me are going to have to take a little less and pay a little more in. **We’re going to have to adjust the age one more time** like Ronald Reagan and Tip — Tip O’Neil did. ...”

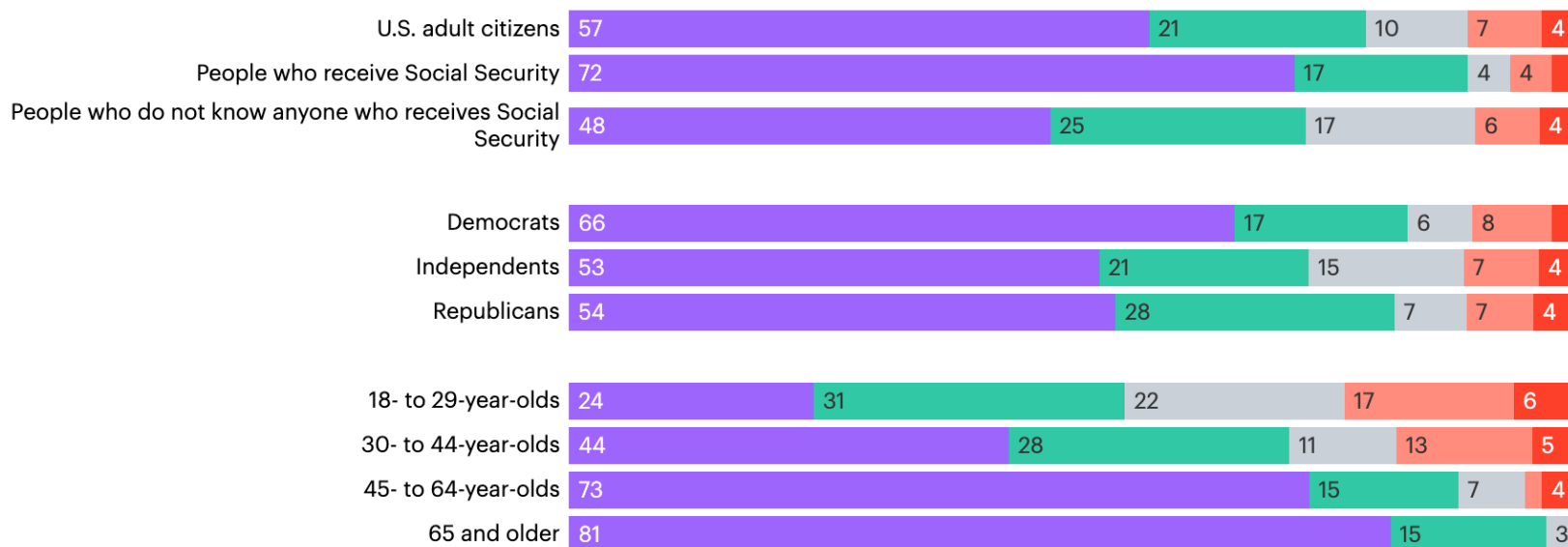
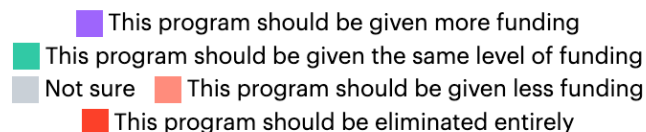
Sen. Mitt Romney: “...you have to recognize that **life expectancy is a lot more today...**”



# Social Security Has Broad Public Support

## Most Americans say Social Security should be given more funding

Thinking about the following U.S. program, do you believe they should be given more or less funding? **Social Security** (%)



**78% of ALL Citizens Say Social Security Should Receive the Same or MORE Funding**

# Pushing Back



**Social Security**  
Our Earned Benefits

# Building Support for Expansion

Strengthen the  
Trust Fund

Provide Revenue to  
Increase Benefits

Ensure Social  
Security is There for  
Current and Future  
Beneficiaries

Restores Fairness



# Other Changes Needed to Improve Social Security

- Repeal WEP-GPO Provisions so public sector retirees receive all earned Social Security Benefits
- Change the Cost-of-Living Adjustment formula to Better Reflect What Seniors Spend Money On (CPI-E)
- Provide Social Security Work Credits for Caregivers



# Fight Back

## Step 1: Sign Our Online Petition

Demanding NO CUTS to Social Security

Step 2: Share the Video with Alliance affiliates and community groups



# We're Here to Help!

- We're happy to schedule and host Zoom meetings for any Alliance events or gatherings.
- To find out more information about the Alliance, including fact sheets on retiree issues and our 2022 Congressional voting record, go to [www.retiredamericans.org](http://www.retiredamericans.org)
- Send us an email if you'd like to get involved with an Alliance chapter in your state!

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## How to Structure Your Anniversary Event 2023

**This year, we celebrate the 58<sup>th</sup> and 88<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of Medicare and Social Security,** respectively. On the anniversaries of Social Security and Medicare/Medicaid, we will hold observances and raise awareness about the elected officials working to dismantle our earned benefits and our elected retiree champions who are fighting to protect and expand these essential programs.

Be sure to [register your event using this form](#) or by emailing the details to [Mobilization@RetiredAmericans.org](mailto:Mobilization@RetiredAmericans.org).

### **Suggested Anniversary Celebrations**

- Hold a press conference at a Retiree Zero award recipient's office and speak out about how their voting record affects your retirement.
- Hold a press conference at a member of the Republican Study Committee's office and speak about how their proposed cuts to our earned benefits will hurt retirees.
- Host a birthday celebration event with a Retiree Hero awardee and present them with a certificate. Contact Michelle Campbell [mcampell@retiredamericans.org](mailto:mcampell@retiredamericans.org) to request your hero certificate.
- Invite candidates for office to speak to your members about what they will do to protect retirement security.
- Host a Keep Your Promise rally or postcard party using our [new Alliance rally signs and postcards](#)

### **Recommended Anniversary Event Agenda**

- Welcome participants
- Invite Speakers
- Present Fact Sheets and Make Legislative Asks
- Present Hero or Zero Awards, if applicable
- Announce Candidate Endorsements, if applicable
- Invite participants to tell their personal stories



## How to Structure Your Anniversary Event 2023

- Enjoy anniversary cake!

**Don't forget to take pictures! Send pics of your events to [mobilization@retiredamericans.org](mailto:mobilization@retiredamericans.org).**



## 2023 Anniversary Summer Toolkit Event Planning Guide

### Keep Your Promise Events

Social Security and Medicare represent a promise that the government made to the American people since 1935 and 1965 respectively. The proposed budget released by the Republican Study Committee shows that some of our members of congress are willing to break that promise and put our earned benefits at risk. Retirees must speak out and demand that Congress keeps its **hands off of Medicare and Social Security**.

To help make your events more impactful, we've created some fantastic new materials that you can use, including Rally Signs, a petition, a postcard, and a template event flier. Our 2022 Congressional Voting Record is also a great tool to use to plan Retiree Hero certificate presentations and Retiree Zero actions for those who voted against retirees' interests.

The list of Alliance materials and order forms are available [on our website](#). Alliance staff are available and eager to help you plan your event! Please reach out to [mobilization@retiredamericans.org](mailto:mobilization@retiredamericans.org) to get started.

### Events

The Alliance for Retired Americans encourages retirees to plan rallies or protests at key Members of Congress' offices calling on them to protect and expand, **not cut**, Social Security and Medicare.

### Possible Event Agenda

- Welcome participants
- Remarks from Alliance State President
- Remarks from retiree champion Member of Congress/guest speaker
- Social Security/Medicare Storytellers call upon elected officials to preserve their earned benefits.

### Media Coverage

Alliance communications staff will help with media turnout and prepare press releases.

### Event Turnout

Alliance staff can provide phone bank lists, invitation emails, and social media invites, and help strategize ways to build the biggest possible crowds for your event.

### Materials Needed

- **Camera Phone** (and designated event photographer/videographer)
- **Rally Signs/Placards** Contact the Alliance to have signs shipped to your location before the event

- **Extra Large Sharpies** The Alliance will ship large Sharpie markers with your “Hands Off” rally sign orders. Please make sure to use them to write on the signs, as smaller markers may make the signs hard to read in photos.
- **Keep Your Promise Petition** to circulate to attendees
- **Sign in sheets/pens/clipboards**
- **Alliance Banner and T-Shirts**

## Pictures

In order to make your event as impactful as possible, it is important to take high-quality, high resolution photos and share them with the national Alliance as soon as possible. We’ve included our Photography for Action photo guide in this toolkit as a refresher. Below are some examples of high-quality photos.





## How to Structure Your Lobby Visit Best Practices

### Request Lobby Visit

Contact the local district office, introduce yourself, who you are with and that you would like to request a virtual district lobby meeting with the member of Congress during the Presidents Day recess.

### Report Lobby Visit and Hold Planning Meeting

Once your date is set, call a meeting of Alliance members who plan to participate in the visit. Review the talking points and fact sheets and assign speaking roles. Members of the national Alliance team are available to join this practice upon request. [Submit the details of the lobby visit using this tracker.](#)

### Identify Yourself and the Group You Represent

Make sure the elected official or their staff knows who is in the room, and is clear about the Alliance's electoral power in the legislator's district.

### Get the Meeting Started and Be Aware of the Time

Meetings usually are 45 minutes or less. Pay attention to the time. After introductions, say why you wanted to meet with the Member and what you hope to gain from the meeting.

### State Your Position Clearly

Tell the elected official or their staff the key facts on your issue, being sensitive to what the particular legislator is interested in. Be clear and specific about what your position is on the issue.

### Get the Elected Official to Take Action

Ask specific questions about where your elected official stands on your issue. Ask for a clear position on your issue and do not give up until you have an unmistakable 'yes' or 'no.' If the legislator is supporting you, ask for a specific action in support, such as holding a press conference with Alliance members.

### Take Pictures!

Take a screenshot picture of your virtual meeting to post and send to the national Alliance.

### Debrief and Follow Up

Talk with your group about how the meeting went, come to agreement on the minutes and how the legislator responded according to the Lobby Report Back Form. Designate a member of your group to [send the report using this form](#) and send pictures to [Mobilization@RetiredAmericans.org](mailto:Mobilization@RetiredAmericans.org). Write letters thanking the legislator and their staff for their time and remind them of the commitments made to you during the meeting. Include any additional information they requested in the meeting.



## 2023 Anniversary Summer Lobby Visit Report Back Form

Click [here](#) to fill out this form online.

Representative's Name, State and District: \_\_\_\_\_

Representative or staff in visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Alliance Participants in Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

### CIRCLE RESPONSE FROM MEMBER OR STAFF

ISSUE	PRO-RETIREE POSITION	ANTI-RETIREE POSITION	UNDECIDED
<b>Social Security</b>	Supports protecting and expanding Social Security. Opposes any cuts to our earned benefits. Opposes raising the age of eligibility.	Supports cuts including raised eligibility age, privatization, means testing, benefit cuts, Trust Act.	Undecided
<b>Medicare</b>	Supports protecting and expanding Medicare. Opposes any cuts to our earned benefits.	Supports cuts including raised eligibility age, privatization, means testing, benefit cuts.	Undecided
<b>WEP/GPO</b>	Supports the repeal of WEP/GPO & restoring spousal and survivor benefits.	Opposes the restoration of earned Social Security benefits.	Undecided

Follow-up commitments from the Representative's office: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up commitments from the Alliance participants: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Any follow-up needs from the national Alliance: \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out and submit immediately using the online [Lobby Visit Report Back Form](#) or via email to [Mobilization@RetiredAmericans.org](mailto:Mobilization@RetiredAmericans.org).

## **Sample Letter to the Editor: Medicare #1**

[Date]

Dear Editor:

July 30th marks the 58th anniversary of Medicare, a program that has improved the lives of millions of retirees like me. Before Medicare, only half of our nation's seniors had health insurance.

However, as great as Medicare is, many members of Congress are pushing a plan that would end Medicare's guaranteed benefits.

Their scheme would end Medicare as we know it. Instead of the benefits we worked a lifetime to earn, we'd get a coupon to put toward the price of buying an insurance plan every year. There would be no guarantee that the coupon would be enough to cover the cost.

We owe it to current and future generations to keep the Medicare program strong and healthy, not force older Americans to deal with for-profit insurance companies for the care they have earned.

Sincerely Yours,

[Name, Alliance position] [Address]

## **Sample Letter to the Editor: Medicare #2**

[Date]

Dear Editor:

July 30th marks the 58th anniversary of Medicare, a program that has improved the lives of millions of retirees like me. Before Medicare, when uninsured seniors had serious health problems, they faced an impossible choice: risk financial ruin by seeking care or avoid treatment and watch their health deteriorate.

Thanks to Medicare, 56.6 million people across the country aged 65 and older now have health coverage. While having access is a start, we can and should do better for older Americans, starting with lowering prescription drug costs.

Last year a new law took effect that for the first time requires Medicare to negotiate lower prices for some of the most expensive prescription drugs. Beneficiaries will save money on their drugs, and taxpayers will save billions every year, according to the Congressional Budget Office. No person should have to choose between financial ruin and their health.

Sincerely Yours,

[Name, Alliance position] [Address]

### **Sample Letter to the Editor: Medicare #3**

[Date]

Dear Editor:

July 30th marks the 58th anniversary of Medicare. Before Medicare, only half of our nation's seniors had health insurance, and now 56.6 million people across the country aged 65 and older have the coverage they need.

But I worry that if House Republicans have their way, the guaranteed health care I rely on will be changed forever.

The House Republican Study group just released a new budget. It calls for privatizing Medicare and replacing guaranteed benefits with a coupon to use toward the price of an insurance policy from a private corporation.

That's not what we need and that's not what I worked a lifetime to earn.

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 if they regain control of the Senate.

Sincerely Yours,

[Name, Alliance position] [Address]

### **Sample Letter to the Editor: Medicare #4**

As we celebrate the 58th anniversary of Medicare on July 30th, I have always felt secure knowing that I would be able to get the medical care I need.

But I fear that if members of the powerful House Republican Study Group get their way, that feeling of security will evaporate. My member of Congress, \_\_\_\_\_, is a member of the study group which takes aim at the health coverage I rely on.

Their plan would end Medicare as we know it. Instead of guaranteed coverage, they'd give every senior a so-called coupon and tell us to go shop for a new insurance plan. There is no guarantee that this coupon would be enough to cover the cost of a policy.

Retirees, beware: these Republicans want to cut our Medicare to give even more tax breaks to rich corporations and individuals. We need to pay attention and let them know we oppose this dangerous scheme.

Sincerely Yours,

[Name, Alliance position] [Address]



## Sample Letter to the Editor: Social Security #1

[Date]

Dear Editor:

Social Security is celebrating its 88<sup>th</sup> birthday on August 14<sup>th</sup>, and more than 66 million Americans - 1 out of every 4 households - rely on their hard earned Social Security benefits to make ends meet.

Congress must pass legislation to strengthen the Social Security trust fund and increase the modest benefits of current and future retirees across-the-board. This can be done by making the wealthiest Americans pay their fair share.

I urge my Rep. \_\_\_\_\_ and my Senators \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to work to strengthen and expand Social Security, and oppose any effort to cut benefits or raise the retirement age.

Sincerely yours,

[Your Name] [Your Address]

## Sample Letter to the Editor: Social Security #2

[Date]

Dear Editor:

Social Security's 88<sup>th</sup> birthday is coming up on August 14<sup>th</sup>. As a bedrock of our retirement security, it lifts more people out of poverty than any other program.

Astonishingly, the vast majority of House Republicans have endorsed a budget plan that would drastically change Social Security for the worse.

It would cut benefits and raise the retirement age to 69. It does nothing to bring new money into the system by making the wealthy contribute their fair share.

For generations Social Security has been a sacred promise between the American public and their government. It is just as relevant today, with 1 in 4 households receiving retirement, disability, or survivor benefits.

I call on Rep. \_\_\_\_\_ and Senators \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to strengthen Social Security and increase benefits, not throw more older Americans and people with disabilities into poverty.

Sincerely yours,

[Your Name] [Your Address]

### **Sample Letter to the Editor: Social Security #3**

[Date]

Dear Editor:

Our Social Security System is celebrating its 88<sup>th</sup> birthday on August 14<sup>th</sup>. As a bedrock of our retirement security, it helps ensure that more than 66 million Americans - including my family – can pay our bills.

Yet more and more members of the U.S. House and Senate are getting behind a bad idea that takes aim at the Social Security benefits we have earned over a lifetime. They want to create a special group and give them the power to propose cuts to Social Security -- without even allowing the public to weigh in.

Most people aged 65 and older receive the majority of their income from Social Security. They and their employers contributed to the system with every single paycheck over many decades.

Older Americans must tell their senators to oppose this dangerous and un-democratic plan.

Sincerely yours,

[Your Name] [Your Address]

### **Sample Letter to the Editor: Social Security #4**

Dear Editor:

Social Security is celebrating its 88<sup>th</sup> birthday on August 14<sup>th</sup>. As a retired \_\_\_\_\_, I know how important Social Security is to our community. It helps seniors, persons with disabilities, widow(er)s, and children who have lost a parent.

One way to make it even better is for the U.S. House to pass “The Social Security 2100 Act: A Sacred Trust,” which will soon be introduced by Rep. John Larson of Connecticut.

This important legislation would improve the Social Security program by increasing benefits across the board, ensure everyone who works in public sector jobs will get the Social Security benefits they have earned, and provide an extra increase for low wage workers and “the oldest of the old” whose benefits have not been significantly raised in decades.

These changes will be paid for by raising the cap on earnings above \$400,000 for those who pay a lower percentage of their income into Social Security than someone making minimum wage. That’s just wrong.

The cost of everything keeps going up; that’s why we need to pass this legislation now.

Sincerely Yours,

[Name, Alliance position] [Address]

## Sample Letter to the Editor: Social Security #5

[Date]

Dear Editor:

August 14th marks the 88th anniversary of Social Security, which helps 66 million seniors, persons with disabilities, widow(er)s, and children who have lost a parent.

But I worry that if the House Republican Study Group gets its way, the guaranteed benefits I rely on will no longer be secure.

More than  $\frac{2}{3}$  of House Republicans signed onto this plan which raises the retirement age, cuts benefits, and allows Wall Street to gamble with our benefits.

Retirees, beware. Nearly 200 members of Congress have declared their intent to cut the Social Security benefits we've earned over a lifetime. We must stop them.

Sincerely Yours,

[Name, Alliance position] [Address]



## **Storytelling Worksheet**

- 1. What's your name?**
- 2. Are you retired? What did you do for work? How many years did you work?**
- 3. Are you a member of a union or organization? If so, which one?**
- 4. What's your story?**
- 5. What's your ask?**

**If you'd like to share your story with the Alliance, please write your email address and phone number below:**