



# FRIDAY ALERT



**Alliance for Retired Americans**

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## Take Action: Tell Congress to Oppose Fiscal Commission Legislation

Social Security and Medicare could be on the chopping block, and it is important that you [contact your Representative and Senators](#) now to prevent that from happening.



Reps. **Bill Huizenga** (R-MI) and **Scott Peters** (D-CA) in the House and Sens. **Joe Manchin** (D-WV) and **Mitt Romney** (R-UT) in the Senate have introduced bills to create a "fiscal commission." The commission would be tasked with recommending cuts to programs like Social Security and Medicare with no amendments or proper debate. There is no requirement that the commission's deliberations would be open to the public,

allowing politicians to fast-track cuts to these critical benefits behind closed doors.

[Send a message to your members of Congress by clicking here](#) to demand that they oppose H.R. 5779, the Fiscal Commission Act; S. 3262, the Fiscal Stability Act; and any other legislation calling for a "fiscal commission."

"Alliance members make a difference when they join together and take action," said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. "Now is the time to do that."

## North Carolina Alliance is Looking for Help to Fight Voter Suppression

Alliance members across the country are fighting back against voter suppression laws. Under North Carolina law, any voter who moves within a month of an election cannot vote at their current (new) address. The North Carolina Alliance is trying to invalidate this illegal law – and we are

looking for voters who may be personally affected. **If you or someone you know is moving to North Carolina in February or October 2024** please reply to this email or click and fill out [this form](#).

“Older Americans take the right to vote seriously,” said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. “We will fight attempts to keep our voices from being heard at the ballot box wherever we see them.”

### **Webinar Outlines Key Legislation and Priorities for Seniors**

Alliance members tuned in Thursday for the Alliance's “2024 Legislative Outlook and Key Priorities for Retirees” webinar. The interactive one-hour event detailed this year's retirement security legislative outlook and included a presentation by **David Simon**, Legislative Representative with the Alliance.

Powerpoint slides highlighted upcoming deadlines to fund the federal government; information about the [Fiscal Commission](#); legislative threats and opportunities involving issues important to older Americans; and Social Security protection and expansion opportunities.

The webinar also covered Medicare and Medicaid expansion and Inflation Reduction Act drug price benefits that have been implemented. Click [here](#) to see the video of the presentation if you were unable to join us.

### **Programs Stress the Importance of Conversations Between Older and Younger Generations**

Researchers have long been aware that intergenerational conversation can improve health and well-being. A recent *New York Times* [story](#) on the subject highlighted the continued importance of fostering closer relationships between older and younger Americans.

Age separation has steadily increased in the United States due in part to earlier retirements, housing that is segregated by age, and a decline in religious membership and traditional social organizations. In addition, some industries like advertising, entertainment, and technology are populated almost solely by younger people.

Breakdowns in intergenerational contact have taken a documented [toll](#) on older people's health. Negative attitudes about aging are known to increase risks of cardiovascular events like strokes and heart attacks, along with an escalation of depression and anxiety. On the other hand, positive attitudes toward aging often [result](#) in better memory and hearing, longevity, and physical function.

One example of successfully addressing the breakdown can be found at Miami University, which is bringing people of different ages together with their “Opening Minds Through Art” (O.M.A.) program, designed to foster intergenerational understanding. This semester, about 70 pairs have enrolled in the video program. Another 73 students engage in O.M.A.-sponsored arts activities with people who have dementia at a nursing home, an adult day program and a senior center. There are thousands of similar programs across the country.

“It is rewarding to see intergenerational relationships flourish,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “Older Americans have a lot of experience to share with younger generations, and better attitudes toward aging benefit all of us.”

## **KFF Health News: Southern Lawmakers Rethink Long-Standing Opposition to Medicaid Expansion**

By Daniel Chang and Andy Miller

As a part-time customer service representative, **Jolene Dybas** earns less than \$15,000 a year, which is below the federal poverty level and too low for her to be eligible for subsidized health insurance on the Obamacare marketplace.

Dybas, 53, also does not qualify for Medicaid in her home state of Alabama because she does not meet the program requirements. She instead falls into [a coverage gap](#) and faces hundreds of dollars a month in out-of-pocket payments, she said, to manage multiple chronic health conditions.

“I feel like I’m living in a state that doesn’t care for me,” said Dybas, a resident of Saraland, a suburb of Mobile.

Alabama is one of 10 states that have refused to adopt the Affordable Care Act’s expansion of Medicaid, the government health insurance program for people who are low-income or disabled.

Read more [here](#).



Patrick Dunnagan of Raleigh, North Carolina, hasn’t been able to work for years because of kidney disease and chronic pain. When North Carolina on Dec. 1 became the 40th state to expand Medicaid, Dunnagan finally qualified for the state-federal health insurance program, which covers people with low incomes. “The financial security is huge,” he says. (photo: KATHLEEN DALEY)