



FRIDAY ALERT



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Alliance Members Join Biden Campaign In Battleground States to Focus on Protecting Social Security and Medicare; Trump Talks About Slashing Them

President **Biden's** reelection campaign is holding [more than 13 press conferences](#) through Friday across key swing states with local elected officials and seniors, all focused on protecting Social Security and Medicare.

The events follow **Donald Trump's** Monday interview on *CNBC's* Squawkbox program, when he told host **Joe Kernen** that there 'is a lot you can do to cut' Social Security and Medicare. The Biden campaign released a [rapid response ad](#) reiterating Biden's promise to stop anyone who tries to put Social Security or Medicare on the chopping block or raise the retirement age.



At an event in Arizona on Tuesday, Arizona Alliance members joined veterans in calling on Arizonans to protect their earned Social Security and Medicare benefits by voting for President Biden for reelection. Also on Tuesday, Michigan Alliance President **Jim Pedersen** [joined](#) state representatives **Stephanie Young** (D-Detroit) and **Tyrone Carter** (D-Detroit) for a press conference in Lansing, where they called on Michiganders to reject Trump at the polls and reelect President Biden.

"It should not come as a surprise that Trump is joining the growing chorus of Republican extremists who are taking aim at our retirement security," [said](#) **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. "Back in 2020 Trump [said](#)

Alliance members and allies in Arizona Tuesday



Michigan Alliance President Pedersen at the podium Tuesday

that cutting 'entitlements' would be a second term issue. Every year he was in office Trump [proposed](#) cuts to Medicare and Social Security. He even called for privatizing Social Security, calling it a [Ponzi scheme](#)."

On Wednesday, Trump [said](#), "I will never do anything that will jeopardize or hurt Social Security or Medicare."

Biden Budget Includes Plans to Further Lower Drug Costs

President Biden [proposed](#) a \$7.3 trillion fiscal year 2025 budget on Monday that includes tax increases on corporations and high earners and a wide range of efforts to address consumer concerns such as housing and prescription drug costs. During his State of the Union address last Thursday, Biden noted that his budget priorities offer a sharp [contrast](#) to his predecessor, who enacted a \$2 trillion tax cut in 2017 that disproportionately benefited the top 1% of earners.

Biden's FY 2025 budget proposes extending Medicare's \$2,000 annual cap on out-of-pocket drug costs to people with commercial insurance; extending a \$35-per-month cost cap for insulin to the commercial market; and allowing Medicare to negotiate prices for at least 50 drugs per year.

"There is already a \$3,200 out-of-pocket cap in place under Medicare Part D this year, and that cap will be lowered to \$2,000 in 2025," said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. "Including Americans with private insurance who are not Medicare-eligible is a logical way to bring drug price relief to even more consumers and their families."

New Administration Rule Caps Credit Card Late Charges

The Biden Administration announced last week that it would cap the fees credit card companies charge customers when they are late for their payments. Starting this spring, [late charge junk fees will be capped at \\$8](#).



This new rule targeting financial giants will save consumers a projected \$10 billion each year. Unless credit card issuers are able to statistically prove their need for higher fees in order to make up for losses, \$8 will remain the maximum charge they can impose.

In 2022 alone, credit card companies were able to rake in \$14 billion in revenue from late fee charges. This was accomplished by charging an average of \$32 per month for late or missed payments to Americans who are in need of savings the most.

Big corporations have exploited extra fees and hidden costs with no accountability in order to overcharge customers. Credit card late fees have risen by nearly 40% from 2015 to 2022.

Republicans like **Sen. Tim Scott** (SC), a top member on the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee, are already kick-starting a process that would allow Congress to review and possibly overturn federal regulations like those targeting junk fees.

In the coming weeks, further actions to combat junk fees will likely be unveiled by the Biden Administration, including a “strike team” run by the Federal Trade Commission and the Justice Department who would tackle anti-competitive pricing tactics in vital consumer areas such as financial services, groceries, housing and prescription drugs.

“Reigning in outrageous corporate junk fees is one of the first steps we can take in ensuring a fairer economy,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “Outrageous late fees affect people of all ages and are especially burdensome to those who can least afford them.”

KFF Health News: Concerns Grow Over Quality of Care as Investor Groups Buy Not-for-Profit Nursing Homes **By Harris Meyer**

Shelly Olson's mother, who has dementia, has lived at the Scandia Village nursing home in rural Sister Bay, Wisconsin, for almost five years. At first, Olson said, her mother received great care at the facility, then owned by a not-for-profit organization, the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society.

Then in 2019, Sanford Health — a not-for-profit, tax-exempt hospital system — acquired the nursing home. The covid-19 pandemic struck soon after. From then on, the facility was regularly

short of staff, and residents endured long wait times and other care problems, said Olson, a registered nurse who formerly worked at the facility.

Now Scandia Village has a new, for-profit owner, [Continuum Healthcare](#). Olson said she was reassured when Continuum hired two locals as the facility's new administrator and nursing director.

But **Kathy Wagner**, a former Scandia Village nursing director, is not optimistic.

Read more [here](#).