



# ANNIVERSARY SUMMER 2024

Alliance for Retired Americans  
July, 2024



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# Anniversary Summer

## ACTION CALENDAR

August 2024							July '24	September '24													
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
28	29	30	31	1	2	3															
4	5	6	7	8	9	10															
11	12	13	14 89th Anniversary of Social Security	15	16	17															
18	19	20	21	22	23	24															
25	26	27	28	29	30	31															
1	2	Notes																			

## Social Security and Medicare Facts & Figures

### The Many Faces of Social Security

- Nearly **182 million** workers contribute to Social Security through payroll taxes.
- Nearly **68 million** people receive monthly Social Security benefits:
  - **53 million** receive retirement benefits
  - **5.8 million** receive survivors' benefits
  - **8.5 million** receive disability benefits



## Social Security and Medicare Facts & Figures

### Average 2022 Monthly Social Security Benefit

Retired Worker: **\$1,845**

Retired couple: **\$2,731**

Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for 2022: **3.2%**

### 2022 Social Security & Medicare Contribution Amounts

Social Security: **6.2%** on earnings up to **\$168,600**.

Medicare: **1.45%** on all wages

### 2022 Social Security Eligibility:

Full Retirement Age: **66** if born before 1960, **67** if born after

Early Retirement Age: **62** (Taking early retirement can reduce Social Security benefits up to 30%.)

## Expanding Social Security

The Alliance for Retired Americans Supports Expanding Social Security to:

- **Increase in benefits** for all current and future beneficiaries
- **Repeal WEP/GPO** provisions that unfairly penalize some public employee pension recipients and their spouses
- **Adopt the CPI-E** to ensure a more accurate measure to calculate Cost of Living Adjustments
- **Improve Benefits for Widows and Widowers** ensuring surviving spouses receive 75% of the total household benefits.
- **Increase Minimum Benefits** for low-wage workers
- **Improve Solvency of the Trust Fund**
- **Raise the payroll cap** to ensure the wealthiest Americans pay their fair share into the system

## Expanding Social Security

**The Alliance has endorsed and is working to pass these 4 bills in the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress:**

**The Social Security Expansion Act: S. 393, HR 1046**, to increase Social Security benefits and extend program solvency.

**Social Security 2100, A Sacred Trust Act: S 2280, HR 4583**, which also increases benefits and extends program solvency.

**The Medicare and Social Security Fair Share Act: S 1174, HR 4535**, which extends the solvency of Social Security indefinitely.

**The Social Security Fairness Act: S 597, HR 82**, which would repeal the WEP/GPO.



# Position Paper

## Project 2025

This 900-page policy blueprint produced by the conservative think tank the Heritage Foundation is designed to be the roadmap for a second Trump Administration and reflects input from over 100 conservative organizations.

- Would dramatically reshape the federal government by **placing the entire Executive Branch of the U.S. government under direct presidential control.**
- Calls for severe cuts to Social Security as well as **increasing the full retirement age from 67 to 70.**
- Would make **Medicare Advantage the default enrollment option** for people who are newly eligible for Medicare.
- **Would fully repeal the Inflation Reduction Act**, which would eliminate Medicare's ability to negotiate prescription drug prices and take away cost-saving benefits for seniors such as:
  - \$35/month out-of-pocket cap for insulin
  - Free recommended vaccines
  - \$2,000 out-of-pocket cap on prescription drug spending
- **Eliminates mandatory benefits in Medicaid**, which would allow states to drop nursing home care.
- Allows states to **increase premiums and cost-sharing on beneficiaries** while eliminating existing federal Medicaid beneficiary protections and requirements.



## Alliance Congressional Voting Records

The Alliance for Retired Americans released its **2023 Congressional Voting Record**, which scored every U.S. Representative and Senator on issues affecting current and future retirees.

The annual report examined **10 key Senate and 10 key House votes in 2023**, highlighting issues concerning the health and well being of retirees.

Specific votes affected **Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid**; **prescription drug costs**; **workers' rights**, and **voting rights**.



# Social Security: Our Earned Benefits



**ANNIVERSARY EVENTS**

# **Social Security at 89 Medicare and Medicaid at 59**

This year is the 89<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of **Social Security** and **Medicare**, respectively.

**Tuesday, July 30<sup>th</sup>** - 59<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid

**Wednesday, August 14<sup>th</sup>** – 89<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Social Security

**2024 is a crucial election year, and retirees vote!** Use these anniversaries to highlight the candidates who champion these programs, and to call out the ones who want to cut and privatize them.

## How to Structure Your Anniversary Events

### Social Security at 89 Medicare and Medicaid at 59

This year, 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** Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

- Host a birthday celebration event with a Retiree Hero and present them with a certificate (and cake!)
- Invite candidates for office to discuss what they will do to protect retirement security
- Hold a press conference at a Retiree Zero award recipient's office and speak out about how their voting record affects your retirement
- Educate your members on the importance of voting for pro-retiree candidates



## ACTION ITEM

# Retiree Hero/Zero Certificates



### Heroes and Zeros

Many Representatives and Senators voted either **100% or 0% on retiree issues**. Accordingly, the Alliance for Retired Americans has created a list of **Retiree Heroes and Zeros**, and has created individualized certificates to be awarded to appropriate individuals.

### Action

The Alliance for Retired Americans encourages all members to plan **Hero and or Zero** actions during which the awarding of these certificates to take place.

Use these awards to **call out members of congress who are working to destroy retirement security** and **praise the heroes who stand with retirees**.



## ACTION ITEM

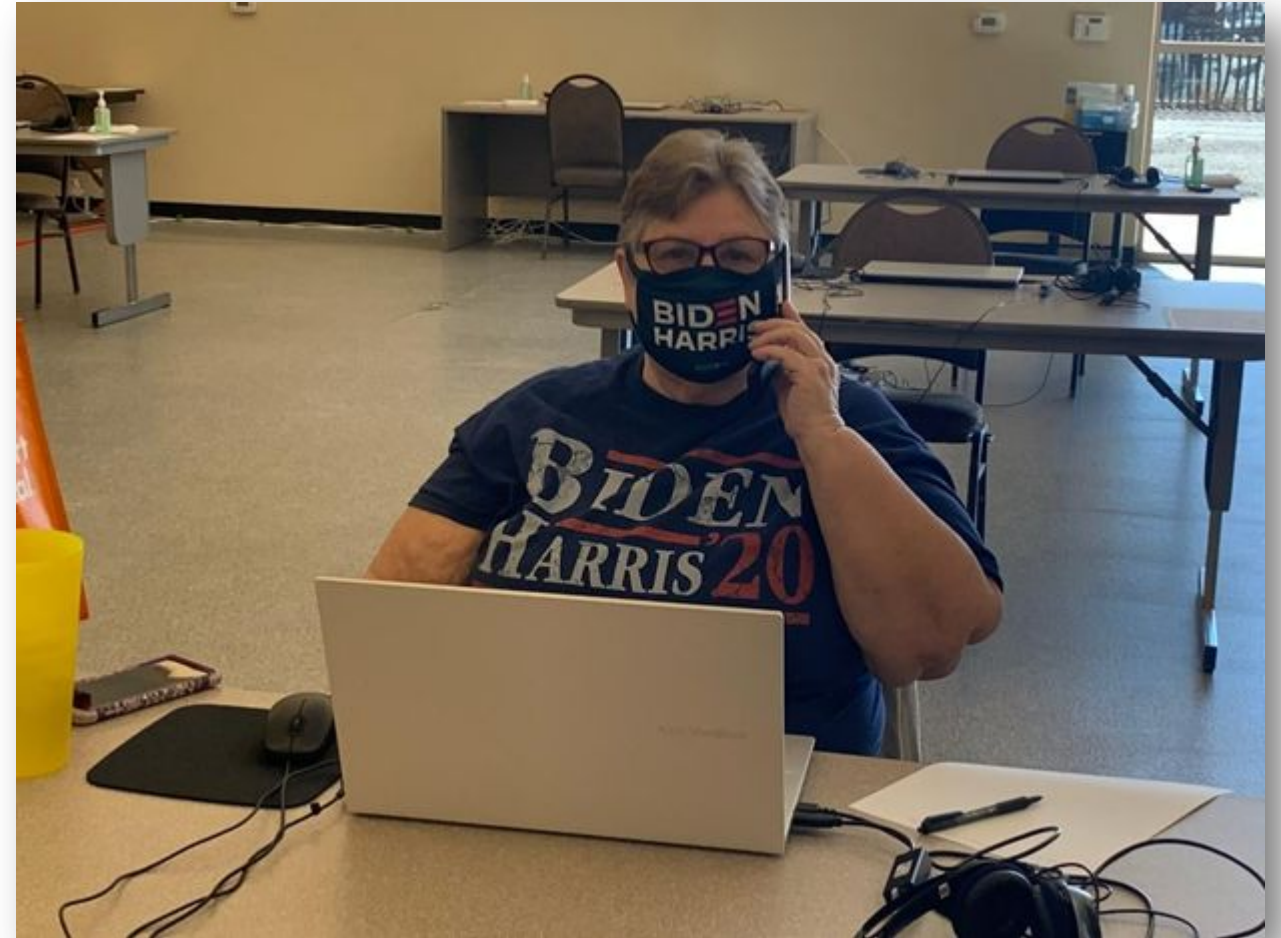
# Elect Pro-Retiree Candidates

**Join in with your state AFL-CIO's Labor 2024 program.**

Face-to-face or telephone conversations with your fellow retirees is the most effective way to get out the vote.

**Host candidate endorsement events**

The national Alliance will notify state chapters when federal candidates are ready to be endorsed and work with them to plan an event to announce the endorsement to the public.



## ACTION ITEM

# Tell Your Story

### We need your stories!

- Prescription Medication Costs Lowered by the Inflation Reduction Act
- Social Security
- Pensions
- Home Care
- WEP/GPO

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





# ACTION ITEM

## Letters to the Editor



### 2024 Anniversary Toolkit Sample Letters to the Editor

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

[Date]

Dear Editor:

July 30th marks the 59th 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, the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank in Washington, D.C., has released "Mandate for Leadership, the Conservative Promise, Project 2025," a plan to end Medicare as we know it.

Their blueprint offers a warning of what could happen if Donald Trump regains the



## ACTION ITEM

# Send us your Photos!

Send photos of hero/zero actions, lobby visits and anniversary events **immediately after the action to:**

[mobilization@retiredamericans.org](mailto:mobilization@retiredamericans.org)



# ACTION ITEM

## Get Involved!

Sign up for our newsletter

[f](#) [Twitter](#) [YouTube](#) [More](#)

### Alliance on Facebook



### Alliance for Retired Americans

Wednesday, June 12th, 2024 at 5:00pm

We could afford to expand Social Security benefits if the wealthy paid their fair share into the system.

Alliance for Retired Americans

**Retirees in 5 cities get the highest Social Security checks in the country — but it's still not enough to get by**

None of the top 5 are in California or New York.



2 likes 1 comment View on Facebook

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

- Sign up for our newsletter
- Join your state and local chapters
- Participate in meetings with your elected officials
- Help us elect pro-retiree candidates
- Help us enact pro-retiree legislation



# 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 2023 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 2024

**This year is the 59<sup>th</sup> and 89<sup>th</sup> anniversary 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
- 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
- Educate your members on the importance of voting for pro-retiree candidates

### **Recommended Anniversary Event Agenda**

Welcome participants  
Invited Speakers  
Present Fact Sheets and Make Legislative Asks  
Present Hero or Zero Awards, if applicable  
Announce Candidate Endorsement, if applicable  
Invite participants to tell their personal stories  
Enjoy anniversary cake!

# SIGN IN



Event Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Event Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Event Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Please Print)	Email	Phone	Zip Code	Organization	Text me updates on important retiree issues and events! (Msg. and data rates may apply)
		H___ C___			<input type="checkbox"/>
		H___ C___			<input type="checkbox"/>
		H___ C___			<input type="checkbox"/>
		H___ C___			<input type="checkbox"/>
		H___ C___			<input type="checkbox"/>
		H___ C___			<input type="checkbox"/>

Please send a copy of this page to Michelle Campbell, [MCampbell@RetiredAmericans.org](mailto:MCampbell@RetiredAmericans.org)





## Hero/Zero Award Event Guide

In 2024, it's more important than ever to champion our retiree heroes in Congress and call out those who've fallen short with our Retiree Hero/Zero events. To strategize around events, or to request a Hero or Zero certificate, contact Maureen Dunn at [mdunn@retiredamericans.org](mailto:mdunn@retiredamericans.org).

### Event Ideas

- **Lobby Visits for Heroes:** Schedule meetings with your Heroes to personally present the award, capturing the moment for social media and press releases. Prepare a brief, impactful speech that highlights their contributions to retiree rights.
- **Candidate Endorsement Events:** Coordinate with the National Alliance to include a Hero award presentation in the event agenda. This public acknowledgment not only honors the legislator but also signals to potential voters their commitment to retiree issues.
- **Protests for Zeros:** Plan peaceful protests or press conferences outside of legislators' offices to draw attention to Zeros' lack of support for retiree issues. Use props like a giant "Zero Award," and Alliance pro-Social Security and Medicare rally signs.

### Making It Impactful:

- **Personal Stories:** Encourage members to share personal testimonials during Hero events and protests, illustrating the real-life impact of legislative actions on retirees.
- **Visuals and Social Media:** Use creative visuals and hashtags to increase visibility. Live-tweet events, share photos, and stream live videos to engage a wider audience.
- **Follow-up:** After events, send thank you notes to participants and press contacts. For Hero events, include a photo of the award presentation. For Zero protests, summarize the key messages and public response.





# July 2024

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	1	2	3	4 Independence Day	5 Independence Day Holiday (National Office closed)	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 59th Anniversary of Medicare & Medicaid	31	1	2	3
4	5	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

# August 2024

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

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- Green Text =Holiday
- Red Text =Alliance Dates of Note



## 2024 Anniversary Toolkit Sample Letters to the Editor

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

[Date]

Dear Editor:

July 30th marks the 59th 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, the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank in Washington, D.C., has released "Mandate for Leadership, the Conservative Promise, Project 2025," a plan to end Medicare as we know it.

Their blueprint offers a warning of what could happen if Donald Trump regains the presidency. Their plan is to cut Medicare and repeal the Inflation Reduction Act, which would raise the cost of prescription drugs for 18.5 million seniors and Medicare beneficiaries.

We need to keep the Medicare program strong and healthy, not force older Americans to face skyrocketing costs with fewer benefits. We owe it to current and future generations to protect and expand Medicare and its benefits, not cut them. Reelecting Joe Biden would do that.

Sincerely Yours,

[Name, Alliance position] [Address]

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

[Date]

Dear Editor:

As the 59th anniversary of Medicare approaches on July 30th, retirees need to know how crazy things have become in our nation's capital.

First Speaker of the House Mike Johnson threw his support behind a so-called "debt commission" to meet behind closed doors and create a plan to cut Medicare.

Then the House Budget Committee approved three pieces of legislation that pave the way for cuts to these programs: H.R. 5779, H.R. 6952, and H.R. 6957 will all turn this dangerous idea into a reality.

If those bills become law, 16 people will be tasked with finding ways to cut the Medicare benefits we've paid for.



## 2024 Anniversary Toolkit Sample Letters to the Editor

If Rep./Sen. \_\_\_\_\_ cares about the future of Medicare, he/she can help put the brakes on this commission scheme. Instead he/she should support legislation to make the wealthiest Americans contribute their fair share into Social Security and Medicare so everyone can receive the full benefits they earned, now and in the future.

Sincerely,

[Name, Alliance position] [Address]

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

[Date]

Dear Editor:

July 30th marks the 59th anniversary of Medicare. Before Medicare, only half of our nation's seniors had health insurance, and now 58.5 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.

Earlier this year, a large and influential group of House Republicans endorsed a budget that goes after our hard-earned Medicare benefits.

The budget was released by the Republican Study Committee, which is made up of over 170 House Republicans, including many allies of former President Donald Trump. 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.

Sincerely Yours,

[Name, Alliance position] [Address]

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

As we celebrate the 59th 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 conservatives in Washington, D.C. get their way, Medicare as we know it will be over.



## 2024 Anniversary Toolkit Sample Letters to the Editor

The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank in Washington, D.C., has released “Mandate for Leadership, the Conservative Promise, Project 2025,”. Their plan offers a warning look into what could happen if Donald Trump regains the presidency.

Their plan is to cut Medicare and repeal the Inflation Reduction Act, which would raise the cost of prescription drugs for 18.5 million seniors and Medicare beneficiaries.

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 89th birthday on August 14<sup>th</sup>, and nearly 68 million Americans - 1 out of every 4 households - rely on their hard earned Social Security benefits to make ends meet.

However, House Republicans are working hard to roll back Social Security benefits. A group called the Republican Study Committee that is comprised of over 80% of House Republicans has created a budget that aims at slashing Social Security benefits.

The Committee budget proposes over \$1.5 trillion in cuts to Social Security, including an increase in the retirement age to 70 and cutting disability benefits.

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 89th 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.



## 2024 Anniversary Toolkit Sample Letters to the Editor

Astonishingly, Republicans at the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank in Washington, D.C. have been working on a plan called Project 2025 that seeks to undo all of the work we have put into Social Security.

Project 2025 would cut Social Security benefits 21% across the board and raise the retirement age to 70. 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. [redacted] and Senators [redacted] and [redacted] 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 89th birthday on August 14<sup>th</sup>. As a bedrock of our retirement security, it helps ensure that nearly 68 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 by conservative think tank the Heritage Project called Project 2025 that takes aim at the Social Security benefits we have earned over a lifetime. They want to cut benefits by \$1.5 trillion across the board and raise the retirement age to 70.

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 and representative in Congress to oppose this dangerous plan.

Sincerely yours,  
[Your Name] [Your Address]

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



## 2024 Anniversary Toolkit Sample Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

Social Security is celebrating its 89th birthday on August 14<sup>th</sup>. As a retired \_\_\_\_\_, I know how important Social Security is to our community. It helps seniors like me, persons with disabilities, widow(er)s, and children who have lost a parent.

Unfortunately, Social Security is under attack. House Speaker Mike Johnson and senior U.S. senators are coming after our hard earned Social Security benefits.

They are trying to pass legislation to create a “debt commission” that will meet behind closed doors and concoct ways to make cuts.

They could do this in a number of ways - raising the retirement age, cutting benefits for current or future retirees, even eliminating Social Security altogether.

Yet they refuse to ask the wealthiest Americans to pay their fair share. Billionaires like Elon Musk pay a lower percentage of their income into Social Security than a person who earns the minimum wage – and that must stop.

I’m calling on Rep./Sen. \_\_\_\_\_ to vote against any commission or scheme that will cut the Social Security benefits I earned over a lifetime!

Sincerely,

Sincerely Yours,

[Name, Alliance position] [Address]

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

[Date]

Dear Editor:

August 14th marks the 89th anniversary of Social Security, which helps nearly 68 million seniors, persons with disabilities, widow(er)s, and children who have lost a parent.

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

More than 80% of House Republicans signed onto this plan which raises the retirement age, cuts benefits by \$1.5 trillion, 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,





**2024 Anniversary Toolkit**  
Sample Letters to the Editor

[Name, Alliance position] [Address]