



**Alliance for Retired Americans**

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

Spanish version: [www.alianzadejubilados.org](http://www.alianzadejubilados.org)

September 13, 2024

## Vice President Harris Highlights Need to Lower Drug Prices During Presidential Debate

“Last night’s presidential debate proved that the health and well-being of older Americans are only on the mind of one candidate for president: **Kamala Harris**,” [said Richard Fiesta](#), Executive Director of the Alliance, in a Wednesday statement.



Arizona Alliance debate watch party

“Despite the moderators neglecting to ask the candidates about Social Security, Medicare, or how to lower prescription drug prices, Vice President Harris made sure to talk about her record of strengthening retirement security and siding with seniors, not drug corporations,” Fiesta continued.

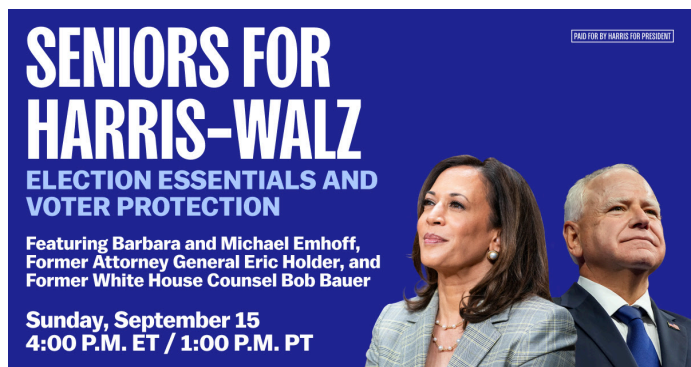
Noting that Harris is well aware Americans pay the highest prices in the world for

prescription drugs, Fiesta drew attention to Harris’ reminding viewers that insulin co-pays are capped at \$35 per month for millions of seniors and that Medicare is negotiating lower drug prices thanks to the Biden-Harris Administration's Inflation Reduction Act.

The Vice President also spoke about strengthening and protecting Social Security and Medicare, the earned benefits that former President **Donald Trump** has said he would be willing to [cut](#) if he wins in November.

“Our members are hard at work educating their friends, families and neighbors about what’s at stake for older Americans in this election, and the [clear differences](#) between the two candidates for president,” Fiesta concluded.

### You're invited: Election Essentials Webinar with Former AG Eric Holder and Former White House Counsel Bob Bauer



Join us - Sunday, September 15, 2024 at 4pm ET / 1pm PT:

<https://events.democrats.org/event/690134/>

### Senate Budget Committee Hosts Hearing, “Social Security Forever: Delivering Benefits and Protecting Retirement Security”

The U.S. Senate Committee on the Budget held a hearing on Social Security solvency and the future protection of beneficiary benefits Wednesday. Chairman **Sheldon Whitehouse** (RI) stated that his goal was to ensure the nation continues to uphold Social Security, which he called “a pillar of retirement security that distributes benefits to nearly 70 million Americans.”



Sen. Whitehouse (left) with Roger Boudreau

Chairman Whitehouse has introduced legislation in the Senate to extend Social Security’s solvency. His bill, S. 1174, *The Medicare and Social Security Fair Share Act*, extends Social Security’s solvency indefinitely by increasing the share that taxpayers earning over \$400,000 in income contribute to the program.

Social Security Administration (SSA) Commissioner **Martin O’Malley** testified and reported that SSA under his leadership has, in less than one year, reduced wait times for disability hearings by almost 30%, reduced phone call wait times by more than 40%, and ensured that more Social Security beneficiaries receive their benefits within two weeks of

applying. He strongly encouraged Congress to increase the SSA’s administrative budget and explained in detail the importance of providing additional funding.

Alliance executive board member **Roger Boudreau** also testified. He stressed that passage of legislation such as the chairman's bill to extend Social Security solvency is critical. He also fielded questions about legislation to repeal the [Government Pension Offset \(GPO\) and Windfall Elimination Provision \(WEP\)](#). Those provisions reduce Social Security benefits for public sector retirees who receive a public pension or the spouse or survivor of a Social Security beneficiary who worked for a period of time in a job not covered by the Social Security program. He shared powerful stories of the hardships fellow Rhode Island teachers have endured because of the GPO and WEP.

Boudreau's opening statement comes at the 1 hour 47 minute mark of the [video from the hearing](#).

## **Election Officials Warn That Pervasive Problems with U.S. Mail System Could Disrupt Voting**

State and local election officials from across the country [have warned](#) that problems with the nation's mail delivery system threaten to disenfranchise voters in the upcoming presidential election.

In a disturbing letter, the officials said that over the past year, including the primary season that just ended, mailed ballots that had been postmarked on time were received by local election offices days after the deadline to be counted. They also stated that properly addressed election mail was being returned to them as undeliverable, a problem that could automatically send voters to inactive status through no fault of their own and cause chaos when those voters show up to cast ballots.

A new [proposal](#) from DeJoy would change the speed of delivery and mail service based on where customers live and how close they are to regional USPS hubs. Those who live within 50 miles of the Postal Service's largest processing facilities would get faster service. The change is supposed to help USPS financially, but trial runs of the plan's provisions suggest that it will hurt rural areas, which are already trying to recover from the aftermath of previous cost-cutting measures.

"The National Association of Secretaries of State and the National Association of State Election Directors have implored Postmaster General **Louis DeJoy** to take 'immediate and tangible corrective action' to address the ongoing performance issues with USPS election mail service," said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. "We wholeheartedly agree that the Postmaster General must address these issues now to safeguard the election process."

## **Harris-Walz Campaign Adds New Policy Information Affecting Seniors to Website**

The [Harris-Walz campaign](#) has updated the Issues section of its website, including Vice President Harris' positions on important issues affecting seniors such as Social Security, Medicare, and taxes.

Harris plans to strengthen Social Security and Medicare for the long haul by making millionaires and billionaires pay their fair share in taxes.

"Use the information to educate your friends and neighbors about the issues, and also tell them to make sure they are registered to vote," said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. "You can check your registration by entering your address at [www.vote.org](http://www.vote.org) to confirm your voting status and find out when voting begins in your community."

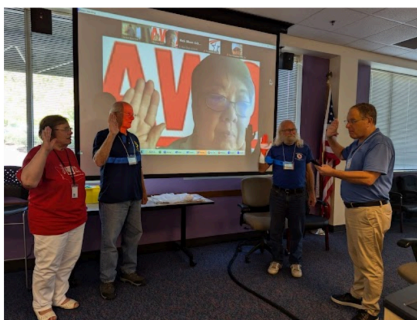


## Alliance Chapters Hold Conventions in Ohio, Washington State, and Massachusetts

On Tuesday, the Ohio Alliance hosted their Fall Convention, which focused on both the state and federal issues at stake in the election. Reelecting **Sherrod Brown** for U.S. Senate is a top priority, and ending gerrymandering is Issue 1 on the statewide ballot. Three seats are open on the Ohio Supreme Court, and members were reminded to re-elect U.S. Representatives including **Marcy Kaptur**, **Emilia Sykes**, and **Greg Landsman**. In addition, attendees passed a resolution thanking **President Biden** for his pro-worker, pro-union work and accomplishments. The resolution will be brought before the Ohio AFL-CIO convention on September 24.

Also on Tuesday, Executive Director Fiesta spoke at the Washington State Alliance (WSARA) Convention in Federal Way, Washington. Sen. **Maria Cantwell's** outreach director accepted a Retiree Hero award on behalf of Sen. Cantwell, who earned a score of 100% in the Alliance's annual [Congressional Voting Record](#), at the event.

Washington State labor council president **April Sims** also spoke. WSARA members elected a new treasurer, **Don Bennett** from NALC (National Association of Letter Carriers); and three union vice presidents: **Marsha Beck**, CWA (Communications Workers of America); **Steve Kofahl**, AFGE (American Federation of Government Employees); and **Mary Lindsey**, WEA (Washington Education Association).



State conventions, clockwise from top: Ohio members show their support for Sen. Sherrod Brown; Massachusetts members gather for their 10th anniversary; and in Washington State, left to right: Mary Lindsey, Steve Kofahl, Don Bennett, and Rich Fiesta. On screen in background: Marsha Beck.

The Massachusetts Alliance celebrated its 10th anniversary Thursday in Dorchester, Mass. They elected the the following officers: **Marilyn Marion** from BTU (Boston Teachers Union) - President; **John Ratliff** (UAW) - Recording Secretary; **Janet Walker** (AFGE) - Vice President; **Roz Avant**



(BTU) - Treasurer; and **Mickie Dumont** (United Teachers of Lowell) - Corresponding Secretary. **Tommy McLaughlin**, Alliance Field Manager, spoke on behalf of the national Alliance.

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The Alliance for Retired Americans is a national grassroots advocacy organization with 4.4 million members fighting for retirement security for all Americans. [www.retiredamericans.org](http://www.retiredamericans.org) @activeretirees