



FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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Some Republicans are Already Planning to Repeal Medicare Drug Price Negotiation if They Win in November

Multiple high-ranking Congressional Republicans have [told Axios](#) they want to repeal the Inflation Reduction Act's (IRA's) Medicare drug price negotiations next year if they prevail in the elections.

The law requires the president to negotiate prices for some drugs, and last month the first round of talks yielded agreements to lower the list prices of [10 widely used drugs](#). Vice President **Kamala Harris** has called for expanding the negotiations and making more drugs subject to price talks if she's elected.

Rep. **Buddy Carter** (R-GA) said the IRA drug pricing provisions are "the worst legislation I've ever witnessed in 10 years in Congress and 10 years in the state legislature" and he "absolutely" wants to repeal them. And Sen. **Thom Tillis** (R-NC) said he "100%" wants to repeal the negotiation provisions, while other drug pricing sections of the law would need to be evaluated based on whether they have "a positive impact on business."

Former President **Donald Trump** claimed to be for drug price negotiations while in office. According to [Axios](#), "he could still be open to repealing the IRA drug price measures, and his campaign isn't elaborating."

"Medicare beneficiaries will save \$1.5 billion in out-of-pocket costs and taxpayers will save \$6 billion in the first year alone when the [new prices](#) from price negotiation go into effect in 2026," said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. "Any GOP plan to end price negotiation would defy logic, but nevertheless some politicians are talking about doing just that."

Graves-Spanberger Discharge Petition Reaches 218 Signatures, Enough to Force U.S. House Vote on Bipartisan Bill to Eliminate WEP & GPO

Last week, Representatives **Garret Graves** (R-LA) and **Abigail Spanberger** (D-VA) [filed](#) a discharge petition to force a House vote on H.R. 82, the Social Security Fairness Act, which would eliminate both the [Windfall Elimination Provision \(WEP\)](#) and the [Government Pension Offset \(GPO\)](#). These two provisions unfairly reduce or eliminate earned Social Security benefits for approximately 2.8 million Americans who've devoted much of their careers to public service — including police officers, firefighters, educators, and federal, state, and local government employees. The GPO reduces Social Security benefits for 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.

On Thursday Reps. Graves and Spanberger announced that their discharge petition for the bipartisan legislation has hit 218 signatures — the number required to force a vote in the U.S. House.

Now that the discharge petition has 218 signatures, the petition will sit on the U.S. House Calendar for seven legislative days. After that period, Reps. Graves and Spanberger will request that the Speaker schedule it for a vote before the full U.S. House of Representatives. According to U.S. House rules, a vote will be scheduled within two legislative days. [Click here](#) to learn more about the discharge procedure in the U.S. House.

Reps. Graves and Spanberger hosted a press conference alongside representatives of retired police officers, firefighters, letter carriers, government employees, and educators from across the country on Thursday. [Click here](#) to watch.

Early Voting Gets Under Way in Some States

Voters in some of the seven battleground states that are expected to decide the November 5 presidential election will start casting ballots [as soon as this week](#). Municipalities in Wisconsin were required to send out “mail ballots” by September 19.



The vast majority of voters across the country will be able to cast their votes [early in person or by mail in most states](#) if that is their preference. An eligible reason to vote by mail is needed only in Alabama, Mississippi, New Hampshire, and West Virginia, where an early voting option is not available to all voters.

Americans have seen a dramatic expansion in their ability to vote early in person and by mail in recent years. The [Center for Election Innovation and Research](#) noted that in 2000, just 40% of voters had access to early voting, either in person or by mail. Now, 97% have at least one option to vote before Election Day. To confirm your registration status and learn more about election dates, deadlines and voting rules in your state, go to www.vote.org.

“The Alliance urges our members to lock in your vote early, if possible,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr., Secretary-Treasurer** of the Alliance. “Make a plan to vote and return your ballot early to avoid mail delays and ensure there are no last-minute problems.”

KFF Health News: Historic Numbers of Americans Live by Themselves as They Age By Judith Graham

Gerri Norington, 78, never wanted to be on her own as she grew old.

But her first marriage ended in divorce, and her second husband died more than 30 years ago. When a five-year relationship came to a close in 2006, she found herself alone — a situation that has lasted since.



“I miss having a companion who I can talk to and ask ‘How was your day?’ or ‘What do you think of what’s going on in the world?’” said Norington, who lives in an apartment building for seniors on the South Side of Chicago. Although she has a loving daughter in the city, “I don’t want to be a burden to her,” she said.

Norington is part of a large but often overlooked group: the more than 16 million Americans living alone while growing old. Surprisingly little is known about their experiences.

Gerri Norington is part of a large but often overlooked group: the more than 16 million Americans living alone while growing old. Their experiences have not been well studied. (TAYLOR GLASCOCK FOR *KFF HEALTH NEWS*)

This slice of the older population has significant health issues: Nearly 4 in 10 seniors living alone have vision or hearing loss, difficulty caring for themselves and living independently, problems with cognition, or other disabilities, according to a *KFF* analysis of 2022 census data.

Read more [here](#).

Alliance Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

Alliance members are joining the AFL-CIO in marking Hispanic Heritage Month, which runs from September 15 - October 15, 2024.

The White House marked the occasion with an event on Wednesday. In his [remarks](#), President **Biden** noted that more Hispanics have health insurance than ever before.

Social Security is particularly important for the Hispanic community, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#). Because Hispanic-Americans have higher life expectancies once they reach ages 65 and 75 than the population at large, they are likely to rely on their earned benefits for longer.

“During Hispanic Heritage month, we celebrate the accomplishments of our friends in the Hispanic community who have played such a major role in building both the union movement and our nation,” said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. “We thank our allies and partners at the [Labor Council for Latin American Advancement \(LCLAA\)](#) for their work to help get out the Hispanic Labor vote in the upcoming elections.”