



FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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GOP Lawmakers Prepare to Slash Social Security and Medicare

A growing number of Republican lawmakers are openly calling for Congress to cut earned Social Security and Medicare benefits in 2025.

Earlier this month, Rep. **Rich McCormick** (GA) [warned](#) that cuts are on the way, saying that his party will have to make some “hard decisions” about Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Sen. **Mike Lee** (UT) [doubled down](#) on his previous calls to dismantle Social Security in a thread on X, which close Trump advisor **Elon Musk** promptly retweeted.

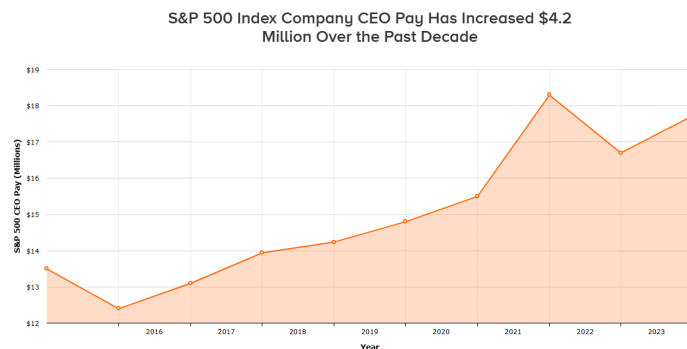
Musk and his allies have made it clear that nothing is off limits when it comes to Donald Trump’s Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) commission, which is leading the charge for cuts. Rep. **Ralph Norman** (OK) [told reporters](#) that “nothing is sacrosanct” and Rep. **Mark Alford** (MO) said the GOP will have to “take a look” at Social Security and Medicare. Outside the DOGE Caucus’ first meeting last week, Rep. **Greg Lopez** (CO) was even more direct, [admitting that](#) they are “on the table.”

When presented with a copy of a Donald Trump campaign mailer promising not to cut essential earned benefits, Rep. **Marjorie Taylor Greene** (GA) threw it on the floor and [refused](#) to make the same promise. Outgoing Republican Governor **Chris Sununu** (NH) [said](#) that DOGE’s ultimate goal should be to privatize Social Security.

“We should be angered but not surprised that cutting earned benefits has emerged as a top priority for Republicans, despite their campaign promises. Alliance members have successfully defeated past threats to Social Security and Medicare and we’re ready to do it again,” said Alliance Executive Director **Richard Fiesta**. “The vast majority of Americans want to strengthen Social Security and Medicare by asking the wealthiest Americans to pay their fair share into the system. It’s our job to make sure Congress and Donald Trump understand that they will pay a price for raising the retirement age or slashing benefits.”

Executive Pay Continues to Skyrocket While Wages Remain Stagnant

CEOs made an average of \$17.7 million in total compensation last year, according to the [AFL-CIO's latest "Executive Paywatch" report](#). Executive compensation has continued to rise steadily since 2016, increasing by 6% between 2022 and 2023. The gap between CEO and worker pay [narrowed slightly](#), with CEOs making 268 times more than the average worker compared to 272 times more in 2022.



Meanwhile, employee wages have increased slightly, but the rate of these gains has declined, going from a 7% increase in March 2022 to a mere 3.9% increase in November 2024. Workers also [have less of a share in corporate income](#) than they used to, going from a nearly 80% share of corporate income in 2020 to a 71% share as of July 2024.

“The fact that the gap between worker pay and executive pay continues to increase at such breakneck speed is deeply concerning. It fuels inequality and negatively impacts retirement security,” said Alliance President **Robert Roach, Jr.** “Ensuring that workers can form or join a union is the best way to address these issues, and why the Alliance will always stand with organized labor.”

Biden Plan to Increase Nursing Home Safety and Staffing Levels in Danger

President-elect Donald Trump and Republicans are [pushing hard to overturn](#) the Biden administration’s nursing home staffing mandate before it can take effect. Twenty Republican state Attorneys General [joined forces](#) with the nursing home industry’s lobbying groups, filing legal challenges in an attempt to quash the rule.

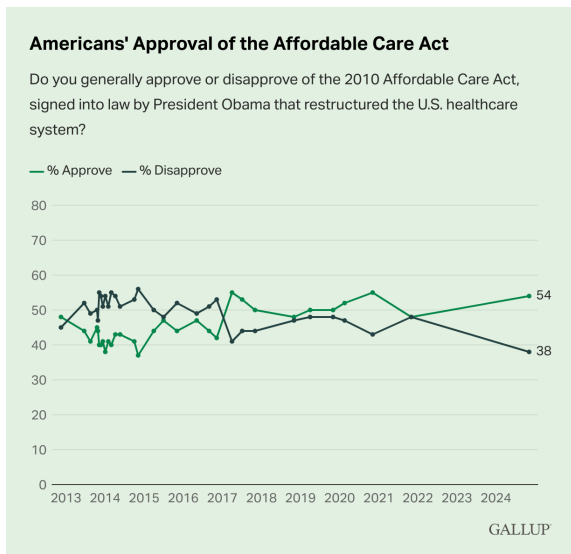
GOP lawmakers in both chambers immediately offered joint resolutions to rescind the mandate once it was finalized. Most recently, House Republicans even tried to use the must-pass legislation to fund the government as a backdoor for repeal, [sending a proposal](#) to include it in a package of health care policies added to the continuing resolution.

The rules state that nursing homes will be required to have a registered nurse on site 24 hours a day and make sure every resident has at least 3.48 hours of nursing care a day. Urban facilities will need to meet staffing requirements in 2027 and rural facilities will need to fulfill staffing obligations in 2029.

Majority of Americans Have Positive Views of the Affordable Care Act, Medicare

Support for the Affordable Care Act has reached its highest level in more than ten years, with 62% of Americans saying they approve of the law, according to a [recent poll from Gallup](#). Approval

rates increased for all political affiliations, with Republicans' approval rating increasing nearly 10% since 2021. Americans also have a positive view of Medicare. Nearly 90% of enrollees [reported satisfaction with their coverage](#) in a survey conducted earlier this year.



This contrasts starkly with Americans' level of satisfaction with private insurance coverage and quality, which has [declined significantly](#) since 2001. Only 44% of U.S. adults rate the quality of healthcare as either good or excellent, with 54% saying it is either fair or poor. Respondents reported decreased levels of satisfaction with the health system regardless of their political affiliation.

Americans rating private insurance and the Affordable Care Act identified healthcare cost and access as the top urgent health issues currently facing the nation. Those rating Medicare coverage said the reduction or elimination of benefits in the future was particularly concerning to them.

Authorities Highlight Potential Scams Targeting Older Americans this Holiday Season

As older Americans celebrate the holidays, federal authorities are [warning](#) about potential fraudsters. The number of older Americans reporting losses of more than \$100,000 to scams [has tripled](#) since 2020, according to data from the Federal Trade Commission.

The advent of artificial intelligence (AI) has [exacerbated](#) the risk, particularly the "Grandparent Scam" in which fraudsters pose as a victim's grandchild using AI voice cloning technology. They pretend to be in trouble and ask the victim to send money. Experts recommend that seniors and their loved ones use a code word known only to them that can be used to verify each others' identities and shut down potential scammers.

There are other steps that older Americans and their loved ones can take to shut down scammers. Eldercare Locator [released a guide](#) with resources and relevant contact information as part of their "Home for the Holidays" 2024 campaign.

KFF Health News: A Centenarian Thrives Living Alone, Active and Engaged

"The future is here," the email announced. Hilda Jaffe, then 88, was letting her children know she planned to sell the family home in Verona, New Jersey. She'd decided to begin life anew — on her own — in a one-bedroom apartment in Hell's Kitchen in Manhattan.

Fourteen years later, Jaffe, now 102, still lives alone — just a few blocks away from the frenetic flashing lights and crowds that course through Times Square.

She's the rarest of seniors: a centenarian who is sharp as a tack, who carries grocery bags in each hand when she walks back from her local market, and who takes city buses to see her physicians or attend a matinee at the Metropolitan Opera.

Jaffe cleans her own house, does her own laundry, manages her own finances, and stays in touch with a far-flung network of family and friends via email, WhatsApp, and Zoom. Her son, Richard Jaffe, 78, lives in San Jose, California. Her daughter, Barbara Vendrigger, 75, lives in Tel Aviv.

She's an extraordinary example of an older adult living by herself and thriving.

Read more [here](#).

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 @activeretirees