



FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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January 24, 2025

President Trump Halts Efforts to Lower Prescription Drug Prices for Seniors on First Day in Office

On Monday President **Donald Trump** [rolled back a Biden administration](#) initiative to lower drug prices for Medicare beneficiaries, make certain treatments more affordable for people with Medicaid, and strengthen the Affordable Care Act. The rules that he revoked would have capped copays for generic prescription drugs at \$2 for Medicare beneficiaries and directed Medicare and Medicaid to test models that could lower prices.

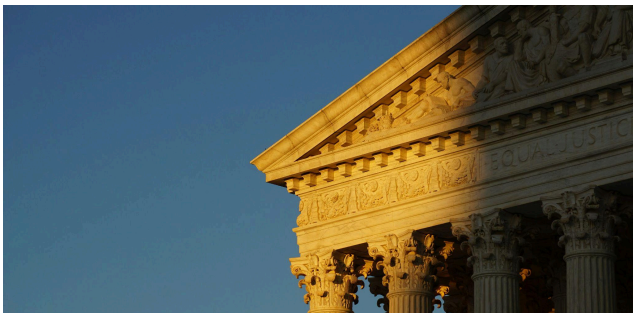
Monday's action did not affect the Inflation Reduction Act, which capped insulin copays at \$35 a month, capped out-of-pocket drug expenses at \$2,000 a year, and made recommended vaccines free for Medicare beneficiaries. But that [does not mean](#) that these laws are secure.

Key Republican members of Congress and the Trump Administration's Project 2025 blueprint call for repealing the Inflation Reduction Act. Moreover, Senate Finance Committee Chair **Mike Crapo** (ID) confirmed that he wants to repeal Medicare's ability to negotiate lower drug prices for seniors.

"President **Trump** sent a clear signal by blocking a plan to lower drug prices for seniors on his very first day in office," said **Robert Roach Jr.**, President of the Alliance. "We are ready to fight to protect the progress we have made and make sure patients can get the drugs they need to stay healthy."

Supreme Court Set to Hear Case Challenging Key Affordable Care Act Provision

Last week, the Supreme Court [agreed to consider](#) a lawsuit seeking to eliminate the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) preventive services requirement.



The Texas employers who filed the lawsuit argue the mandate should be overturned because U.S. Preventive Services Task Force – which recommends preventive services that should be

fully covered under the ACA – consists of unelected officials and is therefore unconstitutional. If Supreme Court justices agree with their argument, free preventive care for Americans will be in jeopardy – including annual wellness checks and health screenings for Medicare beneficiaries.

“The Affordable Care Act is important for older Americans and losing the free preventive services it provides for Medicare beneficiaries would be a blow,” said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. “We will pay close attention to this case and work hard to ensure that seniors don’t lose these health benefits.”

President Trump Takes Aim at Federal Workers

This week President Trump also issued an executive order [reviving Schedule F](#), a plan from his first term that seeks to remove civil service protections from federal workers by reclassifying them, making it easier for his administration to fire and replace government employees with political loyalists who will do his bidding.

“Let’s be clear about who these federal workers are that **Trump** wants to be able to remove without due process,” said **Liz Shuler**, President of the AFL-CIO. “They are the people who care for our veterans at Veterans Affairs centers, make sure our families get their Social Security retirement and disability checks, protect our airports and passengers, inspect our food to ensure it’s safe to eat, and help survivors of disasters—like the North Carolina floods or California fires—get the support they need to rebuild.”

Everett Kelley, President of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), [added](#): “AFGE urges Congress to intervene immediately to stop Schedule F. Every American has a stake in ensuring that federal employees remain free to carry out the mission of the agencies that employ them without fear of political interference.”

AFGE, along with Public Citizen and the State Democracy Defenders Fund, filed a federal lawsuit on Monday [challenging Schedule F](#).

Long-Term Care Industry Prepares for Fallout from Immigration Plans

CNN reported this week that long-term care facilities [are bracing](#) for increased staffing shortages and decreased quality of care if President Trump’s anti-immigration plans proceed as expected.

Immigrants make up a large portion of the long-term care workforce, accounting for 42.4% of home health aides, 4.2% of nursing assistants, and 30% of non-direct care workers such as housekeepers and dietary services staff. 84% of certified nursing assistants (CNAs) – who perform essential duties such as escorting patients to the bathroom, dressing and feeding them, giving them medication and talking to them – are also immigrants.

The number of Americans 65 years and older is expected to [increase 47% by 2050](#), eventually comprising 23% of the population. The need for elder care is also expected to double by that time,

threatening to exacerbate problems with demand that often already outpaces the available supply of workers.

“Vulnerable patients and their families should be very concerned about the threat of mass deportations and what it may mean for the long-term care facilities in their communities,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance.

Alliance Allies Named to Key Positions at PBGC

Davey Grubbs, Vice President of the National United Committee to Protect Pensions (NUCPP) and member of the Alliance, [has joined](#) the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) Advisory Committee. A retired Teamsters truck driver, **Grubbs** has pushed for solutions to the multiemployer pension crisis and served as director of the North Carolina Committee to Protect Pensions. He will advise the committee on investment policy and other matters.

PBGC [also selected](#) **Anne Henderson**, who has presented at several Alliance retirement security symposiums, as the agency’s new Participant and Plan Sponsor Advocate. In this position, she will work with private sector defined benefit pension plan participants to make sure they receive their benefits. Previously, she served as senior advisor in the PBGC Office of Policy and External Affairs.

“We congratulate Davey and Anne and look forward to working with them to make sure the rights and needs of beneficiaries are heard,” said President Roach. “We are proud to have supported Davey’s appointment to this position because he understands the issues facing retirees and the PBGC. Both Davey and Anne bring experience and expertise that the PBGC can rely on as it fulfills its important mission to protect the pension benefits workers have earned.”

KFF Health News: The Growing Inequality in Life Expectancy Among Americans by Amy Maxmen

The life expectancy among Native Americans in the western United States has dropped below 64 years, close to life expectancies in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Haiti. For many Asian Americans, it’s around 84 — on par with life expectancies in Japan and Switzerland.

Americans’ health has long been unequal, but [a new study](#) shows that the disparity between the life expectancies of different populations has nearly doubled since 2000. “This is like comparing very different countries,” said Tom Bollyky, director of the global health program at the Council on Foreign Relations and an author of the study.

Called “Ten Americas,” the analysis published late last year in *The Lancet* found that “one’s life expectancy varies dramatically depending on where one lives, the economic conditions in that location, and one’s racial and ethnic identity.” The worsening health of specific populations is a key reason the country’s [overall life expectancy](#) — at 75 years for men and 80 for women — is the shortest among wealthy nations.

To deliver on pledges from the new Trump administration to make America healthy again, policymakers will need to fix problems undermining life expectancy across all populations.

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