



FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

815 16th Street, NW, Fourth Floor • Washington, DC 20006 • 202.637.5399

www.retiredamericans.org

Spanish version: www.alianzadejubilados.org

February 14, 2025

Republicans Release Dueling Budget Blueprints That Call for Massive Cuts to Health Care and Food Assistance

On Wednesday, House Republicans [unveiled a Fiscal Year 2025 budget resolution](#). The plan calls for \$4.5 trillion in tax cuts and slashing federal spending by \$2 trillion. The \$2 trillion in cuts would come from “mandatory spending” on federal food assistance, Medicare, Social Security, and/or Medicaid but the budget resolution does not specify exactly how much would be cut from each.

Meanwhile, Senate Republicans also [released](#) their budget resolution. The Senate resolution is more narrow and focuses on more spending on immigration enforcement and national security and has already passed the Senate Budget Committee.

Both chambers must reach an agreement on the budget resolution before moving on to drafting bills to enact specific tax or spending cuts.

“We don’t need any more details to see that tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans and corporations are going to be paid for by older Americans and the most vulnerable in our society,” said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. “Poll after poll shows that the American people do not want cuts to Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid and think the wealthiest Americans should pay more in taxes, not less. It’s going to be a tough fight but one we are ready for.”

Alliance Members Join Protests Across the Country

Alliance members and allies in the labor movement are braving the cold and speaking out against the so-called Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), run by **Elon Musk**, this week.

Members of the DOGE team have been placed in federal government agencies and departments, accessed personal data, fired thousands of federal workers, and illegally halted payments for spending that Congress approved prompting numerous lawsuits and criticism.

President Trump signed a new executive order Tuesday giving Musk and DOGE more power, specifically over the size of the federal workforce. The order directs agencies to “undertake plans for large-scale reductions in force” and “coordinate and consult with DOGE” as they work to shrink the size of the workforce.

MD/DC Alliance President **Carol Rosenblatt** and Alliance members joined a “Billionaires out, workers in!” protest at the Department of Labor (DOL) last week. Kentucky Alliance President **Kirk Gillenwaters** and Alliance members participated in a “Stop Elon Musk” rally in Louisville with more than 500 activists – including American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)

members, seniors, teachers, and youth – at the IBEW Local 369 Union Hall to protest DOGE, Elon Musk, and Project 2025. Rep. **Morgan McGarvey** (KY) delivered remarks on the unconstitutional actions taken by DOGE and the Trump Administration over the past week.



The momentum continued this week when members of Congress and labor leaders rallied outside the Social Security Administration (SSA) headquarters in Woodlawn, Maryland, demanding that **Musk** and DOGE not mess with Americans’ earned benefits. Alliance

Executive Director **Rich Fiesta** spoke to AFGE retirees during the union’s Legislative Conference Retiree Workshop in Washington, DC on Tuesday and accompanied them to Capitol Hill to meet with their representatives.

Alliance Western Regional board member **Steve Kofahl**, a retired SSA employee, joined a press conference with Washington Senator **Patty Murray** on Wednesday warning that SSA field offices could be closed and beneficiaries may have to wait longer for help from the agency.

“No one is against cutting wasteful government spending. But **Elon Musk** and his DOGE operatives should not have unfettered access to Americans’ private, personal data and should not be able to block spending that Congress has approved,” said Alliance President **Robert Roach, Jr.** “We are grateful to our members for showing up and standing up for federal workers and all Americans.”

Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is Confirmed by the Senate

On Thursday, the U.S. Senate [voted to confirm](#) **Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.** as Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS). The vote was 52 to 48, with Sen. **Mitch McConnell** (KY) joining all Democrats in opposition.

He was confirmed despite concerns over his management experience, lack of knowledge of Medicare and Medicaid, and anti-vaccine positions. Kennedy will also be responsible for the Medicare drug price negotiation program.

Although at times President Trump has voiced support for negotiating lower drug prices, during Kennedy's confirmation hearings, he [did not](#) provide senators with any assurances about the future of Medicare drug price negotiations.

"Secretary Kennedy has long been a critic of the pharmaceutical industry," said Alliance Secretary-Treasurer **Joseph Peters, Jr.** "We hope that he will embrace the power that he has under the law to lower prescription drug prices and make healthcare more affordable for seniors and taxpayers."

Oklahoma Retirees Form 40th State Alliance Chapter

On Monday, the Oklahoma Alliance held its founding convention at Teamsters 886 Union Hall in Oklahoma City.

Executive Director Fiesta gave a presentation on retiree issues. **Tim O'Connor** (Central Oklahoma Labor Federation) was elected President, **Sabra Tucker** (Oklahoma Retired Educators Association) was elected Secretary, and **Dennis Hanson** (Teamsters) was elected Treasurer.



Alliance Releases 2024 Activity Report

The Alliance published its [2024 Activity Report](#) detailing the progress made in the fight for retirement security last year. From the passage of the Social Security Fairness Act to electing pro-retiree candidates to office and standing up for voting rights, it was a productive year.

"Our work would not be possible without continued support from our members," said Alliance President **Roach**. "We appreciate the opportunity to advocate for older Americans and look forward to continuing that work for years to come."