



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 21, 2025

House of Representatives Will Vote on Budget Resolution That Fast Tracks Massive Medicaid and Tax Cuts Next Week

The House of Representatives is [set to vote](#) on its Fiscal Year 2025 budget resolution next week. The blueprint, unveiled by House Republicans last week, calls for giving \$4.5 trillion in tax cuts to billionaires and wealthy corporations by slashing \$1.5 trillion from Medicaid and food assistance. President Trump has already [endorsed the plan](#), despite promising not to cut Medicaid.

ACTION ALERT – The Alliance is urging people to call **866-748-9411** to be connected with their representatives' offices. Demand that they vote no on the budget resolution when it reaches the House floor for a vote.

"It is outrageous to pay for tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans and corporations on the backs of seniors and working people," said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. "Please call your representatives and tell them to vote no on this bad plan."

Turmoil at Social Security Administration as Acting Commissioner Resigns After Trying to Block Musk Team's Unwarranted Data Access

Social Security Administration (SSA) Acting Commissioner **Michelle King**, a 30-year public servant and veteran of the agency, [resigned](#) this week after refusing to provide **Elon Musk** and operatives access to sensitive SSA data.

President Trump [appointed](#) **Leland Dudek**, who worked in SSA's anti-fraud office, as a replacement, and DOGE operatives were able to gain access to the data.



Alliance members took action this week to protest indiscriminate firing of civil servants and giving Musk's team access to SSA's systems. Maryland/DC members [joined](#) a rally outside of SpaceX's Washington, DC office and Texas members [joining](#) the Dallas AFL-CIO for a protest over the weekend.

"Every American should be alarmed that Elon Musk's minions have been given access to the Social Security databases and computer systems. This is an unprecedented action that puts our financial security at risk and raises questions about their plans for our earned benefits," said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance, [in a statement](#) released on Tuesday. "Seniors who paid for the Social Security benefits they have earned over a lifetime should not have to worry about whether their benefits will be paid or whether their data will be stolen or abused."

Elon Musk has spoken about Social Security throughout the past week, spreading misinformation, [including a false claim](#) that "millions" of dead people are collecting benefits. In fact, while there is a Social Security database with names of Americans who do not have an official death date, [those names are not on the list](#) of people receiving benefits.

Wisconsin Alliance Wins Voting Rights Case as Wisconsin Supreme Court Rejects Attempts to Restrict Absentee Voting

In a 4-3 vote earlier this week, the Wisconsin Supreme Court [dismissed a case](#) that would have restricted voting absentee by mail in the state. The Wisconsin Alliance intervened in the case to defend access to early absentee voting sites.

The case began December, 2022, when a conservative group called the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty (WILL) filed a [lawsuit](#) on behalf of a Racine voter against the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) and the city clerk of Racine for implementing mobile voting vans and early absentee ballot sites.



They claimed that Wisconsin law requires alternate absentee ballot sites to be as close to the clerk's office as possible and that the mobile voting vans gave the Democratic party an advantage.

"Today is a good day for older voters in Wisconsin," said **Ross Winklbauer**, President of the Wisconsin Alliance for Retired Americans. "Older voters are the most likely to vote by mail and thanks to this decision there will be more in-person options available to securely return their ballots."

Medicare Advantage Increases Financial Strain for Rural Hospitals

New research indicates that Medicare Advantage (MA) policies exacerbate financial hardship for rural hospitals, with 75% of rural hospital leaders identifying Medicare Advantage as their “[most challenging](#)” insurance payer.

The American Hospital Association [highlights three](#) MA plan tactics that hurt rural hospital administrators and providers. First, MA insurers often refuse to approve medical procedures, delay payments to hospitals, or deny payments entirely, increasing administrative burdens for hospital staff. Second, overly onerous MA requirements negatively affect the quality of care and reduce access to care for patients. Third, MA plans generally pay providers much less than the actual cost of care.

The combined effects of these policies are [directly impacting patient care](#), often forcing rural hospitals to cut essential services including obstetrics, mental health, and rehabilitation. Many hospital leaders fear they will join the [over 700 rural hospitals](#) already at risk of closure, leaving their communities without essential healthcare services.

“These new analyses show that Medicare Advantage is not always the best option for rural providers or their patients, despite claims that MA plans are more efficient than traditional Medicare,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance.

KFF Health News: GOP Takes Aim at Medicaid, Putting Enrollees and Providers at Risk

Medicaid is under threat — again.

Republicans, who narrowly control Congress, are pushing proposals that could sharply cut funding to the government health insurance program for poor and disabled Americans, as a way to finance President Donald Trump’s agenda for tax cuts and border security.

Democrats, hoping to block the GOP’s plans and preserve Medicaid funding, are rallying support from hospitals, governors, and consumer advocates.

At stake is coverage for roughly 79 million people enrolled in Medicaid and its related Children’s Health Insurance Program. So, too, is the financial health of thousands of hospitals and community health centers — and a huge revenue source to all states.

[Read more here.](#)