



FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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GOP Budget and Tax Plan Advances in the House of Representatives

The House of Representatives moved closer to a final vote on its so-called “big, beautiful bill” tax and spending plan this week.

As of today, the plan calls for \$715 billion in cuts to Medicaid and \$300 billion in cuts to food assistance programs. It also includes \$3.7 trillion in tax cuts and a debt ceiling increase.

The scale of the health care cuts and tax breaks for the wealthy spawned strong opposition on Capitol Hill. More than 25 people, including several in wheelchairs, were arrested for “illegally demonstrating” as the House Energy and Commerce Committee debated cuts to Medicaid.

Twenty-five percent of the tax cuts go to the top 1 percent of Americans. In addition, the bill includes tax breaks for off-shoring jobs, subsidies for private school tuition, ends investments in clean energy, increases spending on border security, and adds \$3.87 trillion over 10 years to the budget deficit.

House Speaker **Mike Johnson** (LA) says he will bring the package for a floor vote next week. But Senate Republicans on Wednesday signaled that they intend to revise the legislation.

“I think we’ve assumed all along that the Senate would have its input on this,” [said](#) Senate Majority Leader **John Thune** (SD). “Obviously, there’s 53 Republican senators who want to have their own thoughts and ideas incorporated.”

“This fight is not over by a long shot,” said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. “Members of Congress are feeling the pressure and we need to make sure everyone knows that cuts of this magnitude will hurt the millions of older Americans who rely on Medicaid to pay for prescriptions, home care services, and nursing home care.”

ACTION NEEDED: [Click here to send a message to your member of Congress demanding they vote against any Medicaid cuts.](#)

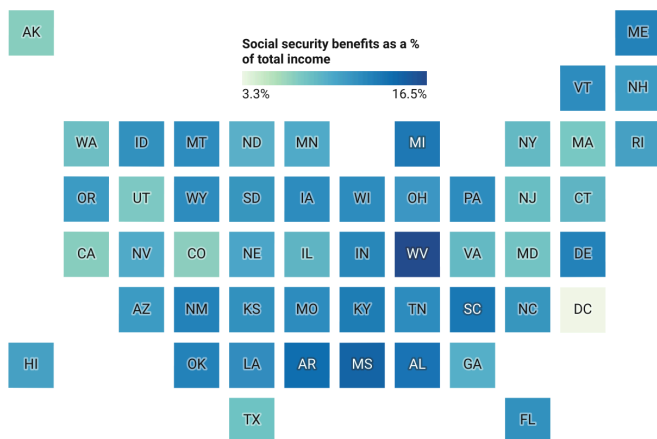
States in the Midwest and the South Are Most Vulnerable to Social Security Cuts

Any disruption or cuts to Social Security benefits will hurt Americans who live in Southern and Midwestern states the most, according to a [new report](#) from the *Economic Policy Institute*. The report reinforced the importance of Social Security to the U.S. economy, with the benefits paid to 73 million Americans every month accounting for 10% of consumer spending.

Social Security benefits make up the largest percentage of income in states in these regions, particularly in West Virginia (16.5 percent), Mississippi (14.7 percent), Arkansas (13.9 percent), Alabama (13.4 percent), and South Carolina (13.3 percent). States with the lowest percentage of Social Security benefits as a share of income, on the other hand, were all in the Western or Eastern parts of the country: District of Columbia (3.3 percent), Colorado (7 percent), Alaska (7.1 percent), California (7.1 percent), and Utah (7.4 percent).

Figure A. States most vulnerable to Social Security cuts and disruptions

Social Security benefits as a share of total income by state, 2023



Source: Total OASDI benefits from the Social Security Administration, Congressional Statistics, 2023 and aggregated total individual income from the Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2023 1-Year estimates [Table B19313] • Created with Datawrapper

“This research proves once again how vital Social Security is. Retirees spend the Social Security benefits they earn and contribute to their local economy,” said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. “We will make sure our elected officials know that any disruption to our benefits will hurt seniors as well as the businesses where we spend our money. Nothing is more important than making sure our guaranteed, earned benefits are protected.”

Executive Director Fiesta Briefs Machinists on Threats to Retirement Security and How to Fight Back

Alliance Executive Director **Richard Fiesta** spoke to retirees from the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) this week. He provided an overview of the Alliance’s work and updated attendees on key retiree issues, including a rundown of **Elon Musk** and the

Department of Government Efficiency's (DOGE) efforts to dismantle the Social Security Administration and threats to Medicaid posed by House Republicans' budget resolution.

KFF Health News: Honey, Sweetie, Dearie: The Perils of Elderspeak
By Paula Span

A prime example of elderspeak: Cindy Smith was visiting her father in his assisted living apartment in Roseville, California. An aide who was trying to induce him to do something — Smith no longer remembers exactly what — said, “Let me help you, sweetheart.”

“He just gave her The Look — under his bushy eyebrows — and said, ‘What, are we getting married?’” recalled Smith, who had a good laugh, she said. Her father was then 92, a retired county planner and a World War II veteran; macular degeneration had reduced the quality of his vision, and he used a walker to get around, but he remained cognitively sharp.

“He wouldn’t normally get too frosty with people,” Smith said. “But he did have the sense that he was a grown-up and he wasn’t always treated like one.”

People understand almost intuitively what “elderspeak” means. “It’s communication to older adults that sounds like baby talk,” said Clarissa Shaw, a dementia care researcher at the University of Iowa College of Nursing and a co-author of a recent article that helps researchers document its use.

[Read more here.](#)