



FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

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New Report Shows How Medicaid Cuts Will Increase Cost of Healthcare for All Americans

A new AFL-CIO report [finds](#) that Senate Republicans' budget reconciliation bill, which includes major Medicaid cuts, will increase healthcare costs — for everyone.

If the bill passes, 179 million workers with job-based insurance could see an increase in premiums by almost \$500 a year for each covered individual. Sixteen million Americans could [lose](#) their healthcare coverage and over 600,000 front-line health care workers would be [fired](#). More than 330 rural hospitals across the country would have to [close](#) as a result of this bill, eliminating those communities' access to care.

"This budget reconciliation bill makes it seem like cutting Medicaid is going to save taxpayers money when it's really going to cost all of us more—all to give tax breaks to the rich," [said](#) AFL-CIO President **Liz Shuler**. "We're not going to let the Republican-controlled Congress make our healthcare more expensive and less accessible for working people."

"This new report confirms what we already knew. The Senate budget plan is just as cruel and devastating as the House version. It will gut Medicare, Medicaid, and food assistance – and still increase the federal deficit – so Republicans can give more tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans," said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. "We must send a loud and clear message that this cannot stand."

[ACTION NEEDED: Click here to tell your senators to vote against the budget proposal when it comes to the floor.](#)

Report Shows Social Security is Strong and Solvent

The following statement was issued by Richard Fiesta, Executive Director of the Alliance for Retired Americans, regarding the Trustees reports on the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds [released](#) this week:

“Older American retirees can feel confident about their Social Security based on the Trustees’ report released today.

Today’s report reaffirms that the Social Security Trust Fund is able to pay full benefits and expenses until 2033 as is the Medicare Trust Fund. If Congress does not make any changes, the Social Security Trust Fund will then pay 77% of benefits to all current and future beneficiaries.

However, we cannot be complacent. Republicans in Congress have made clear they are eager to cut the benefits Americans have worked a lifetime to earn. Whether it’s raising the retirement age beyond 67, privatizing Social Security, or continuing the DOGE agenda of dismantling the Social Security Administration to make it harder to claim benefits, the future of our guaranteed benefits is at risk.

There is a better way to strengthen Social Security for current and future generations. 94% of working Americans pay into Social Security with every paycheck. If the wealthiest 6% of Americans had to do the same, current and future generations of Americans would not only receive all the benefits they have earned, but we could increase benefits for those who need it the most.

We urge Congress and the Administration to strengthen Medicare’s finances by reining in the high cost of prescription drugs and allowing Medicare to negotiate lower prices for more drugs. In addition, we urge HHS to hold Medicare Advantage insurance corporations accountable for delivering care at a reasonable cost and crack down on practices that increase corporate profits without improving patient care.

In just a few weeks Medicare will celebrate its 60th anniversary while Social Security will celebrate its 90th. There is no better time for all Americans to commit to strengthening these critical programs. Our children and grandchildren are counting on us.”

Arizona Alliance Hosts Social Security Town Hall



Rep. Greg Stanton, Christy Vezolles, and former SSA Commissioner Martin O'Malley

On Monday, the Arizona Alliance, Honest Arizona, and Protect Our Care hosted a special town hall event with Rep. **Greg Stanton** (AZ) and Former SSA Commissioner **Martin O'Malley**.

O'Malley highlighted the importance of Social Security, detailing the damage that the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) has inflicted on the Social Security Administration and outlining what Arizonans can do about it.

“We’ve seen **Elon Musk** and his DOGE team go through with a chainsaw and bring that agency down to a seven

year low in staffing,” said **O’Malley**. “So, when you see field offices all over in Phoenix, in Tuscon, all over Arizona packed with people there's a reason. It's because they've cut your Social Security, and the only thing that can save us is people rising up, calling their Congresspeople, whether Democrats or Republicans, and telling them ‘I've earned this benefit my whole life’ and fight to defend it.”

"We wanted to do this event because we wanted to get this message across: That there is an attack on Social Security,” said Rep. **Stanton**. “The other side has suggested that they're gonna defend Social Security – it is not true with some of the changes and cuts that we have seen.”

Senate Republicans Release Long-Awaited Budget Bill Details in Lead Up to July 4 Deadline

The Senate Finance Committee [released](#) legislative text that will act as the foundation for the Senate Republican budget bill this week. The text [incorporates](#) many provisions from the House version, like repealing the minimum nursing home staffing rule and making the 2017 Trump tax cuts permanent.

But the new language also targets Medicaid more aggressively. It calls for reducing financial incentives for states that have expanded Medicaid and cutting federal funding for health care facilities that rely on Medicaid. It also reduces federal funding for rural hospitals.

Under the overall Senate budget proposal, certain Medicaid enrollees would have to pay higher copays and the deficit would increase by \$5 trillion instead of the House version’s projected \$4 trillion.

Unlike the House bill, the Senate version does not crack down on Medicare Advantage insurers’ questionable practice of “upcoding” to get higher payments from Medicare.

“Republicans are trying to destroy essential services and increase the financial burden on average Americans in order to pay for more tax breaks for the wealthiest in the country,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “We call on Congress to stop this bill from passing in the Senate and prevent millions from losing access to healthcare.”

KFF Health News: Nurse Practitioners Critical in Treating Older Adults as Ranks of Geriatricians Shrink **By Jariel Arvin**

On Fridays, Stephanie Johnson has a busy schedule, driving her navy-blue Jeep from one patient’s home to the next, seeing eight in all. Pregnant with her second child, she schleps a backpack instead of a traditional black bag to carry a laptop and essential medical supplies — stethoscope, blood pressure cuff, and pulse oximeter.

Forget a lunch break; she often eats a sandwich or some nuts as she heads to her next patient visit.

On a gloomy Friday in January, Johnson, a nurse practitioner who treats older adults, had a hospice consult with Ellen, a patient in her 90s in declining health. To protect Ellen's identity, KFF Health News is not using her last name.

"Hello. How are you feeling?" Johnson asked as she entered Ellen's bedroom and inquired about her pain. The blinds were drawn. Ellen was in a wheelchair, wearing a white sweater, gray sweatpants, and fuzzy socks. A headband was tied around her white hair. As usual, the TV was playing loudly in the background.

"It's fine, except this cough I've had since junior high," Ellen said.

Carefully, Johnson removed the bandage to examine Ellen's toes. Her lower legs were red but cold to the touch, which indicated her condition wasn't improving. Ellen's two younger sisters had power of attorney for her and made it clear that, above all, they wanted her to be comfortable. Now, Johnson thought it was time to have that difficult conversation with them about Ellen's prognosis, recommending her for hospice.

"Our patient isn't just the older adult," Johnson said. "It's also often the family member or the person helping to manage them."

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