FRIDAY ALERT

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House Budget Committee Holds Field Hearing on Fiscal Commission Legislation

On Monday, members of the House Budget Committee held a field hearing entitled "America's Fiscal Future: Examining the Need for a Fiscal Commission" at the Old Parkland business campus in Dallas, Texas. Led by Committee Chair **Jodey Arrington** (TX), members heard from former Defense Secretary **Leon Panetta**, former Sen. **Joe Manchin** (WV), and former Sen. **Rob Portman** (OH) – who all support a fiscal commission.

A fiscal commission is an advisory group created by Congressional leaders in order to develop policy options for reducing the national deficit, including methods to cut earned benefits. The groups usually have a mixture of handpicked lawmakers and outside experts as members.

No witnesses who opposed fiscal commissions testified.

Five Texas Alliance members tried to attend but were forced to stand outside in extreme heat arguing with staff demanding to know who invited them and claiming that there was not room. After 45 minutes, two of the five were allowed in. Billionaire **Harlan Crow** – who owns Old Parkland and is a frequent Republican political donor – attended.

Click to watch a video by Progress Texas showing Alliance members trying to get inside to watch the meeting.

"Passing the buck is simply not the answer. The buck stops here, and I have to admit, I'm a commission skeptic," said Ranking Member **Brendan Boyle** (PA) in his opening statement. "I do fear there are others who would vote for a commission as a way of saying 'oh look, I'm pretending to do something about this now. I can just push this off and ignore it.'"

Last month, the Alliance sent a letter to every member of Congress urging them to oppose three bills that aim to create a fiscal commission: the PROMISE Act (S. 4979), the Fiscal Commission Act (H.R. 3289/S. 4012), and the Bipartisan Social Security Commission Act (H.R. 9187).

“A fiscal commission will not strengthen Social Security and Medicare,” said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. “Every major seniors organization opposes these commissions for a reason. They waste valuable time and send hand-picked people to go behind closed doors, cut our earned benefits without public oversight or input, and then fast-track those cuts through Congress.”

Click here to tell your members to vote “NO” on any fiscal commission legislation.

Senators Fail to Advance Crypto Bill that Would Have Endangered Pensions

Last week, the U.S. Senate voted against a motion to proceed on the Digital Market Structure Clarity Act, also known as the CLARITY Act (H.R. 3633).

The final vote tally was 49-50, falling eleven votes short of the 60-vote minimum. All Democratic members voted against the motion, while four Republican members — Senators **Susan Collins** (ME), **Josh Hawley** (MO), **Jerry Moran** (KS), and **Thom Tillis** (NC) — also voted in opposition.

The bill, introduced by **Rep. French Hill** (AK), would significantly loosen securities regulations for cryptocurrency platforms and insurers. During the drafting process, approximately a dozen Democratic Senators worked with Republicans to create a bill that could gain bipartisan support. Sen. **Elizabeth Warren** (MA), ranking member of the Senate Banking Committee, delivered a speech the night before the vote, slamming the inadequacy of those revisions and urging Senators to reject the bill. Sen. **Raphael Warnock** (GA) stated that the final bill contained too many ethical loopholes, while Sen. **Ruben Gallego** (AZ) said it contained too many appeasements to President **Donald Trump**.

Last month, the Alliance signed onto a letter drafted by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) that stated, “The cryptocurrency industry has plowed millions into lobbying campaigns to rewrite the rules to benefit cryptocurrency investors while hardworking families and retirees pay the price. The CLARITY Act would turn back the clock to a time when our financial markets were marked by fraud, devastating financial losses and deception.”

“The Senate’s vote to not proceed with the CLARITY Act is good news for seniors,” said **Richard Fiesta**, President of the Alliance. “The cryptocurrency market is volatile. Looser regulations would only harm older Americans and their hard earned retirement savings.”

ACTION NEEDED: Check Your Voter Registration

Voter registration deadlines for the midterm elections are coming up fast. In 16 states, voters only have until early October. Confirm that you are registered and where your current polling place is so you can make a plan to vote as soon as possible.

Click here to check your voter registration status.

"It's more important than ever for working Americans and retirees to make sure they're all set to cast their ballots," said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. "We encourage everyone to take time to prepare everything they will need this November."

Alliance Leaders Join IAM Retiree Advisory Meeting; Illinois and Missouri Alliances Host Events

Alliance Executive Director **Richard Fiesta** and Alliance President **Robert Roach, Jr.** both joined the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) this week, speaking about retiree issues, the latest on vote by mail policies, and current threats to Social Security. Alliance Field Mobilization Director **Maureen Dunn** also presented at the Illinois Alliance's Central Regional Chapter Conference and the Missouri Alliance Convention on Wednesday and Thursday.

KFF Health News: Nursing Home Beds Are Becoming More Scarce
By Paula Span

The San Vicente de Paúl Nursing Home in the South Bronx hasn't admitted a patient since December 2024. ArchCare, which operates the facility, has reduced its capacity from 120 available beds to 53 and plans to shrink it further.

Another ArchCare nursing home, on Staten Island, has shut down a full floor. North of the city, in Dutchess County, its Ferncliff Nursing Home has contracted from 309 available beds to 196.

The eight nursing homes owned by ArchCare, a nonprofit that provides eldercare through the Archdiocese of New York, have 269 fewer usable beds than they did 18 months ago, a nearly 12% decline, creating waiting lists for patients seeking long-term care.

Across New York state, 24 nursing homes have closed since 2020, resulting in a loss of more than 3,000 licensed beds, according to LeadingAge New York, which represents nonprofit senior living organizations.

That mirrors a national trend. In 2015, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services certified 15,648 nursing facilities. A decade later, that number had fallen by more than 900.

Read more here.