



FRIDAY ALERT

Alliance *for* Retired Americans

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Headlines:

Don't Forget: Tuesday is Election Day!

Senator McConnell Revives Talk about Social Security Privatization;

Alliance Members in Alaska, Iowa Join Begich, Braley on Tele-Town Hall Calls;

Alliance's Updated "Myth Busters" Social Security Fact Sheet Now Available;

Vermont Alliance Holds Its Convention

Here is your October 31 Friday Alert:

Don't Forget: Tuesday is Election Day!

Tuesday, November 4 is Election Day, and seniors in every state will be affected by the results. If right-wing extremists take over both houses of Congress, then Social Security and Medicare will be direct targets of the majority in both the House and Senate. And if anti-worker, anti-retiree governors take over state houses, then pensions are at risk, as well. Do you know your voting place so that you can prevent that from happening? Click here to make a plan: <http://www.aflcio.org/Legislation-and-Politics/My-Vote-My-Right/Make-a-Plan-to-Vote>.

Key Senate races in Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, New Hampshire, and North Carolina are likely to draw millions of seniors to the polls. Governors' races, including those in Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin, will have an enormous impact on retirees' lives. Important ballot initiatives are going to be decided by voters in many other states, including California and Missouri. The seat of every member of the U.S. House will also be determined on Tuesday. To view a short Ohio AFL-CIO video of Alliance members talking about why they are voting this year, go to <http://youtu.be/ljb5xgRWuKU>.

If you have trouble at the polls on or before November 4, remember that you can call 1-866-OUR-VOTE, or go to <http://www.866ourvote.org>, for assistance. This nonpartisan Election Protection coalition, which includes the Alliance, was formed to ensure that all voters have an equal opportunity to participate in the political process. For voters who need assistance in Spanish, <http://www.mifamiliavota.us> is a useful resource.

“If you don’t want the Paul Ryan budget to become law -- turning Medicare into a voucher program, raising the Medicare eligibility age, and shifting health care costs to seniors -- then please vote!” said Barbara J. Easterling, President of the Alliance. “Remember all the things that have been determined by our elected leaders over the last few years: health care, the economy, whether the government is open or shut down...and vote!”

“Bring a snack, a book, and a chair if you think there will be a line,” said Ruben Burks, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “Just make sure you don’t go home until your vote gets counted.”

Senator McConnell Revives Talk about Social Security Privatization

Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) recently went to the Louisville Rotary Club. At the event, McConnell had expressed remorse that he couldn’t wrangle any Democrats into supporting George W. Bush’s 2005 effort to, as McConnell put it, “fix Social Security.” Reporter Joe Sonka asked him if he’d revisit that effort to privatize Social Security in 2015, and McConnell said, “I’m not announcing what the agenda would be in advance. We’re not in the majority yet. We’ll have more to say about that later.” Read more from the New Republic at <http://tinyurl.com/krcwhgu>.

“If Mitch McConnell wins his race in Kentucky, and if Republicans are able to capture a net of six senate seats, then Sen. McConnell would likely be the Senate Majority Leader, and his ideas about privatization will have an even bigger significance,” said Richard Fiesta, Executive Director of the Alliance. “Social Security’s guaranteed benefits would be replaced by the whims of Wall Street.”

Alliance Members in Alaska, Iowa Join Begich, Braley on Tele-Town Hall Calls

Alliance for Retired Americans members from Alaska spoke with Sen. Mark Begich on Monday during a tele-town hall conference call. More than 1,500 Alliance members were on the call, which included the Senator. Sen. Begich has a 94% lifetime pro-retiree score on the Alliance’s 2013 voting record <http://retiredamericans.org/issues/congressional-voting-record>.

Call participants were reminded that Sen. Begich has introduced the Retirement and Income Security Enhancements (RAISE) Act, S. 2455. The RAISE Act would enhance Social Security benefits for widows, widowers, and divorced spouses while extending benefit eligibility for children of retired, disabled, and deceased workers. More at <http://tinyurl.com/pa7dk4b>.

Begich is also the sponsor of the Social Security Fairness Act of 2013 (S. 896). That legislation would help public workers and teachers by repealing the windfall elimination requirement, which reduces Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI) retirement or disability benefits if an individual receives a government pension, did not pay Social Security taxes during the years of government service, and therefore did not earn entitlement to Social Security benefits for those years. S. 896 also applies to spouses of public workers and teachers who qualify for benefits under their spouse's Social Security records, by repealing the government pension offset requirement. More at <http://www.ssa.gov/retire2/gpo-wep.htm>.

Last Friday, Iowa Alliance members spoke with Rep. Bruce Braley, who is running for the U.S. Senate, on a tele-town hall call. "Bruce Braley has a 99% lifetime voting record with the Alliance, so he knows first-hand how Social Security and Medicare help retirees make ends meet and stay healthy," said Jan Laue, President of the Iowa Alliance, on the call.

Alliance's Updated "Myth Busters" Social Security Fact Sheet Now Available

During this election season, there have been numerous e-mails circulating that provide misinformation about Social Security. To dispel any misinformation, please refer to our fact sheet: <http://tinyurl.com/narjgwr>.

Vermont Alliance Holds Its Convention

The Vermont Alliance for Retired Americans held its 10th Annual Conference in Barre, VT on Saturday. Jane Osgatharp was re-elected as Vermont Alliance President. Eva Dominquez, Legislative Representative for the national Alliance, spoke about priorities that will affect seniors in 2015. John Michael Hall, currently the Senior Director for the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities, also spoke. He was recently chosen Director of the Champlain Valley Area Agency on Aging, (CVAA) in Essex Junction. Attendees broke out into small groups and discussed issues including Social Security, health care, housing, home energy, and home care.

For a printable or two-page pdf version of this document, go to <http://tinyurl.com/ghrru7k>.

For the Alliance's Spanish language page, which includes last week's Friday Alert in Spanish, go to www.alianzadejubilados.org.