

# FRIDAY ALERT



**Alliance for Retired Americans**

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## **Tell Your U.S. Rep. to Co-Sponsor Cicilline Resolution Opposing the Chained CPI**

This week, Rep. **David Cicilline** (D-RI) introduced a resolution in the U.S. House of Representatives expressing clear opposition to using the chained CPI method to calculate cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for Social Security benefits. In light of recent budget proposals that include chained CPI, it is crucial that Rep. Cicilline's resolution receives a high level of support. More than 2,600 members of the Alliance have already contacted their Members of Congress asking them to co-sponsor the resolution. The Cicilline resolution is H. Con. Res. 34 and has 81 co-sponsors. To see who they include so far, go to <http://tinyurl.com/bmhw3wq>. To see why the Alliance opposes using the chained CPI and to add your voice to the cause, if you have not already done so, click on <http://tinyurl.com/bsd8hfj>.

As a reminder, more than 4,800 Alliance activists have signed a letter to the White House opposing the Chained CPI. Help us reach 5,000 at <http://bit.ly/10CYEd9>.

## **Alliance Supports Sen. Rockefeller's Bill as Way to Achieve Medicare Savings**

The Alliance released a statement this week regarding legislation that lowers prescription drug prices. In a response to the federal government paying unconscionably high drug prices for dual-eligibles on Medicare, Senator **Jay Rockefeller** (D-WV) introduced a bill on Tuesday to require drug companies to provide discounts for low-income Medicare beneficiaries, as they currently do under Medicaid. The Alliance strongly supports Sen. Rockefeller's legislation, S. 740, which would save taxpayers and Medicare beneficiaries billions of dollars.

After passage of the Medicare prescription drug law in 2003, drug companies received windfalls worth billions of dollars, as a result of no longer applying rebates for dual-eligibles (beneficiaries who qualify for Medicare and Medicaid). Senator Rockefeller's 2013 Medicare Drug Savings Act reverts back to previous law and recaptures the savings lost under the 2003 law. "By simply returning these beneficiaries to Medicaid-negotiated rebates, taxpayers would save \$141.2 billion over the next ten years," said **Edward F. Coyle**, Executive Director of the Alliance. The Rockefeller bill has 18 cosponsors. To see who they are, go to <http://tinyurl.com/blaogvu>. Read the full Rockefeller press release and see a coalition letter of support at <http://tinyurl.com/cn7g2yz>.

## **AFL-CIO Releases New Database to Track CEO Pay**

This week, the AFL-CIO released Executive PayWatch 2013, a comprehensive searchable database tracking the excessive pay of corporate CEOs. The CEOs of the top 500 companies now make an average of 354 times the average wage of a U.S. worker; this income inequality has significantly worsened in the last 30 years. In 1982, top CEOs made only an average of 42 times the average wage of a US worker. To view the database and compare your own pay to that of a CEO, go to <http://tinyurl.com/cauuvka>. "In order to enjoy a secure retirement, Americans must receive a fair wage during their working lives," said **Ruben Burks**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. "When

CEOs keep increasing their own pay to astronomical amounts at others' expense, workers cannot afford to save for retirement.”

### **Recommended: New PBS Documentary “Age of Champions”**

The Alliance invites you to watch the new PBS documentary “Age of Champions” for free from April 18th - 28th, at [www.ageofchampions.org/premiere](http://www.ageofchampions.org/premiere). Age of Champions tells the story of five competitors who sprint, leap, and swim for gold at the National Senior Olympics. You’ll meet a 100-year-old tennis champion, 86-year-old pole vaulter, and rough-and-tumble basketball grandmothers as they triumph over the limitations of age. The film premiered to a standing ovation at the prestigious Silverdocs Film Festival. *The Washington Post* hailed it as “infectiously inspiring,” and it’s already shown at more than 1,000 venues around the world.

Invite your family, friends, and colleagues to watch the film by [sharing the link on Facebook](#). Also invite them to a live filmmaker Q+A on April 25th at 12:30, 3:30 and 6:30pm PST! Watch the trailer and learn more at [www.ageofchampions.org/premiere](http://www.ageofchampions.org/premiere).

### **Alliance Members in Missouri, Ohio, Penn., and New Mexico Focus on Health Care**

Alliance chapters in several states held events centered on health care this week. The list included - but was not limited to - Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New Mexico. Missouri Alliance members joined friends in holding a Medicaid expansion and lobby event at the Capitol in Jefferson City on Tuesday. Missourians lobbied for a bill that would provide FULL Medicaid Expansion, to 138% of the federal poverty level. The same day, Ohio Alliance seniors came together with other activists at the statehouse in Columbus in an effort to fund health coverage for an additional 275,000 Ohioans with their state budget.

On Thursday, Pennsylvania Alliance members joined the 120+ organizations of the “Cover the Commonwealth” Campaign in 8 cities across the state. They held events to tell Harrisburg, “Don't Leave the Money on the Table,” and to expand Medicaid. The events highlighted that the health care law offers Pennsylvania \$43 billion over the next ten years to expand health care coverage to 700,000 working people, yet opponents of health care reform don't want to take the money.

Earlier – last Saturday - New Mexico seniors joined CWA members at rallies in 6 cities across the state to stop CenturyLink’s bullying bargaining tactics, and to tell the company to honor retiree benefits and health care. “Thank you to everyone, in any state, who came out for health care this week,” said **Barbara J. Easterling**, President of the Alliance.

### **More Retirees Claim Early Social Security Benefits During Recession**

According to data from the Social Security Administration, increasing numbers of retirees have been claiming early Social Security benefits since the economic recession began in 2008. In 2007, 33.5 percent of men and 36.3 percent of women claimed early benefits at age 62. Only two short years later, in 2009, 35.8 percent of men and 38.9 percent of women claimed early benefits. The SSA believes that this trend is likely the result of increasing unemployment. To read the SSA report, go to <http://tinyurl.com/d2quf3m>. “This data is a clear illustration that raising the eligibility age for Social Security would be devastating for seniors,” said Ms. Easterling.

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This message is being sent to you as a member of the Alliance for Retired Americans. The Alliance is a nationwide membership organization organized under Internal Revenue Code 501 (c) (4) and dedicated to educating all Americans about and advocating on behalf of retirees and seniors. The Alliance is responsible for the content and has paid all costs associated with the preparation and distribution of this message.