UNITED STEELWORKERS SOAR CONNECTION

STEELWORKERS ORGANIZATION OF ACTIVE RETIREES

WE'RE STRONGER TOGETHER



SOAR activists participated in the USW 2026 Rapid Response, Legislative and Policy Conference held July 13-15 in Washington, D.C. Pictured are members of the USW Int'l. Executive Board, the SOAR Int'l. Executive Board, and the SOAR delegates of the conference. We're STRONGER TOGETHER!

Labor Day Festivities

As **Labor Day** approaches, I invite you to take part in local festivities and celebrate all that retirees have accomplished. Capture the spirit of SOAR members—whether they're marching in parades, riding on floats, or enjoying a Labor Day picnic. These moments showcase the vibrant community we've built together.



We plan to feature and dedicate a page (or two, if we receive enough photos) in the Fall issue of SOAR in Action to highlight how our members celebrated and stayed active on this special day.

Submit your Labor Day photos by October 1st, and include captions describing each event. Email them to jstein@usw.org or text to 920-475-4288. Photos received by September 14 will also be featured on our SOAR Facebook page. Thanks for all you do to build SOAR!

Julie Stein, SOAR Director

Leading Forward: A Message from the SOAR President



As your new SOAR President, I am honored to share my priorities, recent activities, and vision for the future of SOAR with you.

Since being sworn in on March 1, my top priority has been to raise awareness that SOAR membership is open to like-minded individuals aged 45 and above. Although our membership rules changed in 2019, the pandemic left many union members unaware of this opportunity. To address this, we are proactively reaching out to union members and supporters about SOAR well before retirement.

We recently concluded our annual SOAR Executive Board Meeting in Washington, D.C., with a focus on strategic planning for SOAR's future.

Building on that momentum, we then took part in the USW 2026 Rapid Response, Legislative & Policy Conference, where SOAR board members and other district SOAR activists joined USW's advocacy efforts by lobbying on Capitol Hill.

Our discussions centered on three key pieces of legislation aimed at supporting retired and working families nationwide. Summaries of each bill appear below, with more details about the USW Rapid Response Action Call available on **Page 9** of this newsletter.

- **Honoring Those Who Served**: The Thomas M. Conway Veterans Access to Resources in the Workplace Act would require employers to post information about available veterans' benefits in the workplace.
- **Protect Worker Health and Safety**: The Protect Worker Health and Safety Act would update our nation's key workplace safety law to meet today's challenges.
- **Defend Our Hard-Earned Retirement Benefits**: Safeguarding American Families and Expanding (SAFE) Social Security Act would strengthen Social Security benefits and address the projected 2032 shortfall, protecting the retirement security of millions.

To keep our momentum going, I urge you to participate in this Rapid Response Action Call by contacting your federal representatives and advocating for these vital pieces of legislation. Your voice truly makes a difference in shaping policies that protect working and retired families.

Additionally, I have had the opportunity to speak at several district conferences – including Districts 4, 8, and 10 – where I promoted SOAR and our age 45+ membership initiative. I look forward to attending more conferences in the future and hope to have the pleasure of meeting many of you in person.

Together, we will fight for the issues that matter most to our members, defend the dignity they have earned through a lifetime of hard work, and build an organization that future generations of Steelworkers will be proud to join.

Wishing you a safe, healthy, and joyful summer ahead.

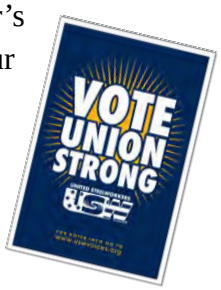
Ken Neumann, SOAR President

SOAR Volunteers Needed for the USW's 2026 Member-To-Member Postcard Campaign!



Julie Stein, SOAR Director

As in recent election cycles, one tactic our union will use during this year's election work is personalized postcards written by USW members and our retirees.



Whether the message urges someone to register or reminds them to vote, this particular outreach stands out in the mail. It's also a way for SOAR members – no matter where they live in the U.S. – to easily get involved in our work to elect pro-worker, pro-retiree candidates.

SOAR volunteers will receive a package in the mail containing (50) blank postcards, sample messages, and instructions on where to return them. Once we receive your completed postcards at USW headquarters, we will take care of delivering them to USW members who live in the most competitive districts and states in the 2026 midterm elections. It's a small step that can make a big impact. Please visit the www.uswvoices.org website to get started. Or, call the SOAR office toll-free at 866-208-4420 or email your name, address and phone number to comlor@usw.org

In addition to writing postcards, SOAR members can also join in on these vital efforts by calling or texting voters and participating in neighborhood canvassing. Every action helps to strengthen our Union Voter mobilization campaign!

Did You Know...



The right to vote has never protected itself.

Across the country, voters continue to face efforts that can make casting a ballot more difficult, from voter roll purges and stricter ID requirements to changes in mail and absentee voting rules, polling place closures, and other barriers that can leave working people confused about when, where, and how to vote.

All too often, people don't realize there's a problem until it's time to cast their ballot.

That's why it's important to check your voter registration status before Election Day, even if you've voted before. A move, a name change, an outdated address, or changes in state election rules can create problems you may not know about until it's too late. Don't wait until Election Day to find out.

Visit www.uswvoices.org to check your voter registration status and get current information on mail and absentee voting, polling locations, and other important election details.

Our union has always understood that working people have power when we make our voices heard. Make sure your vote will be counted. Check your status. Know your options. **Make your voice heard!**

SOAR Chapter Activity: Take the lead by organizing a postcard-writing event or hosting a voter registration drive within your SOAR chapter. These activities are a powerful way to unite members and ensure strong participation in the upcoming elections.

Welcome New SOAR Members with Personalized Postcards



SOAR is pleased to introduce a **new** postcard designed to help chapters welcome their new members. These postcards provide a convenient and personal way to invite new SOAR members to attend chapter meetings and participate in upcoming activities, encouraging greater participation and engagement within the SOAR community.

Each postcard measures **8½" x 5½"** and qualifies as a letter; therefore, requiring first-class postage, **$0.82** (current rate) for the first ounce. To request a supply for your chapter, please contact the SOAR office at 866-208-4420.



Electronic Deposit Available for SOAR Chapter Dues Refunds

You can choose to have your dues refund electronically deposited directly into your chapter's bank account, rather than receiving a paper check. There is still time to set up electronic SOAR chapter dues refunds before the next round is processed.

To set up your chapter to receive electronic deposits, please mail the following items to the SOAR office:

1) A voided check from your SOAR chapter's checking account.
2) The most recent copy of a bank statement to confirm the complete title/name of the chapter's bank account and the current mailing address listed on the account.
3) A note requesting that you want your chapter to be set up for automatic deposit of SOAR dues refunds.



Send the above items to:

SOAR
Attn. Julie Stein, SOAR Director
60 Blvd of the Allies
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
Or, you can scan the items to jstein@usw.org

As a reminder, SOAR dues refunds are sent three times per year, in April, August and November. Once on direct deposit, a confirmation receipt for the sum transferred into the SOAR chapter's bank account is mailed to the officer designated to receive financial mailings. Also included in the mailing is a "SOAR Chapter Refund Summary" report listing the members who paid their SOAR dues during the cycle.

Feel free to contact the SOAR office if you have questions. Toll-free: 866-208-4420

Medicare's Birthday: Celebrating 61 Years of Care

On July 30, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Social Security Act Amendments into law, establishing Medicare and Medicaid. These landmark programs remain the cornerstone of affordable healthcare for seniors and low-income families, demonstrating their lasting impact on the well-being of Americans.

For seniors, Medicare's birthday serves as a reminder of the security that comes from guaranteed healthcare. It highlights the program's essential role in delivering hospital care, prescription drugs, and preventive services, reflecting the collective efforts to prioritize the health of older Americans.

STRONGER TOGETHER

ROXANNE D. BROWN INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

We Pay Our Fair Share. Why Don't the Rich?

By Roxanne D. Brown
USW International President



Last year, United Steelworkers (USW) retirees in Granite City, Ill., held a birthday celebration of sorts on Aug. 14 to commemorate the 90th anniversary of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's signing of the Social Security Act.

These activists, members of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR Chapter 7-34-2), delivered a birthday cake to a local member of Congress and posed for photos, all to send a message about Social Security's importance and the need to protect this lifeline for seniors.

It's a message that gets more urgent each year, with this vital program hurtling toward insolvency and the Republican-led Congress refusing to take the common-sense measures needed to sustain it.

Without decisive action, retirees face benefit cuts of 22 percent by the fourth quarter of 2032, three months earlier than previously projected, Social Security trustees just warned in a new report on the program's rapidly dwindling trust fund.



Dennis Barker, Jeff Rains, Abe Jones (staff) and Stanley Gorka

Last year, to celebrate the 90th birthday of Social Security, SOAR Members visited with the staff at Nikki Budzinski's (Illinois 15th District Congresswoman) in her Collinsville office with a cake to thank her for her vote against the "Big Ugly Bill" and standing up for Working Families and the Social Security Program.

This crisis exists for two reasons: The rich don't pay their fair share. And most Republicans—many of them wealthy themselves—look the other way.

Social Security taxes only the first $184,500 of a person's income, meaning millionaires and billionaires pay the same into the program as people who work for a living. However, because the rich rake in so much, and at so fast a clip, they finish paying their taxes within hours, weeks or months while most Americans contribute with every paycheck all year long.



Removing the so-called cap on Social Security taxes is crucial to addressing the shortfall and preserving benefits for the long term, as the SOAR members in Granite City like to point out.

It's the fix that the USW, other unions and our pro-worker allies continue to demand. We fight for Social Security—along with pensions, Medicare and other retiree health care—because workers deserve secure retirements after decades of doing the hard, dangerous jobs that keep this country running.

It's little surprise that scrapping the cap is the solution preferred by most Americans, who hold up their end with a lifetime of Social Security contributions and deserve every penny promised them in return. We're not talking about fun money here.



Americans rely on Social Security to carry them through old age. For many, it's their main source of income. For some, it's the difference between living out their golden years in dignity or falling into poverty.

But the rich neither need Social Security nor care about sustaining it. That's why the Republicans ignore the obvious remedy of scrapping the cap and instead talk about cutting benefits or raising the retirement age, as if Americans should have to stretch a dollar further or work longer hours than we already do.

Many of our neighbors are barely hanging on already because of skyrocketing economic inequality fanned by corporate greed and Donald Trump's inflationary economy. They can barely make ends meet right now, let alone sock money away for the future.

The SOAR activists in Granite City plan to turn out again this August for another tribute to Social Security. Their message remains the same—scrap the cap, save Social Security and honor the nation's promise to working people.

Five Years of BABA: The Impact and Future of the Build America, Buy America Act



In 2021, the United States Congress enacted into law the Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act, which was a major expansion of the domestic procurement rules that govern contracts for federally backed infrastructure projects.

The BABA Act was intended to make sure all federal departments purchased materials and products that were made in America. Prior to BABA, federal Buy America laws were limited in their coverage and eroded by waivers and loopholes. Billions of taxpayer dollars meant for federally assisted infrastructure projects were spent annually on foreign-made products and materials.

The BABA Act came along to limit waivers and close loopholes so that additional federal spending is available to boost our domestic manufacturing sector by creating jobs and strengthening companies across the U.S. industrial base.

The BABA Act has certainly been a success, but now, nearly five years later, the Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM) believes there are additional opportunities to improve its implementation. A fix to the current law would maximize the use of American-made iron, steel, manufactured products and construction materials in all federally funded infrastructure.

Two U.S. Senators, Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisc.) and Jim Banks (R-Ind.), have put forth the Build America, Buy America Compliance Act, which would require every federal agency to submit annual reports detailing BABA's implementation. The reports must identify all federal financial assistance programs for infrastructure and specify which have fully implemented BABA and which have not.

"The Build America, Buy America Act was enacted in 2021 to ensure taxpayers' dollars spent on infrastructure strengthen U.S. supply chains and support America's workers," said AAM President Scott Paul. "But that promise only works if the law is fully and consistently implemented across federal programs.

"As we approach the five-year anniversary of this important law, AAM applauds Senators Baldwin and Banks for bringing transparency and accountability to the process by requiring agencies to clearly identify where Buy America requirements are being applied and where they are not."

Jeff Bonior is a staff writer at the Alliance for American Manufacturing in Washington, D.C.

ACTION CALL

August 10, 2026

Let's Keep the Momentum Going!

Tell Congress to Support Steelworker Priorities

During the 2026 Rapid Response Conference, Steelworkers from across the country met with their members of Congress to advocate for three key pieces of legislation that will strengthen workers' rights and support working families. Legislation included:

- Protecting America's Workers Act (S. 4413/H.R. 3036), which modernizes the Occupational Safety and Health Act by expanding coverage, strengthening whistleblower protections, increasing penalties for serious safety violations, and giving workers and their families a stronger voice when workplace tragedies occur.

- Safeguarding American Families and Expanding (SAFE) Social Security Act (S. 3462/H.R. 9415), which strengthens Social Security by increasing benefits for current and future beneficiaries while improving the program's long-term financial stability by making the wealthy pay their fair share.

- Thomas M. Conway Veterans Access to Resources in the Workplace Act (S. 3591/H.R. 6960), which would require employers to post information about veterans' benefits developed by the Departments of Labor and Veterans Affairs, helping connect veterans with the services and benefits they have earned through their military service.

We have already seen an increase in cosponsorship on these three bills since our lobby day (usw.to/5q3) – proving that our voices matter! Help keep the momentum going by sending a prewritten email to your U.S. Senators and U.S. Representative urging them to cosponsor the above three bills.

Tell Congress to Stand with Workers, Retirees, and Veterans!
(usw.to/5q4)

Click HERE (usw.to/5q4) or scan the QR code to send a pre-written email to your U.S. Senators and U.S. Representative urging them to cosponsor the above three bills that support workers, retirees, and veterans!

You can also call them and be directly connected by using our toll-free number below. Tell them who you are, where you are from, and to support the above three bills!

Senate Toll-Free Number: 1-877-607-0785
(Remember to make two calls to connect with both Senators.)

House Toll Free Number: 1-866-202-5409

SOAR Chapter
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Articles and Photos Requested

The next deadline for the SOAR in Action magazine will be October 20, 2026, and articles should be emailed to the SOAR Director, Julie Stein at jstein@usw.org

The deadline to submit material for the next issue of the SOAR Chapter Connection newsletter is September 21, 2026. Email your article to soar3@icloud.com.

2026

HAPPY SUMMER!

STAY ACTIVE. STAY INVOLVED. STAY CONNECTED.

STRONGER TOGETHER.

Old Charlie Sez

How a Simple Letter Can Be the Best Therapy a Retiree Can Receive

"A British philosopher by the name of Jeremy Bentham developed his brand of philosophy under the name of "Utilitarianism." He then proceeded to attempt to define happiness and wrote, "Happiness is the absence of pain." He should have added, "also, happiness includes being remembered kindly by your friends."

And a friend who receives many communications from SOAR members, the officers and people like you will help them get through a most difficult treatment period."

Source: taken from a letter written by Larry Spitz, former SOAR Emeritus member in November 2008.

How To Grow Tall Corn





Working the same garden for many years now, Elaine and I have figured out the best way to grow tall sweet corn.

We used to raise 100 chickens every year for eggs, meat and poop, but we stopped that for a couple of years, but then the garden didn't do as well... So we started to save all the right-wing literature we got in the mail before time to vote...

Then we cut it all up and covered with water until it dissolved and spread it around the corn plants and ... **walla!**

Watch Your Step
This is Retirement Talk, by Del Lowery



Falling in love can be the most wonderful thing in the world. Falling down the stairs can be one of the worst. We can't ascribe good or bad to falling. It just depends. Musicians fall in love with their instruments. Artists fall in love with their creations. Kids fall down and skin their knees. Football players fall down and break their necks. My mother fell down at age 89 and never regained her health. Her fall led to surgery and then the nursing home and then the grave. We need to be a bit more careful about falling as we grow older.

We just returned from a holiday in Alaska. A chinook came through while we were there and melting snow covered the icy roads with water. There is nothing more treacherous. After living in Alaska for twenty years I am very familiar with it. We used to take hex headed screws and drive them into the bottom of a pair of our shoes for just such conditions. Alas, I no longer live there and I have no studded shoes.

One day I could stay inside no longer and pulled on regular walking shoes and headed out the door. My son and his daughter protested. I laughed off the warning and continued. I had barely made it down the slippery drive when my granddaughter shouted "Wait for me grandpa. I'll go with you." She continued, "What if you fall and end up lying by the side of the road?"

Well, I didn't fall. Then again, I didn't go more than just a few more feet before I realized my mistake. l relented and we headed back a few steps to the level and dry floors of the great indoors. I have a feeling it was a good move.

My age came up often in a humorous way. Seventy seems to be some sort of milestone in the acceptance of others that we are getting old. When we suggested cross-country skiing our first day there (before the chinook) we were cautiously encouraged. We chose to ski at Russian Jack Springs, the easiest course in the city. Our son kept a close eye on us as we maneuvered our way around the winter wonderland. Brenda and I each fell once. No damage done. We were set on a more challenging course but the warm wind ended all possibilities.

In the not too distant past I fell down some stairs at our condo in Vancouver which is on the fourth floor. I always take the stairs on my first trip of the day. On that particular day I was pulling a sweatshirt up over my head as I neared the bottom of the little used stairs. I lost track of the last step and pitched head first into the wall at the end of the landing. I even left a little dent in the sheetrock with my head. I'm not sure why I didn't break my neck or at least crack a few vertebrae but I didn't. I have approached the stairs differently since that incident. I was lucky. I now approach all stairs with a sense of purpose and attention. I know how quickly life can be changed by one false step.

I have a friend who suffered a broken foot after descending some stairs in front of her friend. She had just reached the bottom of the stairs when he fell. He landed right on top of her. She was in a cast and on crutches for a long time. Two years have now passed and she is just now starting to jog thirty second intervals. Her health and general well being really suffered.

As we were headed to the airport in Alaska my granddaughter led the way to the car in the garage. I said, "It is really dark in here." She looked over her shoulder and said, "There is a light switch right there," pointing behind me. It was bad timing. There are three steps leading down into the garage. She missed a step. Down she went. Today she is on crutches. She is seventeen. Falling isn't reserved for the retired. It distributes opportunity on an equal basis.

My granddaughter will heal rather quickly - I assume. We retired folks may react a bit differently. We don't heal like teenagers. We need to be even more careful. Maybe we should tie a string around our finger to remind ourselves to pay attention to what we are doing - especially when it involves the possibility of falling. We do, in fact, need to **"watch our step."**

"Retirement Talk is an audio podcast intended to help people who are retired, or considering retirement, to examine their own lives. We will consider an active retirement life in all its facets - not just financial. A retirement lifestyle that has been considered carefully is our goal. We want to encourage thought and action."

Editors Note: Del has given us permission to use his articles in our Connection newsletter.

Del Lowery https://retirementtalk.org/text980.html

What is the Alliance for Retired Americans?

The Alliance for Retired Americans is a grassroots advocacy organization with 4.4 million members. Founded by the AFL-CIO in 2001, the Alliance now has 40 state alliances and members in every state.

The Alliance's retiree activists are from all walks of life. We are former teachers, auto workers, state and federal government workers, construction workers, and community leaders united in the belief that every American deserves a secure and dignified retirement after a lifetime of hard work.

Alliance members understand the power of collective action to create change in their communities and the country. Often working in coalitions, we educate the public and policymakers about critical issues facing older Americans and working families. Our members lobby elected officials, take direct action through creative demonstrations and protests, organize online, and fight for labor movement priorities.

Alliance members are highly engaged and active, holding hundreds of meetings, membership conventions, news conferences, lobbying visits, and actions each year to advance the goal of a more secure retirement for all.

The Alliance is dedicated to making the most of the generous support we receive and earned a 2025 Candid Gold Seal of Transparency. Their main offices are in the AFL-CIO building in Washington, D.C.

Bipartisan Support for Scrapping the Cap Grows



by Robert Roach, Jr.



There is growing bipartisan agreement and urgency surrounding the need to strengthen Social Security so it can continue to pay full benefits to current and future retirees.

Two months ago, it was encouraging to see Republican Senator Bernie Moreno (OH) join Democratic Senator Elizabeth Warren (MA) in calling for one of the simplest and fairest solutions for addressing Social Security's financial shortfall: making the wealthiest Americans pay their fair share into the system.

Right now, millionaires and billionaires stop paying into Social Security after their first $184,500 in wages. But everyone else keeps paying in all year long. That's just not right.

If Congress fails to act, the Social Security Trust Fund will only be able to pay about 78 percent of benefits starting in 2032. That translates to a 22 percent benefit cut for Social Security beneficiaries, which for the average retiree will mean $500 less in income each month.

Protecting Social Security shouldn't be a Democratic issue or a Republican issue. It's an American issue. We earned these benefits after a lifetime of hard work.

Senator Moreno deserves credit for understanding that and working across party lines to strengthen and protect Social Security.

Robert Roach, Jr. is president of the Alliance for Retired Americans. He was previously General Secretary –Treasurer of the IAMAW. For more information, visit www.retiredamericans.org.

Celebrating Social Security's 91st Birthday in America

Social Security's birthday falls on **August 14**, commemorating the day in 1935 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act into law. Born out of the hardships of the Great Depression, Social Security marked a groundbreaking shift—offering financial security to Americans after retirement. At that time, most elderly citizens lacked retirement savings and faced widespread poverty.

Over the decades, Social Security has evolved into a foundation of retirement and disability security in the United States. Now administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA), it is one leg of the "three-legged stool" of retirement planning, alongside private savings and employer pensions. By 2025, approximately 74 million Americans received benefits—including retirees, people with disabilities, and recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI). **Since its inception, Social Security has never missed a payment.**

Supreme Court Affirms Protections for Older Americans and All Mail Voters

Press Release: June 29, 2026

The following statement was issued by Richard Fiesta, Executive Director of the Alliance for Retired Americans, regarding the 5-4 Supreme Court decision in Watson v. RNC. The Mississippi Alliance for Retired Americans was an intervenor in the case.

"We welcome today's decision, which protects the right of millions of Americans—especially older voters—to have their legally cast ballots counted.

Mississippi's law has worked well for decades and protects voters who do exactly what the law requires: they cast and mail their ballots by Election Day. The Court correctly recognized that no eligible voter should lose their voice because of mail delays or other circumstances beyond their control.

For generations, states have adopted practical election rules that reflect the realities of mail delivery, protect the right to vote, and meet the needs of their citizens. The Court's decision means that voters in the 14 states that provide a grace period for regular mail ballots, and the 29 states which allow additional time for at least some mail voters, including military and overseas voters, can breathe a little easier. By upholding these long-standing protections, the Court has preserved certainty for voters and election officials, respected the ability of states to administer their own elections, and protected election laws that millions of mail voters across the country rely upon.

Our Alliance members in Mississippi proudly joined this case to defend the constitutional right to vote. We have always maintained that no eligible voter who casts a ballot in a timely manner should have that vote tossed out because of circumstances they cannot control.

Today's decision affirms a simple principle: legally cast ballots should be counted. We will continue fighting to protect every eligible voter's right to have a ballot cast in a timely manner."

Old Elaine Says, a Little Summer Treat for the Ladies...



COSMO

2 ounces (¼ cup) vodka or citrus vodka

½ ounce (1 tablespoon) triple sec, Cointreau, or Grand Marnier

¾ ounce (1 ½ tablespoons) cranberry juice cocktail

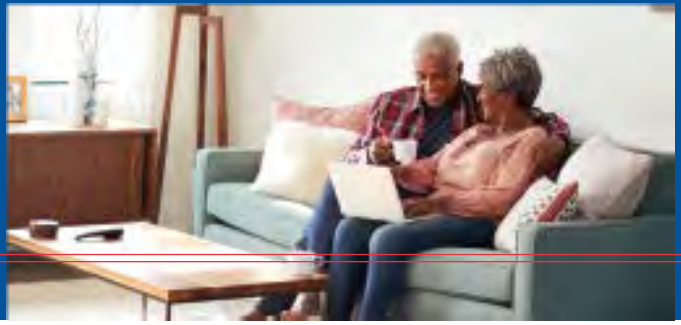
¼ to ½ ounce (1 ½ teaspoons to 3 teaspoons) fresh lime juice

One 2-inch orange peel/twist

Alliance for Retired Americans

POSITION PAPER

JUNE 2025



Debt Commission Legislation Fast Tracks Cuts to Social Security and Medicare

On May 8, 2025 Rep. Bill Huizenga (R-MI), introduced H.R. 3289, the Fiscal Commission Act with 28 original bipartisan cosponsors.

The legislation establishes a 16-member "Fiscal Commission" appointed by congressional leaders. Twelve members of the commission would be members of Congress and the other four would be "outside experts." It would make recommendations on how to balance the federal budget by addressing the growth of discretionary and direct spending and revenues, while improving the solvency of Federal trust funds, including Social Security and Medicare, for at least 75 years. There is no requirement that the Commission's deliberations would be open to the public.

The Commission's recommendations would then be delivered to Congress immediately following the November 2026 elections, with the requirement that each chamber conduct an immediate up or down vote on the recommendations without any opportunities for changes or amendments. The legislation's focus is on cuts rather than revenue increases.

Alliance Position

The Alliance for Retired Americans strongly opposes H.R. 3289 and any other legislation to create committees or commissions to do the work of Americans' elected representatives without input from the American people.

Retirees have earned their Social Security and Medicare benefits over a lifetime of work. The benefits ensure older Americans receive the health care they need, and provide income for more than 70 million Americans. These benefits are critical and should not be cut.

The Alliance urges Congress to strengthen the solvency of our nation's retirement programs and expand Social Security and Medicare benefits by making the wealthiest pay their fair share into these programs.

Social Security Does Not Contribute to the Deficit

Social Security does not contribute to the federal debt or the deficit. By law, the Social Security Administration cannot borrow funds. The program has its own dedicated revenue source — specifically, payroll contributions from workers, as well as interest on special interest bonds and revenue from higher earners who pay taxes on their Social Security earnings.

The Commissions Are Anti-Democratic

The bills call for a closed-door, fast-track process that dramatically limits public input, excludes the traditional committee process from acting on the legislation, and does not allow amendments or full debate. Additionally, most Americans' elected representatives in Congress will not be able to even debate the proposals, much less amend any commission recommendations.

Outcome is Pre-determined

The mandate given the commission is narrow and designed to produce recommendations for cuts to Social Security and Medicare. Any discussion of changes to these programs must include ways to increase revenue instead of exclusively focusing on benefit cuts.