



MONDAY ALERT

New York State Alliance *for* Retired Americans

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June 23, 2025

NYC Chapter of NYSARA Participates in a Town Hall

"Forging a Path Forward"

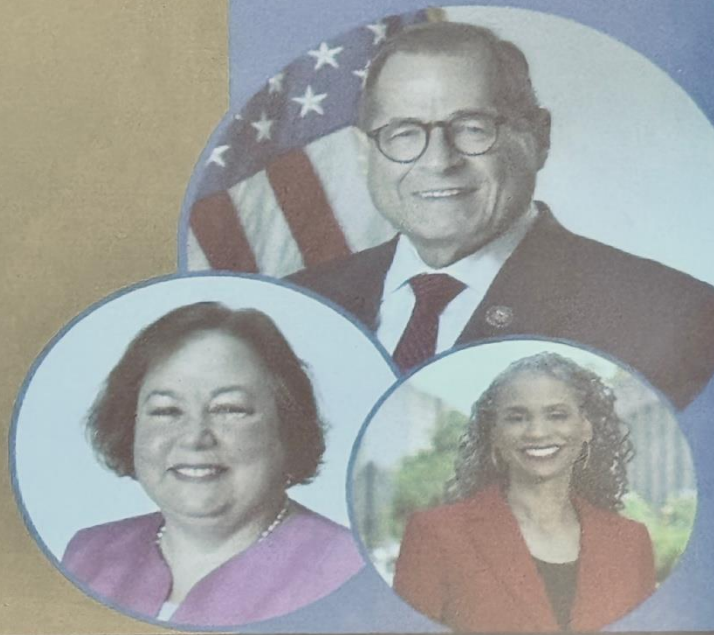
Sponsored by Representative Jerrold Nadler and NYS

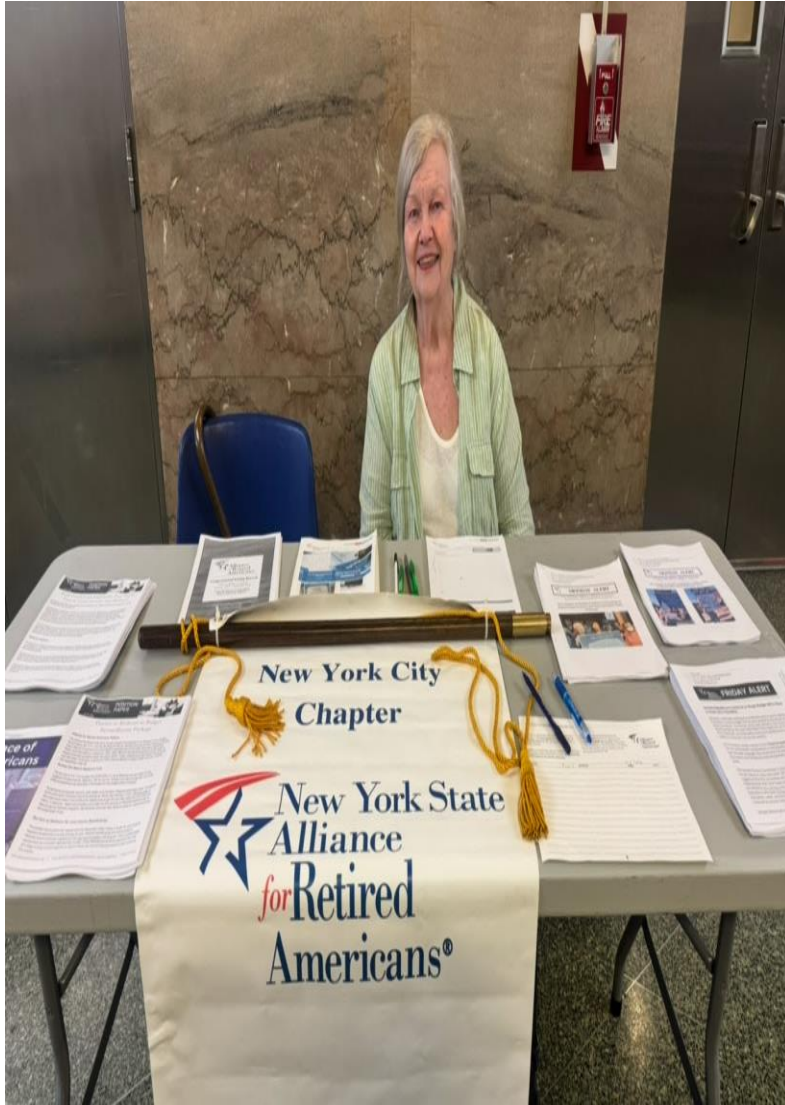
Senator Liz Krueger

JERROLD NADLER
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE

LIZ KRUEGER
NY STATE SENATOR

MAYA WILEY
MODERATOR







A town hall entitled "Forging a Path Forward" was held on Tuesday, June 17, at Hunter College in NYC sponsored by U. S. Representative Jerrold Nadler (CD 17) and State Senator Liz Krueger (SD 28). The focus of the event was to highlight positive activism in response to continuing overreach by federal authorities. Representing NYSARA, NYC Chapter President Barbara Waldmann participated in the accompanying Resource Fair along with ten other community organizations which provided outreach and current

information to the standing room only crowd.

Rep. Nadler called the current administration the “greatest threat to democracy since the Civil War.” He underscored the devastating effects of the congressional reconciliation bill, “the Big Ugly Bill,” on our state and local communities, some of which are: loss of 13 billion dollars in Medicaid spending; certification changes that would throw 4 million New Yorkers off Medicaid; cuts of 2 billion dollars in SNAP, the federal nutrition program; and loss of Section 8 housing vouchers for our most vulnerable residents. Nadler also highlighted the damage done by DOGE cuts affecting the Social Security Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration Authority, and thousands of federal workers across many government agencies. The cruel and indiscriminate flouting of immigration laws by masked ICE agents that denies due process to immigrants represents “a moment of unprecedented urgency” meant to instill fear and break the people’s trust in our democracy.

Senator Krueger called these “dangerous times” that we must fight against not only “for our children and grandchildren, but also for the future of our planet.” Because “elections have consequences,” it is imperative to exercise the right to vote in this year’s NYC elections and the 2026 Congressional election. She believes in strong support for public education because an electorate that is “educated is less likely to fall for fascism.” Kreuger urged the audience to “fight back without escalating” in reference to the calling up of the U.S. Marines and the federalization of the California National Guard as an overreaction to protests in Los Angeles.

In addition to voting, positive actions being taken against unconstitutional executive orders include numerous lawsuits by NYS Leticia James and 23 other states’ Attorneys General; state legislation to protect our constitutional rights, and ongoing demonstrations coordinated on a national scale. The closing admonition to participants was to go out and “Take back our democracy!”

NYS Fiscal Year 2026 Enacted Budget

NYS Expects Severe Fiscal and Economic Consequences from Federal Policy

On Friday, June 13, New York State's Division of the Budget (DOB) released its financial plan for this year's enacted State budget. The financial plan forecasts a national economic slowdown over the next four years as well as dramatic federal budget cuts. These forecasts indicate that the State will likely need to implement tax increases to manage the fallout from federal economic and fiscal policy.

DOB expects that the current presidential administration's tariff and immigration policies will trigger a national economic slowdown and a condition of "stagflation" in which low rates of economic growth accompany relatively high rates of inflation. FPI previously wrote about the risk that New York State's economy is headed into such conditions. This economic slowdown is expected to result in a significant decline in tax receipts - an average decline of \$4 billion per year over the next four years, relative to previous expectations.

The fiscal risks of declining tax receipts are compounded by the likelihood that the State will lose substantial federal funding. DOB estimates that the spending cuts included in the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" - the federal budget legislation that passed the U.S. House on May 22nd - will cost New York State an average of \$5.2 billion per year over the next four years.

Despite these gloomy forecasts, the State's current fiscal position is surprisingly strong. The State ended fiscal year 2026 with a \$10.6 billion general fund surplus, driven by end-of-year receipts coming in \$6 billion above its January projections. The end of year surplus was

partly spent to pay down the State's \$7 billion unemployment insurance (UI) trust fund debt, ending a six-year freeze of the benefit level.

Even after paying down the UI trust debt, however, the State still holds record fiscal reserves - \$31.7 billion at the end of fiscal year 2025 - providing a buffer against fiscal downturns.

The State's expectations may be far too pessimistic. But if they turn out to be accurate, a strong tax base and record reserves will enable the State to manage spending in the coming years while minimizing cuts to services - though it will likely implement tax increases to do so.

All Americans should take a moment each summer to recognize the significance of two tremendous benefits that continue to serve us all very well, as they have for decades - Social Security (1935) (90th Anniversary) and Medicare (1965) (60th Anniversary). No one should take these programs for granted. They benefit us all and they are currently at risk.

While Franklin Delano Roosevelt receives much credit for Social Security, it was another great New Yorker, Frances Perkins, the first woman in a President's cabinet, who really made it happen. Social Security, funded by worker and employer contributions -each of us pays in according to our wages during our working life - has provided generations of Americans with baseline retirement protections. Some simple steps now to reform and improve could easily ensure its benefit for generations to come.

Medicare, enacted as part of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society initiative provides essential health benefits to older Americans. It's literally a life-saver. Both programs are efficient, effective and popular and we should all support them because they make each of us and our communities stronger!

Myths about Social Security

- Social Security is going broke. Young people will never see a penny in benefits.
- Spending on “entitlements” like SS, Medicare and Medicaid is by far the major cause of the federal deficit and debt.
- There’s a massive amount of fraud in Social Security.
- You can do better by investing on your own.

Facts

- Workers and employers pay into Social Security based on wage earnings. The money is separate from federal government budget, and benefits based on a lifetime of an individual’s earnings, are paid out when they choose to retire.
- Social Security is a baseline social insurance program. It complements individuals’ savings, investment and other retirement benefit planning.
- Social Security has a board of trustees and professional actuaries who report accurately and annually on the health of the fund based on professional standards and ethics.
- A July 2024 report from Social Security’s inspector general confirmed that fraud is NOT widespread, concluding it accounted for LESS than 1% of payments 2015-2022. SS has internal systems that are constantly seeking to prevent waste and abuse.
- By law, Social Security does not contribute one penny to the federal deficit. It is a separate program with SEPARATE funding from general federal spending. Staffing cuts put NO money back into the federal budget but they do affect the ability of regular Americans to access benefits and services.
- The current Social Security Trustees report states that there is a 3.5% revenue shortfall over the next 75 years . This can be fairly addressed by increasing the cap on Social Security withholding which is \$176,100 for 2025. That means high wage earners stop paying into Social security once they’ve reached that limit each year.

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."