



MONDAY ALERT

New York State Alliance *for* Retired Americans

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August 18, 2025

NYSARA Mourns Passing of Former CSEA President Danny Donohue



NYSARA joins with Labor and the broader community in mourning the passing of Danny Donohue who served as President of CSEA from 1994-2019. Donohue made a lasting impact throughout his career in advancing the interests of working people across New York and beyond.

Donohue, who often referred to himself as a “truck driver from Brooklyn”, rose through the union ranks at Central Islip Psychiatric Center on Long Island to serve as CSEA Long Island Region President and then Statewide Executive Vice President before being elected as statewide President. He served as President longer than any leader in the union’s 115 year history.

Donohue also served as Vice President of the NYS AFL-CIO and as International Vice President of AFSCME.

He is survived by his wife, Irene, and three children, Amy, Shawn and Megan.

<https://gordoncemerickfuneralhome.com/tribute/details/2605/Daniel-Donohue/obituary.html>

NYSARA Biennial Election Convention Early Registration Deadline Approaching

Date: September 4, 2025 10:30 am - 3:00 pm

Place: NYSUT Headquarters - 800 Troy Schenectady Rd., Latham, NY

Purpose: Elect NYSARA Officers 2025-2027, get information issues both nationally and Statewide that have impact on Seniors and actions to take that have impact. Hearing from people who impact Seniors.

Keynote Speaker: Robert Roach, President National ARA

Other Speakers: Ravi Reddi, Senior Staff for US Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (confirmed), Greg Olsen Acting Director NYS Office for the Aging (confirmed) and NYS Senator Patricia Fahy (requested)

Declared Candidates for NYSARA Office:

President - Barry Kaufmann (NYSUT)

Vice President - Paul Schuh (UAW)

Secretary - Opportunity

Treasurer - Gary Lanahan (CSEA)

Nominations will be taken from the floor. Voting will be by weighted vote as per bylaws. Any nominee **MUST** be present and representing a Statewide dues payer.

EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS AUGUST 25
FEE FOR EARLY REGISTRATION \$15 LATE OR ON SITE
REGISTRATION IS \$25 WITH NO LUNCH GUARANTEE

[To Access Registration form click here](#)

**Capital District Chapter of NYSARA Recognizes
Milestone Social Security and Medicare
Anniversaries at Tri-City Valley Cats Labor Night**

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Members of the Capital District chapter of NYSARA marked the Anniversaries of Social Security (1935) and Medicare (1965) by sharing important information about the two social safety net programs to a receptive audience at a recent Tri-City Valley Cats baseball game.

The event which coincided with Labor Night at the ballpark, has become an annual activity for the chapter, which shared important information about the history of the two programs. The informational flyers also offered facts to dispel common myths about the programs.

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.

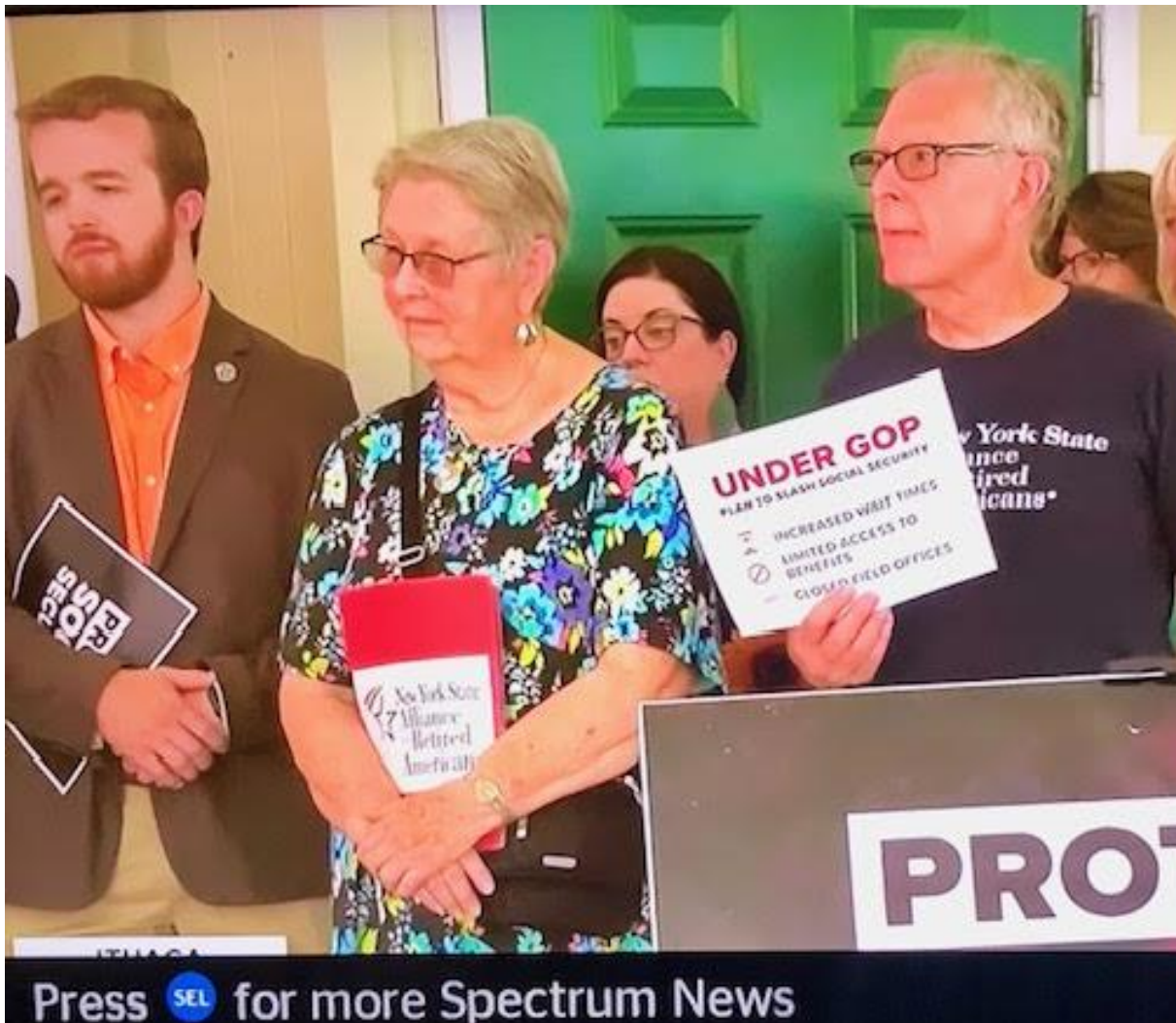
Both programs are efficient, effective and popular and we should all support them because they make each of us and our communities stronger!

Meanwhile Historian Heather Cox Richardson also marked the Social Security milestone this week with some factual perspective: [Historian Heather Cox Richardson on Social Security 8.13.25](#)

Central New York Chapter of NYSARA Attend Senator Schumer Press Conference on Bill to Protect Social Security and Attend an Event with Congressman Mannion to Support Veterans and the VA

Central New York Chapter of NYSARA members were invited to attend Senator Charles Schumer's press conference last Tuesday, unveiling new legislation to protect social security from DOGE cuts that threaten services to nearly 200,000 Central New Yorkers. The new bill will reverse cuts, keep local offices open, reduce wait times, and make getting monthly checks easier.

CNY NYSARA members Margo Buckingham (past president NYSUT RC7) and CNY NYSARA President Bill Spreter listen as Senator Schumer outlines aspects of the bill.



Congressman John Mannion shows support for the Veterans and the VA hospital in a speech highlighting the need for continued good service to those who sacrificed for America.

Central New York Chapter of NYSARA members rally to restore cuts to the VA not only in Syracuse, but nationwide. Tens of thousands of VA workers, many of whom are veterans, will be laid off, services to vets will be

impacted, and collective bargaining will be abolished. From left to right, Ed O'Rourke, Doug Matousek, Deb Benware, Dick Knowles, Rich Veenstra, Jim Schuyler, and Bill Waters. Others not shown: Bob O'Connor, Janet Jackson, Warren Fretwell, Pam Corbett, and Bill Spreter.



CBO Report on Distributional Effect of the "Big Ugly" Bill Act Finds Richest Gain and Poorest Face Cuts

The Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) [latest analysis](#) of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), the reconciliation bill passed by congressional Republicans and championed by the Trump administration, anticipates millions losing access to critical food aid, financial assistance, and health coverage in the next ten years.

Benefits of Tax Cuts Will Not Reach Lowest Earners

Released on Monday, the report predicts that the legislation will likely raise the after-tax income of the richest Americans, while cuts to social spending will substantially disadvantage the poorest. The budget office's report was an update to an [earlier analysis](#) it issued in June, before the bill was finalized and signed into law. The updated report similarly examines how the bill's policies would affect Americans at every level of income, estimating that the incomes for the highest 10% of earners would rise by an average of 2.7% by 2034, mainly driven by tax cuts, while those of the lowest 10% would fall by 3.1%, mostly because of cuts to programs such as Medicaid and food aid.

Millions to Become Uninsured

The impacts on health insurance are stark across all programs. Under the law, at least 10 million more people are expected to become uninsured by 2034—with 7.5 million in losses due to changing Medicaid policies and around 2.1 million people losing access to coverage through the Affordable Care Act marketplaces.

CBO expects 100,000 people who have paid Social Security taxes for 10 or more years will be newly ineligible for Medicare under the law's changes,

while changes that halt rules streamlining [Medicaid](#) and [Medicare Savings Program \(MSP\)](#) enrollment would cause 400,000 to become uninsured. The millions of people who will lose access to MSPs or Medicaid but keep Medicare are not counted among those who will be uninsured as a result of the changes, but [previous CBO estimates](#) anticipate that these individuals will forgo healthcare because they will not be able to afford their out-of-pocket costs without that additional coverage.

Although not reflected in the CBO report, an additional [5 million](#) people are expected to become uninsured when the Affordable Care Act's enhanced tax credits end later this year. Unlike other expiring tax breaks, the credits were not extended in the reconciliation bill. The latest CBO estimates confirm the OBBBA will have serious and long-lasting consequences, resulting in harmful program cuts and coverage losses. Medicare Rights remains committed to minimizing and reversing these harms.

Alliance Members Demand Action to Protect Social Security on its 90th Anniversary

Alliance members continued to hold "Save Social Security" events with the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and other labor allies this week to mark Social Security's 90th anniversary this Thursday.

"For 90 years, Social Security has allowed millions of Americans to retire with dignity. It's a sacred promise between them and their government," said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. "We should be celebrating that legacy, but instead we have to worry about Social Security's future. This Administration has slashed the Social Security Administration (SSA) workforce, spread disinformation about earned benefits, and talks openly about doing things to privatize and weaken Social Security, including raising the retirement age."

Attendees urged lawmakers and SSA Commissioner **Frank Bisignano** to take action to address three key demands for keeping Social Security strong:

- Fully staff the Social Security Administration to reduce wait times and ensure high quality service delivered by professionals, not machines;
- Protect Americans' private SSA data;
- Make the wealthy pay their fair share into Social Security so we can strengthen benefits for current and future generations.

The Texas Alliance kicked the week off with an event on Sunday in Corpus Christi, holding events later in the week in Houston, Beaumont, San Antonio, Dallas, and Austin. Rep. **Jasmine Crockett** (TX) received a "Retiree Hero" Award from members on Friday.

On Wednesday, Wisconsin Alliance members rallied in front of a recently closed SSA office in Racine. "We're standing out here today in front of this Social Security office that has permanently closed. This location was so easy for people to go to. Right on the bus route, they could come here, get off right across the street and walk over here," said **Ross Winklbauer**, President of the Wisconsin Alliance. "But unfortunately, because of the cuts that are going on in our government right now and the attacks on our Social Security and Social Security offices, we're making it harder and harder for our seniors to be able to go and apply and collect Social Security."

The New Mexico Alliance commemorated Social Security's anniversary with cake deliveries at nine senior centers in Albuquerque.

Alliance members were particularly active on Thursday, attending and hosting Social Security events in 18 states, including California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, and Ohio.

The bus then took AFGE President **Everett Kelley** and Pennsylvania Alliance leader **Jody Weinreich** to a rally outside an SSA facility to highlight how

this Administration's changes and staff cuts are hurting workers and Social Security beneficiaries.

"Across the country, we are using our voice — as workers, as parents, as people who care about our communities — to demand that this administration and Congress do whatever it takes to protect Social Security," AFGE President **Everett Kelley** said. "The American people deserve nothing less."

The Arizona Alliance hosted "Silver Sit-ins," where they presented Rep. **David Schweikert** (AZ) and Rep. **Juan Ciscomani** (AZ) with "Retiree Zero" awards for their anti-retiree votes on key retirement security issues last year, while the Kentucky Alliance rewarded Rep. **Morgan McGarvey's** (KY) pro-retiree voting score with a "Retiree Hero" award. The Florida Alliance also drew attention to their congressional delegation's voting record, presenting Sen. **Rick Scott** (FL) and Rep. **Neal Dunn** (FL) with "Retiree Zero" certificates.





The week's actions ended with a Social Security anniversary rally hosted by the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers. Alliance Executive Director **Richard Fiesta**, American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Secretary-Treasurer **Fedrick Ingram**, Rep. **Chris DeLuzio** (PA) and Rep. **Summer Lee** (PA) all spoke during the event.

There are also several anniversary events planned for the coming days, including a protest outside Rep. **Tim Walberg's** (MI) office in Niles, Michigan on Monday.

Courts Uphold Medicare Drug Price Negotiation, Marking Major Victories Against the Pharmaceutical Industry

Last week, three federal courts [denied](#) the pharmaceutical industry's latest attempt to overturn the Medicare drug price negotiation law.

On August 6, the U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals [found](#) that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce did not have standing to challenge Medicare drug price negotiation, upholding a lower court's dismissal last year. Two other courts [upheld](#) the Medicare drug price negotiation law's constitutionality the following day.

The Alliance and allies worked for more than 20 years to pass a law requiring Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices for seniors and taxpayers with drug corporations. That advocacy paid off when President **Joe Biden** signed the Inflation Reduction Act – which enacted Medicare drug price negotiation – into law on August 16, 2022.

The 2nd District Court of Appeals in Connecticut [rebuffed](#) pharmaceutical corporation Boehringer Ingelheim's argument that Medicare drug price negotiation violates its first and fifth amendment rights, saying: "Participation in the Negotiation Program is voluntary and thus does not entail an unlawful deprivation of rights." In Texas, U.S. District Judge **David Alan Ezra** also [rejected](#) a case brought by the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers (PhRMA), the Global Colon Cancer Association, and the National Infusion Center Association, maintaining that drug price negotiation is constitutional.

"These are significant wins for the [9 million](#) Medicare beneficiaries who will see lower drug prices this year alone, thanks to drug price negotiation," said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. "The courts have shown that we have a fighting chance to protect consumers and make prescription drugs more affordable, despite how much money and effort the pharmaceutical industry is investing to lock in sky high prices."

New Social Security FAQ Highlights Program's Efficiency and Popularity

Social Security is popular, efficient, and sustainable, according to [a new "Social Security FAQ"](#) from the Economic Policy Institute.

The FAQ covers three main topics: what Social Security is and how it's financed, what Social Security benefits people receive, and why Social Security is facing a funding shortfall. Additionally, it debunks anti-Social

Security talking points, makes the case for how Social Security provides a good return on investment for beneficiaries, and discusses how earned benefits are structured to be fair to workers of color, women, low-income workers, and younger workers.

The FAQ page also underscores the fact that the majority of Americans want to address the Social Security funding shortfall by making the wealthy pay their fair share into the system.

“With attacks to our earned benefits from every direction, we need to get accurate, fact-based information about Social Security like this FAQ into every retirees’ hands,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance.

Alliance Field Director Briefs Union Retirees on Threats to Retirement Security and Ways to Take Action

Last week, Field Mobilization Director **Maureen Dunn** spoke to the Communication Workers of America (CWA) Retired Members Council at the 80th CWA Convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She briefed CWA retirees on the Alliance’s organizing efforts, discussed the latest threats to retirement security, and outlined ways to take action to protect earned benefits.

KFF Health News: Experts Say Rural Emergency Rooms Are Increasingly Run Without Doctors **By Arielle Zionts**

EKALAKA, Mont. — There was no doctor on-site when a patient arrived in early June at the emergency room in the small hospital at the intersection of two dirt roads in this town of 400 residents.

There never is.

Dahl Memorial's three-bed emergency department — a two-hour drive from the closest hospital with more advanced services — instead depends on physician assistants and nurse practitioners.

Physician assistant Carla Dowdy realized the patient needed treatment beyond what the ER could provide, even if it had had a doctor. So, she made a call for a medical plane to fly the patient to treatment at Montana's most advanced hospital. Dowdy also called out medications and doses needed to stabilize the patient as a paramedic and nurses administered the drugs, inserted IV lines, and measured vital signs.

Emergency medicine researchers and providers believe ERs, especially in rural areas, increasingly operate with few or no physicians amid a nationwide shortage of doctors.