MONDAY ALERT

New York State Alliance *for* Retired Americans

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December 29, 2025

ACA Subsidies to Expire December 31
New Yorkers Health Insurance Rates to Rise Dramatically

In 2025, 140,403 people in NYS receive critical tax credits that help lower their monthly premium payments to make quality, comprehensive health insurance coverage more affordable. These enhanced tax credits are set to expire under current law. This would send premiums skyrocketing and mean fewer New Yorkers are able to afford coverage at all, including children and families, people with chronic conditions, early retirees, small business owners and hourly workers.

The current speaker of the house has refused to allow a vote on continuing these subsidies, even temporarily, to maintain affordability of health care. When you add this to actions taken in the "Big Ugly Bill" of 1.1 trillion cut to Medicaid (5.5 billion per year in NY) and the automatic cuts to Medicare of $500 Billion 2026-34 that are mandated by the PAYGO act of 2010 because of the drastic increase of the deficit. Add these together and you have the "perfect storm" of health care cost. Because of the refusal of the speaker to put this issue on the floor the Congress had to draft a discharge petition to get the issue to the floor there had to be 218 signatures. To that end Mike Lawler (NY/R/CD #17) and 3 Republicans from Pennsylvania signed on to a three year clean continuation of the subsidy's . However this vote will not take place until after the first of the year and the deadline for insurance decisions is January 15 unless extended. This legislation also faces an uncertain future in the Senate.

If Congress increases health premiums on families and workers by not extending the ACA subsidies:

- In 2025, more than 24 million Americans who didn't get coverage through their employer, Medicare or Medicaid buy coverage on their own and would face significantly higher premiums or lose coverage all together.
- 1 in 4 people with chronic conditions could lose coverage.
- 1.6 million children are at risk of losing access to essential health care services as families face steep premium increases, forcing tough decisions.
- 3.3 million small business owners and self employed workers would see premiums skyrocket, discriminating between them and those who get health insurance from their employer.
- 2.8 million rural Americans would be hit hard. Options for her;th care services in rural areas are fewer and harder to reach, and the cost of insurance is much higher

In New York State:

- For a 60 year old couple earning $85,600 per year the annual premiums would **increase by $12,258 (196%)**
- For a family of four earning $133,750 a year (ages 45, 45, 15 and 10) their annual premium would **increase by $16,394 (164%)**
- For a family of four earning $66,000 a year (ages 45, 45, 15 and 10) their annual premiums would **increase by $3,025 (342%)**

To see statistics for your Congressional District.

Should high earners support scrapping Social Security's cap on taxable earnings?

By the Economic Policy Institute

Earnings above a cap aren't subject to the payroll taxes that fund Social Security. As a result, billionaires pay the same tax as someone earning $176,100 in 2025 (the cap is indexed to the average wage, so it changes every year).

"Scrapping the cap" is a popular and effective way to address Social Security's funding gap. Nearly three-fourths of Social Security's projected long-term shortfall would be eliminated if the cap were scrapped without increasing

benefits.
But wouldn't such a move be opposed by high earners? The answer isn't as obvious as you might think, because most workers with earnings above the cap stand to lose more from benefit cuts than from higher taxes. If nothing is done to shore up Social Security's finances, EPI estimates that 70% of workers aged 32–66 who earned more than the taxable maximum in 2024 would lose *more* in benefit cuts than they would pay in higher taxes if the cap were scrapped.

The remaining 30% of these high earners, would, however, be better off losing 22.4% of their benefits beginning in 2034 than paying Social Security taxes on earnings above the cap. Unfortunately, this group includes politically influential multi-millionaires and billionaires.

If the cap were eliminated, a worker who was 35 years old and earned below $236,000 in 2024 would pay taxes on earnings above the cap through age 66, but the value of these additional taxes would be lower than the value of forgone benefits if these were reduced by 22.4% (the amount necessary to restore the system to long-term balance).

Ultimately, most high earners stand to lose more from potential Social Security benefit cuts than from paying taxes on earnings above the cap. Scrapping the cap remains the most fair and practical path to safeguarding Social Security for future generations.

Older American's Lost up to $81.5 Billion in the Past Year to Financial Fraud, FTC Report Says

FTC Report Shows Older American's Now Losing Four Times More Money Than in 2020

By Kristen Altus Fox Business

The following is at least one of the rationale's that NYSARA will be rolling out a "train the trainer" Stop the Scam program in March. With the cooperation and support of the NYS Office for the Aging, the United Way and Live on NY as well as various elected's. The NYSARA Stop the scam will focus largely on AI scams and social media scams as they are the most difficult to recognize and combat.

Scammers are draining seniors' life savings at staggering rates, a new Federal Trade Commission report shows, with older Americans reporting about four times more in fraud losses in 2024 than in 2020. Main findings from the FTC's Protecting Older Consumers 2024-2025 report show that reported fraud losses for adults 60 and older exploded, with about $2.4 billion lost to scams in 2024 — up from about $600 million in 2020.

However, the FTC warns that the real losses are far higher due to underreporting, with the agency estimating that the overall cost of fraud to older adults in 2024 was between $10.1 billion and $81.5 billion, depending on methodology.

Large, devastating losses exceeding $100,000 are reportedly driving the surge, with combined losses reported by older adults who lost more than $100,000 increasing more than five-fold from 2020 to 2024. These large-loss cases account for about 68% of all aggregate reported dollars lost by older Americans.

RISING HOLIDAY SCAMS ARE COSTING CONSUMERS. HERE'S HOW TO PROTECT YOUR WALLET

"The FTC's latest report details the agency's commitment to protecting older Americans from scams that rob them of their hard-earned money," Christopher Mufarrige, director of the FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection, told Fox News Digital in a statement. "The FTC is doing everything possible to protect older adults and shut down illegal scams."

The report also found that social media has become the top pipeline for scammers, with older adults now reporting losing more money to scams initiated on social media than to those that begin through any other contact method. Reported losses via social platforms have increased nearly ninefold since 2020, with a focus on cryptocurrency and romance fraud.

Although social media is the top contact method by total dollars lost, scams that begin with a phone call produce the highest median reported loss at $2,210, compared to $650 for social-media-initiated incidents. Tech support, sweepstakeslottery and government impersonation scams hit older Americans disproportionately, the FTC notes, but investment schemes are now the most financially damaging among seniors, with about $744 million in reported losses by adults 60 and over in 2024

Additionally, FTC staff outreach and consumer complaints indicate that impersonation scammers exploit seniors' trust in authority — often posing as FTC officials, banks or law enforcement to pressure older adults into quickly transferring funds.

To avoid falling victim, the AARP notes that most fraud starts with three red flags: an unexpected contact, a surge of emotion and a sense of urgency. Its Fraud Watch Network advises taking an "active pause" when these signs arise, to allow time to process what's happening.
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Will Medicare cover my long-term SNF stay?

By Our Friends At Medicare Rights

Dear Marci,

I need to stay in skilled nursing facility (SNF) care for several weeks, possibly longer. I'm concerned about the cost. So far, Medicare has covered my stay, but will it continue to? Will

Medicare cover an extended SNF stay? I have Original Medicare.

- Maria (Boise, ID)

Dear Maria,

Medicare Part A covers up to 100 days of care in a skilled nursing facility (SNF) each benefit period. Your costs during a covered SNF stay are:

- **Days 1–20**: You pay $0 each day after you pay the $1,676 amount in 2025 ($1,736 in 2026).
- **Days 21–100:** You pay $209.50 each day in 2025 ($217.00 in 2026).

Past 100 days, you will be responsible for the full cost of the stay.

Medicare SNF coverage can be extended in some circumstances:

- Once you have been out of a hospital or SNF for 60 days in a row, a new benefit period will start. At that point, you are eligible for another 100 days of SNF care following a three-day qualifying inpatient stay.
- If you are receiving medically necessary physical, occupational, or speech therapy, Medicare Part B may continue to cover those skilled therapy services even when you have used up your SNF days in a benefit period.
    - Note that Medicare will not pay for your room and board, meaning you may face high costs. Check with your provider to see if you qualify for therapy at home through Medicare's home health benefit, or if you could safely receive therapy as an outpatient while living at home.
- If you have long-term care insurance, it may cover your SNF stay after your Medicare coverage ends. Check with your plan for more information.
- If your income is low, you may be eligible for Medicaid to cover your care. To find out if you meet eligibility requirements in your state, contact your local Medicaid office.

Keep in mind that if your Medicare coverage is ending because you are running out of days, the facility is not required to provide written notice. It is important that you or a caregiver keep track of how many days you have spent in the SNF to avoid unexpected costs after Medicare coverage ends.

Hope this answers your questions!

-Marci

Happy New Year to Our Members

NYSARA President Barry Kaufmann and the NYSARA Board of Directors wish the NYSARA membership the happiest of New Year's. With the 2025 year and the political attacks on healthcare, nutrition and issues important to seniors the Board is hopeful for a better 2026. With our continued spirited and consistent advocacy for senior issues at both the state and federal level and our pressure on our representatives to do the right thing and improve their voting records on senior issues NYSARA is hopeful for a better 2026. To all of you and yours wishes for the happiest of new year's and a productive 2026.