



# Illinois Alliance *for* Retired Americans

## July - December 2013 Newsletter

### Illinois Alliance Holds Sixth Constitutional Convention

Over 100 members attended the Illinois Alliance's constitutional convention in Ottawa at the UAW Pat Greathouse Center on September 4<sup>th</sup>. Speakers included Barbara Easterling, President of the national Alliance for Retired Americans and Michael Carrigan, President of the Illinois AFL-CIO.

Re-elected to office were: Barbara Franklin, President; Homer K. Spaulding, Executive Vice President; Katie Jordan, Treasurer; and Jane Russell, Secretary.

It was the Illinois Alliance's 6<sup>th</sup> constitutional convention, and it was the largest attendance since their founding.



Barbara Easterling, President of the national Alliance, swears in members of the Executive Board.



Michael Carrigan, President of the Illinois AFL-CIO, address the crowd at the convention.

### Seniors Mobilize to Protest the Chained CPI Social Security Benefit Cut

During the second half of the year, the Illinois Alliance continued its campaign to call on members of Congress to oppose the dangerous chained CPI proposal. An average retiree would lose \$6,000 in benefits over 15 years with a chained CPI. Adoption of the chained CPI is a cruel proposal to balance the budget on the backs of seniors, veterans, and the disabled, none of whom has caused our fiscal situation.

In August, the Illinois Alliance marked the 78<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Social Security by thanking members of Congress that had cosponsored a House resolution (H. Con. Res. 34) that expresses opposition to the chained CPI. On August 28<sup>th</sup>, dozens of members gathered with Congressman Bill Enyart in Alton to celebrate Social Security's success. On August 30<sup>th</sup>, members held a roundtable with Congresswoman Cheri Bustos in Rockford to discuss issues facing seniors and thank her for opposing the chained CPI.

Near Veterans Day, on November 7<sup>th</sup>, Illinois Alliance members and veterans gathered outside of Congressman Rodney Davis' Champaign office to speak out about how the chained CPI would be particularly harmful to veterans and to deliver a letter to the Congressman's office.

On December 5<sup>th</sup>, the Illinois Alliance partnered with the National Committee to Preserve Social Security & Medicare to deliver thousands of petitions to Senator Dick Durbin's office in Chicago. Senator Durbin is the second most powerful Democrat in the Senate and the Illinois Alliance continues to call on him to strongly oppose the chained CPI.



Barbara Franklin, Illinois Alliance president, stands with veteran Jim Dixon in front of Rep. Rodney Davis' office.



Rep. Cheri Bustos speaks to seniors at the Booker Washington Center in Rockford.



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## Seniors Demand a Better Illinois *Call for legislators to support a fair tax*

The Illinois Alliance has joined the large and growing coalition, A Better Illinois, to call on state legislators to support a fair tax with lower rates for lower incomes and higher rates for higher incomes. A fair tax will set the state's priorities straight, by protecting health care, public safety, education and services for seniors.

Claiming that Illinois is broke; state legislators have slashed vital public services while opening costly new tax loopholes for big corporations and handing out special breaks to CEOs.

Those aren't the priorities Illinois seniors share. The Illinois Alliance has mobilized seniors across the state to support a fair tax. Through petition signing events, visits with state legislators and more than a dozen educational presentations, the Illinois Alliance is amplifying the senior voice.

A fair tax is strongly supported by seniors and working families in Illinois. In recent months, A Better Illinois commissioned a poll of voters statewide. The results showed that more than 77% of voters expressed support for a fair tax with lower rates for lower incomes and higher rates for higher incomes.

For more information about A Better Illinois, and to get involved with the coalition, go to their website at [www.abetterillinois.org](http://www.abetterillinois.org).

## Peoria Retirees Hold Congressman Schock Accountable for Opposition to Affordable Care Act

Illinois Alliance activists gathered outside of Congressman Aaron Schock's Peoria office on August 22<sup>nd</sup> to demonstrate against the Congressman's continued opposition to the Affordable Care Act. They delivered a letter demanding that he fight for the best interests of his constituents by supporting access to affordable health care.

The law strengthens Medicare in part by closing the Part D prescription drug "doughnut hole" coverage gap that has long been a financial burden on seniors. Additionally, due to the law, Medicare Part B premiums and deductibles are projected to go down for the first time in Medicare history. Medicare beneficiaries now receive many preventive services with no out-of-pocket costs.

Congressman Schock has stated his strong support for repealing the Affordable Care Act on numerous occasions. Congressional Republicans have voted 40 times to repeal the law, which has benefited millions of Americans.



Illinois Alliance members in Peoria protest outside of Rep. Schock's office.