



Illinois Alliance *for* Retired Americans

Mid-Year 2013 Newsletter

Save the Date



6th Constitutional Convention

Wednesday, September 4

9:00am to 3:00pm

UAW Pat Greathouse Center

1000 E. Center St, Ottawa, IL 61350

Guest speakers include:

Michael Carrigan

Illinois AFL-CIO President

Barbara Easterling

Alliance for Retired Americans President

Senior Power Lunch

Monday, October 7 at Noon

Elks Lodge

495 Lee St, Des Plaines, IL 60016

Jerry Prete Award Recipient

U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky

Keynote Speaker

Keith Kelleher, SEIU Healthcare Illinois/
Indiana President

For more information contact the Illinois Alliance for Retired Americans office at (312) 427-2114 ext. 207 or illinoisara@gmail.com.



Members of Progressive Baptist Church Senior Citizens at a lobby day in Springfield on April 11.

Seniors Storm the Capitol

Call on legislators to invest and protect in retiree care

This spring, the Illinois Alliance for Retired Americans, in coalition with allies, brought hundreds of seniors to the capitol in Springfield to call on legislators to protect retiree care for seniors. The Illinois Alliance worked with SEIU Healthcare Illinois/Indiana, Illinois AARP and Jane Addams Senior Caucus to hold four lobby days. Seniors lobbied their legislators to protect home care services, expand Medicaid, preserve public employees' pensions and support a fair state income tax.

At the lobby day on April 11, seniors delivered pennies and postcards that read "Don't Shortchange Seniors – Fully Fund Home Care Services" to every legislator. The Community Care Program, which provides home care services to 85,000 seniors, faced a major shortfall in funding. By late April, a supplemental funding bill for the program passed.

On April 30, seniors held a prayer circle outside of the House and Senate chambers with pastors from Chicago. At the prayer circle, the seniors called on legislators to support the expansion of Medicaid, which would move some 342,000 low-income uninsured residents out of the emergency room and into mainstream health care which will lower overall health costs. The bill to expand Medicaid passed in late May.

On May 14, nearly 200 seniors listened to Senator Heather Steans, Representative Don Moffitt and Representative Mike Smiddy in the auditorium of the Howlett Building. The seniors thanked the legislators for supporting supplemental funding for the Community Care Program and called on them to support a fair state income tax.

This spring, the Illinois Alliance also worked to support SB 2404, which is the fair and constitutional pension reform bill that was developed with the We Are One Illinois union coalition. Illinois Alliance President Barbara Franklin released the following statement. "As a voice for seniors we encourage all segments of the senior population to act with unity on legislative, political and policy issues of importance to retirees and their families. For these reasons, the Illinois Alliance for Retired Americans advocates for the passage of SB2404, the negotiated pension bill."



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Retirees Admonish U.S. Representative Aaron Schock for Scoring Zero on Senior-Issue Voting Record

Members of the Alliance for Retired Americans gathered in Peoria on Monday, June 3 in front of U.S. Representative Aaron Schock's office to criticize him for scoring zero on the Alliance's 2012 Voting Record. The Alliance's Voting Record assesses Members of Congress on 10 House and Senate votes, which include issues of importance to seniors from taxes to Medicare, from Social Security to prescription drugs.

The members delivered signed petitions into the office that called on him to improve his voting score by opposing the chained CPI. The use of the chained CPI to calculate the cost-of-living-adjustment for Social Security would lower benefits.

"Congressman Schock gambled too freely with the health and economic security of older Americans," said Ginny Nailing, an Alliance member. "It's shameful when the officials we elect consistently disappoint their constituents. When someone pretends to be a friend of seniors, it's the Voting Record that is the ultimate reality check."



Illinois Alliance Members Meet Across the State

IARA continues to hold regional membership meetings to educate seniors about the Illinois Alliance's latest campaigns. A Southern Regional Membership meeting was held in Belleville on January 31 and a Central Regional Membership meeting was held on March 7 in Springfield. Most recently, on June 12, over twenty members met at the Illinois Federation of Teachers' office in Fairview Heights to learn the latest on the impacts of sequestration, implementation of the Affordable Care Act and to hear reports on lobby visits with state legislators. On August 6, members in central Illinois are invited to attend a membership meeting at the Labor Temple in Peoria at noon.



Illinois Alliance members rally outside of U.S. Representative Aaron Schock's office in Peoria.

Seniors Form Human Chain in front of U.S. Representative John Shimkus' Office to Protest the Chained CPI Social Security Cut

On Wednesday, July 3, the Alliance for Retired Americans sponsored a national day of action which focused on opposing the chained CPI, which would cut Social Security benefits by changing the cost-of-living adjustment formula.

Members of the Illinois Alliance created a human chain in front of U.S. Representative John Shimkus' office to protest the chained CPI. Dozens more human chains were formed in front of key Congressional offices and federal buildings, as well as other strategic locations, in states around the country.

"Politicians continue to press for the chained CPI benefit cut as a way to reduce the deficit. But the truth is, Social Security has not contributed one dime to the deficit," said Barbara Franklin, President of the Illinois Alliance for Retired Americans. "The chained CPI is a cold, calculated benefit cut to our Social Security."