IARA President’s Report

Fellow retiree leaders,

The first half of 2022 has been an exciting time for the Illinois Alliance for Retired Americans. We hired a new organizer from Central Illinois, we helped mobilize to win big on pension funding and public investment in care in the legislative session, and we continue to build momentum towards the November election.

In the primary elections, we are proud to announce our endorsement of Nikki Budzinski for Congress in the 13th District. Budzinski’s commitment to workers’ rights, families, and healthcare is aligned with the values and mission of the Illinois Alliance, and we are excited to support her campaign.

When it comes to the General Elections in November, Illinois has a chance to advance our movement by winning the Workers’ Rights Amendment (WRA). A “yes” vote for the WRA is a vote to ensure safer workplaces, a stronger bottom-up economy, and protection for the right to organize in Illinois for generations of workers to come.

We are also mobilizing a statewide postcard writing campaign to push back against the billionaires who are campaigning to stack the Illinois Supreme Court with an anti-worker, anti-civil rights majority. IARA and our affiliated organizations are teaming up with leading progressive organizations to educate voters on the importance of the Illinois Supreme Court races which could determine the fate of the Pension Protection Clause, voting rights, criminal justice reform, and more.

Last but not least, I am happy to announce that our Executive Board voted unanimously to host our annual Senior Power Celebration in my hometown, Springfield! Stay tuned for more information about how you can join us!

Solidarity,

IARA President Don Todd

with his grandson

IARA Celebrates Older Americans Month

During Older Americans Month this May, 2022, the Illinois Alliance for Retired Americans (IARA) hosted town halls with Congresswomen Lauren Underwood and Jan Schakowsky. We were joined by some of our movement leaders as we presented the Congresswomen with the Retiree Hero Award for their flawless voting records on issues impacting seniors and workers.

Virtual Town Halls w/ Congresswomen

Jan Schakowsky & Lauren Underwood
tinyurl.com/OAMTownHalls

Our Retiree Champions on the Issues:

Congresswoman Schakowsky and Underwood both applauded the Build Back Better plan that would allow Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices and cap out of pocket costs. They also spoke on social security, and championed the bill they are co-sponsoring, Social Security 2100 Act, which will repeal GPO & WEP, as well as ensure funding for social security into the year 2100. The social security bill is currently in the Ways and Means Committee for language drafting!

“[WEP/GPO] is unfair to people who have been in the public sector, teachers, who find out, often at the end of the day when their spouse dies, or they retire, that the money they thought they had earned, by working outside of the public sector, and paying into social security, is not going to be there. Regardless of whatever the cost is, we need to continue to fight for that change.”--Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky.

We also heard from Maureen Dunn, Alliance for Retired Americans Field Director, on the power and importance of storytelling in building our movement. Shante Wolf, Caring Across Generations (CAG), updated us on the status of important key care legislation we’ve been following and spoke to the upcoming election and CAG’s commitment to get out the vote efforts. William McNary of Citizens Action, closed the town halls by reminding us that Illinois is facing two elections in the northern part of the state that will impact the entire state--Illinois Supreme Court races. Electing pro-worker Judges is vital to protecting our pensions and social safety nets.
BIG ANNOUNCEMENT!
The 2022 Senior Power Celebration is being hosted in Springfield!

Join us on Tuesday, September 13th, 2022
UA Local 137 Plumbers & Steamfitters Hall
2880 E Cook St, Springfield, IL 62703
Doors open at 11:30am - Program Begins at 12:00pm

Details including tickets & virtual options at
illinois.retiredamericans.org/2022seniorpowercelebration