



FRIDAY ALERT

Alliance for Retired Americans

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Headlines:

Leaders in Washington Pushing to Strengthen and Expand Social Security;
Wild Week in Virginia Shifts Political Landscape;
Activists Plan Events in Response to ALEC's Annual Meeting in Dallas;
Millennials May Be Headed For Retirement Hardship;
North Carolina Alliance Holds Golf Tournament, Sees Great Results

Here is your June 13 Friday Alert:

Leaders in Washington Pushing to Strengthen and Expand Social Security

In a sign that the push to expand Social Security is continuing to build support, on Wednesday Senators **Mark Begich** (D-AK) and **Patty Murray** (D-WA) introduced the Retirement and Income Security Enhancements (RAISE) Act. The RAISE Act would enhance Social Security benefits for widows, widowers, and divorced spouses while extending benefit eligibility for children of retired, disabled, and deceased workers.

The RAISE Act is not the only proposal to expand Social Security. Last year, Sen. **Tom Harkin** (D-IA) introduced the Strengthening Social Security Act (S. 567) in the Senate, with Rep. **Linda Sanchez** (D-CA) introducing a companion bill in the House (H.R. 3118). The Strengthening Social Security Act proposes adjusting the benefits formula to provide an increase in benefits for most beneficiaries and improving the program's finances by lifting the earnings cap on Social Security contributions.

"With multiple expansion bills under consideration, it's clear that an increasing number of leaders in Washington realize the importance of strengthening and expanding our Social Security system," said **Barbara J. Easterling**, President for the Alliance. If you have not already signed the petition calling on senators to stand up in support of the RAISE Act, go to <http://bit.ly/1umKX9g>.

Wild Week in Virginia Shifts Political Landscape

During a tumultuous week in Virginia politics, two politicians are now out of their posts in moves with major implications at both the state and national levels. At the national level, a shocking result in the Virginia GOP primary saw U.S. House Majority Leader **Eric Cantor** (R) lose to Tea Party candidate **David Brat**. Following the loss, Rep. Cantor announced his resignation from the Majority Leader position, effective July 31st. Cantor's loss will have ripple effects throughout the House Republican leadership. The result is also expected to revitalize the Tea Party after a primary season in which Tea Party candidates nationwide have otherwise had little success challenging establishment Republicans. Cantor has a 2% lifetime voting record with the Alliance (<http://tinyurl.com/xfp6pd>). Read more on Cantor's defeat at <http://inn.6/1NTCME>.

Earlier in the week, on Monday, Virginia Republicans had taken control of the state Senate after the unexpected resignation of Democratic state senator **Phillip P. Puckett**. Republicans now control the Virginia Senate by a 20-to-19 margin. Following the resignation, Republicans immediately ended a budget standoff that had threatened to shut down the state's government in the coming weeks. The impasse was brought on by a proposed Medicaid expansion under the terms of the Affordable Care Act. Expanding health coverage to 400,000 low income Virginians has been a top priority for Gov. **Terry McAuliffe** (D). Mr. McAuliffe had traveled to hospitals that serve the poor in rural districts of conservative lawmakers, seeking to pressure them to endorse his plan to join the 26 states that embraced Medicaid expansion under the president's health care law. He is now widely believed to be studying how to enact a Medicaid expansion without the legislature.

"Any time the health care of 400,000 people is put at risk, it is extremely unfortunate," said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance.

Puckett's resignation was clouded in controversy as news quickly leaked that he was set to receive a job as deputy director of the state's Tobacco Commission and that his daughter was in line for a judicial appointment. Puckett subsequently removed himself from consideration for the Commission post. For more on the resignation, go to <http://wapo.st/5hedbus>.

Activists Plan Events in Response to ALEC's Annual Meeting in Dallas

The shadowy American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) will be heading to Dallas from July 30th to August 1st for its annual meeting. The Dallas-Fort Worth area chapters of the Texas Alliance for Retired Americans are working with North Texas Jobs with Justice and an anti-ALEC coalition to organize a number of upcoming events in order to draw attention to ALEC's anti-retiree and anti-worker agenda, putting pressure on ALEC-linked politicians to cut ties with the corporate-backed organization. The events kicked off this Thursday with a teach-in and concert featuring folk musician and political activist **Anne Feeney**. Numerous grassroots actions, including workshops and protests, will be held in the Dallas area through late July. The main protest and rally will take place on July 30th. For more on the upcoming events, see the flyer at <http://bit.ly/1jseHND>.

Millennials May Be Headed For Retirement Hardship

A recent Merrill Lynch survey looking at generational attitudes towards retirement security suggests that millennials expect Social Security and employer-provided pensions to make up less of their retirement income than previous generations. Millennials, a term researchers and commentators often use to refer to those with birth years ranging from the early 1980s to the early 2000s, expect to rely more heavily on employment income and personal savings. With record levels of student debt, high unemployment rates curbing future earnings, and low rates of retirement savings, millennials may be counting on savings that don't ever materialize. According to *New Republic*, if millennials' expectations about relying on personal savings prove accurate, these younger workers may face economic hardship in retirement or be left working for years longer than previous generations.

"This survey underscores the importance of strengthening Social Security and protecting pension programs so that our children and grandchildren are able to enjoy a dignified, secure retirement," said **Ruben Burks**, Secretary-Treasurer for the Alliance. More at <http://bit.ly/1hN3wKS>.

North Carolina Alliance Holds Golf Tournament, Sees Great Results

On Monday, the North Carolina Alliance for Retired Americans held their 3rd Annual Golf Tournament at Holly Ridge Golf Links in Archdale, NC. Twenty-one golfers, 10 sponsors and 30 donors took part! Congratulations go out to SEIU member **Lewis Sasse**, who won the affiliate's first ever raffle. The prize was a 42-inch flat screen HDTV. "This year's golf tournament was our most successful to date," said North Carolina Alliance President **Jim Moore**. "Thank you to all of our volunteers & sponsors." To view a photo from the event, go to <http://tinyurl.com/q2za9p2>.

For a printable version of this document, go to <http://tinyurl.com/mxlp6pe>.

For the Alliance's Spanish language page, which includes last week's Friday Alert in Spanish, go to www.allianzadejubilados.org



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