

Alliance Clips and Retiree News November 29, 2011

Alliance Mentions

Meeting set to discuss Affordable Care Act benefits for seniors
Sioux City Journal
November 28, 2011

The Alliance for Retired Americans and Know Your Care will hold a forum on Wednesday to answer questions about the Affordable Care Act and the plans available to seniors. At the forum there will be presentations by both government and nonprofit groups.

http://www.siouxcityjournal.com/news/local/briefs/meeting-set-to-discuss-affordable-care-act-benefits-for-seniors/article_aafeb17d-6ea4-5b60-87a7-8ea55bf7a7d1.html

Alliance People

Bass forum offers healthcare info to seniors
Nashua Telegraph
Cameron Kittle
November 29, 2011

Representative Charles Bass from New Hampshire hosted a forum on healthcare Monday. This was a chance for seniors to ask questions about their coverage and help them decide which plan to buy for the upcoming year. Mike Bradley, 62, of Hillsborough, said the forum was a good source of information for concerned seniors, but he also was disappointed by Bass' lack of accountability. Bradley asked Bass about his vote in favor of Wisconsin Rep. Paul Ryan's budget, which proposed cuts to Medicare, but Bradley thought Bass dodged the question. Without going into specifics, Bass defended his voting record and said it is always his intention to preserve the status of Medicare and Medicaid. Bradley attended the forum with a few other members of the New Hampshire Alliance for Retired Americans, who are concerned about health care for older adults. "People are calling different services and being led around in loops," said Charles Balban, president of the New Hampshire Alliance for Retired Americans. "There should be more common knowledge."

<http://www.nashuatelegraph.com/news/941553-196/bass-forum-offers-healthcare-info-to-seniors.html>

Politics

Senate Democrats Propose Extending Payroll Tax Cut
The New York Times

Jennifer Steinhauer
November 29, 2011

On Monday Senate democrats introduced a bill that would extend the payroll tax cut that is currently set to expire in 2012. This legislation would reduce the payroll tax by half, from 6.2% to 3.1%, this would save the average family about \$1,500 a month. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) says that this bill will help millions of Americans struggling to make ends meet, “seems to me the most important thing we can do is to make sure they have money to keep their bills paid to the best of their ability.” This tax cut will benefit mainly the lower and middle class. Republicans are not excited about the tax cut, especially the fact that it is supposed to be funded by a 3.25% tax increase on millionaires. The Democrats have promised to make this a key issue in the coming days.

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/29/us/politics/senate-democrats-propose-extended-payroll-tax-cut.html?_r=1&ref=todayspaper&gwh=5B2428CA3FEF42D806F245513440A01A

Retirements hit Dem aspirations for a House takeover in 2012

The Hill

Josh Lederman

November 29, 2011

Rep. Barney Frank’s (D-Mass.) announced Monday that he will be retiring this cycle. He makes the 17th Democratic member of the House to decide not to run. Like many of his fellow retirees Frank points to a majority of reasons why he is deciding to retire, one of those reasons being redistricting, and the fact that his district now includes a number of conservative towns. Many representatives have echoed this reason for retirement. Republican strategists point to this as a sign that Democrats have seen the writing on the wall and know there is little chance they will regain a majority in the House and will most likely lose their majority in the Senate. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) released a memo stating the opposite. “Today, you have heard a lot of bluster from Republicans about Democratic retirements — don’t believe it,” the memo said. “The fact is that this cycle, there are fewer retirements than have historically retired.” Regardless of what either side says, both parties are preparing for a fight in the upcoming election cycle.

<http://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/195795-retirements-hit-dem-aspirations-for-a-house-takeover-in-2012-elections>

States squirm over health exchanges

Politico

Jason Millman

November 28, 2011

A provision of the Affordable Care Act requires states to set up health exchanges, but a number of states are waiting for the Supreme Court ruling to put in place their exchanges. These exchanges will set up subsidized healthcare coverage for middle and lower class workers. States' exchanges are required to be in place by January 2014, but they need to be in working order by January 13 so that Health and Human Services can inspect them, and make sure they are up to par. The last chance for the states to receive federal assistance is June 2012, so the clock is ticking. Only 13 states have set up exchanges so far, with few of them in working order. The states will be paying close attention to the outcome of the Supreme Court's decision early this summer.

<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1111/69253.html>

Labor

As Public Sector Sheds Jobs, Blacks Are Hit Hardest

The New York Times

Timothy Williams

November 29, 2011

The economy has been hard for everyone, but middle class African-Americans in the public sector have been hit the hardest. About one in five African-American workers have public sector jobs. Unemployment rates of African-Americans have been about double those of Whites during the recession. In October the unemployment rate for the African-American community was 15.1% compared to 8% for whites. Economists sight a number of reasons for this racial gap. There does not seem to be an end in sight, as the Postal Service faces financial turmoil, they plan to cut 220,000 jobs in order to stay solvent. About 25% of the Postal Service workforce is African-American and they are expected to take these lay-offs hard.

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/29/us/as-public-sector-sheds-jobs-black-americans-are-hit-hard.html?_r=1&hp

American Airlines' parent files for Ch. 11 bankruptcy protection; CEO steps down

The Washington Post

Associated Press

November 29, 2011

American Airlines and its parent corporation AMR Corp. declared bankruptcy Tuesday. They also announced that their current CEO, Gerard Arpey, will be stepping down and will be replaced by Thomas W. Horton. The company says it will continue to operate as normal, taking reservations and honoring frequent flier miles, but will reduce its schedule 'modestly.' There will also be major layoffs to save money. The company says there is no single reason for bankruptcy but they point to rising jet fuel costs and labor spending. The airline claims that labor contracts

forced the company to pay \$600 million more than other airlines. Pilots are worried about their pensions, as other airlines have used bankruptcy to terminate pension plans. Darryl Jenkins, a consultant who has worked for the major airlines says, “Labor is going to take a major hit. Their pensions are in danger.”

http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/industries/american-airlines-and-american-eagles-parent-companies-file-for-ch-11-bankruptcy-protection/2011/11/29/gIQA65KH8N_story.html?hpid=z1