

## Alliance Clips and Retiree News December 15, 2011

### **Alliance Mentions**

Teachers to occupy Riverside.

Record Gazette

December 12, 2011

California Teachers Association Board of Directors member and Moreno Valley teacher Jose Alcala will join representatives from area organizations, including the California Alliance for Retired Americans, at a vigil and march in Riverside on Tuesday, Dec. 13, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. The event will protest any additional cuts that could be “triggered” on Dec. 15, resulting from the state not meeting revenue projections put forth in this year’s state budget. If the state’s revenue target is not being met, California’s health, human services and education budgets could see an additional \$2.5 million in deep cuts on top of huge cuts in these vital services during the past several years.

[http://www.recordgazette.net/articles/2011/12/12/news/breaking\\_news/doc4ee65613aab80243999233.txt](http://www.recordgazette.net/articles/2011/12/12/news/breaking_news/doc4ee65613aab80243999233.txt)

### **Social Security**

Disagreement Over Payroll Tax Cut’s Impact on Social Security

Jackie Calmes

New York Times

December 15, 2011

Democrats and Republicans predict the payroll tax cut will be extended beyond its Dec. 31 expiration, though the question of how to pay for it and some other unrelated issues in the year-end legislation continued to hold it up on Wednesday. Still, the disagreement over the tax cut lingers. Democrats fear that repeated extensions would disrupt the link that President Franklin Delano Roosevelt forged to lock in support for Social Security: with workers taxed for their benefits, politicians would not cut them. And Republicans object that transferring general revenues to Social Security to offset the tax cut makes the program more like welfare, and worsens the federal budget deficit.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/16/us/politics/payroll-tax-cut-extension-seen-as-peril-to-social-security.html>

### **Medicare**

Gingrich’s plan to “Newtify” Medicare Advantage

Sarah Kiff

Washington Post  
December 14, 2011

Gingrich's proposal for Medicare sounds a lot like the current program: A public, traditional Medicare plan coupled with private alternatives, Medicare Advantage, that seniors can voluntarily enroll in. And that's kind of Gingrich's point: He doesn't want to move forward on a Medicare plan that's not politically popular. That's how he explains his criticism of Budget Chair Paul Ryan's Medicare proposals, which would move the entire program into a voucher system. "If there's a program which is very, very unpopular should Republicans impose it?" Gingrich asks. "And my answer is no." What Gingrich proposes sounds a lot like, a "Newtified version of Medicare Advantage," where federal regulations would get out of the way, doing more to encourage private plans to compete against traditional, government-run coverage.  
[http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/ezra-klein/post/gingrichs-plan-to-newtify-medicare-advantage/2011/12/14/gIQA2VpWuO\\_blog.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/ezra-klein/post/gingrichs-plan-to-newtify-medicare-advantage/2011/12/14/gIQA2VpWuO_blog.html)

Plan to raise Medicare premiums for upper-income retirees would affect middle class as well  
Washington Post  
December 13, 2011

A year-end economic package approved by the House on Tuesday prescribes a Medicare premium increase for "high-income" beneficiaries. "High income" for Medicare beneficiaries currently means those making \$85,000 and above for individuals, or \$170,000 for families. Just the top 5 percent of Medicare recipients fall into those income brackets, causing them to pay higher premiums for outpatient and prescription coverage. The legislation would expand that over time so the highest-earning one-fourth of seniors pay added premiums. Millions who don't consider themselves wealthy would end up paying more, in some cases several hundred dollars more a month.  
[http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/plan-to-raise-medicare-premiums-for-upper-income-retirees-would-affect-middle-class-as-well/2011/12/13/gIQAK37FrO\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/plan-to-raise-medicare-premiums-for-upper-income-retirees-would-affect-middle-class-as-well/2011/12/13/gIQAK37FrO_story.html)

New Ryan Proposal Still Aims to Eliminate Medicare, Replace With Voucher Plan  
Robert Creamer  
Huffington Post  
December 15, 2011

Today, Republican House Budget Chairman Paul Ryan will present his new "bi-partisan compromise" plan to a meeting of an outfit known as the "Bipartisan Policy Center." Ryan's latest proposal would allow individuals to choose between traditional Medicare or vouchers that provide "premium support" for private insurance plans. The Center on Budget and Policy has concluded that the plan would allow private insurers to skim off healthy seniors and leave sicker, older seniors in the traditional Medicare plan. The effect would be to raise the costs of the traditional program and increase economic pressure to eliminate traditional Medicare -- that provides guaranteed benefits -- and replace it with vouchers for everyone.  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/robert-creamer/new-ryan-proposal-still-a\\_b\\_1150847.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/robert-creamer/new-ryan-proposal-still-a_b_1150847.html)

## **Politics**

'Dismal' prospects: 1 in 2 Americans are now poor or low income

Associated Press

December 15, 2011

The latest census data depicts a record number of Americans — nearly 1 in 2 — have fallen into poverty or are scraping by on earnings that classify them as low income. Based on a new supplemental measure by the Census Bureau, About 97.3 million Americans fall into a low-income category, commonly defined as those earning between 100 and 199 percent of the poverty level. Many middle-class Americans are dropping below the low-income threshold — roughly \$45,000 for a family of four — because of pay cuts, a forced reduction of work hours or a spouse losing a job. Housing and child-care costs are consuming up to half of a family's income.

<http://usnews.msnbc.msn.com/news/2011/12/15/9461848-dismal-prospects-1-in-2-americans-are-now-poor-or-low-income>