

Alliance Press Clips for October 19, 2011

Alliance Mentions



Demonstrators with the California Alliance for Retired Americans hold a rally outside the office of U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) in San Francisco, California August 17, 2011.

Credit: Reuters/Robert Galbraith

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/10/19/us-usa-economy-socialsecurity-idUSTRE79I45U20111019?feedType=RSS&feedName=domesticNews>

Alliance People

York-area seniors reject 'sneaky' attacks on Social Security

The York Dispatch

Christina Kauffman

October 18, 2011

The Pennsylvania Alliance for Retired Americans along with the IAM Local 98 and UAW Local 1872 sponsored a forum in York Pennsylvania to educate retirees on the danger Social Security is facing. Adam Swope, a PARA field organizer was a key speaker at the forum. He urged seniors to not jump on to just any social issue, such as the Balanced Budget Amendment. The amendment may seem like a good idea, and would in no way affect senior benefits, but the truth of the matter is that it would affect benefits a lot. Swope points out that this is just one example of Congress' "sneaky" way of cutting senior benefits without anyone really knowing.

http://www.yorkdispatch.com/news/ci_19141955

Local retirees worry that their children will not have Social Security benefits.

Daily Record/Sunday News
Sean Adkins
October 19, 2011

A number of retired union members gathered at the IAM Local 98 in Pennsylvania to discuss the problems Social Security and Medicare are facing. The main concern of the group was to preserve the program from their children. With the Super Committee scavenging for \$1.2 trillion in cuts it is likely there will be some major changes to Social Security if the public does not step up and stop them. Adam Swope, a field organizer from the Pennsylvania Alliance for Retired Americans briefed the group on the Super Committee's role and actions so far (or lack thereof). "What this is about is protecting what we have and protecting our children and families," said Tom Santone, another speaker at the forum.

Letters to the Editor

Drug companies try to mislead elderly
Wednesday October 19, 2011

Ohio retirees need to know the truth about a new \$1.6 million advertising campaign that aims to scare seniors with misleading claims about Medicare prescription-drug costs.

Organized by the conservative American Action Network, this national campaign is a thinly veiled attempt by the big drug companies to keep a loophole in federal law that results in taxpayers paying billions more per year than necessary for Medicare prescriptions for low-income seniors. As part of its deficit-reduction plan, the Obama administration wants to save Medicare \$135 billion over 10 years by requiring pharmaceutical companies to lower prescription costs for low-income seniors.

In other words, the big drug companies want to block us from ending their sweetheart deal created in 2003. Seniors and consumer advocates support the administration's proposal. Independent analysts view the advertisement's contention — that Medicare premiums would increase — with great skepticism. PolitiFact has cited experts from Georgetown, Johns Hopkins and Rutgers universities, who say that the linkage between these prescription-drug rebates and higher premiums is highly speculative and vastly overstated.

As the elections draw near, my generation must become politically savvy seniors who know the issues and fact from fiction. Sadly, this new campaign only fuels fear and confusion among the very people it claims to be trying to help.

DAVID FRIESNER, President
Ohio Alliance for Retired Americans

Medicare

Olympia Snowe breaks from GOP on health care

Politico

Matt Dobias

October 19, 2011

Republican Senator Olympia Snowe broke with fellow GOP members over the Senate Finance Committee's recommendations to the Super Committee. The GOP submitted a letter urging cuts to Medicare and changes that included tightening Medicare eligibility, and turning Medicaid into a block grant, along with repealing healthcare reform. Sen. Snowe did not agree with these recommendations. This is an indicator that that again Sen. Snowe is not afraid to tote her moderate stance even as she faces reelection against two Tea-Party back candidates. Moderate Republicans like these are needed to protect Medicare and healthcare reform.

<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1011/66184.html>

Social Security

Social Security increase will be 3.6% in 2012

USA Today

Stephen Ohlemacher

October 19, 2011

Social Security benefits will increase 3.6% this year due to a cost of living adjustment, or COLA. This is the first time there has been a COLA since 2009 because in both 2010 and 2011 the inflation was not high enough to warrant a COLA. People receiving Supplemental Security Income will also receive a 3.6% raise.

<http://www.usatoday.com/money/perfi/retirement/story/2011-10-19/social-security-cola/50822994/1>

Politics

Obama health care plan headed to high court

USA Today

Joan Biskupic

October 19, 2011

Obama's healthcare reform is heading to the Supreme Court. Many worry that the court will hand down a decision close to election season next year and will thus sway the public one way or another. Both the White House, and the challengers have accelerated filings and arguments well

before the mid – November deadline. This could mean that the justices argue the case as early as March, instead of April, giving them more time to come up with their opinions.

<http://content.usatoday.com/communities/theoval/post/2011/10/obama-health-care-plan-headed-to-high-court/1?loc=interstitialskip>

Deficit Panel May Need Push, Lawmakers Say

The New York Times

Robert Pear

October 19, 2011

The Super Committee is facing problems. The committee is about half through its deadline to cut \$1.2 trillion by November 23 and no major progress has been made. A majority of their time was spent in a standoff between Republicans and Democrats. Republicans refused to consider higher taxes and Democrats refused to consider cuts to Medicare and Social Security. As a result almost nothing has got accomplished, even the most basic of things such as establishing a baseline, or deciding if tax reform is even on the table. “These 12 people are no more autonomous than your left thumb. They need some guidance from the White House and from the leadership of Congress,” says Representative Barney Frank, Democrat of Massachusetts. It is no surprise that Senator John Kerry is the least-popular member of the committee. “Kerry just talks a lot,” said a House Republican aide. “It’s what I would call Senate talk. It’s like a waterfall of words. It never gets you anywhere.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/19/us/politics/congressional-deficit-panel-still-not-close-to-a-plan.html?ref=todayspaper>

Labor

Unions back Occupy Wall Street movement

The Hill

Kevin Bogardus

October 19, 2011

Unions are becoming increasingly involved in the Occupy Movement. The movement itself echoes many of the issues unions have been advocating for years, such as getting rid of big corporate bonuses and banks’ control of the market. “We have been talking about the increasing inequality in this county for a long time. I think what’s wonderful about the Occupy movement is that they captured this with ... ‘We are the 99 percent’,” says Mary Kay Henry, president of the Service Employees International Union. The occupy Movement is educating young people on a number of positions unions have been battling to defend since their creation. Many unions have pledged to help the movement in any way possible; whether that is bring out more people, petitioning the Mayor of New York to stop from clearing Zuccotti Park, or providing pizza for

the protestors. It is clear the unions will be playing a major role in the Occupy Movement, but they have made it clear that they do not want to take credit for its beginnings.

<http://thehill.com/business-a-lobbying/187765-unions-back-occupy-wall-street-movement>