



President
Barbara J. Easterling

Secretary-Treasurer
Ruben Burks

January 24, 2012

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 4 million members of the Alliance for Retired Americans, we are writing to request your opposition to H.R. 1173, the Fiscal Responsibility and Retirement Security Act. This legislation repeals the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) provision of the Affordable Care Act, while offering no alternative to retirement security.

As you may know, the CLASS program was designed to help working Americans plan ahead for their future long term care needs. Never has the need for these services been greater. Currently, nursing home care costs approximately \$78,000 a year and home health services upwards of \$21,600 annually. CLASS would enable beneficiaries to determine and choose the services they need. The program is to be voluntary and self-supporting, funded from premiums paid by those who choose to participate.

Last year, the Administration suspended its implementation after it was determined that the law, as written, would produce unaffordable premiums. Nonetheless, the Obama Administration does not support its repeal nor do we. We believe that statutory changes to the program can be made to make the law work as intended.

The suspension of CLASS does not erase the need for a long-term care program. Currently, seniors have few, if any, options when they begin to lose independence and can no longer perform many activities of daily living. Often, their only option is to go into a nursing home, which increases costs under Medicaid. If the CLASS program were revised, it could provide a sensible and cost-effective alternative.

Your vote against H.R. 1173 will demonstrate your commitment to the quality of life for retirees and older Americans. Should you have any questions, please contact Richard Fiesta or Eva Dominguez at the Alliance Department of Government and Political Affairs.

Sincerely yours,

Handwritten signature of Barbara J. Easterling in black ink.

Barbara J. Easterling
President

Handwritten signature of Ruben Burks in black ink.

Ruben Burks
Secretary-Treasurer

Handwritten signature of Edward F. Coyle in black ink.

Edward F. Coyle
Executive Director

