

## Alliance Press Clips and Retiree News for October 18, 2011

### **Alliance Mentions**

Occupy St. Louis marches through downtown

St. Louis Today

Marlon A. Walker

October 15, 2011

There is no denying that the Occupy Movement is sweeping the nation. In St. Louis the young, old, and unemployed all gathered together to bring attention to the 99%. A number of labor and other organizations were represented at the rally, including the Alliance for Retired Americans. The protestors in St. Louis have been camped out in Kiener Plaza since October 1. This weekend they marched to the Bank of America chanting "banks got bailed out, we got a sold out," a popular rallying cry for the Occupy Movement all over the United States.

[http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/article\\_8d5b1f87-848a-5dca-904a-6025d862e6f3.html#ixzz1b2gtuvJO](http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/article_8d5b1f87-848a-5dca-904a-6025d862e6f3.html#ixzz1b2gtuvJO)

Retirees told to fight to keep benefits

News Day

James Bernstein

October 14, 2011

A large group of retirees gather in Long Island to hear Eric Kingson, a Syracuse University social policy professor and co-director of the Washington, D.C.-based Strengthen Social Security Campaign, speak on the threat Social Security and Medicare is facing. A majority of that group was made up of Long Island Alliance for Retired American Members. The group is focusing on communicating to Congress and the Super Committee that cutting Social Security and Medicare is not the best way to balance the budget. Dorothy Zuckerman, who on Friday became the Long Island Alliance's past president, was interviewed on this occasion by News Day. She explained how the Alliance was formed during the second Bush administration, when the president proposed to privatize Social Security. Zuckerman said "hundreds" have joined the alliance in the years since. "We need more voices of this type," Zuckerman said after Kingson's talk.

<http://www.newsday.com/columnists/james-bernstein/retirees-told-to-fight-to-keep-benefits-1.3246740>

Letters to the Editor

AZ Central

October 14, 2011

Frosted Flake . . . Too bad Mesa Congress guy has a schedule conflict and has to miss Occupy Phoenix today.

He has to make an appearance at his \$1,000-a-plate fundraiser tonight in Paradise Valley; otherwise I'm sure he'd be there, man of the people that he is.

All's not lost, though. He still may be able to catch a whiff of patchouli and pepper spray, not to mention Ben Gay, as he and his special guest, Wisconsin Rep. Paul "Leatherface" Ryan, arrive at the Camelback Inn tonight.

A group of senior citizens will be right outside, dining on bread and water to protest Ryan's Medicare stance.

"It's truly insult-to-injury after Paul Ryan has gone all over touting his plan to end Medicare as we know it, which Jeff Flake supports," said Arizona Alliance for Retired Americans prez Doug Hart.

Info: arizonaretiredamericans.org.

<http://www.azcentral.com/community/mesa/articles/2011/10/14/20111014mesa-john-danna-turkey-donations.html>

The Toledo Blade

October 18, 2011

Super-committee targeting aid?

Now that the fate of so many older Americans is being addressed by a new super-committee on debt reduction, I am worried about our life-giving Social Security and Medicare benefits ("House passes funding for government; President is sent bill to avert shutdown through Nov. 18," Oct. 5).

On Nov. 23, the committee is to announce its recommended cuts. Then the U.S. House and Senate will vote on the plan.

I have been visiting congressional offices to talk about the need to keep hands off Social Security and Medicare. According to some accounts, Social Security has a \$2.7 trillion surplus.

Politicians in Washington are meeting behind closed doors to discuss raiding Social Security.

Sam Burnett

Robin Road

<http://www.toledoblade.com/Letters-to-the-Editor/2011/10/18/Texting-driving-don-t-mix-2.html>

Pro: Seniors stand with youth in opposing greed of Wall Street

The Florida Times – Union

Tony Francetta

October 18, 2011

Tony Fransetta, President of the Florida Alliance for Retired Americans, writes a poignant article in support of the Occupy Movement. He points out that this movement is educating the nation of the outrageous corporate greed that has been going on for years at the expense to the unknowing 'common man.' He criticizes his and the current generation for failing the next generation. "We told children and grandchildren to go to school and get a good education. For what? America is failing these generations. Where are the jobs? Overseas. Where is the capital? In offshore accounts."

Read his entire article at: <http://jacksonville.com/opinion/letters-readers/2011-10-18/story/pro-seniors-stand-youth-opposing-greed-wall-street>

## **Alliance People**

Huge differences found in Medicare supplements

Miami Herald

John Dorschner

October 14, 2011

Seniors that buy Medicare supplement plans, known as Medigap, may be paying completely different prices, for the same coverage. This is because companies are allowed by state regulators to change the cost of their packages based on the companies' expenses and the cost of their current patients. Gavin Magor, an analyst with Jupiter-based Weiss Ratings likens it to buying a Coke. "Every Coke is the same, but the price can be a lot different from one store to another." Federal law requires that only 65% of the healthcare premiums got to the actual coverage, the rest can go to commission, administration cost, and profit. Under the healthcare reform act, 85% of premiums will be required to go to coverage, which could force prices up for some. "This is a huge example of buyer beware," says Richard Fiesta of the Alliance for Retired Americans. "Price differences vary greatly from plan to plan and state to state."

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/10/14/2454550/huge-differences-found-in-medicare.html>

## **Medicare**

White House eliminates insurance program for long-term care

N.C. Aizenman

The Washington Post

October 14, 2011

The Obama Administration along with the Department of Health and Human Services have deemed the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports Act (CLASS) unworkable. This bill was designed to create lifelong benefits of at least \$50 a day to cover non-medical expenses of the sick. It was designed to be a voluntary payroll tax available to all workers. This

was designed to be a self-sufficient program, the only problem being that in order to provide the high cost benefits the act was intended to, the premiums would have to be extremely high. With premiums so high there was serious doubt that any healthy workers would sign up, with no participating workers, the act would not be able to give out its benefits. Many senior advocacy groups are disappointed with the failure of this program to get off the ground, as they saw great potential in the plan

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/white-house-kills-long-term-care-program/2011/10/14/gIQAVZLYkL\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/white-house-kills-long-term-care-program/2011/10/14/gIQAVZLYkL_story.html)

Health Law to Be Revised by Ending a Program

Robert Pear

The New York Times

October 14, 2011

The Department of Health and Human Services has decided to throw the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports Act, known as CLASS. This act would help would help people with chronic diabetes still be able to live in the community along with helping terminally ill seniors in nursing homes. The act has been terminated because it is now seen as too expensive to implement. “We do not have a viable path forward. We will not be working further to implement the Class Act,” says Kathy J. Greenlee, the assistant secretary of health and human services in charge of the program. This is bad news for healthcare reform. Republicans in Congress are latching on to tis repeal and using it as an example of how Democrats passed the bill too quickly with no real regard for how much it would cost.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/15/health/policy/15health.html?\\_r=2](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/15/health/policy/15health.html?_r=2)

Obama opposes repeal of healthcare program suspended last week

The Hill

Julian Pecquet

October 17, 2011

The Department of Health and Human Services has released its report stating they are suspending work on the CLASS Act, due to the fact that they do not see a viable way forward financially for the bill. Obama and his administration are not happy about this suspension. Obama condemns any sort of repeal for this act. “Repealing the CLASS Act isn’t necessary or productive. What we should be doing is working together to address the long-term care challenges we face in this country,” says a White House official. The Republicans are adding the suspension of CLASS to their bag of tricks to get healthcare reform repealed. There is already a bill in the House and the Senate that demand the repeal of healthcare based on this suspension.

<http://thehill.com/blogs/healthwatch/health-reform-implementation/187949-white-house-opposes-formal-class-act-repeal?page=2#comments>