



# MONDAY ALERT

New York State Alliance *for* Retired Americans

800 Troy Schenectady Rd., Latham, NY 12110 | 518-783-6231 | [www.newyorkstateara.org](http://www.newyorkstateara.org)

## Thank You Gerald Lotierzo



### Central New York Chapter of NYSARA co-chair Gerald Lotierzo "Leading the Pack"

Gerald "Jerry" Lotierzo has stepped down as co-chair of the Central NY Chapter of NYSARA. Jerry, was one of the leaders of NYSARA that was involved with NYSARA since its inception. His sense of purpose and his dogged activism have advanced the interests of seniors in Central New York, New York State and nationally. His unrelenting energy and focus has enabled his advocacy to bear fruit during many fights. NYSARA President Barry A. Kaufmann said of Jerry " Your activism, energy and guidance were a large part of the reason that NYSARA still exists both in Central NY and across NYS. Your insight and guidance were invaluable in focusing our attention to what was REALLY important to retirees in New York. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all you have done and I am sure what you will continue to do because you can't keep a good man down."



**The Big "3" Co-Chairs of the Central New York Chapter of NYSARA Doug Matousek, Gerald Lotierzo and William "Bill" Spreter**

## **The ACA, Medicare and Medicaid at Risk Actions NYSARA members need to take**

As you have heard, Speaker Paul Ryan plans to push through "reforms to Medicare that would replace the current guarantee of benefits with voucher's that would ensure that Medicare recipients would share a higher percentage of their health care costs. Congressman Ryan has proposed "fast tracking" these changes in early January through a process of reconciliation. (requiring only 51 votes in the Senate) The New York State Alliance for Retired Americans leadership asks that you take the following actions to push back against these destructive actions. Send the [I need Medicare, not coupon care. Do not replace Medicare's guaranteed benefits with a voucher form](#) to your Congress person and Senators and to Paul Ryan and Mitch McConnell **and** participate in National Call-In Days.

Congress National Call-In Day Wednesday, January 4th Call Congress  
**(866) 828-4162**

White House National Call-In Day Monday, January 23rd



House Speaker Paul Ryan told Fox News that he would push legislation in early 2017 that would end Medicare's guaranteed health care benefits. Call your Member of Congress and the White House to tell them Hands Off My Medicare! I Earned It!

A script for both of these call in's will appear in next weeks Monday Alert.

**Please reply to this e mail by typing in "I will be participating in the call in's" in the subject area or body of the e mail.**

## **Reminder of upcoming local NYSARA events:**

**Momentive IUE/CWA 359 Strike Line Solidarity** December 13, 2016 - 5:30 pm Momentive Performance Materials main gate 260 Hudson River Road, Waterford, NY 12188. **Pick up NYSARA Supports you sign from NYSARA Executive Director John Costello at the site.**

**Post Election Conversation with Congressman Paul Tonko :** Tuesday December 20, 2016 - 9:30 - 10:30 am, Registration - 8:30 am Continental Breakfast at 9:00 am 10:30 - 11:00 am Capital District chapter of NYSARA meeting to hear about upcoming events at the New York State United Teachers Headquarters 800 Troy Schenectady Rd., Latham, NY

**This event is free of charge**

You **must** register at [518-366-8141](tel:518-366-8141) vm/text or [karengony@gmail.com](mailto:karengony@gmail.com)

## **Intended Nominee to lead Department of Labor is Harsh Critic of Raising the Minimum Wage**

On Thursday the incoming president chose **Andrew F. Puzder**, chief executive of the company that franchises the fast-food outlets Hardee's and Carl's Jr., as his nominee for secretary of labor. Puzder has been a tireless campaigner against raising the minimum wage - another anti-union position by the new administration.

"If Mr. Puzder is confirmed by the Senate, the Alliance will absolutely be engaging him on issues of retirement security," said President Roach.

## **U.S. Life Expectancy Declines**

*The Washington Post* reported on Thursday that the [life expectancy](#) for Americans declined in 2015, a phenomenon that hasn't happened since 1993. According to the new report, males could expect to live 76.3 years at birth last year, down from 76.5 in 2014. Females could expect to live to 81.2 years, down from 81.3 the previous year. Death rates rose across all ages and most demographic groups. Among the ten leading causes of death in the United States, eight rose last year including heart disease, stroke, and Alzheimer's disease.

"This is especially troubling because other developed nations are not seeing similar statistics," said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. "We must make sure that everyone has access to quality, affordable health care."

## Activists Deliver a Million “Hands Off Our Medicare” Petitions to Capitol Hill

Alliance Executive Director **Richard Fiesta** spoke at a Capitol Hill press conference and petition delivery event with allies on Wednesday that renewed the fight to protect Medicare and Medicaid.



*Virginia Alliance President Ron Thompson joined Rep. Jan Schakowsky and allies at the Wednesday event*

At the [event](#), Medicare champions including incoming Senate Democratic Leader **Chuck Schumer** (NY) promised to fight tooth and nail to block any GOP effort to weaken, cut, or privatize Medicare. Other speakers included House Democratic Leader **Nancy Pelosi** (CA), Sen. **Bernie Sanders** (VT), and Representatives **Tony Cárdenas** (CA), **Ted Deutch** (FL) and **Jan Schakowsky** (IL). Several representatives from other advocacy groups also expressed their horror that Republicans have threatened to slash and privatize the program. A video of the event is available [here](#).

Alliance members signed 279,000 of the 1,000,000 petitions that were delivered, telling House Speaker **Paul Ryan** and Senate Majority Leader **Mitch McConnell** to keep their hands off Medicare. “This was just the beginning of our fight to save our guaranteed Medicare benefits,” said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. “We are outraged that many politicians want to do this in order to give millionaires and billionaires more tax cuts.”

“Our members are irate,” [said](#) Fiesta. “They paid into the Medicare system for decades, and heard President-elect Trump repeatedly promise to protect their earned health care benefits. Medicare must be protected, preserved and expanded for future generations, not dismantled.”

### Join us on Monday to Learn How You Can Help

The event marked the launch of a new Alliance campaign to protect seniors from Republican efforts to dismantle Medicare and make deep cuts to Medicaid. Call-in days to Capitol Hill and the new administration’s White House are scheduled for January.

As part of the campaign, you are invited to join an online Webinar on Monday, December 12th at 3 pm ET. During this online meeting Alliance leaders will share the latest information about the threats to Medicare, provide ways for you to get involved and answer questions. All you need to participate is a computer with an internet connection. “Now more than ever we need to stand up and defend the benefits we have earned after a lifetime of hard work,” said Fiesta. Click [here](#) to RSVP.

## Does Medicare Matter to You? Share your story.



*Wendy Boszak*

We need your help reminding people why it's important to protect Medicare's guaranteed earned health care benefits.

If you are willing to be interviewed for a story on our website, please contact **David Blank** by e-mail at [dblank@retiredamericans.org](mailto:dblank@retiredamericans.org) or by phone at (202) 637-5275. You can also click [here](#) to tell us online what saving the program means to you personally.

One person who shared her story is **Wendy Boszak**, 68, of Reno, Nevada. She is president of Women of Washoe – WOW, the first all-woman chapter of the Alliance and the Nevada Alliance. She believes that if Medicare were cut or privatized, her financial well-being and health would suffer. Her modest pension and Social Security continue to be threatened and medical costs drain savings that fluctuate on Wall Street.

"My Medicare costs are already almost \$4,000 per year just with premiums. People don't realize how much seniors are paying as it is," she said. "In addition, during my working years I was pre-paying into Medicare." Asked what she would like to say to Speaker Ryan if she had the opportunity, Wendy said it's not recordable. But after re-thinking it, she said, "People did not vote for Trump to have Medicare cut. Keep your hands off it!" Get inspired by reading more stories [here](#).



## President-Elect Saves Some Carrier Jobs, but Attacks their Union Representative

**Chuck Jones**, president of United Steelworkers 1999, [told](#) NBC News that he had been harassed and threatened in the wake of **Donald Trump's** latest attack — a Twitter diatribe against Jones' leadership of union workers at a Carrier manufacturing plant in Indiana that took center stage last week. While thanking the incoming president for saving some jobs, Jones noted — correctly — that the president-elect had overstated the number of jobs that were being kept in Indiana and not moving to Mexico.

"Chuck Jones spoke out on behalf of those who will not be able to keep their jobs. He was doing his job as a union leader," said President Roach. "The Alliance stands with the United Steelworkers, their president **Leo Gerard**, and all of Carrier's employees. Not only are many of them losing their jobs, but also the potential to retire with dignity."

"We hope the president-elect will now turn his attention to pensions and retirement savings and away from attacking unions and their members," he added. "This is symptomatic. It is not just an attack on Brother Jones — this is a signal to all of labor."

### Social Security Service Declines as Waits at Offices Grow Longer

A new [report](#) from the Social Security Administration (SSA) inspector general confirms that funding levels have not kept up with the needs of those who visit SSA offices. For all regions, the number of field office visitors who waited longer than one hour for service increased from 2.3 million in FY 2010 to 4.5 million in FY 2015 — a 95 percent increase.

"Our service budget has been underfunded since FY 2010," an agency statement said. "The number of Social Security beneficiaries and Supplemental Security Income recipients has already risen by 12 percent since 2010, resulting in service deterioration since we simultaneously have had less funding to serve them. ... Additionally, Social Security's enacted budgets for service have not kept pace with inflation."

"Without a doubt, budget cuts at SSA have adversely affected the services that offices are able to deliver," said Mr. Fiesta. "This report proves what people have been saying for years now."

For a printable or pdf version of this document, [click here](#).

