

# **SENIORS AND SOCIAL SECURITY LEGISLATIVE PACKET**

*(prepared by DC staff)  
Updated January 2012*

# CONGRESSWOMAN LAURA RICHARDSON OF CALIFORNIA

## Actions Taken That Benefit Seniors

The Affordable Care Act that President Obama signed and Congresswoman Laura Richardson supported benefits seniors by:

**Reducing prescription drug costs for seniors.** More than 3.5 million seniors who entered the Medicare Part D 'donut hole' coverage gap in 2010 have received \$250 rebate checks. Beginning on January 1, 2011, seniors who enter the 'donut hole' are receiving even greater savings – a 50% discount on brand-name drugs. Reform completely closes the 'donut hole' by 2020. These seniors, on average, will save more than \$500 in 2011 and more than \$3,000 in 2020 on their drug costs.

**Providing a free annual wellness visit under Medicare,** for the first time, beginning on January 1, 2011.

**Providing free Medicare coverage of key preventive services,** such as mammograms and colonoscopies, beginning on January 1, 2011.

**Strengthening Medicare, extending solvency of the Medicare Trust Fund** from 2017 to 2029. These reforms strengthen solvency by squeezing waste out of the system and making it more efficient, without reducing benefits.

**Providing new tools to crack down on fraud in Medicare,** and in 2010, a DOJ-HHS anti-Medicare fraud task force recovered a record \$4 billion on behalf of taxpayers.

**Helping seniors remain at home and stay out of nursing homes,** with the new Community First Choice Option, allowing states to offer home-based services to disabled individuals through Medicaid rather than institutional care October 1, 2011.

**Providing nursing home residents with more protections from abuse** and making more information available about nursing homes so consumers are better informed.

## **SENIORS AND SOCIAL SECURITY BILLS CLR SPONSORED/CO-SPONSORED**

### **H.R.3749, Expanding Opportunities for Older Americans Act of 2011**

The Expanding Opportunities for Older Americans Act of 2011 would amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to expand the Senior Community Service Employment Program.

**CLR Sponsored H.R.3749, Expanding Opportunities for Older Americans Act of 2011 on December 20, 2011**

### **H.R.3758, Social Security Safety Dividend Act**

The Social Security Safety Dividend Act would ensure that seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities who receive Social Security and certain other Federal benefits receive a \$250 payment in the event that no cost-of-living adjustment is payable in a calendar year.

**CLR Sponsored H.R.3758, Social Security Safety Dividend Act on December 20, 2011**

### **H.R.539, Preserving Our Promise to Seniors Act**

The Preserving Our Promise to Seniors Act directs the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) of the Department of Labor to prepare and publish for each calendar month a Consumer Price Index for Elderly Consumers (CPIEC) that indicates changes over time in consumption expenditures typical for individuals in the United States 62 years of age or older.

**CLR Co-Sponsored H.R.539, Preserving Our Promise to Seniors Act on September 23, 2011**

### **H.R.676, Expanded & Improved Medicare For All Act**

The Expanded & Improved Medicare For All Act establishes the Medicare for All Program to provide all individuals residing in the United States and U.S. territories with free health care that includes all medically necessary care, such as primary care and prevention, dietary and nutritional therapies, prescription drugs, emergency care, long-term care, mental health services, dental services, and vision care.

**CLR Co-Sponsored H.R.676, Expanded & Improved Medicare For All Act on November 2, 2011**

### **H.R.798, Consumer Price Index for Elderly Consumers Act of 2011**

The Consumer Price Index for Elderly Consumers Act of 2011 would direct the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor to prepare and publish a monthly Consumer Price Index for Elderly Consumers (CPIEC) that indicates changes over time in expenditures for consumption which are typical for individuals aged 62 years of age or older.

**CLR Co-Sponsored H.R.798, Consumer Price Index for Elderly Consumers Act of 2011 on March 8, 2011**

**H.R.831, To Amend Title XVIII of the Social Security Act**

To Amend Title XVIII of the Social Security Act would provide for treatment of clinical psychologists as physicians for purposes of furnishing clinical psychologist services under the Medicare Program

**CLR Co-Sponsored H.R.831, To Amend Title XVIII of the Social Security Act H.R.3758, Social Security Safety Dividend Act on April 12, 2011**

**H.R.935, To Amend Title XVI of the Social Security Act**

To amend title XVI of the Social Security Act amends title XVI (Supplemental Security Income) (SSI) of the Social Security Act to provide that the value of certain funeral and burial arrangements involving an irrevocable trust whose named beneficiary is the funeral provider are not to be considered, under the SSI program, as resources available to the individual.

**CLR Co-Sponsored H.R.935, To Amend Title XVI of the Social Security Safety Act on June 24, 2011**

**H.R.1058, Seniors' Tax Simplification Act of 2011**

The Seniors' Tax Simplification Act of 2011 would direct the Secretary of the Treasury to make available a new federal income tax Form 1040SR (similar to Form 1040EZ) to individuals who have turned 65 as of the close of the taxable year. Allows the form to be used even if income includes: (1) social security benefits; (2) distributions from qualified retirement plans, annuities, or other such deferred payment arrangements; (3) interest and dividends; or (4) capital gains and losses

**CLR Co-Sponsored H.R.1058, Seniors' Tax Simplification Act of 2011 on March 14, 2011**

**H.R.1332, Social Security Fairness Act of 2011**

The Social Security Fairness Act of 2011 would amend title II (Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance) (OASDI) of the Social Security Act to repeal: (1) government pension offset requirements applicable to husband's and wife's insurance benefits, widow's and widower's insurance benefits, and mother's and father's insurance benefits with respect to OASDI payments; and (2) windfall elimination requirements with respect to computation of an individual's primary insurance amount.

**CLR Co-Sponsored H.R.1332, Social Security Fairness Act of 2011 on January 18, 2012**

**H.R.1546, Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act of 2011**

The Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act of 2011 would amend title XVIII (Medicare) of the Social Security Act to repeal the cap on outpatient physical therapy,

speech-language pathology, and occupational therapy services of the type furnished by a physician or as an incident to physicians' services.

**CLR Co-Sponsored H.R.1546, Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act of 2011 on September 9, 2011**

**H.R.1580, Medicare Beneficiary Preservation of Choice Act of 2011**

The Medicare Beneficiary Preservation of Choice Act of 2011 amends title XVIII (Medicare) of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, to repeal the allowance for disenrollment, between January 1 and March 15 of each year, only from a Medicare Advantage plan to elect enrollment in the original Medicare fee-for-service program.

**CLR Co-Sponsored H.R.1580, Medicare Beneficiary Preservation of Choice Act of 2011 on April 15, 2011**

**H.R.1845, Medicare IVIG Access Act**

The Medicare IVIG Access Act would direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to establish a demonstration project under title XVIII (Medicare) of the Social Security Act (SSA) to evaluate the benefits of providing payment for items and services needed for the administration, within the homes of Medicare beneficiaries, of intravenous immune globulin (IVIG) for the treatment of primary immune deficiency diseases.

**CLR Co-Sponsored H.R.1845, Medicare IVIG Access Act on May 11, 2011**

**H.R.2723, Social Security Protection Act of 2011**

The Social Security Safety Protection Act of 2011 would amend the Budget Control Act of 2011 to prohibit the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction from proposing any cuts in Social Security benefits under title II (Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance) (OASDI) of the Social Security Act (SSA) or under SSA title XVI (Supplemental Security Income) (SSI).

**CLR Co-Sponsored H.R.2723, Social Security Protection Act of 2011 on October 5, 2011**

**H.R.2725, Medicare Protection Act of 2011**

The Medicaid Protection Act of 2011 would Amends the Budget Control Act of 2011 to prohibit the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction from proposing any reductions in eligibility, payments, or benefits, or any increases in premiums or other cost-sharing that would reduce outlays for, the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act.

**CLR Co-Sponsored H.R.2725, Medicare Protection Act of 2011 Act on October 5, 2011**

**CLR SENIORS AND SOCIAL SECURITY VOTE RECORD**  
**110<sup>TH</sup> - 112<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS**  
**2008-PRESENT**

*UPDATED: JANUARY 2012*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Bill Title</u>	<u>Vote</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
<u>10/ 27/2011</u>	<u>H.R. 2576 Requires Inclusion of Social Security Benefits in Calculation of Modified Adjusted Gross Income</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Bill Passed - House (262 - 157)</u>
<u>12/08/2010</u>	<u>Seniors Protection Act HR 5987</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>Bill Failed - House (254 - 153)</u>
<u>11/19/2009</u>	<u>HR 3961. Revising Medicare Physician Fee Schedules and Reinstatement of PAYGO</u>  Vote to pass a bill that restructures the Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate payment system and that reinstates the statutory Pay-As-You-Go budget rule.	<u>Y</u>	<u>Bill Passed - House (243 - 183)</u>
<u>07/15/2008</u>	<u>HR 6331. Medicare Bill</u>  Vote to override a veto on a bill that extends and expands Medicare coverage for various programs and revises regulations regarding Medicare fee-for-service programs.	<u>Y</u>	<u>Veto Override Passed - House (383 - 41)</u>
<u>06/24/2008</u>	<u>HR 6331. Medicare Bill</u>  Vote to pass a bill that extends and expands Medicare coverage for various programs and revises regulations regarding Medicare fee-for-service programs.	<u>Y</u>	<u>Bill Passed - House (355 - 59)</u>
<u>05/15/2008</u>	<u>HR 2642. G.I. Bill Expansion and Other Domestic Provisions</u>  Extends and expands moratoria relating to	<u>Y</u>	<u>Concurrence Vote Passed - House (256 - 166)</u>

Medicaid through April 1, 2009, including cutting Medicaid reimbursements to health care providers, removing Medicaid reimbursements for graduate medical education programs, excluding certain social services related to families and children from being included in the Medicaid program, and restricting optional case management services, outpatient hospital services, or allowable provider taxes (Sec. 5001).

Appropriates \$25 million in 2009 and the same amount in each subsequent year for the purpose of reducing Medicaid fraud and abuse (Sec. 5001).

03/13/2008	<p>H Amdt 972. <u>Substitute Amendment for the House Budget Resolution</u></p> <p>-Calls for the pursuit of medical liability reform as a means to endeavor towards domestic entitlement reform involving limiting the growth of Medicare and Medicaid "to ensure their long-term viability" (Sec. 413).</p>	N	<p>Amendment Rejected - House (157 - 263)</p>
03/13/2008	<p>H Con Res 312. <u>Concurrent Budget Resolution</u></p> <p>Allows the chairman of the Committee on the Budget to increase appropriations for the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), veterans and military personnel health care and disability benefits, renewable energy production, affordable housing, Medicare, and other programs, provided that they do not increase the budget deficit (Sec. 301-317).</p>	Y	<p>Resolution Passed - House (212 - 207)</p>

**CONGRESSWOMAN LAURA RICHARDSON  
INTEREST GROUP RATING**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Interest Group</b>	<b>Rating</b>
2009	Alliance for Retired Americans – Lifetime Score	100%
2009	Alliance for Retired Americans – Positions	100%
2008	Alliance for Retired Americans – Lifetime Score	100%
2008	Alliance for Retired Americans – Positions	100%
2007	Alliance for Retired Americans – Positions	100%

# RELEVANT CAUCUSES

## **The Democratic Congressional Task Force on Seniors**

The mission of the Congressional Task Force on Seniors is to promote and raise the public's awareness of policies under development in Congress that would improve the health and well-being of America's seniors.

The Congressional Task Force on Seniors will accomplish this mission by focusing on three principles that are critically important to aging Americans:

- Financial Security
- Affordable, Reliable Health Care
- Quality of Life as People Age

By highlighting policies in Congress that advance these principles on behalf of America's aging population, the Congressional Task Force on Seniors will ensure that the needs of America's senior citizens remain at the forefront of public discourse. After working hard their entire lives, aging Americans have earned a dignified and secure retirement.

**CLR is a member.**

# TOP SENIOR AND SOCIAL SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS

**The Alliance for Retired Americans** ([www.retiredamericans.org](http://www.retiredamericans.org))

A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization of retired trade union members affiliated with the AFL-CIO

**American Association of Retired Persons** ([www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org))

A nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization for people age 50 and over.

**AFSCME Retirees** ([www.afscme.org/union/retirees](http://www.afscme.org/union/retirees))

A retiree union that fights to protect and improve retirement benefits

**Experience Works** ([www.experienceworks.org](http://www.experienceworks.org))

An organization offering job training, job placement, and work experience in community service organizations to mature workers over age 55

**National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE)** ([www.NARF.org](http://www.NARF.org))

An organization dedicated to protecting and improving the retirement benefits of U.S. federal retirees, employees and their families

**Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO)**  
([www.LCAO.org](http://www.LCAO.org))

A large coalition of the nation's non-profit organizations serving older Americans

# **MISSIONS AND GOALS FROM ORGANIZATIONS' WEBSITES**

## **Alliance for Retired Americans**

The mission of the Alliance for Retired Americans is to ensure social and economic justice and full civil rights for all citizens so that they may enjoy lives of dignity, personal and family fulfillment and security. The Alliance believes that all older and retired persons have a responsibility to strive to create a society that incorporates these goals and rights and that retirement provides them with opportunities to pursue new and expanded activities with their unions, civic organizations and their communities.

A primary objective of the Alliance is to enroll and mobilize retired union members and other senior and community activists into a nationwide grassroots movement advocating a progressive political and social agenda-one that respects work and strengthens families. The long-term goal of the Alliance is to become the voice for all older Americans. By engaging in important political battles to protect and preserve programs vital to the health and economic security of older Americans, the Alliance will gain recognition as the country's leading progressive grassroots senior organization.

In pursuit of these values, the Alliance will:

- Build a strong organization of seniors with a viable structure, ample resources and clear objectives - a structure compatible with that of the labor movement and community-based groups at local, state and national levels.
- Create programs and membership organizations designed to promote a commitment by retired workers and older persons to the concept of lifelong participation in their unions, and in their community, political and civic organizations.
- Encourage all segments of the senior population to act with unity on legislative, political and policy issues of importance to retirees and their families in order to maximize their influence on federal, state and local governments and on private organizations that affect their interests.

## **American Association of Retired Persons**

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with a membership that helps people age 50 and over has independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole, ways that help people 50 and over improve their lives. AARP believes strongly in the principles of collective purpose, collective voice and the collective power of the 50 and over population to change the market based on their needs.

## **AFSCME Retirees**

As the nation's largest organization of public-sector retirees and the fastest-growing retiree organization in the entire labor movement, the AFSCME Retirees keeps members up to date on congressional action. It is the leading voice for public-sector retirees on Capitol Hill and in the senior citizen community.

### **Experience Works**

**Mission Statement:** Improve the lives of older people through training, community service and employment

Experience Works is a national, charitable, community-based organization. Originally named Green Thumb, and chartered in 1965 as a small, rural demonstration program, Experience Works has grown to be the nation's leading provider of training, employment, and community service for low-income older people.

### **NARFE**

NARFE is the only association solely dedicated to preserving and improving the health care and retirement benefits of federal workers and retirees. Today, NARFE's efforts are more important than ever as Congress and the administration consider unprecedented cuts in federal pay and benefits. Just as in the past, NARFE is leading the fight.

### **LCAO**

The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) is a coalition of national nonprofit organizations concerned with the well-being of America's older population and committed to representing their interests in the policy-making arena.

Recognizing that the strength of the coalition lies in the diversity of its membership, the purpose of the LCAO is to foster communication and resource sharing among its member organizations, to serve as a source of information about issues affecting older persons, to initiate joint advocacy strategies as appropriate, and to provide leadership and vision as America meets the challenges and opportunities presented by its aging society.

All members of the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations are dedicated to:

- advocating for strengthening both the public and private sector response to meeting the needs of America's older population;
- promoting thoughtful and rational policy changes where such changes are necessary, recognizing that state and local level activities are important both to the generation and implementation of public policy;
- seeking dialogue with responsible leaders of both the public and private sector;

- working with all of society's institutions—political, social, economic, religious— to ensure that they welcome and support full participation by America's older population;
- working to ensure that no older person is a victim of discrimination based on age, gender, race, or ethnic origin; and
- recognizing the diversity of America's older population, which includes the most vulnerable and frail elderly in need of a range of services, as well as older persons who are contributing to their communities through work-related pursuits and volunteer service.