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*Affiliated with the Rhode Island AFL-CIO
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Paul Ryan Can't Fool the American People With His Latest Budget

His Newest Version is Still Unfair to Seniors

The following statement was issued by Richard Fiesta, Executive Director of the Alliance for Retired Americans:

“House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan unveiled a Republican budget on April Fools’ Day that once again proposes privatizing Medicare and turning it into a voucher system, while lowering tax rates on the wealthy and corporations.

“The newest incarnation of the Ryan budget asks seniors to pay more for preventive health services and prescription drugs while again ending the Medicare guarantee. The Ryan budget clearly chooses tax breaks for the wealthy and corporations over health care for millions of

working families.

“Moving to a voucher system for Medicare, as the Ryan plan outlines, is just a way of cutting Medicare. It shifts health care costs onto retirees, most of whom cannot afford the changes and wouldn’t get the health care they need.”

“This year, Chairman Ryan did add something new, but it is erroneous. He is saying that the Social Security Trust Fund is not a real savings account – questioning the value of U.S. bonds. In 1936, Alf Landon made the same charge when he was the presidential nominee, and the sentiment is as wrong now as it was then.

“Paul Ryan can’t fool the American people with his latest budget. His newest version is still just as unfair to seniors, and is still based on flawed logic.”

Women's Economic Security Depends on Raising the Wage and Expanding Social Security

Huffington Post By: Barbara Easterling and Nancy Altman

Barbara Easterling, president of the Alliance for Retired Americans, and Nancy Altman, founding co-director of Social Security Works, wrote a piece in honor of women’s history month reflecting on the legacy of Frances Perkins and calling for an increased minimum wage and expanded Social Security.

March marks Women's History Month, a time to highlight women's contributions to society and role in making our country what it is today.

To call Frances Perkins (1880-1965) a trailblazer would be to put it very mildly. Perkins was selected by FDR as Secretary of Labor in 1933, the first woman to ever serve in a Presidential Cabinet. She was selected only 13 years after women obtained the right to vote in the United States. Over her career she had crucial roles in championing the Works Progress Administration, creating the Fair Labor Standards Act (which created the minimum wage), banning child labor and helping to enact the National Labor Relations Act, which protected the rights of workers to unionize. Perhaps her greatest accomplishment however, was the legislation she helped draft while she served as the chair of FDR's interagency Committee on Economic Security -- the Social Security Act. Indeed, her grandson has written,

"My grandmother considered [Social Security] her most significant accomplishment. She strove to provide 'the best possible life' to working men and women across the nation."

Since Perkins' time as Secretary of Labor, Social Security has become one of the most crucial earned benefits programs for seniors, people with disabilities and families of workers who have died, a foundational program that enhances the economic security and quality of life for millions of Americans. Despite its strengths and achievements, our Social Security system can still be improved and expanded...[Read More](#)



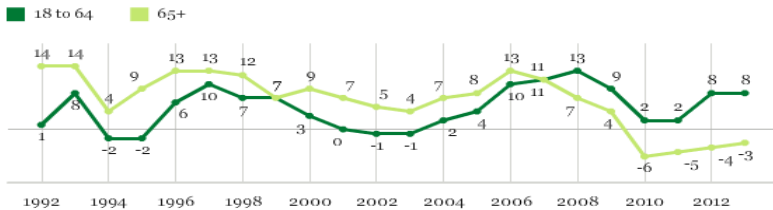
**This is a sad story, the very people that are trying to hurt seniors,
are now consistently supported by seniors.**

U.S. Seniors Have Realigned With the Republican Party Seniors move from a reliably Democratic to a reliably Republican group

by Jeffrey M. Jones

Democratic Advantage in Party Affiliation, by Age, 1992-2013

Figures represent the % Democrats/Democratic-leaning independents minus the % Republicans/Republican-leaning independents



GALLUP

U.S. seniors -- those aged 65 and older -- have moved from a reliably Democratic group to a reliably Republican one over the past two decades. From 1992 through 2006, seniors had been solidly Democratic and significantly more Democratic than younger Americans. Over the last seven years, seniors have become less Democratic, and have shown an outright preference for the Republican Party since 2010... [Read More](#)

Is the Supreme Court's latest ruling on campaign donations a victory for free speech, or an open check book to buy Congress?

First there was the Citizens United ruling for Corporations, now striking down the limitation on the amount any donor may give.



Two Senate Democrats told a news conference the ruling was another in a string of decisions by a conservative court majority that strengthens the ability of wealthy donors to have an impact on politics. "It advantages wealthy people over everybody else," Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said. Said Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, D-R.I., "We see the Supreme Court behaving in a way that would be matched if the

five conservative judges made it a strategy to go off and sit in a room by themselves and decide how best to implement the Republican agenda and then came out and did it."

On a 5-4 ruling, the court struck down a limitation on the amount any donor may give to candidates, committees and political action committees combined.

Only 646 out of millions of donors in the election cycle of 2011-2012 gave the now-defunct legal maximum, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. For the current election cycle, the limit is \$123,200, broken down as \$48,600 to all candidates combined and \$74,600 to all party committees and political action committees in total.

The ruling will "mean there will be much greater emphasis by the campaigns and the parties on those donors with the biggest checkbooks who can make those very large contributions," said Bob Biersack, who works for the CRP and is a 30-year veteran of the Federal Election Commission.

From RI ARA President, John A. Pernorio, with the poor, middle class and seniors struggling just to make ends meet for their families and themselves, we now have a ruling that makes money, if it wasn't before, an even more powerful tool in elections.

The Ryan Budget contains \$4 trillion in cuts to programs that protect Americans who can least afford cuts. Medicare is privatized. Food stamps, college aid, support for schools, Head Start, child nutrition programs are savaged. Cuts to Corporation for National and Community Service that improve the lives of millions of our most vulnerable citizens by helping children learn to read, caring for seniors through their Senior Centers, rebuilding communities struck by disasters, helping veterans readjust to civilian life, and more. The Ryan Budget also creates a process designed to ensure Social Security cuts in the near future, while lowering tax rates on the wealthy and corporations.

How can we, as average people, young and old, compete with big corporations and the wealthy. When will we stand up to big money and demand that **"WE THE PEOPLE, THE POOR, MIDDLE CLASS & SENIORS"** get a voice in how we treat Americans.



HealthLink Wellness

Hearing Problems Make Senior Citizens More Introverted, Withdrawn

Study points to the importance of acknowledging and treating hearing loss among the elderly

A study of senior citizens between the ages of 80 and 98 reports that impaired hearing causes some serious social problems. Old people have a natural tendency to become less outgoing as they age, but if they have hearing problems, this condition becomes even worse.

New research from the University of Gothenburg shows that this change in personality is amplified among people with impaired hearing. The findings, the researchers say, emphasize the importance of acknowledging and treating hearing loss in the elderly population.

They studied 400 individuals 80-98 years old over a six-year period. Every two years, the subjects were assessed in terms of physical and mental measures, as well as personality aspects such as extraversion, which reflects the inclination to be outgoing, and emotional stability...[Read More](#)



Millions of Seniors Achieved Goal for Blood Pressure Overnight, Reports JAMA

Seniors age 60 and up were focus of 2014 guidelines that set treatment for hypertension at 150-over-90 mm Hg, rather than 140/90

A new estimate projects that 13.5 million U.S. adults – primarily seniors age 60 or older – will now be considered as having achieved their goal for blood pressure, as defined by the 2014 BP guidelines announced last December. Almost six million adults can relax, too, since they will no longer be classified as needing hypertension medication, according to a *JAMA* study released online to coincide with the 2014 American College of Cardiology Scientific Sessions.

These older American age 60 and over were the focus of the [2014 guidelines](#) that set treatment for hypertension at 150-over-90 mm Hg, rather than 140/90, which still remains the defined level for high blood pressure...[Read More](#)



New Formula for Peak Heart Rate During Exercise Developed for Older Men, Women

Everybody's peak heart rate declines with age, but decline is more gradual in women

A study of more than 25,000 stress tests by older people convinced researchers that the current formula for determining a person's peak exercise heart rate had to be changed. It was used by doctors for decades to diagnose heart conditions but the study says it was flawed because it failed to recognize differences between men and women, particularly as they age.

The researchers found significant differences between men and women and developed an updated formula to reflect those nuances, which is being presented at the American College of Cardiology's 63rd Annual Scientific Session.

The old and simple formula of "220 minus age" has been widely used to calculate the maximum number of heart beats per minute a person can achieve. Many people use it to derive their target heart rate during a workout. Doctors use it to determine how hard a patient should exercise during a common diagnostic test known as the exercise stress test.

"The standard that's currently in use is somewhat outdated," said Thomas Allison, M.D., cardiologist and director of stress testing at Mayo Clinic, and senior author of the study.

"We want to make sure that when people do the stress test, they have an accurate expectation of what a normal peak heart rate is. Every so often, you need to recalibrate what's considered normal."

The new recommendations are:

- ◆ Women in the age range of 40 to 89 years should expect their maximum heart rate to be 200 minus 67 percent of their age.
- ◆ Men in the age range of 40 to 89 years should use 216 minus 93 percent of their age.

The new formula can help people better optimize their workouts and also improve the accuracy of test results. Stress tests, which are commonly used to help diagnose conditions such as coronary heart disease, heart valve disease and heart failure, require patients to exercise near their top capacity while technicians monitor the patient's cardiac performance...[Read More](#)

More Severe Heart Disease Found in Patients with Vitamin D Deficiency

Lower levels of vitamin D predict extent of coronary artery disease; diet rich in vitamin D and moderate exercise outdoors recommended

A low level of vitamin D is an independent risk factor for heart disease. It not only increases the odds of developing coronary artery disease, it also seems to be associated with more severity of the heart disease, according to research being presented at the American College of Cardiology's 63rd Annual Scientific Session.

On the flip side, there seems to be a growing body of research showing that vitamin D may be beneficial in preventing heart disease. Several recent studies also support the idea that low levels of vitamin D are linked to an increased risk of heart disease.

It is still not clear, however, whether adding vitamin D supplements may help reduce that risk, the researchers say...[Read More](#)

Marriage Linked to Lower Heart Risk – Not So Much for Seniors, Says Large Study

Marriage linked to lower risks for several cardiovascular diseases in study of 3.5+ million adults; much lower for those under 50

A very large national study has found that married people are five percent less likely to have any vascular disease than are single people. The surprise to the researchers is the big gap between older people and young adults. Those 50 and younger have 12 percent lower odds of vascular disease. But, seniors are not as lucky. Those marrieds 61 and older are only 4 percent less likely to have vascular disease.

People who are married have lower rates of several cardiovascular diseases compared with those who are single, divorced or widowed, according to the research presented at the American College of Cardiology's 63rd Annual Scientific Session. The relationship between marriage and lower odds of vascular diseases is especially pronounced before age 50.

"These findings certainly shouldn't drive people to get married, but it's important to know that decisions regarding who one is with, why, and why not may have important implications for vascular health," said Carlos L. Alviar M.D., cardiology fellow, New York University Langone Medical Center, and the lead investigator of the study.

"We are able to take a better look at a spectrum of relationships," Alviar said.

Researchers prospectively analyzed records from a database of more than 3.5 million people nationwide who were evaluated for cardiovascular diseases...[Read More](#)



Spanish Friday Alert now Available

The *Friday Alert* will now be available each week in Spanish! To see last week's *Alerta Semanal*, go to <http://tinyurl.com/mq7gpry>. For the Alliance's Spanish language page, which includes fact sheets and other translated documents from the main site, go to <http://tinyurl.com/nllcz6n>. More outreach from the Alliance to the Hispanic elder community will be coming in the next few months.

The New England ARA state affiliates are actively pursuing these Petitions.

House Concurrent Resolution 67 and Senate Concurrent Resolution 26 to get power doors installed in Post Offices and other federal buildings.

**Get The Message Out:
SIGN THE PETITION!!!!**

Elimination of the Unfair GPO and WEP Provisions of the Social Security Act to make sure the Congress of the United States enacts legislation, HR 3118 & S 896

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SIGN THE PETITION!!!!**