

## **CARA Alert – February 23, 2021**

A publication of the California Alliance for Retired Americans

### **NEXT FABULOUS FRIDAY FORUMS at NOON**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 5TH at 12 NOON PST**

**JOSH KORNBLUTH'S PERFORMANCE OF "CITIZEN BRAIN"**

[Register here](#)

Many CARA members met Josh Kornbluth at our 2019 Convention in Sacramento, where he shared some of the videos that he developed while interning with the UCSF Global Brain Institute. Josh performs autobiographical monologues around the world, and has recently completed his latest monologue, called *Citizen Brain*, based on his work at UCSF. Josh began his fellowship at the Global Brain Institute in 2016 where he drew a connection between dementia and the collective breakdown in communication across the political divide. At the same time, UCSF discovered a circuit in the brain, an empathy circuit. You can learn about this circuit through a funny, smart performance of Citizen Brain by Josh Kornbluth. For more information about Josh and his show go to: <https://www.citizenbrain.org>

### **2021 THE YEAR FOR IMPROVED MEDICARE FOR ALL IN CALIFORNIA**

***SIGN THE PETITION AND PASS IT ON!***

<https://bit.ly/CARA-Healthcare>

Improved Medicare for All has been gaining greater traction over the years. And while the odds of passing legislation at the federal level improve every day, the more likely path is probably through the states. And in California we are in a unique position to lead the way. Our first step in winning Improved Medicare for All in California is getting Governor Newsom to request a waiver for California to develop a state-based system.

### ***AB 1400 – California Guaranteed Health Act Introduced!***

On Friday, Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>, Assemblyman Kalra along with 18 other Assembly and Senate Members introduced AB 1400 – the California Guaranteed Health Act (single payer health care). You can read the full text of the bill here:

[https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202120220AB1400](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB1400).

CARA will be reviewing the bill and developing our action plan – STAY TUNED!

## **SAVE THESE DATES:**

### **MARCH 26<sup>TH</sup> – MASTER PLAN ON AGING ACTION PLAN FORUM**

CARA and St. Barnabas Senior Services are sponsoring a special FRIDAY FORUM to present some key strategies to implement the Master Plan on Aging that was released by the Governor in January of this year. Learn about the plan, and how you can help make it a reality. Register for this Friday Forum on March 26<sup>th</sup> here:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUpceqrqD4iH9Bj3qwh4GuZEnRwyASlwBHk>

### **MAY 21<sup>ST</sup> – CARA VIRTUAL LOBBY DAY WITH YOUR LEGISLATOR.**

CARA will be coordinating virtual meetings with all 120 state legislators on this date. If you would like to participate in a Zoom or teleconference meeting with your state assemblymember or senator, you can sign up by contacting [caralobby@gmail.com](mailto:caralobby@gmail.com)

## **The U.S. POSTAL SERVICE IS NOT FOR SALE!**

After a year of successfully fighting back against savage cuts to our public Postal Service, it's time for us to go on the offensive. The Postal Board of Governors sets the postal agenda and it hires, fires and holds accountable the Postmaster General. Its members are appointed by the U.S. President and confirmed by the Senate and we need President-elect Biden to appoint pro-postal Governors.

## **SENATOR BROWN ANNOUNCES CHAIRMANSHIP OF SOCIAL SECURITY AND PENSIONS SUBCOMMITTEE**

### ***CALLS FOR SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSIONER AND HIS DEPUTY TO GO***

U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) announced on Feb. 19th that he is assuming the Chairmanship of the Senate Finance Committee's Subcommittee on Social Security, Pensions, and Family Policy. This is the key Finance subcommittee with the responsibility to protect and expand Social Security, address the insolvency of the multiemployer pension system, provide paid family and medical leave to America's workers, and more. In his first act as Chair of the Subcommittee, Brown called for the immediate replacement of Social Security Commissioner Andrew Saul and Deputy Commissioner David Black. Saul and Black were key agents of the Trump agenda to systematically dismantle Social Security.

**“Saul and Black are incapable of carrying out Democrats’ vision of protecting and expanding Social Security,”** said Brown. **“As agents of the Trump Social Security agenda, they cut the benefits that hardworking Americans have earned, attacked the Social Security Administration's employees, denied beneficiaries due process, and needlessly increased disability reviews during the COVID-19 pandemic. No one has been safe from their path of destruction.”**

**“Every current and future Social Security beneficiary is fortunate to have Senator Brown, a longtime Social Security champion, looking out for our interests as the chair of this critical subcommittee”** said Alex Lawson, Executive Director of Social Security Works. **“Senator Brown is wisely calling for the immediate replacement of Commissioner Saul and Deputy Commissioner Black, who have spent years waging war on Social Security beneficiaries and the SSA workforce. We look forward to working with Senator Brown to protect and expand our Social Security system.”**

Saul and Black spent their time at the Social Security Administration implementing Trump’s amoral agenda for Social Security, including regulations that:

- Make it even harder for older, severely disabled people to access the essential income they’re qualified to receive.
- Deny disability benefits for older, severely disabled people who are not fluent in English, resulting in an estimated 100,000 people being denied more than \$5 billion in benefits.
- Dramatically reduces due process protections for benefit appeals hearings by allowing SSA agency attorneys, instead of Administrative Law Judges, to preside over appeals hearings.
- Provide beneficiaries with almost no relief from harsh requirements to repay extra benefits paid due to SSA action during the COVID-19 pandemic, through no fault of the individual.
- Would throw people off benefits by significantly increasing the number of disability case reviews resulting in an estimated \$2.6 billion in benefit cutoffs.

Saul and Black also routinely attacked federal employees by forcing harsh union contracts that strip employees of their rights, vigorously enforced Trump’s anti-union Executive Orders and eliminated telework for employees.

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