



## **CARA Alert – November 11, 2021**

A publication of the California Alliance for Retired Americans

### ***Honor our Veterans!***

#### **CARA PRIORITY ISSUES for 2022**

At the CARA Convention on Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>, participants voted on Zoom and others by mail on the issues that they want CARA to focus on in 2022. The list below reflects the results of this election. All of these issues are on CARA's radar, and we will engage and advocate on all of them. There are other issues not reflected on this list that CARA also works on. The election helps us determine which issues deserve a little more time and CARA resources, but all are important and will be part of our 2022 agenda. Here are the results:

- Protect, Improve and Expand Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid – stop efforts to cut or privatize benefits.
- Support efforts to win guaranteed health care for all (state and nationally).
- Support efforts to reform Prop 13 and other taxes to ensure that the wealthy and corporations pay their fair share.
- Advocate for funding for deeply affordable housing construction/ preservation/ rehabilitation, with services as needed and appropriate.
- Expand protections for renters, homeowners and manufactured home owners, including protections against rising utility rates.
- Support a Universal Long Term Supports and Services (LTSS) benefit for all Californians.
- Continue to advocate to increase SSI/SSP base grants, reinstate full COLA.
- Require transparency of drug pricing; lower drug costs, negotiate for prices.
- Protect pensions and retirement benefits (state and nationally), including fighting legislative and electoral efforts to eliminate or reduce benefits.
- Educate and engage seniors on climate change and other environmental issues.
- Improve conditions at nursing homes and advocate for better transparency, accountability, better staffing and pay for workers, infection control, etc.
- Support efforts to implement Campaign Finance Reform at state/national levels.

#### **Build Back Better Plan Needs Your Advocacy Today**

As Congress is on recess this week, **it is critical that all members of Congress hear from constituents that they expect them to keep their promise and vote for BBB as soon as they return on Nov 15.**

- Social Security Works has [a new digital toolkit for the countdown to a House BBB vote on the 15th](#).
- Many members of Congress will be holding townhalls – virtual and in-person – during this recess week and especially on Veterans Day on November 11, so please encourage constituents to attend and urge their rep to vote as soon as possible on Build Back Better with Medicare drug price negotiation and expansion. You can find upcoming townhalls at [www.townhallproject.com](http://www.townhallproject.com).

After a long back and forth last week, the House passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and has a path forward for passing BBB soon. To ensure that BBB would have a path forward for swift passage, House progressives and centrists reached an agreement to pass IIJA and take a key procedural vote necessary for debate on BBB. All Democrats voted “yes” on the latter, advancing a more progressive version of BBB that includes paid leave, a more generous hearing benefit for seniors, and other provisions left out of the previous iteration of the bill.

The current iteration of the Build Back Better bill leaves out important provisions that we must continue to fight for: expanding Medicare to include dental and vision – not just hearing; a stronger provision to allow Medicare to negotiate for drug prices; and full funding of the \$400 billion for home and community-based services. Additionally, stronger climate goals must be part of this package.

Please contact your Congressman and U.S. Senators Padilla and Feinstein to urge them to stand for a stronger Build Back Better Plan.

## **Support Kaiser Unions – Sympathy Strikes on Nov. 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>** **CARA STANDS IN SUPPORT OF LOCAL 39 AND ALL KAISER UNIONS**

CARA is encouraging our members to support the 2-day sympathy strike being authorized by the unions in the Alliance of Kaiser workers in support of the engineers of Local 39 to help them achieve a fair contract. This Alliance understands how disrespected they feel by Kaiser’s unfair labor practices, when workers are mandated to work overtime and denied time off even though they’ve put in extra hours during the pandemic, or when their work is outsourced. The Alliance of Kaiser unions are demanding that Kaiser stop its anti-union tactics and agree to a fair contract with Local 39. Despite being a non-profit organization – which means it pays no income taxes on its earnings and extremely limited property taxes – Kaiser Permanente reported a net income of \$6.4 billion in 2020.

“After raking in billions of dollars in profits during the pandemic, Kaiser continues to pay dozens of executives million-dollar salaries but wants to cut frontline healthcare workers’ pay rates and reduce their benefits,” said Dave Regan, president of SEIU-UHW. “Kaiser’s position is not only demeaning to workers but is also absolutely dangerous and destructive for patients. It’s well recognized that there is a growing

healthcare worker shortage that is getting worse by the day. Slashing pay rates and benefits to pad profits and boost executive salaries will exacerbate the shortage and hurt patient care.”

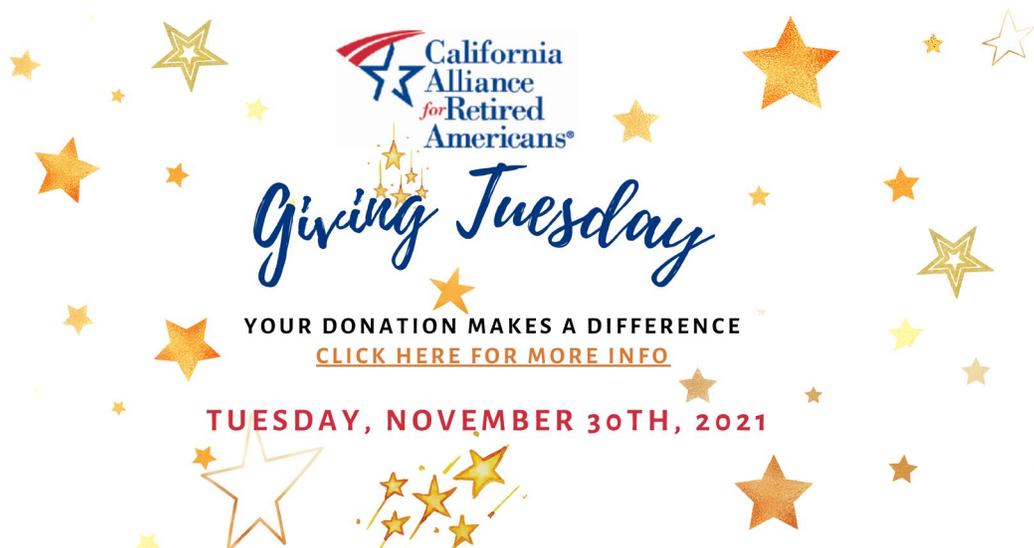
***CARA members are encouraged to join a picket line at a Kaiser facility near you on either November 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup>. If you aren't comfortable joining the picket line, drive by, honk your horn, and show your support.***

An impact of this strike and Kaiser's unwillingness to negotiate is Kaiser pharmacy services. Kaiser has alerted members that pharmacy services will be greatly reduced during the strike and are encouraging members to fill prescriptions now so that your medications are not impacted. We encourage all Kaiser members to follow this suggestion AND to call your providers and member services at Kaiser and urge them to sit down with the unions and negotiate in good faith to end this strike. Tell them you **STAND WITH THE KAISER WORKERS!**

## **Social Security 2100 A Sacred Trust Introduced (HR 5723)!!!**

We are so excited to report that on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – Day 1 of the CARA Convention, Congressman Larson and other U.S. Representatives introduced HR 5723, the Social Security 2100 Act. This bill will increase Social Security benefits for all beneficiaries, improve the COLA formula, repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO), increase benefits for the oldest old, reduce waiting periods, provide caregiver credits, strengthen the service of the Social Security Administration, make it easier to get SSI and SSDI and begin to SCRAP the CAP by ensuring that millionaires and billionaires pay their fair share by applying FICA to earnings above \$400,000. CARA and our national partners have been working to address many of the issues included in this omnibus bill. The time is NOW to talk with our Congressional Representatives to urge their support of this important legislation. Stay tuned to future CARA Alerts when we will share opportunities to engage and advocate!!!!

**GIVING TUESDAY IS NOVEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup>. PLAN TO GIVE TO CARA AND  
HELP US START 2022 OFF IN THE BLACK**



California Alliance for Retired Americans®

*Giving Tuesday*

YOUR DONATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE  
[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2021**

## **HEALTHY CA COMMISSION GETTING READY TO PREPARE REPORT**

***Attend the meeting on November 17<sup>th</sup> from 9am-12:30pm***

Many CARA members have attended (virtually) the Healthy CA Commission that Governor Newsom created to develop a roadmap to get us to a unified financing system in California – one that could lead us to Single Payer- Guaranteed Health Care. At our Convention, the Governor stated that he expected the Commission to conclude their deliberations soon, and the Governor will release a plan early in 2022.

One of the final meetings is scheduled for November 17<sup>th</sup>. Below is the [registration link](#) for the Healthy California for All Commission meeting on November 17 from 9am to 12:30pm. The meeting presentation and discussion will focus on financial sustainability under unified financing. You can see the [agenda here](#). Public comment is always the last 30 minutes. If you cannot join, please send written public comment to [HealthyCAforAll@chhs.ca.gov](mailto:HealthyCAforAll@chhs.ca.gov).

### **Contact CARA: NEW MAILING ADDRESS**

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