The Senate leadership has taken the first dangerous step toward repealing the Affordable Care Act. Repeal of the ACA will pull the plug on the 30 million Americans who now depend on it for health care—not to mention the 57 million seniors and disabled who benefit every day from the ACA’s improvements to Medicare.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that repealing the ACA will cost Medicare some $800 billion over 10 years, which would undermine the solvency of the Medicare Part A Trust Fund. (According to the 2016 Medicare Trustees Report, the ACA has extended the solvency of the Part A Trust Fund by 11 years, to 2028.)

Repeal also would eliminate preventative health screenings with no out-of-pocket costs for Medicare beneficiaries (which the ACA mandated), and restore the Medicare Part D drug coverage gap known as the “donut hole.”

“America’s seniors will keenly feel the effects of an ACA repeal,” says Max Richtman, President and CEO of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare. In a letter to all 100 U.S. Senators, Richtman explains, “Since the law’s enactment more than 11 million seniors and people with disabilities have received savings and discounts in the Part D donut hole of over $23.5 billion on prescription drugs, an average of $2,127 per beneficiary. In 2015 alone, an estimated 39.2 million people with Medicare took advantage of at least one preventive service with no copays or deductibles.”

In addition to Medicare beneficiaries, ACA repeal will hurt millions of “young seniors” ages 50-64 who depend on the health care law. Under the ACA, these individuals have been able to purchase private insurance even if they have pre-existing medical conditions. Premiums have been more affordable due to the law’s limits on age rating and the subsidies available for lower-income beneficiaries. If the ACA is repealed, the number of uninsured Americans in this 50-64 age group will increase, leaving them potentially in poorer health by the time they are eligible for Medicare. This pool of less healthy enrollees will drive up Medicare’s costs, which could threaten its long term solvency.
Social Security is required to use three methods in estimating the future of the Trust Fund. It makes a report using the most conservative estimate of the three. While many in Washington are calling for major changes in SOCIAL SECURITY benefits, a number of factors need to be taken into account. This year 19 states have enacted increases in the minimum wage. Pew Research indicates 20.6 million workers are identified as near-minimum-wage workers; and 3.3 million workers are at or below Federal minimum wage. The increase in the minimum wage means multiple millions of dollars will be put into the Trust Fund each year, due to the raise in pay these people will begin receiving this year.

The unemployment rate presently is below five percent, the lowest it has been since 2008. Along with an increase in the number of people working; a number that has been increasing in each of the last few years, it reflects a higher number of people contributing into the Social Security Trust Fund. If these workers received decent wages and regular pay increases, instead all of the money going to a few at the top, no one would need to be talking about Social Security except to suggest increases.

Also, the earnings limit, from which Social Security is deducted, increases from $118,500 to $126,000 beginning 2017. Just this increase generates an additional employer/employee contribution of $930. Multiply that number by the estimated 10 million people who earn that kind of money and you can see what kind of impact removing the cap altogether would have on the solvency of the Fund.

Finally, we must never forget and often repeat that the Federal Government does not give us our Social Security. We and our employers contributed into the Fund and the money we receive is money put into the Trust Fund by us to live out our lives with some dignity. We cannot sit back and let political hacks go unchallenged when they say Social Security needs to be reduced for our own good. We know what is best for us and that is for them to KEEP THEIR HANDS OFF OUR SOCIAL SECURITY.

Bill Pienta
SOAR President

FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK

New Year, Old Fight

FROM THE DIRECTOR’S DESK

Reflections

The election is now over and the people have spoken. For those of us who advocate on behalf of retirees and the working class, we know the weeks, months and years ahead will not be easy; but we will get through them together and we will come out stronger together, just as we have done in the past.

Today, we rededicate ourselves to our role as activists and recommit ourselves to mobilizing our members and like-minded fellow Americans to protect and defend what was won in the halls of Congress and in our collective bargaining agreements.

We knew this was an election about change and a revolt against the political elite. It was a revolt against what those in power in both parties have done or accepted; global trade and tax deals for corporations; Wall Street bailouts; big-money politics and decades of promises not kept. After neglecting the working class for decades, that class, working folks, abandoned the Democratic Party that once represented them, said enough is enough and voted for what they thought was real change.

Time will tell if this election will truly make a difference. However, in the meantime, I am scared out of my wits of the agenda of the far right now in power in the House, Senate and the White House. What will happen to Social Security and Medicare? We all know these two critical programs that mean so much to retirees have been in their crosshairs for years.

There is already talk of turning Medicare, one of our government’s most successful programs into a voucher program. There is talk once again about privatizing Social Security, which in its present form has kept so many retirees from living in poverty. Changes to these two very successful programs could very well destroy the quality of life of older Americans and place retirement for the next generation out of reach.

We must be steadfast in our diligence and pay close attention to what is going on in Washington. We must be prepared to fight to protect what is ours! Social Security and Medicare are earned benefits not entitlements, as the Washington elite would like you to believe. The battle continues…..

Jim Centner
SOAR Director

FROM THE DIRECTOR’S DESK

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USW District 9 Lands SOAR Chapter in Amory, Mississippi

USW District 9 Director Daniel Flippo has a new SOAR Chapter in his home town of Amory, Mississippi. USW Local 7477, which represents workers at the True Temper Sports manufacturing facility in Amory, Mississippi received their SOAR charter on December 21, 2016 for Chapter 9-8.

Director Flippo credited USW Staff Representative Scott Cox for heading up the organizing of this SOAR Chapter. Cox said, “This chapter is in a great location in Amory. We can expand into other locals in our area, which is a good thing for our retired Steelworkers. We are driven to making this happen.” Cox also said that Director Flippo has given him the leeway way to making it happen and continues to give his strong support to organizing other SOAR chapters in Mississippi and throughout the district.”

District 11 SOAR Activist Honored

Clay County (Missouri) Democratic Central Committee recognized longtime USW/SOAR activist Bill Finkle as their “2016 Labor Man of the Year.” USW District 11 District Director Emil Ramirez said, “Bill is your man, whether you’re organizing phone banks or recruiting activists to knock on doors, you can always count on him to show up with a crowd.”

Bill is not new to this work, it’s his passion. He retired as a member of USW Local 12561 after 37 years of service. While working, he served his local as Vice President, Legislative Chair and Rapid Response Coordinator for 21 years. When he retired he immediately became involved with SOAR Chapter 34-3, putting his talents to use building up the Kansas City SOAR Chapter and continuing his activism in politics. “We offer our congratulations to Bill, and are delighted the Clay County Democratic Central Committee has recognized the enormous contribution he makes every day to working families and to retirees in Missouri and across the country,” said Bill Pienta, SOAR International President.

Editor’s note: Brother Finkle is also very active with the Alliance for Retired Americans.

SOAR Activist Bill Finkle accepting the Clay County Democratic Central Committee’s “Man of the Year” award as State Representative Jon Carpenter looks on.
SOAR Chapter 10 President Lena Sutton Wins 2016 Lynn Williams Award for Service

It is with pride that the Canadian SOAR executive board voted to award the 2016 Lynn Williams Award for Service to Lena Sutton, President of SOAR Chapter 10.

Lena is a longtime SOAR activist and has helped many retiree organizations in her community of Hamilton and across the province of Ontario. She has served on the executive boards of the Hamilton, Burlington, Oakville area council of the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada and the Ontario Federation of Union Retirees.

As an active USW member since 1974, Lena has held a variety of positions in Local 7711, including: recording secretary, shop steward, health and safety representative and negotiating team member.

Lena has received many awards for her volunteer activities, such as the Hamilton and District Labour Council Volunteer Award, Community Leadership Award from Ward 3 and the City of Hamilton and a special award for non-members from the Hamilton-Wentworth Occasional Teachers.

Lena is a stalwart political activist. As a member of the New Democratic Party, she has volunteered as a phone canvasser, fundraiser and canvassing and e-day organizer. She also worked on the Obama campaign in 2008.

Lena teaches computer skills to SOAR members and often assists seniors with their tax filings, to ensure they receive all the tax credits to which they are entitled. She is a relentless advocate for seniors and people with disabilities.

The presentation was made by SOAR National Coordinator Doug MacPherson to Lena at the Steelworkers Hamilton Area Council meeting on December 12, 2016.

THE CANADIANS ARE COMING, THE CANADIANS ARE COMING!

This conference will see 22 delegates and a number of observers from Canada. At the 2016 Canadian SOAR conference held in Montreal, chapters with fewer than 250 members came together and elected “at large delegates” to represent the smaller chapters in their districts: Kay Noonan (Chapter 3-14, District 3), Gérard Gregoire (Chapter 5-05, District 5), Mansell Gullis (Chapter 6-13, District 6) and Rob Clark (Chapter 6-05, District 6).

The SOAR district board members and one SOAR coordinator from each district attend as delegates because of their positions.

The number of delegates that chapters may elect is based on the size of their membership.

- Chapters 3-09, 3-19, 6-02, 6-80 and 6-Sa2 each elected one delegate.
- Chapters 6-07 and 6-SA1 each elected two delegates.
- Chapter 6-17 elected three delegates.

Given the recent political shifts in Canada and the U.S., we can expect a very interesting and exciting conference.
Scott Duvall Carries Shop Floor Issues to Parliament Hill

Whether it’s the plight of Stelco pensioners, the future of the former Hilton Works or restoring door-to-door mail delivery, Scott Duvall’s affinity for helping can be traced to the shop floor of the old Stelco Canada Works plant on Wellington Street North.

“I started at Canada Works in 1972,” said the 60-year-old NDP MP for Hamilton Mountain. Duvall recalled, “In those times they would hire you off the street; I stayed there because the money was good and my family was there.”

In fact, three generations of Duvalls—grandfather Frank Duvall, father James Duvall and Scott all worked at the same plant, at the same time, for about a year.

Born at the former Henderson General Hospital, Duvall attended Franklin Road and Parkdale schools up to Grade 2, before the family moved to Burlington where he lived until age 40, when he moved back to the central Mountain.

At Canada Works, Duvall got involved in union politics and was elected as a steward, recording secretary, chief steward, vice president and in 1984 president of United Steelworkers Local 3250.

Ironically, the year he became president was the same year that Stelco announced the plant was to be closed, affecting about 500 workers. The plant closed in 1986.

“I was the last one to leave Canada Works,” said Duvall, who stayed on to help employees get employment insurance benefits or jobs elsewhere in the Stelco chain, before joining some of his colleagues at Stelco’s Parkdale Works who were represented by Local 5328. Duvall would run for president of the local only to lose by 15 votes to Joe Crugnalle.

“I ran because there was some animosity at the time between the Canada Works people and the Parkdale Works people,” said Duvall who would go on to work with Crugnalle for the next 12 years as the local’s vice president.

After Crugnalle died in 2001, Duvall took over as local president and won two more terms in the top job.

By 2007, the company was in financial difficulty and went through the federal Companies’ Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) process before it was purchased by ArcelorMittal.

Over the years, Duvall took a number of union-supported night school courses and obtained a Labour Studies certificate from Mohawk College. He would eventually retire from the plant and union politics in 2007.

But he didn’t retire from politics entirely. A year earlier he was approached by union officials and others, including former Mountain councillor Henry Merling, to run for city council in Ward 7.

“They wanted someone who lived in the ward,” Duvall said. Incumbent councillor Bill Kelly had decided not to seek re-election and Duvall won the seat with nearly 30 percent of the vote and he would go on to handily win re-election two more times.

In December 2014, Hamilton Mountain NDP MP Chris Charlton announced she would not be seeking re-election. The move caught Duvall by surprise, but it wasn’t long before he was asked to seek the NDP nomination for the riding. Duvall sought and won the nomination. and in October 2015 he was elected MP for Hamilton Mountain.

Despite his personal victory, Duvall was shocked at how poorly the NDP ran nationally, going from Official Opposition to a third party in the House of Commons. “What happened? Was the election too long?” Duvall wondered.

Today he has pretty much gotten used to his new job and surroundings.

“I’m a lot more comfortable understanding how things are run,” said Duvall. “I’ve got great people (working with me) with experience.”

His Ottawa days usually begin around 8 a.m. with a caucus meeting, followed by meetings at his office and then House of Commons duties.

“You’re always busy,” said Duvall. He figures most days wrap up around 9 p.m. during the week, then it’s back to the central Mountain riding on weekends where he tries to attend two or three events while at home with Sherry, his wife of 42 years. The couple has three adult children and two grandchildren.

Duvall said his work in Ottawa involves a lot of walking, and he figures all that exercise has trimmed 10-12 pounds off his frame.

And as the NDPs pensions critic, the folks at the former Stelco operations are seldom far from his mind. “I want them (the Trudeau government) to come to the table and see how they can strengthen the steel industry in Canada,” Duvall said.
Woefully Inadequate Pension Reform for Canadians

By Doug MacPherson
National Coordinator

While changes to the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) recently adopted by the current federal Liberal government offer some improvement, they do not go far enough.

The legislation includes an increase in the annual payout, from 25 percent to 33 percent, of preretirement earnings. In addition, the maximum amount of income covered by the CPP increases from $54,900 to about $82,700—once it is fully phased in. However, because the changes do not fully come into effect until 2025, most workers will not have saved enough or contributed a sufficient amount to the CPP and therefore many will be retiring in poverty.

For a government that claims its legislation is fact-based, it has clearly misread the facts.

THE FACTS ARE:

- Statistics Canada projects that by the year 2026 fully 25 percent of Canadians will be aged 65 or older.
- Statistics Canada reports that the proportion of the overall employed population covered by registered pension plans declined from 52 percent to 37 percent between 1977 and 2011. Evidence suggests this decline has continued through to 2016 as many employers shed defined benefit pension plans or converted to defined contribution plans. Some estimates put coverage in current private workplace pension plans in Canada at less than 30 percent.
- On Sept. 7, 2016, the Canadian Payroll Association released a report stating that 58 percent of workers said debt and a bad economy are the biggest obstacles to saving for retirement. Furthermore, 76 percent worry that they have saved only one-quarter or less of what they feel they will need to retire comfortably.
- A Sept. 9, 2016, study by Innovative Research Group, prepared for the Ontario Security Commission, revealed that over 50 percent of Canadians do not have any plan for retirement.

In a society such as Canada's, retirement security is built on the premise that employer-provided workplace pensions provide a significant portion of the necessary income replacement. With dwindling employer-sponsored pension plans and inadequate personal savings, it is clear that the present system is not working and needs much more than the proposed changes to the Canadian Pension Plan.

Employer-provided defined benefit pension plans are being phased out and replaced, if at all, by market-driven defined contribution plans. In fact, the Canadian government is encouraging this trend by introducing Bill C-27 that enables Crown corporations and federally-regulated private-sector employers to back out of defined-benefit pension commitments. Bill C-27 removes employers' legal requirements to fund plan benefits, which means that benefits could be reduced going forward or even retroactively.

Permanent full-time employment is on the decline and is being replaced with part-time, low-paid contract or precarious employment that generally does not provide pensions. A study released on Jan. 4, 2017, by TD Economics showed that all of the job growth in Canada in 2016 was part-time employment. This is not a new phenomenon. Indeed, the same study by TD Economics showed that the share of full-time employment has been declining since the 1980s, and accelerated during the 2008 recession. This trend will only increase as technological change makes more and more jobs obsolete—think driverless cars and trucks, artificial intelligent manufacturing and changes to banking and clerical jobs through automation.

Interest rates, on which much of the future pension income is predicated, are expected to remain low for years to come. The average Canadian does not qualify for full Canada Pension Plan benefits, but draws usually half the maximum benefit. The drop in permanent full-time employment means that there will be no change in the short term and is likely to get worse. Unfortunately these are the facts.

Clearly, the change from 25 percent to 33 percent of the CPP's Yearly Maximum Pensionable Earnings (YMPE), phased in over time, will not adequately address the retirement income needs of Canadians now and in the near future. Using the Low Income Measure, senior poverty increased from 3.9 percent in 1995 to 11.5 percent in 2013 and this is likely to continue unless meaningful action is taken.

In my opinion, we need a national dialogue about the future of work and our social programs of income support for all ages. We could start with free education, up to and including college and university. A high school education alone will not prepare our young folks for the jobs of the future. Historically, investments in education have led to bursts of innovation and creativity that have driven economic advances. Free primary and secondary education sufficed in the past, it is now time to move that to the next level. Most developed Western economies do this and recently New York Governor Andrew Cuomo advocated free tuition at public colleges to develop the state's economy.

If part-time precarious work is the future, as Federal Finance Minister Bill Morneau recently indicated, then let's talk about how we can help people have a decent quality of life in this new economy. A national guaranteed annual income should be part of the solution. I am old enough to know that most people want to excel and do a good job regardless of the endeavor. So let's not be fearful that people will stay home and drink beer as some would suggest. Countries such as Finland and Scotland are already experimenting with this. Ontario is thinking about this approach as well.

Perhaps if we begin this discussion and implement some of these strategies we can revisit how retirement income is going to be funded on a secure basis going forward, so that no senior is doomed to end their life in poverty.
District 8 Gets a New SOAR Chapter

Retirees from USW Local 8-957, which represents workers at the Mylan Pharmaceutical facility in Morgantown, West Virginia received their SOAR Charter January 10, 2017.

SOAR’s District 8 Executive Board Member Bob Adkins, made the trek from his hometown in Huntington, W.Va., to do the charter presentation. In his remarks, he delivered congratulations on behalf USW District 9 Director Ernest “Billy” Thompson and SOAR International President Bill Pienta. Bob welcomed them into the SOAR family and stressed the importance of their continued activism in retirement. He also discussed the importance of the chapter’s interaction with their local and the community.

Howard Martin, President of Local 8-957 was also in attendance. He offered his encouragement and committed the local’s support to their retiree organization. Dave also shared his vision with the group, hoping that the chapter would continue to grow and be a leader in northern West Virginia, as well as in District 8. Two of the chapter’s members were elected to attend the upcoming West Virginia AFL-CIO Legislative Conference.

The chapter members expressed their desire to work closely with the local and to be actively involved with the local’s media committee. They already have plans to setup a Facebook page to reach out to fellow retirees. The local also took advantage of the opportunity to present SOAR member Dave Chidester with a USW Appreciation Award, presented by Howard Martin, local union president, for Dave’s years of leadership and commitment to the union.

SOAR would like to acknowledge and offer our thanks to Local 8-957 members Daniel Langdon and Dave Duesenberry for their hard work and diligence in making this chapter a reality!

Receiving their charter, pictured left to right: Bob Adkins, District 8 SOAR Executive Board Member; Sherry Phillips, Financial Secretary; Denny Bennett, President and Jeff Scripp, Vice President.
The Affordable Care Act (ACA or “Obamacare”) is in the national spotlight once again. Emboldened by a new President, the majority party in Congress quickly declared their intentions to repeal the law in early 2017, while citing vague principles about a potential replacement policy. Keep in mind that the ACA became law in 2010, leaving lawmakers with more than six years’ time to come up with a replacement idea, yet there still is no announced proposal as of press time.

In contrast to other large-scale social programs in American history that saw changes over time — for instance, automatic cost-of-living adjustments weren’t originally part of Social Security and prescription coverage got added to Medicare decades after its implementation — the current approach to the ACA is radically different.

The repeal and replace strategy is being met with resistance from Democrats, a growing number of Republicans and industry experts who are concerned about massive insecurity occurring in the insurance markets and millions of Americans losing coverage.

As this debate unfolds, our union will continue to advocate for the policies that support our health care needs, while fighting back against those that would do us harm.

Here are key ways the ACA is impacting retirees:

**Medicare-Eligible Retirees**

The ACA is reducing prescription drug costs when hitting the “doughnut hole.” Previously when seniors hit this “hole,” they had to pay 100 percent of costs. Under the ACA, costs are decreasing, and by 2020, the “hole” will be closed completely. The ACA also provides no-cost preventative benefits, such as screenings for breast and colorectal cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes. It incorporates a free wellness exam annually and protections against rising costs. The ACA also includes new oversight, incentives and coordination that are improving patient care.

**Increased Financial Security for Medicare**

The ACA has provisions that have extended the financial security of Medicare. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office estimates repeal would require finding an additional $802 billion over the next 10 years to fund Medicare. This would likely lead to higher Medicare premiums, greater deductibles, increased cost-sharing for beneficiaries and accelerating Medicare’s insolvency.

If you have concerns, speak out!

Let your Representative and Senators know what’s important to you by calling our toll-free hotlines.

You will be directed to the correct lawmakers after entering your zip code.

**U.S. House**

866-202-5409

**U.S. Senate**

877-607-0785

Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation, “What Are the Implications of Repealing the Affordable Care Act for Medicare Spending and Beneficiaries?” December 13, 2016; Alliance for Retired Americans Fact Sheet; Healthcare.gov, Medicare.gov, “The Affordable Care Act & Medicare.”
One of the major reasons Donald Trump was elected the 45th President of the United States was his appeal to working-class Americans who are now struggling to make ends meet. He promised to be a champion of American manufacturing and rebuild industries which saw massive job layoffs over the past 17 years.

“The forgotten men and women of our country, people who work hard but no longer have a voice — I am your voice,” said Trump when he accepted the Republican nomination in July.

Trump promised changes in trade agreements that have hurt so many U.S. industries and workers. He threw down the gauntlet against China, Mexico and other foreign nations that have flooded the U.S. market with cheaply-produced products that have supplanted many made-in-America companies. He also put U.S. companies on notice that a Trump administration will not tolerate the transfer of manufacturing facilities to low-wage labor countries.

Whether Trump can deliver on these promises remains to be seen. He is unpredictable and cannot govern from a Twitter account.

Americans must hold him to his words. The future of the domestic steel industry could be at stake.

China’s government-subsidized steel industry now produces more than 50 percent of the world’s steel products. In 2000, China was the supplier of just 14 percent of global steel.

The massive amount of Chinese steel being sold below market value in the U.S. has forced the closure or partial closure of many of U.S. mills, the layoffs of thousands of skilled American workers, the destruction of communities’ tax bases and a threat to national security. The decline of American-made steel caused the loss of nearly 19,000 steelworker jobs in 2016 alone and a total of 91,000 jobs when you factor in jobs directly connected to U.S. steel production.

At a campaign stop in the steel country of Monessen, Pennsylvania, in July, Trump promised to restore the American steel industry and return manufacturing jobs that have been eliminated.

“We are going to put American-produced steel back into the backbone of our country,” Trump told a crowd of invited guests. “This alone will create massive numbers of jobs.”

At another campaign stump speech Trump said, “American steel will send new skyscrapers into the clouds.”

And in an Instagram post from late December he stated, “My administration will follow two simple rules: Buy American and hire American.”

So there may be hope for our struggling USW brothers and sisters.

AAM hopes to work with the Trump administration to advance his manufacturing goals and put more Americans back to work in well-paying factory jobs. In a letter to President Trump, AAM has laid out our priorities:

► **Investments in American infrastructure using American-made iron and steel**, with careful attention paid to their fiscal sustainability and size.

► **Support for Buy America policies and a defense against efforts to weaken them.** That means expanding their coverage; closing loopholes, revisiting already-granted exceptions and strengthening enforcement; and rejecting efforts to undermine them by lowering their standards.

► **Make trade work for more Americans** by prioritizing trade enforcement efforts by government agencies; working to reduce global industrial overcapacity; maintaining China’s well-earned non-market economy status; deterring and penalizing currency manipulation; and emphasizing domestic job creation in future trade agreements.

Can President Trump restore American steel mills to working capacity?

continued on page 10
The Road Ahead

How would you describe the early start of President Donald Trump? It certainly isn’t like anything I’ve ever witnessed before. It is usually customary for the incoming President to bask in his victory, focus on getting his cabinet selections confirmed and prepare his agenda for the first 100 days. Instead, we witnessed a sense of confusion, accusation, investigations and denials. The so-called honeymoon period lost its way before the formal swearing in ceremony even took place.

While thousands gathered in protest in communities all around the country, Congressional hearings began on Trump appointees. How would these cabinet choices respond to questions asked about Trump’s promises made during the campaign?

Trump promised to cut our taxes, build a wall along the Mexican border; and rebuild our infrastructure and the military. Are all these proposals really deliverable? It’s difficult for me to see all of this being done while we balance our budget and lose revenue though the proposed tax cuts. Be reminded that Republican Presidents—Nixon, Ford, Reagan, George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush—all promised to cut taxes and balance the budget. It didn’t happen. Eisenhower made the same promise and delivered while continuing to pay off the debts of World War 2. The only time in recent history that our nation had a balanced budget was with Johnson and Clinton. However, to reach that goal, our taxes were increased not cut.

As I watched and listened to the cabinet appointees’ hearings, I noticed some disagreement with Trump by his appointees. Remember that one appointee stated that Russia (Putin) was a threat.

Now that Trump is in office, we will have a better take on his Presidency with or without a 100-day honeymoon. Time will tell. Let us all hope for the best!

By Ken Kovack
SOAR Legislative Director
Washington, D.C.

WE MUST HOLD TRUMP ACCOUNTABLE

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- Strengthen the defense industrial base by reforming the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States so that national security is a primary consideration; improving “Buy America” rules in defense procurement; and pinpointing vulnerabilities in strategic industries.

- Prioritize U.S. manufacturing in any plan for corporate tax reform so that—simply put—manufacturers don’t end up footing the bill for a tax cut for Wall Street and Walmart.

By fulfilling these tenets, the Trump administration can provide the American steel industry, and manufacturing in general, a much-needed stimulus that will re-create those long-forgotten, well-paying, benefit-friendly jobs while protecting our national security. But, he will have to work with a reluctant congress to implement many of these changes. We can all help by contacting our representatives in Congress to let them know that we are behind the new administration’s plans to make American manufacturing great again. Please contact your senators and members of the U.S. House of Representatives to express your support by calling them at their local, state and district offices. They can also be reached in Washington, D.C. by calling the U.S. Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121.

Ask for your representative by name and you will be connected to their Washington office.

Jeff Bonior is a staff writer for the Alliance for American Manufacturing.
By Robert Roach, Jr.

Donald Trump promised not to cut Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid many times during his presidential campaign. But that hasn’t stopped his Republican supporters on Capitol Hill from taking steps to dismantle and cut our earned benefits.

The Alliance for Retired Americans is working to make sure the President keeps his promises. We will remind him of them until he tells House Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell that he will veto any cuts to Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

Alliance members called the White House in strong numbers on January 23 and told the new president to keep his word, to veto cuts to these crucial programs. Prior to that, on January 4, more than 14,000 people called Capitol Hill, telling their Senators and Congressmen not to dismantle or cut Medicare and Medicaid.

Some Alliance members have also come to Capitol Hill in person to make their case. Alliance members have spoken at press conferences and forums with key members of Congress, telling in detail what Medicare cuts would mean for them, given their circumstances.

Other activists have told their stories about what Medicare means to them personally on the Alliance website at [https://retiredamericans.org/medicare-stories](https://retiredamericans.org/medicare-stories).

Our message: we have earned these benefits through a lifetime of hard work. Social Security and Medicare represent a sacred trust, a contract between the United States and the American people that should not be broken.

And we will remind our leaders about that as long as they have an agenda that is in conflict with it.

Robert Roach, Jr. is president of the Alliance for Retired Americans. He was previously the General Secretary-Treasurer of the IAMAW. For more information, visit [www.retiredamericans.org](http://www.retiredamericans.org).

District 7 SOAR Steps Up in Fight to Defend Medicare

By Scott Marshall

District 7 SOAR is taking action to defend Medicare against GOP attacks on health care. Working with Illinois and Indiana Alliance for Retired American groups (ARA) and other union retirees, SOAR chapters are circulating the national SOAR petition at all kinds of retiree events.

USW District 7 and locals are also helping the chapters in this effort. SOAR chapters throughout the district have helped organize and lead delegations to visit the offices of Senators and members of Congress, in both parties to voice our concerns. More meetings are in the works. In addition SOAR members helped organize and participate in state events on January 15, that were part of the national demonstrations that took place in 70 cities to defend all health care for seniors.

District 7 SOAR coordinators and activists report that these efforts are also having an impact among non-union seniors. Even members and friends who supported the GOP candidate are now saying that they fear the attacks on Medicare and senior health care. They increasingly feel that promises made during the 2016 election will likely not be honored by the President. The nomination of Congressman Tom Price to Secretary of Health and Human Services is an ominous sign. Price has long championed schemes to privatize and gut Medicare and Social Security. District 7 SOAR will be stepping up to help circulate the AFL-CIO’s petition and campaign to reject Price’s confirmation.
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